

MALDWYN HARRIERS NEWS AND RESULTS UPDATE – NOVEMBER 2014

As the Club Championship reaches its fever pitched climax and Maldwyn's seniors ensure record attendance and some great performances in the Cross-Country, it's been all go this month. And if that wasn't enough we see the return of the Travelling Harrier reporting on some excellent running by our juniors. So slip an aspirin under your tongue, take a few deep breath and kick back with this latest news and results round-up.

First up though some announcements:

Christmas Party, 12th December 2014, Newtown FC

A final reminder that the Christmas get-together will be at Newtown FC on Friday the 12th and will, this year, take the form of a less formal hog roast and disco. There will be the usual annual achievement awards as well as the announcement of and presentations to the club championship winners and the draw for our much sought after 2015 London Marathon places. Plus it's your chance to dance like a dad or else fall over your handbag.

Those who want to attend but haven't yet informed June could they do so by contacting her on 07846 352674 or email junejones8@hotmail.co.uk as soon as possible. Thank you.

Inter-Regional Cross-Country Championships selections

Congratulations to the following Harriers on their selection to run for North Wales at the Inter-Regional Cross-Country Champs at Builth Wells on 13th December:

U13: Kate Jerman, Esme Hughes, Dillon Gill.

U15: Joseph Crutchley, Shannon Walker.

U17: Chloe Evans, Emily Thomas, Margo Martin, Gruff Martin.

Senior: Tim Davies

Veteran: Ed Davies

Good luck to the chosen ones.

In addition, alumnae Andrew Davies and Gwynant Jones have also been selected to run. Well done them. Nice also to see Maldwyn "old boy" Richie Jones representing Wales in the recent British and Ireland Veterans championships in Nottingham.

Jacqui Lloyd

We are sorry to hear that Jacqui, one of the "ladies' leaders" on a Wednesday and Thursday nights and a regular at our committee meetings, has been very unwell of late and wish her all the best for a speedy and complete recovery.

Members will be aware that Club President Trefor Pugh was also taken ill earlier in the year. We are pleased to report that Trefor appears to be making good progress and we hope to see him back with us soon.

CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS

Not one but two races this month as some of our senior athletes sought to maximise their points and improve their standings in events 13 and 14.

Mad Jack's 5, Attingham, Shrewsbury, 8th November

Chris Atherton led home the faithful in a super 6th place from 392 in this incredibly popular off-roader which has the "attraction" of wading through a lot of water. Chris' time of 31:37 was a couple of minutes up on 25th placed **Sean Clarke** (33:53) whose performance will have done no harm at all to his club championship credentials. **Ifan Jones** was the next Harrier safely home in 42:09, ahead of a titanic tussle between our first two women, in which **Helen Owen** (43:35) won out by a solitary position and single second over **Andre Hutchinson**.

Sharon Lloyd (46:28); **Georgina Fletcher** (47:20); **Rachel Williams** (48:23); **Jill Hillman** (48:54); **Diane Jones** (50:52) and **Mandy Mullet** (60:09) were our other gallant competitors.

Some great photos of our colleagues enjoying themselves waist deep in water can be found here: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/70907794@N00/sets/>

Elan Valley 10, 22nd November 2014

This was our last championship fixture. It may have been due to other commitments or else a lot you had done your maths (no flies on you lot) but a comparatively small contingent made the short trip to Elan Valley for the annual running of Rhayader AC's typically well organised "tough ten". How those who were present must have been pleased with the improvement in the weather following Friday's washout, with most of the race being run in various quantities of sunshine and favourable temperatures.

Martin Copus shone with another PB to follow on from his 5k and Marathon best efforts earlier in the year – 66:39 was good enough for 17th spot.

Sean Clarke had struggled with injury in the lead-up to the race but managed to perform creditably well, finishing in a time of 70:09 for 33rd place and an end to what was a busy month of racing for him.

Chris "The Travelling Harrier" Copus completed the men's positions for Maldwyn (1.22:29) and, like Sean and Martin, will be hoping to see some reward for his gruelling effort when the championship points are totted up and the winners announced at the Christmas "do".

Next it was the turn of our women. The Owen girls (no relation) have both had great seasons and on this occasion it was **Helen Owen** who took the honours making her the first Maldwyn woman across the line in successive championship races – a fine performance in a finishing time of 1.26:33. **Hannah Owen** has been something of a revelation in her first season with the club and here she ran very well again to clock 1.27:55, six places behind namesake Helen.

Sharon Lloyd (1.34:11), **Jill Hillman** (1.37:57) and **Emma Roberts** (1.43:46) completed the Harriers' roll of honour and picked up a nice t-shirt each for their efforts.

So that's it then for our first ever club championship except that the announcement of the winners and the award presentations will take place at the Christmas Party on 12th December. If you think you are in with a shout and wish to bask in the adulation of fellow Harriers then book your place by contacting June (see above).

We would like members' views on the club championship; whether or not you think we should continue to hold them and if so, what can we do to improve on the formula. We'll be sending out a very brief questionnaire to you very soon and would be pleased to hear back from you.

ROAD

Not a huge amount to report this month. However we should mention that **Andrew Davies** cracked 30 minutes for 10k at the famously fast Leeds Abbey Dash on 16th November. His 29:56 earned him 12th place and gave him a number of handy scalps. The first 100 to finish all bettered 32 minutes! Any doubts that joining Stockport has rejuvenated Andy can be dispelled by his Run Britain profile which recently showed him as an U23.

TRAIL/FELL

Clwydian Hills Fell Race, 2nd November 2014

Bernie Jones completed the 15km course (3000ft of ascent) in 1.45:50 (88th from 140).

Betws Trail Challenge, 8th November 2014

Ed and **Tim Davies** both had useful run-outs in the second year of this trail event. Ed's 6th place (26:33) in the 5k earned him the M55 award (we're surprised they've not named the motorway after him by now), while Tim recorded 39:02 for 8th spot in the 10k. Like many Maldwyn athletes that weekend they were to race on consecutive days.

Rhobell Fawr, 8th November 2014

Another strong showing from Maldwyn runners led by **Alex Kendall** (22nd/60:14) and ably supported by **Paul Beeson** (26th/60:43); **Rob Martin** (35th/65:08) and **Glyn Fletcher** (36th/65:37)

CROSS-COUNTRY

Herefordshire Cross-Country League, Croft Castle, 9th November

A multitudinous turnout of Harriers helped ensure that this 30th running of the Croft Castle fixture was celebrated by a record turnout. What is more, several of our 28 runners (count 'em) were having their second race of the weekend having either run Mad Jack's 5, the Betws Trail Challenge or Rhobell Fawr the previous day. This could be testimony to both the way the cross-country has captured the imagination and to the tenacity of the team captain in bringing would-be competitors to ground (how many of us get nervous every time the phone rings these days?).

Listening to Mike Blenkinsop's pre-race instructions we could be forgiven for thinking that even if you managed to avoid breaking at least one limb you'd probably at some point have to be airlifted off

Heartbreak Hill, which the women would have to climb twice and the men three times. Those of us obliged to carry cameras because of recurring leg niggles suddenly felt relieved rather than disappointed and it was a wonder that people didn't start deserting the start line and melting away into the mist.

These XC runners are made of stern stuff, however, and particularly when joined by several of our fell running fraternity as the Maldwyn Big Guns really turned on the fire power in the men's race.

Tim Davies was victorious in a time of 46:40 with **Roland Stafford** – sporting an antediluvian club vest – and **Chris Atherton** also bagging top 10 spots to ensure Maldwyn men's A team finished in an astonishingly good 2nd place overall. **Ed Davies** completed the A team scoring.

Chloe Evans, who was recently crowned club junior female cross-country athlete of the year, led home the women in 24th (41:04) ahead of **Rachel Butler** and **Helen Owen** who were 32nd and 33rd respectively to earn the women's A team a solid 9th place finish.

Of all the other notable features of the day we should mention **Reece Moles'** "shorts" which outshone – in more than one respect – even **Diane Jones'** latest headwear and **Andre Hutchinson's** psychedelic socks. What's more, Reece managed the impossible given the conditions and crossed the line looking as spotlessly clean as when he started. There is a theory that his choice of "shorts" (we will again use the word advisedly) acted as a parachute enabling him to glide across the boggy bits of the course. We wonder how many other runners used Reece to guide them through the gloomy conditions.

CAPTAIN'S CORNER

"If we thought we'd joined a real cross-country league after Fforest Fields then we can be in no doubt after this one, that's for sure. This was definitely harder. After climbing Heartbreak Hill twice what would I have given to have been able to veer off with the women, but it wasn't to be. Mind you, three times was obviously not enough for some as we had to call one of our men back to prevent him from running a 4th lap.

I had hoped to get around 2 circuits without being lapped but that wasn't to be either! Still I'm pleased that it was a Maldwyn Harrier - Tim – who inflicted this indignity on me.

A big well done to everyone who took part and for making sure that we made such an impression on the race. The atmosphere at the finish was terrific, with everyone supporting each other. Next up is Ufton Court on 7th December which promises to be a bit flatter. It also means an early start, so remember to set your alarm clocks!" Ifan

Shropshire Young Athletes League Cross Country League, Much Wenlock, 23rd November 2014

Here's Chris with news of the welcome return of the junior cross-country (and therefore the welcome return of his match report)

"After the October hiatus when Packwood School was afflicted by some hideous disease it was back to cross country action for our juniors. The torrential rain of the previous week occasioned a slight

alteration to the usual course. This was to protect the cricket field rather than save the athletes running through standing water. Fair enough then. Again disappointing in terms of numbers, although not in terms of performance. 10 athletes and 6 top 10 finishes. That's good going in anybody's book.

U11 - Another good run from **Olivia Robson**. Olivia started really well before finding the middle section a bit tough. A great comeback to finish strongly in 26th, well done. We had 2 young men making their Maldwyn cross country debuts. Good efforts both. Never more than a few metres apart **Connor Owen** (11th) eventually finished just ahead of **Harvey Gill** (14th) in an entertaining tussle. Having ran so far at Oswestry in supporting big brother Dillon I think Harvey thought he might as well have a go himself. Good lad.

All other age groups get at least one crack at 'The Hill'. Despite one or two half-hearted complaints I think everybody likes to test themselves up it. Me and Martin certainly tested ourselves a fair few times in support of our athletes!

U13 - **Kate Jerman** has been in good form for both club and school this year. No surprise, therefore, to see her moving confidently through the field in the later stages to claim 7th. Kate really ran well. Great stuff. Also going well this year is **Dillon Gill**. Dillon had a rather frustrating race this time, though. Although always close to the leading pair Dillon could never quite close the gap. Despite trying everything he could Dillon had to settle for a still excellent 3rd place. Looking really promising in 9th was debutant **Dan Stones**. I thought Dan looked comfortable at this level, a great start. Good too to see **Amren Stephenson** enjoy a much happier outing this time. He found it quite hard in Oswestry last time out. Amren has put in a lot of work in training and looked comfortable in 38th.

U15 - Back from his international efforts for Wales in Ireland was **Joseph Crutchley**. Boy did he run well! Joe stayed on the heels of the leaders until the hill came along. By the time he reached the top there was only ever going to be one winner. Dave, Martin and me all reckoned that was as good as anything we've ever seen from Joe. Terrific stuff! Hopefully there's plenty more where that came from.

U17 - A change of tactics from **Chloe Evans** and a much happier race this time. Chloe was never outside the top 5 and looked comfortable throughout (as comfortable as you can when running 4k up hill and down dale). Her superior strength on the climb ensured Chloe crossed the line in an impressive 3rd place. Also enjoying their outing a bit more than at Oswestry was the hard working **Margo Martin**. A strong, gutsy effort saw Margo home in 8th. A super effort.

Well done to everyone who made the trip - some great performances. With a bit more support from some of our other athletes we could have been in contention for team prizes in some categories. Hopefully a few more will make it to Bridgnorth, it's always good there.

Please send any news, results, photos or entertaining athletics stories to Ian at fraserman1@hotmail.co.uk as we always like to receive them. Likewise if you want to alert us to any omissions or corrections please let Ian know.