

The Jubilee Plunge

Martin Cortvriend

On a blustery but warm day, in complete contrast to the icy cold of the last two years, a record 52 runners galloped down the slopes of Moel Famau from the Jubilee Tower. Reputations count for nothing in an event like this and various downhill fliers revealed impressive descending speed and technique as big guns fell by the wayside. Despite the double handicap of being dressed as Father Christmas and running into a

gale force headwind, Adam Peers knocked over a minute off the men's record to descend to the Goldie in an astonishing time of 10.24. And despite me telling her at the prizegiving that she was just outside the ladies' record, Amy Jones was in fact inside it with a very strong new ladies' best time of 13.55. Batman and Robin (aka Rob Butler and Maxine Brockley) declined using their superpowers to any significant effect and were

happy to amble down comfortably, taking in the applause of the surprising numbers of spectators en route. An assortment of Clwydian Range Runners demonstrated their local knowledge to good effect and there was quite a Merseyside feel this year with great support from Pensby Runners and Liverpool Harriers. Another perspective on what

motivates people to travel around to sample new races is provided by Andy Walmsley of Bowland Fellrunners, Yiannis Tridimas's club who help him organise the Arenig Fawr Race and regularly turn up in far flung corners to race up far flung mountains. Andy had a cracking race on his one good leg and here is his report:



Andy Walmsley's 2011 Plunge

A few years ago, a group of us journeyed to North Wales to do the Llangynhafal Loop a great little race on the Clwydian Hills. Whilst there, the organiser, Martin Cortvriend, told us of a downhill race he organises - the Jubilee Plunge - from the summit of Moel Famau to the back of the Golden Lion Inn in Llangynhafal every Boxing Day and I resolved to make the trip there "one year". Unfortunately, the race was cancelled in both 2009 and 2010 due to snow and ice so this year was my first opportunity to have a go at what looked like a great course.

I was staying in Sheffield over Christmas, so doing the Plunge involved a 200 mile round trip but, now armed with an unbelievably economical car (a SEAT Ibiza TDI), I was undaunted by the fuel cost. The Ibiza is also a very capable long-distance car so I didn't even envisage a tiring drive. Plans were laid.

On Christmas Day I did a run along the gritstone edges of Froggatt, Curbar and Baslow (great running on firm gritty paths) in very windy conditions and felt ready for the Plunge. Gill and Karen (our Sheffield host over Christmas) planned a run from

Ringinglow back to Sheffield on Boxing day and I thus dropped them off outside the Norfolk Arms pub and then continued via Snake Pass and the M60/M56 to Llangynhafal, a drive of just over 2 hours.

After registering in the car park, I joined the procession for the 50 minute walk to the summit. The course is quoted as 2 miles and 1500ft but I think it's a bit longer than that. The men's record was 11.55 and I'm sure the holder must have been faster than 6 minute mile-ing. The course starts with a short stretch of level ridge path, followed by a short rocky descent, then an undulating section with a couple of little ascents - all of this on the broad ridge path. The route then turns off the ridge to make a gradually descending traverse on a narrow path through heather before a brilliantly fast section of green turf path through gorse bushes. A fast plunging descent on short grass (the final descent of the Llangynhafal Loop) then leads onto a downhill section of road (booo!) but you soon turn off into fields. Four fields, all downhill and quite firm, then take you to the back garden of the pub and the finish.

I reckon about 50 runners were huddled in the shelter of the ruined Jubilee Tower on the Summit awaiting the off, three of them in fancy dress including Santa (of course), Batman, and Wonder Woman. I clambered onto the top of the tower for a look, almost getting blown off my feet in the process, then returned to the shelter of the lee side as the 2pm start approached. Martin appeared with his clipboard and marshalled us to the start, shouted a few words of guidance/encouragement then counted us down to the start - 3, 2, 1, GO!

The initial dash was mad, as you'd expect, and I soon lost touch with the leading bunch but on the first bit of technical descent some of them came back to me (aha!) and I was then in a little group battling it out along the undulating section. Jumping across a pool of water my leading foot slipped, almost causing me to do the splits but I recovered and thought no more about it until lower down. On the narrow traverse there were two in front of me who were going fast enough to not be holding me up, which was just as well as overtaking would be difficult on this bit. However, I did gain a bit of recovery and as soon as the path opened out I passed one of those ahead. The second one then decided to help me out by falling over (on nice soft mossy turf) and I then had open fell in front of me. I stretched out to max plunging speed but then felt a worrying twinge in my left hamstring, causing me to shorten my stride somewhat. Someone in red (thankfully it wasn't Santa) then passed me but apart from this I held onto my position down to the road despite consciously keeping my stride short.

The pain didn't return and I kept going across the final fields fairly well. There was a young lad close behind at one of the stiles but he

was making horrible noises and was obviously having a hard time of it. I was almost home and dry but a big bunch were bearing down on me and they caught me at the stile into the final field. Throwing caution to the wind I launched into a final effort for the finish but the hamstring then went 'twang' quite emphatically and I ended up limping to the line, losing 3 places in the last field. D'ohh! Still, as I sat massaging my hamstring I was relieved to see that I had beaten Batman AND Wonder Woman.... Santa however had won the race in a new record time of 10.24! My time was 15.37 and I was 28th out of 52. If it wasn't for the hamstring I would have been in the top half of the field for the first time in AGES!

I had a slight concern that the hamstring might make driving back difficult but once changed, refuelled on chicken and stuffing butties and ensconced in the driving seat I had a perfectly comfortable drive back to Sheffield to complete a grand day out (despite the injury!). AW

DAVE AUSTIN'S APPEAL

I'm aiming to attempt the **South Wales Traverse on Saturday 2nd June**

Starting half an hour before dawn. I'm targeting a 22 hour schedule. I am looking for a few support runners - need all the help I can get!

Please contact me if you can help
07947 127 410
dna100@gmail.com

An Easter Whodunnit

Simon Blease

So, by now it should be all done and dusted. Medals pinned on the plucky winners, mugs given out to the serial completists and commiserations for those who tried but came up short once again, left to lick their wounds and to plot revenge for when the days shorten once more. But there is a mystery. A whiff of a plot, a suspicion of a story untold. Because as Spring unfolds into a technicolour orgy of drought and blizzards, no-one can find out who has run off with the South Wales Winter Series.

It should be simple. 7 races run on easy courses after the hour goes back. Best of 5 to count. Last race on 24 March just as winter hours give way to the relief of lighter evenings. But here we are, rubbing out tums full of Easter choccy and yet the League is not even complete and of the 6 races run, results for only 4 have made the official stats. So what's going on?

Well, it started off in sparkling form with the usual autumnal "death by extreme climbing" that is the short, sharp burst up and down Fan Fawr. It's rumoured that the race only survives because Toffer has a concession at the burger van parked at the Storey Arms start/finish line. And it was still barbeque weather that greeted the 46 who hurled themselves up and down this short classic race. With no navigational concerns to contend with, Matt Collins threw down an early season marker with a win of over 20 seconds from the fast chasing Peter Ryder. But his time was still 2 ½ minutes shy of Graham Patten's incredible 16.02. And with Matt now in the U/40 group, perhaps it will be the fast improving James Blore of Chepstow Harriers who will now have the best chance at tilting at this particular windmill. Mind you, he has his work cut out since Gareth Hurst (O/40) is still beating him on this course. The O/50 was also strongly represented with Ken Ham, Richard Everson and Andy Creber finishing line astern in 14 to 16 place. Leading Lady Sally Wilder posted 23rd place 3 ½ minutes adrift of Jill Teagues 19.16. The evergreen John Battersby shone the Lantern Rouge for the O/70's!

3 weeks later and the Series moved east, to the enormously

popular Sugar Loaf race from the wonderful Crown Inn at Pantygelli. This race was threatening to become a victim of its own success with regular fields of over 100. The problem was becoming so acute that, 2 years ago, RO Douglas Adlam was forced to move the start back to the road by the pub to give the field a chance to thin out before attacking the murderously steep mountain access lane. This year, a more manageable 96 turned up, with just one DNF, a dap-wearing denizen of Butetown Fun Runners. His 2 mates, similarly attired, did manage to finish, so all credit to them. Let's hope they come back next year....and with more suitable footwear! At the sharp end of the field, it was business as usual as Matt Collins posted a second straight win (without troubling his own record) but with 2 very fast finishing O/40's in 2nd and 4th places...well done Paul Jones and Mark Palmer. Jonathan Barnes (u/23) of Wye Valley was just pipped into 3rd so is another promising name for the future. A strong run by Emma Hitchins saw her post first Lady in 15th place, but again, well over a minute outside the record.

In 2010, the next race, The Mighty Blorange, was run in the snow. But, as we now know, 2011 winter was a pussycat by comparison and fair, clear conditions met a healthy field of 60. The fear-some reputation of this brooding mountain obviously frightened the youngsters away as there were NO U/23 represented at all, allowing Matt Collins to saunter to his 3rd straight victory, yet again 2 minutes outside the record. This is getting boring. Someone really needs to start a serious challenge to these slow winning times. Perhaps the Olympics effect will kick start the pale youth of this Fair Isle and we will see records torn up in 2013. Maybe? Perhaps? Anyway, back to the league and the O/40 and O/50 age groups were turning into a right old scrap with a number of runners jousting for supremacy. In the ladies, there had been a different winner each time, with Helen Bennett coming home first this time; but lurking underneath was Vanessa Lawson who was carefully accumulating points with steady runs on each outing. Blorange marked the re

turn to racing for Chris Gilder-sleve, sidelined for 3 years by a nasty hip fracture sustained whilst cycling. Amazingly, he reached the summit in around 15th but it was all too much for one hamstring that decided it needed a rest after that leaving him to hobble home, a worthy finisher nonetheless.

So far, so normal. Same old races, usual winners. Ho hum. But now the League rolled out its brand new baby, a new race at Tor Y Foel. Some may know the mountain as it forms the first summit on the clockwise Brecon Beacons race. The dam on the Talybont reservoir forms a dramatic start/finish line for this 7km circular route and what a cracker

continued on page 3

RACE UPDATES

PENTYRCH
Date changed to
Wed 25th April

SNOWDON
Date changed to
Saturday 21st July

ELIDIR FAWR
This race may move
to avoid clash with
Snowdon

BRIDGES OR BUST
Date changed to
Sunday 5th August

RON SKILTON
Date changed to
Sunday 21st October

MIDWEEK SERIES
Final race from
Llanberis on
Tuesday 26th June
starts at 7.00pm
not 7.15pm

Members Discounts

The shops listed below have confirmed that they will give WFRA members a discount on purchases. This may not be on all items (eg sale items). Discount is normally 10% unless indicated otherwise. You must show your WFRA membership card.

BENARD'S GALLERY
Craig y Don, Llandudno
BLACKS

Betws y Coed and
Llandudno
CONWY OUTDOOR SHOP
Conwy

PETE BLAND SPORTS
Kendal
Y WARWS
Beddgelert

JOE BROWN SHOPS
Llanberis and
Capel Curig

COTSWOLD
Betws y Coed

RUN AND BECOME
Cardiff

RUNNING BEAR
Altrincham

If there are other retailers members would like to be included please contact any Committee member

Mynydd Troed Sunday 29 April

First race in the 2012 Open Welsh Championships

The inov-8/WFRA Open Welsh Championships commences on Sunday 29th April, with the Mynydd Troed race in south Wales. This is a great medium race with 3 good climbs - well worth travelling for.

Long Championsp Races

Please note that Ras y Berwyn and Brecon Beacons are long arduous races. A high level of fitness will be required and good navigational skills if the weather is poor.

North Wales Series

Sponsored by planetFear

Two races in the nine race series have taken place. For current positions see the latest edited Table in this Newsletter. Visit the website for the complete Table (which is on 3 separate pages showing - overall positions, positions by age category and positions by average score).

Race 1 : MOEL Y CI Saturday 25th February

There was a record turnout of 155 for this WFRA North Wales Series race (sponsored by planetFear). The weather was spring-like with sunny intervals. The race was won by Richard Roberts of Eryri in a new record time of 35 minutes and 10 seconds. Matthew Roberts of Eryri was 2nd in 35.45 and Ifan Richards of Meirionnydd 3rd in 36.59. Other category winners: Over 40 Paul Jones (Mercia) 37.37, Over 50 Michael Belshaw (BAOC) 43.35, Over 60 Tony Hulme (Cheshire) 48.38. The ladies race was won by Anna Bartlett of Sy Tri in a time of 42.39 (also 1st over 40). Andrea Rowlands of Eryri was 2nd in 44.46 and clubmate Siobhan Evans 3rd in 46.09. Other category winners Over 50 Ellie Salisbury (Eryri) 52.29, Over 60 Maggie Oliver (Eryri) 68.56.

Many thanks go to the Moelyci Environmental Centre staff, marshals, 'Team Dolly' radio network, and all the helpers.

Race 2 report on page 6

Simon reviews South Wales Winter Series

continued from page 1

it turned out to be. The climb is very fast on forest tracks and then a long pull up grassy slopes. But the view from the summit is special with the reservoir reaching out like a curving finger, pointing into the heart of the Beacons. And on race-day, Ma Nature pulled off one of those special skys with boiling dark clouds pierced by laser-beams of sunlight. It was worth drawing breath just to savour it. The downhill was just as good with grippy grass slopes and the odd skiddy or boggy bit before another blast along forest trails and a last scamper through woods back to the dam. Winter racing at its finest and all power to 'uncle' Les Williams for putting it on. His hard work was rewarded by a field of 60 and this time no Matt Collins, allowing Ben Moon to take the glory in 34.29. Gareth Hurst continued with a strong second place and Richard Everson powered home in the O/50 group in 7th. Emma Hitchins posted her second win in the ladies but Steve Herrington prevented Les Williams from taking his 3rd win in the O/60's...and in his own race too!

And this is where it all gets a bit mysterious. 2 more races have been held but there is no sign yet of official results.

Longtown is a bit of a cheat really as it starts and finishes in England and only flirts briefly with Welshness along its summit ridge. Maybe this alien nature accounts for the squadron of runners who took a 'scenic' detour on their descent through those fair English fields on their way to the finish line? It's a simple race...a triangle of up from the pub, run along the ridge a bit and return back down to the pub. But of course, one persons simplicity is another's confusion, especially if markers go astray or are not easily seen in the heat of downhill battle

THE KYMIN AS - 7th January

Two South Wales running clubs swarmed all over the Kymin Winter Race and supplied almost two thirds of the 110 starters.

Les Croupiers and Chepstow Harriers came up to Monmouth eager for points in their club championships. But ironically unattached runners nabbed the first two places, though Chepstow did supply the women's winner and three of the age category leaders.

At the front Sean Taylor had a good tussle with Huw Evans and finally passed him as they emerged from the woods a few hundred yards from the finish.

Chepstow women took the first four places: Niki Morgan pipping Jane Horler by just 11 seconds.

The men's team prize also went to Chepstow, with age cat. trophies claimed by the club's Steve Caldwell, Laurie Carter and Neil Grant. Tor y Foel 2012

Dick Finch

However, the unofficial results show 56 starters with Hugh Aggleton getting the better of Matt Collins for once. Gareth Hurst still proving hard to beat in the O/40 and Sally Wilder putting in a second win. Congratulations to Sadie Melhuish, running as an U17 for coming home 47th.

Blaenbran Blast was another matter altogether with the mistake this time occurring on the ASCENT with leader Hugh Aggleton missing the markers for the steep climb to the ridge. He pulled 4 others in his wake and all 5 were disqualified for not adhering to the marked race route. Perhaps the runner most affected by this would be Richard Wilder of San Domenico, who is holding 9th place in the league, despite missing Tor Y Foel. Anyway, local runner Grant Lewis of Fairwater grabbed his chance, stuck to the route and was rewarded with first place in 29.52. Sally Wilder posted a 3rd win in the ladies category but this time there was no Gareth Hurst leaving O/40 honours to league stalwart Max Suff. Some chap called Blease unexpectedly won the O/50 group but was oblivious to the fact as he left straight after the race to watch Wales vanquish England at Rugger!

So, its now 6 down, one to go but even that has been difficult. Traditional season finisher, Pen Cerrig Calch, has been postponed (shame, it's an even year so it would have been sunny and dry). John Sweeting proposed Crychan as an alternative but has had to pull out of putting this on. So the first counter for the Summer League will now double up as the last counter for the Winter League. Clear?

Anyway, not to worry. The summer version of Sugar Loaf attacks the hill from from Abergavenny Leisure Centre and is fast and furious. A bit longer than the traditional Winter race but beggars cant be choosers. But the rather blurred end to the league this year has highlighted a couple of important issues.

First, course marking. Perhaps this is time for a consensus on marking these short races where its not about route choice but running fast around a specific route. Markers and marking practice should be specific, clear and consistent. Should we be content with bits of tape tied around a twig or dangle off a branch?

Second, we need more new races to freshen things up. Andy Creber is already proposing a nice route up Skirrid. I have oftenthought that a winter Waun

Fach that goes up and back from the castle along the roller coaster switchback would superb, easy to marshal and mark and have the all important pub at the finish. Either the Blaengarw Bunny or Abergwynfi need to be resurrected. And surely, it must be possible to engineer something to take in that mega-climb up the west face of Fan Gyhrych.

We need to address these issues to keep the league fresh and alive. We have a healthy situation regarding participants with most fields being over 60 and over 150 scoring so far this year and they deserve to tough, vibrant, well organised league.

Footnote: With just the one race remaining to complete the series of seven races, a couple of the 2011/12 S Wales Winter League prizewinners are already decided. But most of the trophies are still hanging on who does what on Sugar Loaf on Saturday 14 April.

Remember that the best five scores count. So while just three points separate Senior Men leaders Rhodri Evans and Richard Johnson, a good performance from Matt Collins who has done just four races should see him steal the trophy.

No such contest in a sparsely contested Senior Women's competition, with first seasoner Sally Wilder seemingly unbeatable.

Kevin Hagley has a 12 point lead over Neil Lewis in the M40s, with four-race Gareth Hurst lurking with four completed.

Congrats to Chepstow's Vanessa Lawson who seems unassailable in the F40 group.

In the M50s Richard Evans leads Simon Blease by 18 points, with Richard Wall and Pete Williams not too far adrift.

Gill Stott has done three races so far but looks to be the winner of the F50s.

In the M60s Les Williams has done every race and holds a 70 point lead over Steve Herrington who could catch Les if his fifth race is exceptional.

Rob West is way ahead in the M70 category and will complete his five if he runs in Abergavenny.

In the FU23s Naomi Prosser has run frequently and consistently and well deserves the trophy.

Altogether 184 have taken part so far, but the small number of younger women is worrying. Let's hope we get a few more in the very runner-friendly Sugar Loaf run.

*Simon Blease
South East Wales rep WFR.A.*

Blaenbran Blast 25 Feb 2012

61 lightly clad runners set off for the third running of the Blast in what is now the traditionally warm and sunny weather that this race has become blessed with.

Fairwater Runner Grant Lewis stuck to the carefully flagged route and recorded his first ever race win.

"I was in sixth place coming to the foot of the final steep climb" he said afterwards "but I could see the lads ahead were cutting straight up instead of following the marked route. I'm glad I resisted the temptation to follow."

The Blast was Race 6 of the South Wales Winter Series, and the Women's competition saw Sally Wilder move ahead in her tussle with Emma Hitchens by leading Emma Bayliss and Vanessa Lawson across the finish line.

With John Sweeting having to call off the Crychan race, the final race of the series will now be Emma Bayliss' Sugar Loaf on 14 April.

Expect this to be very keenly contested, with the destination of many trophies thereupon hanging.

Dick Finch

Clwydian Junior Series - Race 1 Ponderosa Polka 1st April

Although it was a small turnout we had a great day and the sun was shining. Some good times from the winners who I'm sure will do well in future events.

6 - 7yrs of age - 0.75km

Boys
1st Harvey Bennett - 4:13
2nd Ted Bolton - 4:29
3rd William Armstrong - 5:18
Girls

1st Amelia Bailey - 5:12
2nd Ella Heap - 5:28

8 - 9yrs of age - 1.19km

Boys
1st Luca Bennett - 4:21
2nd Morgan Jones - 5:11
Girls

1st Isabella Bailey - 4:58

10 - 11 yrs of age - 1.74km

No Boys
Girls
1st Ellie Russell - 9:14
12 - 15yrs of age - 2.05km
Boys
1st Louie Bennett - 8:44
Girls
1st Emily Williams - 15:07
2nd Rebecca Bloomfield - 20:00

Race 2 will be the **Cilcain Caper on Monday 27th August**. Run in conjunction with the Moel Famau race.

More details from Organiser Mary Gillie 01244 347560 marygillie1@yahoo.co.uk.

Statistics John Sweeting
Full Table on www.wfra.org.uk

South Wales Series - 2011 - 2012

Pos.	Name	Club	Cat.	Fan Fawr		Sugar Loaf		Blorengre		Tor y Foel		Longtown		Blaenbran B.		Total
				Time	Score	Time	Score	Time	Score	Time	Score	Time	Score	Time	Score	
1	Rhodri Evans	Ponty Rodents	M	20.46	92	45.15	85			36.51	97	27.03	90	30.18	101	464
2	Richard Johnson	Mynydd Du	M	19.59	96			30.48	87	38.39	92	28.15	86	30.08	101	461
3	Kevin Hagley	SWRR	M40	20.08	95	45.08	85	29.41	91	37.08	96	28.24	85			452
4	Neil Lewis	Hereford Couriers	M40	20.41	92			31.24	85	39.35	89	29.26	81	32.24	94	440
5	Richard Everson	SWRR	M50	21.35	87	45.37	84	31.27	85	37.25	95	28.38	84			435
6	Steve Harry	Llisbury	M40	21.55	86	47.55	78	32.07	82	39.49	88	35.36	56	32.43	93	427
7	Simon Blease	Brycheiniog	M50	22.15	84	48.07	78	33.21	78	40.07	87			33.18	91	417
8	Matt Collins	MDC	M	18.34	103	38.40	102	26.07	104			24.01	103			412
9	Sally Wilder	San Domenico	F	22.45	81	46.58	81	33.34	77			29.41	80	32.54	92	411
10	Richard Wall	Hereford Couriers	M50	23.09	79	51.06	70	33.55	76	42.12	82	35.29	56	34.52	86	392
11	Peter Williams	MDC	M50	22.41	82			32.43	80	41.43	83	35.22	57	33.25	90	392
12	Gareth Hurst	Royal Marines	M40	19.40	97			27.53	98	35.01	102	26.27	93			390
13	Richard Wilder	San Domenico	M	19.27	98	40.33	97	28.07	97			25.28	97			389
14	Johnny Lam	San Domenico	M	24.09	74	49.13	75	34.04	75			32.03	70	33.31	90	384
15	Graham Colvin	Celtic Tri	M40	23.51	75	50.25	72	37.38	62	43.02	79	32.07	70	35.51	82	379
16	Pete Ryder	Brycheiniog	M	18.57	101	42.38	92	28.14	97			27.38	88			377
17	Vanessa Lawson	Chepstow Harriers	F40	23.59	75	53.13	65	35.24	70	43.10	79	32.09	70	35.55	82	376
18	Les Williams	Rhedwyr Eryri	M60	23.56	75	52.55	66	35.24	70	44.30	75	32.10	70	36.08	81	372
19	Dominic Shields	San Domenico	M40	25.26	67	55.26	59	37.39	62	45.25	73	33.18	65	36.46	79	346
20	Andy Creber	Chepstow Harriers	M50	21.44	86	46.43	81	31.32	84	39.31	89					341
21	Sam Dizon	Unattached	M40			49.04	75	33.51	76	40.13	87			35.01	85	323
22	Naomi Prosser	Cardiff Uni H.	Fu23	27.26	57	57.15	55	37.48	61	47.22	67			40.43	66	306
23	Steve Herrington	Hereford Couriers	M60			51.17	70			43.14	79	32.04	70	35.26	84	302
24	Chris Taylor	Mercia	M50			48.56	76	32.37	80	40.15	87	35.38	56			299
25	Andy Blackmore	MDC	M40			50.35	71			41.12	84	35.36	56	34.39	86	298
26	Glyn Samsom	San Domenico	M40	22.55	80			35.01	72			35.21	57	33.47	89	298
27	Mike Harris	MDC	M50	26.11	63	56.28	57	40.15	52	46.09	70	35.59	54			297
28	Ian Gait	M	M					28.21	96	35.43	100	25.14	98			294
29	Mike Melhuish	Mynydd Du	M40	21.58	85	48.07	78	33.29	77			36.44	51			292
30	Dick Finch	MDC	M60			60.47	46	37.55	61	50.34	58			41.04	65	277
31	Chris Gurney	Mynydd Du	M40	25.25	67	54.05	63	36.24	67	44.40	75					271
32	Peter Sowerby	Brecon	M40			47.53	78			37.30	95			32.45	93	266
33	Richard Hudson	Avon Valley R.	M40					34.20	74	41.16	84			33.00	92	250
34	Martin Lucas	MDC	M50	28.35	51	61.17	44	47.19	27	49.49	60	40.32	36	43.07	59	250
35	John Sweeting	MDC	M60			53.25	64			50.44	58	36.03	54	38.58	72	248
36	Chris Gildersleve	Brycheiniog	M50			50.23	72	51.19	12	49.36	61			35.47	83	227
37	Emma Hitchins	SWRR	F40			44.57	86			39.38	89	36.27	52			227
38	Rob Brown	Chepstow	M60			61.56	43	41.43	47	51.09	56	40.35	36	48.17	42	223
39	Anne Marie Harris	Mynydd Du	F40	24.00	75	50.44	71	35.02	72							217
40	Ben Moon	MDC	M							34.29	103	25.15	98			201
41	Paul Murrin	Chepstow	M			40.48	96	26.34	103							199
42	Jonathan Barnes	Mynydd Du	Mu23			39.07	101					25.35	96			197
43	Gerry Ashton	Chepstow	M50			55.24	59			44.32	75	35.45	55			190
44	Thomas Burden	Unattached	M			43.26	90	27.44	98							188
45	Max Suff	Hereford Couriers	M40											31.10	98	188
46	Robert West	MDC	M70	27.42	55	63.29	39	41.32	48			27.07	90	48.39	40	182
47	Richard Samuel	Cardiff Harlequins	M40	19.37	98	46.08	83									180
48	Patrick Wooddissie	MDC	M40					30.01	90					28.36	84	174
49	Matt Tyler	Unattached	M	21.09	90	46.15	82									172
50	Emma Bayliss	Mynydd Du	F			48.52	76							33.31	90	166
51	Gill Stott	MDC	F50							53.16	51	37.45	47	42.43	60	157
52	Andy Stott	MDC	M50									31.53	71	34.52	86	157
53	Mark Blake	FODAC	M40			49.35	74	34.23	74							148
54	Sharon Woods	Mynydd Du	F50					35.16	71					38.09	75	146
55	Gary Gunner	Croft Ambrey	M60							44.38	75	32.11	70			144
56	Eoin Garvey	Les Croupiers	M							46.46	69			38.03	75	144
57	Chris Shaw	Unattached	M									35.32	56	35.15	84	140
58	Martin Simonds	Unattached	M50					35.17	71			33.38	64			135
59	Robert Taylor	Chepstow Harriers	M			53.57	63					31.49	71			134
60	Kevin Barnes	Hereford Couriers	M40									35.51	55	38.19	74	129
61	Roy Silver	Les Croupiers	M50	25.23	67	55.35	59									126
62	Stephen Hind	Unattached	M40									36.14	53	39.33	70	124
63	Les Pugh	MDC	M													

WFRA North Wales Series 2012

Sponsored by planetFear

Pos	Name	Club		Moel y Ci		Llantysilio		Total
				Time	Score	Time	Score	
1	Amy Jones	u/a	F	50.46	61.18	67.41	62.43	123.61
2	Lauren Jeska	Todmorden	F		0.00	53.35	91.09	91.09
3	Jenny Williamson	Eryri	F	59.05	38.44	74.19	48.95	87.39
4	Mel Price	Mercia	F		0.00	56.47	84.59	84.59
5	Andrea Rowlands	Eryri	F	44.46	77.59		0.00	77.59
6	Siobhan Evans	Eryri	F	46.09	73.80		0.00	73.80
7	Wendy Trimbel	Eryri	F	49.28	64.73		0.00	64.73
8	Victoria Whitehead	Denbigh	F	64.33	23.49	80.51	35.67	59.16
9	Ruby Bye	u/a	F	53.49	52.84		0.00	52.84
10	Keziah Paxton	Bangor	F	54.08	51.97		0.00	51.97
11	Miranda Grant	Eryri	F	55.26	48.42		0.00	48.42
1	Anna Bartlett	SyTri	F40	42.39	83.37		0.00	83.37
2	Val Swingle	Shropshire S	F40		0.00	61.07	75.78	75.78
3	Joanne Moore	Eryri	F40	50.38	61.54		0.00	61.54
4	Sandra Rowlands	Clwydian	F40	50.49	61.04		0.00	61.04
5	Ali Thomas	Eryri	F40	51.23	59.49		0.00	59.49
6	Sarah Barnwell	Eryri	F40	51.25	59.40		0.00	59.40
7	Helen Teasdale	u/a	F40	52.28	56.53		0.00	56.53
8	Louise Emery	Eryri	F40	53.18	54.25		0.00	54.25
9	Celia Mills	Mercia	F40		0.00	74.11	49.22	49.22
10	Fiona Graham	u/a	F40	55.57	47.01		0.00	47.01
1	Ellie Salisbury	Eryri	F50	52.29	56.49	71.19	55.05	111.53
2	Mary Jeal	Denbigh	F50	69.30	9.95	95.40	5.56	15.51
3	Catherine Luke	u/a	F50	68.12	13.51		0.00	13.51
4	Audrey Russell	u/a	F50		0.00	102.47	1.00	1.00
1	Margaret Oliver	Eryri	F60	68.56	11.50	85.35	26.05	37.55
1	Ifan Richards	Meirionydd	M	36.59	98.87	49.11	100.03	198.90
2	Glyn Griffin	u/a	M	41.00	87.89	52.33	93.19	181.08
3	David Parker	u/a	M	40.22	89.62	54.38	88.96	178.57
4	K Steinegger (U/23)	Ambleside	M	42.34	83.60	54.17	89.67	173.27
5	Robert Armstrong	Abergele	M	44.52	77.31	63.09	71.65	148.96
6	Richard Roberts	Eryri	M	35.10	103.84		0.00	103.84
7	Matthew Roberts	Eryri	M	35.45	102.24		0.00	102.24
8	Andres Jones	Aberystwyth	M		0.00	48.28	101.49	101.49
9	Felipe Jones	Aberystwyth	M		0.00	48.28	101.49	101.49
10	Brendon Taylor	Rosendale	M		0.00	48.59	100.44	100.44
11	Tony Bowie	Trismart	M	37.20	97.91		0.00	97.91
12	Jim Bacon	Eryri	M	37.51	96.50		0.00	96.50
13	Matthew Fortes	Eryri	M	38.43	94.13		0.00	94.13
14	Neil Hockley	WFRA	M		0.00	53.25	91.43	91.43
15	Iwan Morton	u/a	M	40.08	90.26		0.00	90.26
1	Paul Jones	Mercia	M40	37.37	97.14	50.54	96.54	193.68
2	Martin Cliffe	Eryri	M40	38.46	93.99	51.49	94.68	188.67
3	Jeremy Randell	Clwydian	M40	47.06	71.21	62.33	72.87	144.07
4	David Marham	Leighton	M40	47.20	70.57	63.57	70.02	140.59
5	Michael Kelly	Leighton	M40	49.07	65.69	63.04	71.82	137.51
6	Graham Davies	Mysteruns	M40	49.33	64.51	65.30	66.87	131.38
7	Richard Borne	u/a	M40	50.05	63.05	65.58	65.92	128.97
8	Arfon Hughes	Merionydd	M40	50.06	63.00	66.14	65.38	128.38
9	Steven Marham	Leighton	M40	50.00	63.28	66.53	64.06	127.33
10	Anthony Smith	Ambleside	M40		0.00	51.36	95.12	95.12
11	Neil Ashcroft	Ambleside	M40		0.00	53.13	91.84	91.84
1	Neil Owen	Prestatyn	M50	48.28	67.47	65.26	67.01	134.47
2	Neil Hindle	FRA	M50	51.12	59.99	65.49	66.23	126.22
3	Duncan Jones	Denbigh	M50	50.08	62.91	67.46	62.26	125.17
4	Ross Powell	Mercia	M50	50.28	62.00	70.01	57.69	119.69
5	Nich Bradley	Merionnydd	M50	55.56	47.05	72.27	52.74	99.80
6	Michael Belshaw	BAOC	M50	43.35	80.82		0.00	80.82
7	Iwan Edgar	Eryri	M50	44.41	77.81		0.00	77.81
8	Colin Lancaster	Telford	M50		0.00	60.58	76.08	76.08
9	Glyn Fletcher	Maldwyn	M50		0.00	61.23	75.24	75.24
10	Mario Foschi	Wirral	M50	46.19	73.35		0.00	73.35
11	Kean Rowlands	Clwydian	M50	47.18	70.66		0.00	70.66
1	Tony Hulme	Cheshire	M60	48.38	67.01	67.20	63.14	130.16
2	John Morris	Buckley	M60	53.21	54.12	69.31	58.71	112.82
3	David Owen	Prestatyn	M60	58.08	41.04	76.21	44.82	85.85
4	Philip Jones	Prestatyn	M60	60.37	34.24	79.54	37.60	71.85
5	Francis Uhlman	WFRA	M60	62.03	30.33	80.02	37.33	67.66
6	Martin Cortvriend	Denbigh	M60		0.00	66.18	65.24	65.24
7	Mike Blake	Eryri	M60		0.00	71.13	55.25	55.25
8	Martin Rasgauski	Hook Norton	M60		0.00	74.04	49.46	49.46
9	Michael Purcell	Deeside O	M60		0.00	76.05	45.36	45.36
10	Brian Robbins	u/a	M60	56.55	44.36		0.00	44.36
11	Michael Edwards	Wrexham	M60	67.42	14.88		0.00	14.88
1	Peter Norman	Wrexham	M70		0.00	92.20	12.33	12.33

WFRA North Wales Series 2012

Race 2

LLANTYSILIO

Saturday 31st March

Despite a new, high-profile race being held nearby and on the same day, a quality field of 81 runners set off over a still smouldering hillside for the 2012 Llantysilio Fell Race. Lauren Jeska (Todmorden Harriers) and Mel Price (Mercia) were both inside Anna Bartlett 2006 record, with Lauren taking over three minutes off the previous time to finish in 53:35. Mel Price time was 56:47. Val Swingle of Shropshire Shufflers was 3rd in 61.07 (also 1st over 40). Other category winners Over 50 Ellie Salisbury (Eryri) 71.19, Over 60 Maggie Oliver (Eryri) 85.35.

Brothers Felipe and Andres Jones (Aberystwyth) finished joint first in 48:28. Brendon Taylor (Rosendale) was in the lead until the final descent, but lost control, only arresting his fall by planting his face in a gorse bush. He crossed the line in third with spines in his eyelids in a time of 48:59!

Pete Norman (Wrexham) enjoyed the whisky being doled out by Simon Ellis on the summit of Moel y Gamelin more than most. He not only cycled to and from the race, but also picked up the vet 70 prize. The other category winners were Under 23 Karl Steinegger (Ambleside) 54.17, Over 40 Paul Jones (Mercia) 50.54, Over 50 Colin Lancaster (Telford) 60.58, Over 60 Martin Cortvriend 66.18 (who had been asked to send his birth certificate for scrutiny). No doubt some of the more unusual spot prizes will resurface at a future North Wales Series race!

Tattenhall Runners would like to thank the local community for supporting the race, in particular the two farmers, whose land the race crosses. Thanks also to the John Gambels for the use of the village hall (the Sun Inn being closed) and to the ladies of Llantysilio church for serving the runners with post-race soup.

See you all next year,

Peter Taylor (on behalf of race organiser Nick Holmes, who left the country soon after the event).

2012 WFRA

NORTH WALES SERIES

The next race in the series is

RAS Y MOELWYN

on

SATURDAY 21ST APRIL

The first race in the

SNOWDONIA

JUNIOR SERIES

will also be held at

Ras y Moelwyn

More details in Race Calendar and on www.wfrw.org.uk

Dragon's Back Race 2012

Start 07.00 Conwy Castle 3rd September

Steve (SPJ) Jones

What have I done – or perhaps I should say, what am I planning to do!

Twenty years ago I missed out on an opportunity to compete in the Dragon's Back race so I couldn't resist applying last October when I saw it was being resurrected. Just in time apparently as I managed to obtain entry number 100 out of a maximum of 100 entries with the race not due to start until Sept 3rd. I don't know of any other Eryri members who have a confirmed entry, other than Matt Fortes? Most people I talk to don't know much about the event and the route followed so here's a short summary.

Training started last November and I'm slowly starting to build up some mileage although it's not the best time of year to try and fit in long runs. I'm obviously keen to get out on the hills once the weather improves but at the moment I tend to use lower level routes - Betws-y-coed is a good option where tree cover and sheltered footpaths offer plenty of route choice. I'm also taking part in some of the 'trail marathons' which include the recent Anglesey event, a South Devon coastal marathon in February and the new Excalibur marathon in the Clwydians at the end of March.

My first challenge will be to actually make it to the start line in one piece. I'm only 2 years away from my 60th birthday and things don't seem to recover as quickly as they used to a few years ago. I guess I'll need to cut down on the number of races I do, particularly the shorter ones, and try to build up the mileage over the next few months. Suddenly September doesn't seem that far away – it's amazing how that thought can inspire you to get out for a run at this time of year! Hopefully I won't overdo things, my body will cope with the increased mileage and I'll make it to the start line in

Conwy on Sept 3rd – then it gets really serious! However, this is my best chance of completing this event – if it's not organised again for another 20 years I'll have to go round using a Zimmer!

I've lifted the following information from the event website but if you would like to know more about this event further details are at: <http://www.dragonsbackrace.com/>

The original Dragon's Back Race™ happened just once in September 1992. Ever since, the race has been whispered about with a mix of awe and trepidation and its growing reputation has reached legendary status with fell, mountain and ultra runners the World over.

Many consider the Dragon's Back Race™ to be the toughest mountain running event ever organised. Certainly, this is not a challenge for the faint hearted.

September 2012 is the 20th anniversary of the original race and once again the Dragon will be breathing fire on the mountains of Wales!

The 2012 course will follow the original route closely; starting at Conwy Castle in the north and tracing the mountainous spine of Wales southwards, over 5 days with the optimum route being approximately 200 miles with 45,000 feet of ascent, to finish at Carreg Cennen Castle. It's an incredible journey.

There have been some changes made to the original 1992 route. Namely, there is less road running and a few more summits. Although this gives the overall route a more adventurous feel, it also means that there is slightly more height gain and some tougher terrain to contend with than in 1992. Overall, the 2012 route will be marginally harder to complete than the 1992 route.

ROUTE

Day 1 - Carneddau, Glyders and Snowdon area

Straight line distance and height gain: 30 miles (48 km) / 19,700 ft (6,000m)

Day 2 - Moelwyns and Rhinogs area

Straight line distance and height gain: 27 miles (43 km) / 14,700 ft (4,500m)

Day 3 - Cadair Idris and Plynlimon area

Straight line distance and height gain: 34 miles (54 km) / 16,400 ft (5,000m)

Day 4 - Elan Valley area

Straight line distance and height gain: 37 miles (59 km) / 11,500 ft (3,500m)

Day 5 - Black Mountain area

Straight line distance and height gain: 34 miles (54 km) / 11,100 ft (3,400m)

Totals = 162 miles (260 km) / 58,730 ft (17,900m)

Of course, we all know that you don't run in straight lines in mountainous terrain and the optimum course as been calculated as exactly 200 miles (322 km) with 45,600 ft (13,900m) of ascent.

It is expected the fastest competitors will be out for approximately 8 hours each day and the slowest competitors to be out for approximately 16+ hours each day.

John's Rant

I must make this clear that this is only my opinion and in the style of "Not the 9 O'clock News" the word "allegedly" applies to everything I say. Honestly though it's true (well allegedly)

When I was a teenager back in the 1950's my uncle Jack was a good gymnast and I used to watch him with awe as he performed on the apparatus in the gym. He could do the crucifix on the rings like I have never seen since.

I spent a lot of time with him in my youth and he had an influence on my views of athletics. His favourite moan was the "Blazer Boys" and this can be defined as a person who acts as an official, who no longer competes (or never did) but gets a free ride to events and have a bigger say than the athletes, whilst competitors have to meet their own expenses. It is just as relevant today as then. Now I can see why some of these officials should be recompensed to act as officials as they do a much needed task, but this sometimes goes too far.

Jack's brother Edwin competed in the Empire (now Commonwealth) Games just after WW2. I only found out recently that Jack had been picked for the Olympics but could not afford to go, he was not allowed to claim any expenses (even travel) or get time off work with any wages so did not go. I wonder what the spectators paid back then to watch the games?

So; very good athletes are looked after now and that can only be a good thing. However I think that things have got worse in other ways. Lots of other people and organisations are making money from sport in other ways.

"Slicker, Slyer, Richer" Oh sorry that should read "Faster, Higher, Stronger"

London Olympics (not British Olympics). As a resident Brit you were invited to take part in a lottery to apply for tickets. Now; whatever the event you choose, imagine winning tickets for day 1 and the final day with no tickets allocated in between. It is simply not practical to either stay in London between event days or travel down more than once to watch. To add insult to this an advert on TV by a French energy supplier recently offered the chance of tickets if you swap to them as your energy supplier. Did they get these tickets by applying through the same lottery as we did? I think it is more likely that they simply paid more for the tickets.

London Marathon. To enter as an average runner who will not meet a qualifying time you may or may not get in. Some form of ballot has to be done to keep the numbers within reason. However before the general allocation of entries; charities are sold open entries at a very much inflated price. In the months leading up to the event the charities then offer guaranteed entry in the running mags to anyone who will raise money for their charity, with a large percentage of any sponsorship money being creamed off to pay for the inflated entry fee and the adverts in the running comics.

With regard to other sponsored athletic events, including some high profile road and fell running events:

I can never get my head round why any sponsored event should be dearer for an average runner to enter

than a smaller event where sponsors are not involved.

Cycling and multi discipline events have become eye watering expensive to enter with professional companies being set up to take profit from the events. There are even booking companies taking a fee from the money sent as entry fees before the race organisers even receive the remainder.

Some of the English fell races now can only be entered on the www: months before the event with 400 - 600 entries. Now what's that all about?

A group of us organise little races where you can run with a few others around you and still be given a hard race by the others you are racing against. There should be a feeling of the open spaces of the hills and not being jostled and elbowed at the start and then having to run the whole thing like the Exodus of a nation!

In our little races we have made money for charity from some and lost money from our own pockets when we have had poor entries. Where else can you get a keenly competed race, stand a 20% chance of a prize, even if it is a pair of socks, a garden gnome, or a bubble bath and sometimes get a free bite to eat at the end?

But be warned, if entries rise to more than a couple of hundred, I will drop any of my events or let someone else organise. I will simply start another small race where you can simply put on a pair of fell shoes, pin a number on and run your heart out and all for less than a fiver.

Oh and Uncle Jack? He never achieved anything for performance, only carrying on joking about the Blazer Boys, worked tirelessly for youth and athletic facilities in Cheshire.

His employers did eventually give him time off with pay to collect his MBE for the work he did for youth and athletics over the years. *John Linley*

DAY ON THE BARE MOUNTAIN

Talybont resident Les Williams chose a sharp, bright day to introduce his new South Wales Winter League race. Starting and finishing on Talybont dam wall, Tor y Foel offers plenty of flat running along the ancient dram road as well as the steep climb and descent to and from the bare mountain's summit.

Gareth Hurst took out the early running along the dram road and through the foothills with Ben Moon and Ian Cait in his wake. Ben nosed in front at the start of the steep bit and stayed there despite a tumble on the iciest and boggiest stretch of the descent. "My first ever win" reported Ben over hot tea and biscuits back at HQ. "I've been in Norfolk the last three months, so haven't done much mountain training lately!"

Emma Mitchell is racing sparingly so far this season, but followed up her decisive Sugar Loaf win with another good performance, and according to eye witnesses was the only combatant to run the steeper slopes. Ever reliable Vanessa Lawson took second with another reliable Alice Bedwell right on her tail. *Dick Finch*