

Clwydian Sheeptracks 2018 Race Report

The inaugural Clwydian Sheeptracks was held Sunday 25th February on a bright sunny but ever-so-chilly day. 73 runners turned up to start with 69 finishing the course (though 3 missed at least 1 checkpoint). The ground was mainly frozen hard though lower down it loosened up later on in the sun.



Champion Ram - Neil Talbott (Ambleside) 2:28:50

The two clear stars of the day were Champion Ram - Neil Talbott (Ambleside) 2:28:50 & Champion Ewe - Hayley Evans (Buckley) 3:08:53 [10th overall]. No one could get close to them.



Champion Ewe - Hayley Evans (Buckley) 3:08:53

In the men's categories Matthew Fortes (Eryri) [2nd overall 1st O40] tried to hold onto Neil the best he could, managing to hold a 3 minute gap from CP5 to CP8 before falling away

finishing 10 minutes behind. Andrew Jackson (Bowland) [3rd overall 2nd O40] steadily plugged away at Michael Corrales (Unattached) [4th] from 2 minutes behind at CP5 to pass on the final section. Shout out also to Simon Ellis (Chester Tri) [7th overall 1st O50] who was the 4th fastest runner between CP5 & CP12 passing 4 runners, Jack Agnew (Mercia) [11th overall 1st U23] with a great showing (I owe you a prize) and Chris Wilcox (Buckley) [1st O60]. Oh yes next time winners when I say beer or wine - take the whole bag of beer not just one bottle (though saying that the marshals did appreciate the left overs).



Matthew Fortes 2nd (Eryri) & Michael Corrales 4th (Unattached) on Moel Dywyll Traverse

In the ladies categories we had 11 runners overall. Sarah Harley (Unattached) [2nd lady 24th overall] had a good run coming in with the first main pack. Rowena Browne (Unattached) [3rd lady 1st O50] came in with the second main pack. O40 category went to Claire Cobley (Saddleworth) [4th lady].



Sarah Harley 2nd Lady

There was no official team award this year but we had a good spread from Mid through North Wales and Mid through North West England. Buckley nominally won with Denbigh Harriers a close second and then Saddleworth from further afield.



Andrew Jackson (Bowland) 3rd overall

One of the main elements I tried to build into the race was the route choice available between several of the checkpoints. These choices were never meant to be race winners or losers in their individual right - usually only having a couple of minutes between them. Some of these favoured the more local runners who were able to run some recce's on them in the preceding weeks. The other great feature of a traversing race over undulating terrain is that you only need a minute or two's gap to lose sight of the runner in front so this again meant some handy map work was required - though I noted there was some serious tactical play going on further back with several packs running together all the way up to CP12 before stretching their legs over the 2 final kickers of CP15 & CP16.



Unfamiliar terrain caused a few problems for some ;-)

Next year's race (can't believe I am writing that) will NOT be over the same course - though it is likely to have a few similar legs - maybe in reverse..?

The usual teething problems with a new race to learn from: gazebo taking flight into the farmers field during registration, me being delayed getting CP6 & CP7 out onto the hill (only just made CP7 before Neil came crashing down the hill towards it), CP14 going AWOL during the previous 24 hours, frozen fingers trying to write control codes..... hopefully if you come back next year we will have tidied up a few of these ;-)

Thanks as always to all the helpers, cake bakers & marshals from NEWSAR who as always did a sterling job (and managed a little actual 'no duff' job during the race without anyone noticing).