

Jack Bloor Races

May 2014

New names will be engraved on coveted trophies following the 29th annual Jack Bloor Races. Held on Ilkley Moor, this 8.4 kilometre navigational fell race pits young legs against experienced heads.

Ian Nixon of Pudsey & Bramley won the senior race to take the men's title in a time of 41 minutes 25 seconds. Preparation and perseverance rewarded Ian who had carefully recced the final descent and triumphed in his 7th attempt at the race. After his win Ian said, "I am so chuffed to have eventually won the Jack Bloor and to join such an esteemed list of previous winners".

Only five seconds separated 2nd and 3rd places with Jonny Bradshaw of Wharfedale Harriers just beating Howgill Harriers' Sam Fisher. Three of the top five places went to promising young talent with Jonny winning the Arthur Dolphin Trophy for first U23.

Representing Pudsey & Bramley, Neal Armitage and Jon Holah won the veteran over-40 and over-50 classes respectively. Local runner Nick Pearce claimed the veteran over-60 title for Ilkley Harriers.

Towards the final descent in the women's race, Wharfedale Harriers' veteran fell runner Gill Myers lay in

third place. As the leading ladies deviated from the optimum route, Gill's experience resisted the temptation to follow. Staying on her trusted course, Gill was ecstatic to take not just the veteran over-50 title but to win the women's race outright.

Leeds University student Lucy Crookes took second place and, for the third consecutive year, won the Pat Bloor Trophy for first woman U23. Running for Skyrac Rebecca Cesar De Sa came third, just 21 seconds behind Lucy. Carol Morgan of Nidd Valley won the Mike Rose Bowl for the first veteran women over-40 whilst local Ilkley Harrier Rachel Gooch took the lady's over-60 veteran title.

Although the organisers got drenched preparing for the race, all the runners enjoyed the moors in splendid evening sunshine with dramatic cloudscapes.

Throughout the rest of the field individual runners battled with rivals or simply enjoyed the challenge and atmosphere of the race. All were rewarded with a bottle of fine Dinner Ale thanks to the generous support of our senior race sponsor, the Ilkley Brewery Company.

With three runners to count Ilkley Harriers won the women's team competition followed by Wharfedale then Bingley Harriers. Pudsey & Bramley took first place in the men's team competition leading Wharfedale Harriers then Abbey Runners.

Terry Lonergan of Complete Runner, a loyal sponsor and supporter of both the Jack Bloor Memorial Fund and Races, presented the senior race trophies to the winners.

These races commemorate Jack Bloor an accomplished outdoor sportsman who did so much to encourage young people to engage in sport. All monies raised through race entries, the cake stall and individual donations help support young people to develop physical and technical skills in any recognised outdoor sport.

During the last year the Fund made twelve grants. Activities included preparing for the World Mountain Running Championships, gaining a single-pitch climbing award and an expedition to climb Mount Elbrus in the Western Caucasus. Applications are welcome at any time and further details can be found at www.jackbloor.co.uk

Earlier in the evening, over a hundred children tackled junior courses of half a mile, one mile or 1.5 miles in one of five age-based classes (U8, U10, U12, U14, U16). Many were there simply to enjoy the occasion with several trying their first fell race. Others were out to improve positions in leagues or compete in club championships.

Henry Cesar De Sa won the U8 race in just 4 minutes 25 seconds whilst Hattie Bishop took the girls' U8 title 17 seconds later. First girl in the U10 race was Anna Black and Lewis Carr of Ilkley Harriers took the boys' U10 title by 3 seconds!

Wharfedale Harriers' Sam Smith won the boys' U12 race whilst Poppy Anderson led a trio of Ilkley Harriers on the girls' U12 podium. Similarly, three Bingley Harriers took all medal positions in the girls' U14 race with Olivia Roper in first. Euan Brennan of Ilkley Harriers won the boys' U14 race.

In a time of 12 minutes 26 seconds, Wharfedale Harriers' Thomas Nelson took the boys' U16 title. Twelve seconds later, Lucy Haines took the girls' U16 title leading a 7-strong pack of club-mates from Ilkley Harriers in their distinct red and green vests.

Every junior runner received a homemade cookie as reward. The top three boys and girls in each category were presented with certificates together with handcrafted edible cookie medals.

As ever, thanks go to our sponsors and members of the Gritstone Club, Airienteers, Ilkley Harriers and all our other supporters who make this event possible.

Rob King

Race Organiser & Jack Bloor Fund Trustee