

3 Peaks Race Report for 2010

Report on the 56th Three Peaks Race held on Saturday, April 24th

This year was the 56th Three Peaks Race and the popularity of this long established event remains undiminished as indicated by the number of entries and over seven hundred starters on the day. Although the course has changed over the years, both in terms of the route and the underfoot conditions it is still considered a tough event with the three peaks offering challenging climbs (and descents) and the paths allowing fast running not to mention the small matter of the distance..... 24 miles. The event organisation has also evolved with safety, as always, paramount but in recent years the change from the traditional date of the last Sunday in April, to Saturday combined with the enhanced race facilities have been well received to provide a very convivial post race social atmosphere with plenty of undercover area with bar and food.

After a few years of good days, the forecast a week before this year's race was not too good, however as the day approached the weather pattern changed to give a very warm and sunny day, with very hard dry ground, which augured well for a fast race.

Ex President, George Kirby addressed the massed competitors at the start and announced, with sadness, the recent deaths of Stan Bradshaw, aged 97 and Peter Dugdale, aged 76. Stan was one of a small group of Clayton-le-Moors Harriers who organised the first Three Peaks Race in 1954. On that occasion Stan finished second behind Fred Bagley of Preston Harriers and ahead of his team-mate Alf Case (who subsequently became the first FRA chairman). Stan continued to take part in the race until 1980 when he recorded his 23rd finish. He was a past president and a life vice president of the 3 Peaks Race Association. Stan donated our trophy for the First Veteran over 40. Former winner of the Three Peaks Race, Peter Dugdale, passed away on January 22nd 2010 aged 76. As a member of the Clayton-le-Moors team Peter won the 1957 race when he finished ahead of some famous names in the history of fell running, including Alan and Ken Heaton, Stan Bradshaw, Jack Bloor and Eric Beard. Peter's grandson, Jack Dugdale, took part in this year's race.

The race itself was won by Morgan Donnelly with Anna Lupton winning the ladies race and also finishing a very creditable 22nd overall.

With seconds separating the leading men on Pen Y Ghent, the ladies race was led by Victoria Wilkinson over two minutes ahead of Anna. The long run off Pen Y Ghent and across to Ribbleshead can be quite searching and it was on this stretch that Morgan started to gain a lead on second man and veteran John Brown (MV40) with Pete Vale and Chris Birchall a couple of minutes behind. At this stage Victoria maintained a comfortable lead on Anna with Jo Waites and veteran Lyn Clough (FV40) just starting to lose contact.

By the summit of Whernside the men's leading positions remained unchanged as did the first two ladies, however, Lyn made up ground to have a slight advantage over Jo. Jackie Winn and Adrian Pickles were having a close fought battle in the MV50's category with Jackie just over a minute ahead of Adrian with Brian Horrocks a few minutes adrift. Kieran Carr had, what appeared to be, a comfortable four minute lead on Robin Britton in the MV60's category with Sandy Presly and Pete Braham close together but a few minutes

behind. In the Ladies FV50's the ever youthful Wendy Dodds had developed a comfortable lead over Sue Haslam with Amanda Dean and Val Kerr a further few minutes behind.

With a fast descent to Hill Inn checkpoint and a sharp climb to achieve the summit of Ingleborough, potential changes to the positions could happen. Sure enough, Anna overhauled Victoria to have about a minute's advantage on the final summit and extended this lead at the finish. The first four men's positions remained the same at the summit and right on to the finish. Seconds separated Jackie and Adrian (MV50's), so the run off to the finish was going to be close..... Adrian finished first with a six seconds to spare. Graham Schofield turned the tables on Brian Horrocks (MV50's) from Whernside onwards to have a three minute advantage at the finish.

On the descent of Ingleborough to the finish, Robin Britton stormed through to overtake Kieran to win the MV60's category. Wendy maintained her lead to the finish (FV50), Sue Haslam, Val Kerr and Amanda Dean were all within five minutes of each other but well behind Wendy. Lyn Clough easily won the FV40's category, with Carol Evans and Ali Raw within three minutes of each other to finish second and third in this category.

Congratulations to all who took part and especially the overall and category winners. Thanks also to our sponsors for their cooperation and support in making the event successful and not forgetting all those who give up their time to help on the day with marshalling and administrative duties for the event.

David Weatherhead