

Look How Caer We've Come- Border League 1, Caernarfon, 24th October 2010

The 2010-11 Border League season kicked off with what is for us the furthest away fixture, Eryri's beautiful but tough Caernarfon 10k course. The Deestridders, in Division 2 but aspiring to promotion, fielded full teams in sunny and windless conditions. This made the first 4.5k on the coast faster than usual, however the three hills waiting inland were as long and tough as ever.

Jay Jennions, suffering with a cold, wasn't feeling her best and nor was Martin Witty so the pair decided to run together. Martin led after a brutal first mile (6 minutes) but then found himself paying the price as the course moved inland and uphill. Jay worked with packs of male runners to attain a strong 39.41 and third lady, whilst Martin was unlucky to be given an official time of 40.05 (his actual time being an excellent 39.58).

Nick Chadwick, still getting back into speed training after a PB in the Loch Ness Marathon three weeks ago, did not disappoint with a terrific 42.57. Fred Aird has struggled with injury in recent times but still managed a very creditable 43.16.

Mike O'Brien certainly wins a prize for dedication as he travelled over 100 miles from Manchester, as does Sid Bailey. Mike is consistently excellent, with 44.09 today. Sid meanwhile anchored the men with a brave 56.19. Sid's great rival Kev Burns (the pair have enjoyed numerous close battles over the years) got the upper hand today with a very good 49.09.

Peter Rooney, who finds it hard to fit in much time for training with a busy work/family life, managed to defy the odds with an outstanding 45.35. Phil Taylor then powered in with a near best 46.21, an incredible performance considering he hasn't regained his sharpness post-marathon. The other Mike, Mr Norris, had a tremendous run with what could be a course best of 52.30.

Lorna Royle is showing no signs of slowing down now she's a V40 (well so's the virtually unbeatable Marilyn Kitching of Tattenhall, who won the race yet again!) as she broke 48 minutes with a fabulous new PB of 47.59 and came third in the category. Becki Hall, in her Border League debut, took one for the team as she ran the course feeling unwell and with sore shins, making it home with a courageous 51.57. Jane Evans and Val Blair duelled gamely and both were unlucky to just miss officially breaking the hour with nevertheless good runs of 1 hour and 2 seconds and 1 hour 45 seconds respectively- Val beating her Flintshire time on a tougher course. The ladies can take confidence from the fact that they currently lead the race for the Improvers' trophy. Thanks to Eryri and all the helpers including Ruth who kindly did the club's numbers, and also to the Black Boy Inn for squeezing in 8 of us for an enjoyable meal at no notice.

Next race is on 14th November at the much nearer (to us anyway), much flatter Capenhurst. Watch out for those ostriches though!