

Coniston Marathon Trail Race Sunday 3 July 2011 Report by Kay Farrow of Beverley AC



A small group from Beverley Athletic Club travelled to the Lake District for the Coniston Marathon Trail Race and Mini Marathon. Despite a tough course and hot conditions they all thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

Advertised as the most picturesque marathon in the UK, the route followed a circuit round Coniston Water and included idyllic beauty spots such as Tarn Hows and the elevated Beacon Tarn. There were panoramic

views of the lake and surrounding peaks of the Old Man, Swirl How, Wetherlam and Dow Crag.

Commenting on the stunning scenery, experienced marathon athlete Pete Watkinson said "This marathon surpasses all others I've done." He finished in 73rd place in 4:03:44 and is already looking forward to next year's event.

Andy Johnson was the first Beverley runner to finish. He completed the course in 3:48:07 in 35th place and found the race "harder than expected from the write up" suggesting that pre-race information did not do justice to the challenging course.

It was a very hot day but the excellent race organisation provided plenty of water and Kendal mint cake at the feed stations to keep the runners going. There was also a river crossing at the twenty mile point where runners were up to their knees in refreshing cold water.



Pete McNally narrowly missed the last sweep up at the river crossing and did not finish officially. He completed 21 miles of the route and thoroughly enjoyed it. Considering that he had spent the week leading up to the race walking in the Lake District he did very well.

In contrast to Pete McNally's energetic week leading up to the event, Brian Richardson had been taking it easy recently to recover from an injury. He was surprised at being able to run so much of the course and finished in a very respectable time of 5:37:24.

Lucy Stamford enjoys the challenge and the atmosphere of off-road marathons. She said "It was pretty tough underfoot but it was an absolutely glorious day and I enjoyed every second."

There were 383 finishers and the race was won by Alex Brooks from London in 3:01:26. The first lady to finish was Helen Woodley of Ulverston in 3:45:37.



While their friends were tackling the trail marathon Andy Tate, Jayne Dale and Amanda Ritchie took part in the Mini Marathon. The 14km route covered the first 10km of the marathon course and offered an alternative for those not wanting to run the marathon. Jayne was the first L50 to finish and Amanda was fourth in the L40 category.

There were 107 finishers in the mini marathon and the race was won by David Miller of Serpentine Running Club in 1:01:24. The first lady was Sara Ridehalgh of Accrington Road Runners in 1:07:48.

Beverley AC finishing times:

Marathon:

Andy Johnson 3:48:07; Pete Watkinson 4:03:44; Lucy Stamford 4:16:58; Helen Storr 5:00:21; Brian Richardson 5:37:24.

Mini marathon

Jayne Dale 1:31:53; Andy Tate 1:31:53; Amanda Ritchie 1:32:06; Margaret Richardson 2:40:27.