

*Jamie Sircom's*

# **Newsround**

*Review of the Year 2019*

It's time once again to look back over the past the 12 months in the life of Halesowen Athletics Club. And even though there's somewhat of a clammer at the moment for reviews of the decade, that will not be happening here at the Newsround newsdesk.

If you want to review the past 10 years, talk to the likes of Bill Nock, Paul Allen and Keith Perry. Although most of their stories will pre-date 2010 ....

## **JANUARY - MARCH**

The year started with gold medals for Owen Jinks (U15 Boys), Lily Higgins (U20 Women), Sam Morton (W50), Andy Nock (M60) plus the U15 Boys and the U17 Girls teams at the Worcestershire County Cross Country Championships at Newbold Revel.

After a two year absence from the top flight, our men's senior team clinched promotion back to Division One of the Birmingham Men's Cross Country League.

Halesowen finished in the third and final promotion place, a convincing 210 points ahead of nearest rivals Bromsgrove and Redditch

Kristian Bayley led the way, finishing in first place in the Junior Men's Series and fifteenth overall.

A mean team of thirteen took on the English National Cross Country Championships in Harewood House in Leeds with the men's team finishing 67th out of the 144 teams taking part.

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*Simone Jones with her second place female trophy at the Fradley 10k*

Simone Jones finished second female in the Fradley 10k in a blistering time of 42:05 and Andy Yapp ran 3:07:23 at the Tokyo Marathon.

In the Midland Road Relays at Sutton Park, our men's team were 21st and women's team 16th in the Midland Spring Road Relays at Sutton Park and there were bronze medals for Emily Amos (U13 Girls) and Amelia Hartshorn (U15 Girls) in the junior Midland Championship 5k races.

Indoor highlights saw Josie Oliarnyk winning the Long Jump at the Elan Meeting in Bratislava, Katrina Simpson finishing third in the 400 metres at the Welsh Championships in Cardiff and James Robinson winning the British Masters M40 Pole

Vault before going on to finish fourth in the World Masters Championship in Toruń in Poland with an indoor best of 4.15m.

## **APRIL - JUNE**

April began with an impressive showing from the men's team finishing 49th in the National Road Relays at Sutton Park.

Dave Lewis ran a four minute PB at the London Marathon in 2:55:12 and he was joined on the streets of the capital by Russ Cadwallader (3:01:12), Simon Duck (3:20:38) and Martin Maclauchlin (3:30:54).

Jackie Bradshaw ran the Manchester Marathon in 3:18:28, coming within 22 seconds of her PB.

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*Adam Cross going sub-35 at the DK 10k PHOTO: Brian Smith*

The DK 10k saw Adam Cross going sub 35 for the first time in finishing in tenth place in 34:49.

Simone Jones was third lady at the Worcester Pitchcroft 10k, Lucy Cambridge won silver in the Midland Masters 10 mile Championships at Burton and our women's W45 team were fourth in the British Masters Road Relays at Sutton Park.

Josie Oliarnyk and Lily Higgins came back with medals from the England Athletics Under 23 and Under 20 Championships at Bedford.

Josie jumped 6.24m to win silver in the Under 20 Long Jump and Lily won bronze in the 3000m Steeplechase in 11:41.84.

There was a huge haul of 30 medals for the club at the Worcestershire County Track and Field Championships at Stourport.

Our gold medallists were Jabez Berry (U15B Shot), Cerys Brook (U13G Long Jump), Lucy Cambridge (5000m Women Vets), Betsy Cooper (U15G Shot and Discus), Adam Cross (5000m Male Vets), Phillipa Harlow (U13G Discus), Elise Lambert (U17W Javelin), Falan Malone-Priest (U17W 3000m), Iris Oliarnyk (U17W 100m Hurdles and U20W Shot), Josie Oliarnyk (U20W 200m and Long Jump) and Clare Thurston (400m Women Vets).

Katrina Simpson (U20W 800m) and Josie Oliarnyk (U20W Long Jump) won golds in the Midland Counties Championships, and joining the gold rush at the Midland Masters Championships were James Robinson (M40 Pole Vault and Shot) and Mel Hepke (W45 Pole Vault).

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Kristian Bayley won the Redditch 12k multi-terrain race held in monsoon conditions at Arrow Valley, Simone Jones was first female in the Blakedown Bolt and Peter Dear and Lily Higgins were first male and female for the second year running at the Harlequins OC June Jaunter 5k fell race.

And we also saw a number of our athletes switch from two legs to two wheels to take part in the Velo Birmingham 100 mile cycle ride with marathon master Dave Lewis first home in 6:14:20.

Roger Mallard and Sam Morton were next both finishing in 6:17:35, closely followed by Alex Morgan and Dave Turvey in 6:17:39.

**JULY - SEPTEMBER**

Josie Oliarnyk once again donned the GB vest in the women's long jump in the European Under 20 Championships at Borås in Sweden.

After narrowly squeezing through qualifying in tenth place with a jump of 6.12m, Josie returned the following day to improve to 6.14m to finish in seventh place.

Our team in the Heart of England League had a successful season, finishing in first place in all three meetings and clinching promotion to Division Two.

In the UKYDL, the Lower Age Group athletes reached the promotion play-off final but it was a more difficult season in the Midland League, as we were relegated to Division 4.

There was a new Midland Vets League record in the pole vault for James Robinson, who jumped 3.85m in the meeting at Worcester.

Sam Mannings went sub-2 minutes for the 800m, running 1:58.66 at the Warwickshire Open meeting in Leamington.

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*Getting Ready to Rhumble! Hagg Farm crew 2019!*

The summer training weekend at Hagg Farm in Derbyshire was a tremendous success with James Hoults's entertaining repertoire of PJ and Duncan and Phil Collins living long in the memory!

Kristian Bayley fought off the challenge of Richard White to win the overall Worcestershire Midweek Series title.

Kristian also retained the Seth Somers Trophy winning the club 5000m Championship race in 16:37.6.

Lily Higgins was first female in 19:01.6 and the 3000m race for junior athletes was won by Lucas Wolf-Pudne in 10:20.4 and Emily Amos in 12:35.1.

Rosemary Chrimes won three golds (W85 Discus, Shot and Hammer) in the British Masters Championships and there was also gold for Julie Bellfield in the W50 5000m walk.

The autumn Midland Road Relays saw the senior men's team finish 38<sup>th</sup> and the women's team 39<sup>th</sup>, with pride of place going to the men's Vets team in fourth and the Under 15 Girls team who were fifth.

Julie Bellfield won bronze in the 10k walk at the European Masters Championships in Venice and Mark Hadley romped home in 38<sup>th</sup> in 1:15:19 at the Lake Vyrnwy Half.

Matt Allen ran 3:28:38 at the Berlin Marathon, Jonny Lewis made an impressive debut in the Rutland Marathon finishing tenth in 3:16:40 and the team of Alex Morgan and Chris Royal were triumphant in the Halesowen Beer Mile Relay!

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**OCTOBER - DECEMBER**

Simon Duck and Jackie Bradshaw both broke three and a half hours at the Chester Marathon, with Simon running 3:25:33 and Jackie 3:28:48.

The start of the cross country season saw our Under 15 Girls team take gold in the Midland Cross Country Relays at the Aldersley Stadium.

Heavy rain and flooding caused the cancellation of the opening WMYACCL fixture and there were numerous last minute venue switches in both the Birmingham League and Midland Women's League, keeping team captains on their toes!

Another casualty was the Midland 7 and 5 mile cross country race which was due to be held at the club. The rising river levels of the Illey Brook on the Thursday before the event left no other option than to postpone the race.

A week later the usual highly serious and athletics focused winter training weekend that this club is known for took place at Ty Careg.



*Captain Peter Dear and the trophy winning Midland 7 men's team*

However, the training miles that were actually run in the Black Mountains paid off to the full the following Saturday when the rearranged Midland 7 and 5 mile cross-country race was held at Bulwell Hall Park in Nottingham.

The five mile race saw Lily Higgins win individual bronze and the ladies team win the bronze medal by a single point.

This was followed by a supreme performance by the men's team in the seven mile race.

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Skilled packing saw all of Halesowen's scoring six finish in the top 20 and that was enough to finish 10 points clear of the field and claim the Midland 7 trophy.

Our top four male athletes also helped Worcestershire win the Inter-Counties title and Lily Higgins and Sarah Thompson were part of the bronze medal Worcestershire team in the Inter-Counties Women's race.

2019 was rounded off with Simone Jones and Sarah Thompson racing to sub-40 minute PBs at the Telford 10k and with the traditional Boxing Day handicap race, which was won by Johnny Lewis.

And at the December monthly meeting there was a special presentation to Josie Oliarnyk who was awarded the Worcestershire County Athletics Association Founder's Award for Outstanding Performance for her results in the Long Jump throughout the 2019 season.

### **PARKRUN**

Over 80 athletes from the club tackled over 500 parkruns at more than 90 different courses throughout the year.

Kristian Bayley (16:41) and Lily Higgins (19:05) recorded the quickest times for the 5k Saturday events whilst Alex Taylor and George Allen (7:44) and Charlie Ann-Baird (7:45) were fastest over the 2k Sunday junior parkruns.

Our most prolific parkrunners were Lucy Cambridge, Nia Brook and Robin Lambe.

Lucy ran a total of 42 parkruns whilst Nia ran 35 junior events.

But this was eclipsed by Robin Lambe who completed 33 5k and 19 2k junior events over the course of 2019. Robin also knocked over three minutes off his PB to go sub-30 for 5k for the first time.

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## **ATHLETES OF THE MONTH**

JANUARY – JOSIE OLIARNYK who won the women's long jump in the Elán International Meeting in Bratislava with a jump of 6.16m.

FEBRUARY – LILY HIGGINS for finishing second overall and first junior in the Midland Women's League Cross Country race at Gloucester.

MARCH – JAMES ROBINSON for finishing fourth in the pole vault at the World Masters Champs in Poland.

APRIL – DAVE LEWIS for running 2:55:12 for a four minute PB at the London Marathon.

MAY – The WOMEN'S VETS ROAD RELAYS TEAM for finishing fourth at the National Road Relays.

JUNE – JOSIE OLIARNYK for finishing second in the long jump in the Under 20 England Track and Field Championships.

JULY – JAMES ROBINSON for setting a Midland Vets League Pole Vault record.

AUGUST – SAM MANNINGS for a sub-2 minute 800m (1:58:66) at Leamington.

SEPTEMBER – AMELIA HARTSHORN for her performance in the Midland Road Relays at Sutton Park.

OCTOBER – The winning UNDER 15 GIRLS MIDLAND CROSS COUNTRY RELAY TEAM.

NOVEMBER – The gold medal winning MIDLAND 7 MILE CROSS COUNTRY MEN'S TEAM.

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**SOCIAL HIGHLIGHTS**

Although it may be hard to believe, there was plenty of non-athletic activity to pass the time between races (!)



*A hard day's night for Sam Love and the girls in Liverpool!*

The year's social highlights saw the ladies flock on mass to Liverpool for Sam Love's birthday celebrations, plus there were trips to the River Rooms, Birmingham Bierkeller and Flight Club, the summer end of season drinks in Stourbridge, Steve Horton's official unofficial fireworks party, a comedy night at the Cornbow Hall as well as

numerous trips to the King Edward and the odd late night curry or two!

Not to mention the summer training weekend at Hagg Farm and the winter training weekend at Ty Carreg.

At the club, there was Andy Nock's Whisky Night, presentation evenings, quizzes, Christmas parties and a homecoming gig for Adam Cross and the Urban Players following a summer of gigging across the Midlands!

And there's plenty more to come in 2020 with the date already set for the Hagg Farm Summer Training Weekend.

The date for your diary is Friday June 12<sup>th</sup> – Sunday June 14<sup>th</sup> and if you are interested in going then get in touch with Matt Allen.

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**2020 VISION!**

Who knows what's in store over the next 12 months, let alone the next decade?? There'll almost certainly be plenty of chances to get involved with the club on cross-country, track and road, as well as the usual mix of Tuesday night efforts, Wednesday night and Sunday morning long runs as well as the various junior track sessions and Saturday Club.

Thanks for all their hard work over the past year go to all the volunteers, coaches, team captains and committee members who truly make the club the special place it is.

Don't forget the monthly meetings on the first Wednesday of each month in which you can hear reports from all our team managers and put forward nominations for the Athlete of the Month and the slightly less coveted flat mackerel award!

You can keep up to date with all the latest happenings via the various WhatsApp groups and the club Facebook group.

The latest news can also be found on our Twitter feed @HACCathletics and on the club website.

Happy New Year and Up Owen!

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