

Halesowen Athletics Club

Newsround

The 100th year of Halesowen Athletics Club began with a typically varied month of activities that the club has become known for.

Our athletes were busy competing in cross country, indoor and road competitions but there was still time to gather in Halesowen Town Centre to launch our centenary year and take Woodgate Valley parkrun by storm with our club volunteer takeover.

CLUB CENTENARY LAUNCH



The club 2022 centenary year was launched with a special event in Halesowen Town Centre honouring club founder Jack Price.

Over 40 club members gathered in Halesowen Town Centre near the site of the club's original headquarters on Hagley Street.

Speaking at the launch, chair Steven Millington said: "Halesowen is a strong, vibrant club which has over the past 100 years, given thousands of people the opportunity to train and compete as athletes, regardless of age or ability.

Halesowen Athletics Club

Newsround

“We all owe a massive thanks to Jack Price for founding the club which has become a massive part of our lives and led us to form friendship which have lasted for many years.”

Following the launch, the club received a letter from James Morris, the MP for Halesowen and Rowley Regis.

Mr Morris wrote: “I wanted to wish everyone at the club my warmest wishes for the centenary year.

“The club has a long and distinguished history and played an important part in the local community.

“I am sure it will continue to do so for many years to come.”

PARKRUN TAKEOVER

A more recent addition to the local running scene than HACC is Woodgate Valley Country Park parkrun, which is a mere infant at just five months old.



The Halesowen takeover crew at Woodgate Valley parkrun!

marshals and runners around the course.

Plenty of Halesowen runners have taken on the challenging 5k course since last August, and on January 22, the parkrun hosted a Halesowen club takeover event.

The club provided the majority of the volunteers for the morning, and the gloomy skies were brightened by old gold clad

Halesowen Athletics Club

Newsround

On the finish field, we had Jenny and Bettina looking after the timing, Rob taking charge of the funnel, Caroline number checking and Peter, Matt, Milly, Emma and Kathryn looking after the finish tokens and barcode scanning.

Out on the course were Alan, Jo, Nigel, Sam and Vicci marshalling with Simone looking after the furthest 2k turnaround point.

Steve took the photos and Les, Barrie and Vanessa were the tailwalkers, ensuring all of the 201 parkrunners taking part got back safely.

Eight Halesowen athletes took part in the run, with Roger Mallard first back for the club in tenth place in 20:02 and Sarah Thompson finishing first female in thirteenth place in 20:13.

Thanks go to everyone who helped contribute to the biggest club takeover event and the largest number of volunteers ever seen at Woodgate Valley.

MIDLAND COUNTIES XC

Championship cross country racing returned after a two year break as the Midland Counties Championships were held at Berry Hill Park in Mansfield.

The senior men's team finished seventeenth with Andy Yapp (100th), Richard White (117th) and Barry Gardner (161st) quickest around the seven mile course.

Our senior women ran just under five miles for their race and finished seventh, with Simone Jones (35th), Lily Higgins (40th) and Sarah Thompson (41st) leading the way.

A number of junior athletes also lined up at Berry Hill Park, with Ffion Collins getting the best finishing position of the day in crossing the line in seventh place in the Under 13 Girls race.

But it was our veteran athletes who came back with the honours, as Paul Allen won M75 gold, Mel Hepke W50 silver and Barry Gardner M50 bronze.

Halesowen Athletics Club

Newsround

BIRMINGHAM LEAGUE XC

In what proved to be one of the toughest cross country courses in recent years, our men's team conquered the hills of Burton Dassett to stay in contention for promotion from Division Two of the Birmingham League.

Max Parker was the top points scorer finishing fifth, and there were top 20 finishes for Andy Butler in fifteenth, Joe Donkin in sixteenth and Mateusz Sliwinski in eighteenth.

James Hoult in 83rd and Richard White in 99th completed the scoring six.

The team finished fifth on the day, which put the team in the third and final promotion berth in Division Two.

Halesowen are on 599 points, 38 points behind Royal Sutton Coldfield in second but 45 points ahead of Bromsgrove and Redditch in fourth.

The B team finished eighth out of the twelve qualifying teams.

The final, crucial meeting of the season is on Saturday 19th February at Ipsley Meadows in Bromsgrove.

Keep the date free in the diary and be sure to respond to captain Peter Dear's emails and WhatsApp messages so we can get Halesowen back to their rightful place in Division One next season!

MIDLAND LEAGUE XC

Our women's team also faced the tough Burton Dassett course in their Midland League Division One fixture.

Simone Jones was 23rd, Lily Higgins 26th and Sarah Thompson 63rd.

The final Midland League fixture is at Newbold Comyn in Leamington on Saturday 19th February.

Halesowen Athletics Club

Newsround

JUNIOR XC ROUND-UP

Walsall Arboretum hosted the latest WMYACCL meeting.

In the Under 13 Girls race, Olive Thomas was second and Ffion Collins fourth.

Also securing a top ten finish was Alex Taylor, who was ninth in the Under 15 Boys race.

Halesowen stand eleventh in the overall team standings with the final meeting of the season at Nuneaton on Sunday 20th February.

In the West Midlands School Championships at Warley Woods, Jessica Dale finished second (U15G) and Alex Taylor fourth (U15B) in their respective races,

There were medals too at the Hereford and Worcester School Champs at Holt Heath.

Ffion Collins won a silver medal in the Under 15 Girls race and Amelia Hartshorn won bronze in the Under 20 Women's race.

WORCESTERSHIRE XC UPDATE

The Worcestershire County Championship race at Newbold Revel on January 8th was cancelled following a COVID outbreak at the prison officer training college on site.

The championships will NOT be rearranged and various alternative qualifying criteria have been set for those wish to put themselves forward for the Worcestershire team at the Inter Counties Championships at Prestwold Hall on March 12.

Details on this have been circulated via Facebook and the HACCentral WhatsApp group but should you need more info, then please get in touch with Keith Perry.

Halesowen Athletics Club

Newsround

NEWS (and WEDDINGS!) IN BRIEF

Sophie Cook opened her pole vault indoor season with a leap of 4.31m to win the Loughborough Indoor Open and a week later, Sophie cleared 4.25m to take the honours at the Manchester World Indoor Tour meeting.

Joseph Rogers, representing the University of Wyoming, won the 800m in 1:53:54 at the Potts Invitational Indoor Meeting at Boulder, Colorado.

In the various 60m races at the Loughborough Indoor Open, Edward Fussi ran 7.16, Edward Charles ran 7.52 and Maddy Down won her heat in 8.56 seconds.



Marianne and Jonny celebrating their big day!

Edward Fussi also ran 7.09 at the London Indoor Games at Lee Valley and 7.22 at the Welsh Indoor Championships in Cardiff.

Abi Saker finished third lady in 41:29 at the Woodcote 10k in Oxfordshire and Jamie Sircom was 99th in the Last Friday of the Month 5k in Hyde Park in London in 23:01.

And in non-takeover parkrun news, Simone Jones was first female at Walsall Arboretum event #444, Marc

Turner was first finisher at Evesham event #274, Ashleigh Kennedy was first female at Bromsgrove junior event #308 and Isla Westwood was first female at Stevens Park, Wollescote event #107.

Finally, congratulations to Jonny Lewis who decided to forgo the delights of the Midland Cross Country Championships in favour of marrying Marianne Morgan.

Everyone at the club sends their best wishes to the happy couple!

Halesowen Athletics Club

Newsround

EVENTS UPDATE

The first in a busy programme of centenary year events is set for Saturday March 5th, when there will be a special club dinner at a pub in Neen Sollars, homeland of club founder Jack Price.

More details on this will follow in the days to come.

And Friday June 10th to Sunday June 12th are the dates set for the club summer training weekend at Hagg Farm.

The word "training" is used in the loosest sense, so if you are interested in taking part in a relaxed, social and enjoyable weekend in the beautiful surrounds of the Peak District, then get in touch with Matt Allen.

FEBRUARY HIGHLIGHTS

The crucial final cross country League races and the English National Cross Country Championships in London are the top attractions in February.

As usual, there'll be updates across the club Facebook page and HACCentral WhatsApp group.

Up Owen!

JAMIE SIRCOM

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