

Halesowen Athletics Club

Newsround

A memorably muddy start to the cross country season with the National Relays and opening League fixtures a mere muddy puddle compared to the swamp at the Midland 7!

As well as news from our road and indoor runners and race walkers, there's a well-deserved award for Adrian Dale and a couple of special discounts just in time in Christmas!

MIDLAND 7/5 XC

The club were proud to stage the Midland 7 / 5 mile race, one of the oldest events in the country.



James Thomas in full mudlark mode on his way to a bronze medal at the Midland 7

Held on club life president's Stuart Geggie's farm in Romsley, the Bill Nock designed course very much embodied the old school spirit of cross country.

Mud, river crossings, 1100 feet of climbing and even more mud were the order of the days, with post-race reviews ranging from brilliant to brutal!

65 athletes lined up for the men's 7 mile race with Milan Champion of Notts AC taking the win in an incredible time of 39:25.

First 'Owen runner back was James Thomas who took individual bronze in 43:00.

Joe Donkin was ninth and was followed by a trio of guest runners – James Hoults in 18th, Peter Dear in 21st and Andy Yapp in 22nd.

Completing our scoring team were David Lewis (26th), Phil Scarr (28th), Roger Mallard (31st) and Carl Follows (34th).

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Course creator Bill Nock was 37th, James Parker 38th, Alex Morgan 40th and Andy Carruthers 43rd.

Andy Nock in 51st and Adrian Low in 63rd brought the host club home.

The 'Owen mens' efforts were good enough to win team silver maintaining the club's long history of success in the event.

A smaller field of 22 tackled the women's 5 mile event, which was won by Molly Browne from Warley Woods Pacers.

Phoebe Dodd came fourth, Sally Spencer fourteenth and Joanne Congerton twentieth.

Bill Nock said: "There was good support from Halesowen athletes and spectators alike. Stu Geggie was very generous with his time, tractor and attention to detail to provide us with a memorable event. What a bloke."

"Thank you to Ali, Pete and Andy for course construction, Maurice on registration and our team of marshals around the course; Mark H, Ali, Jacko, Bettina, Mick D, Rich, Steve H, Caroline, Keith, Ollie D, Sam M, Dave T and Paul.

"Ollie W, Phil, Alex, Archie, Stu G, Andy N, Andy Y, Pete, James T and Mick R (Notts) gratefully lent a hand to the marshals in dismantling the course in super fast time.

"Thanks also to photographer Stuart T for the piccies.

"It was a bonus that no one required first aid and was nice to see so many in the clubhouse afterwards, including runners from Sparkhill and Notts. Thank you Leon for having faith and opening early."

NATIONAL XC RELAYS

Two Halesowen senior men's teams battled some of the wettest and muddiest conditions seen in recent years at the National Cross Country Relays at Berry Hill Park in Mansfield.

The B team was led out by Carl Fellows who completed the 2.9 mile course in 22:10 to put the club in 159th place.

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Steve Horton gained a place with a run of 26:54 before Ollie Dodd picked his way through the field up to 149th in 22:48.



The Halesowen men's team at the National XC Relays in Mansfield

whose excellent time of 17:58 brought 'Owen home in 79th.

A great effort all round in appalling conditions and never was the post-run carvery roast dinner more deserved!

James Hoult then ran a storming anchor leg of 19:46 to cross the line in 129th place out of a total of 177 teams.

The A team got off to a solid start with Rich White's opening leg of 18:56 putting the team in 123rd place.

Comeback kid Ben Williets, in his first competitive run for the club for seven years, ran 19:02 to take the team up to 105th, before captain Peter Dear improved our position to 94th in 18:23.

Sealing a comfortable top half finish was James Thomas,

BIRMINGHAM LEAGUE MEN'S XC

The men's team opened their campaign to return to the top division of the Birmingham League in Cheltenham, with a mix of seasoned regulars and new faces battling for vital promotion points.

Five of our A team scoring six finished inside the top 50.

James Thomas was eighth, Peter Dear eighteenth, Joe Donkin 21st, Rich White 33rd and Andy Butler 48th.

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Joe Clarke was our first B team runner in 93rd place.

21 Halesowen athletes took part in total and our strength in depth paid off with 'Owen finishing in a strong second place, nine points ahead of Solihull & Small Heath in third.

MIDLAND LEAGUE WOMEN'S XC

Halesowen's women's team were at Aldridge Airport in the Midland League as they also looked to make a strong start to their bid for a top flight return.

And just like the men, five of our ladies made the top 50.



Awesome at Aldridge! The ladies Midland League XC team

Phoebe Dodd was fifth with Louise Collins finishing ninth as well as second Masters athlete.

Sarah Gill was 25th, Michelle Dale 28th and Ryley Malone-Priest 47th and second Junior runner.

Sally Spencer was 65th and the combined efforts of our team placed them second in the overall team standings

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YOUNG ATHLETES ROUND-UP

The second round of the WMYACCL at Newbold Revel in Warwickshire saw Halesowen finish in a solid mid-table team position of tenth place.

The Under 15 Girls placed second in their team competition with Ffion Collins second, Lucy Hellingsworth third, Olive Thomas seventh and Lucy Tebbett ninth.

Also clinching top 20 finishes were Alex Taylor (U17M, 15th) and Jessica Dale (U17W, 16th).

Ffion and Lucy now lie second and third respectively in the U15 Girls season standings.

Meanwhile, there was a Halesowen 1-2 in the Wyre Forest School Sport Partnership cross country race, with Grace Follows finishing first and Peggy Thomas following in second.

BRITISH VETS ROAD RELAYS

Seeking a respite from the never ending cross country mud, our men's M35 team headed to Mallory Park for the BMAF Road Relays Championships.

David Lewis was a notable glutton for punishment with his third race of the weekend, after competing in the brutal Midland 7 and far from easy Wyre Forest parkrun the day before.

Paul Bradley led the team of six off with the fastest Halesowen leg of the day, completing the 5k course in 15:41.

Paul handed over to Marc Turner who ran 16:31 and he was followed by Richard White who finished in 17:09.

Next up was Tapiwa Huni, who in his debut race for the club ran a PB of 20:31.

Showing few ill effects from the previous day's exertions, David Lewis ran 17:53 before Adrian Low brought the team home to finish in eighteenth place with a run of 25:27.

And big thanks go to Paul Allen who put such sterling work into recruiting the team following his recent operation.

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AWARDS CORNER

Everyone at the club was delighted to learn that Adrian Dale received a Special Certificate of Recognition at the 2023 England Athletics West Midlands Regional Volunteer Awards.

In just a short time at the club, Adrian has quickly become one of the most passionate and inspirational members of the club.

He played a key role in the Food Bank Run which resulted in more than 100 items being donated to the Black Country Food Bank and supported and encouraged other club members to take up key leadership and volunteering roles.

And Adrian has been the driving force behind the hugely successful Halloween Trail events at the club in the past two years.

And we are also delighted to report that Madeline Down has been shortlisted in the top 10 for SportsAid's One-to-Watch award, which recognises Britain's brightest young sporting prospects.

Previous award winners include Olympic medallists Tom Daley and Alex Yee.

Maddie began the year getting a L5 pars stress fracture in her lower spine but recovered six months later to win double gold in the 100m and Long Jump at the 2023 Commonwealth Youth Games in Trinidad.

NEWS IN BRIEF

The Halesowen indoor season started in Sheffield with Alex Morgan, Paul Bradley and Marc Turner all taking on the rarely-run 1000m.

Paul was fastest over five laps in 2:46.48, Marc ran 2:54.39 and Alex finished in 3:27.60.

Ethan Hall bagged an indoor PB double of 7.30 in the 60m and 17.69 in the 150m.

Jamie Sircom finished 100th in the Cheddleton Christmas Pudding 10k in 48:15.

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Adrian Dale placed 149th in the 9 Locks Challenge run along the canal from Stourbridge to Brierley Hill, completing the challenging and muddy 10k course in 1:01:14.

In the Midland Race Walking League 5k race in Leicester, Julie Bellfield was fourth and second lady in 32:01 and Lynn Bellfield was ninth in 34:26.

And on a rain-sodden morning, Abbie Saker was first female at Walsall Arboretum parkrun #536 and Michelle Dale was first female at Sandwell Valley parkrun #221.

SLITHERY and SPEEDY SPECIAL OFFERS!

One of the highlights of the Halloween Trail event has been the display of snakes, spiders and insects from local pet store, Prestwood PetZone.

Owner Richard Guest said: "A big thank you to all at the club from the staff at Prestwood Petzone for allowing us to show off some of our slithery and scary friends this Halloween.

"We had a brilliant time and all the kids were so well behaved and good with the animals.

"Please visit us in store to meet even more of our little friends as well as specialist supplies like raw dog food, pond equipment and aquariums!

"Say 'Spooky Snakes' to our till staff and we'll give you 10% off absolutely anything!"

The offer lasts until December 31st and the store is open seven days a week.

You can find Prestwood PetZone on the A449 just up from the Stewponey junction.

And a cheeky and far from subtle reminder that all HACC members can get 10% off all items at Up & Running on Colmore Row in Birmingham.

Come and see Karl, Jamie and the team there for free treadmill running gait analysis and a large selection of running shoes and clothing from brands including Brooks, Saucony, New Balance and Asics.

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DECEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

The festive social programme is already in full swing.

On the advent agenda is the children's Christmas party on Sunday December 10th, the Christmas Quiz is on Wednesday 13th December and Christmas drinks centred around Stourbridge and the Wollaston mile on Saturday December 16th

The pre-Christmas run is set for Sunday December 17th with route details to be confirmed in due course.

And it all culminates in the highlight of the Halesowen year, the Boxing Day handicap run on Tuesday December 26th. The usual format applies with registration from 10.00 am with the race starting from 11.00 am.

Our social media elves will keep you up to date over Facebook, Instagram and Twitter with the club website and HACCentral WhatsApp group packed full of informative Christmas cheer!!

Wishing everyone at the club a Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy year ahead in 2024.

Up Owen!

JAMIE SIRCOM

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