

Halesowen Athletics Club

Newsround

The season long battle for cross country promotion culminated with a top Owen performance at Top Barn Farm.

We also celebrated indoor medals, parkrun and sportshall success and there's a look back on a memorable training weekend at Ty Careg.

CROSS COUNTRY DOUBLE DELIGHT!

After a campaign marked by some of the muddiest courses seen in recent years, the Birmingham and Midland League cross country seasons came to a thrilling close at Top Barn Farm near Worcester.



James H, Max, Peter and James T with their Birmingham League silver medals!

Both our men's and women's teams were chasing promotion back to the top division, and any dreams of a drier end to the season ended with heavy rain falling on the Thursday before race day.

The men's team were in a strong position occupying the third and final promotion place with a 137 point buffer over Stratford in fourth

It didn't take long for Halesowen to make an impression, with Max Parker finishing in second place, with Joe Donkin in 15th and James Thomas in 18th earning valuable points in the top 20.

Captain Peter Dear was 46th, Andy

Yapp 53rd and James Hault was the final points scorer in 57th.

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With a further fourteen Owen athletes completing the race this helped to ensure a third place finish on the day and in the crucial final League table, Halesowen moved up a place to second and seal a thoroughly deserved return to Birmingham League Division 1!

Max Parker took silver in the individual League standings, Bill Nock was third M60 and Joseph Clarke was the best placed junior athlete in tenth.



Joanne, Sarah, Sally, Michelle, Ryley, Louise and Phoebe all smiles after winning Midland League promotion!

The women's team went into their race lying in second place on 220 points with Worcester AC breathing down their necks on 235 points and Knowle & Dorridge not too far behind on 253 points.

Louise Collins and Phoebe Dodd led the team home in seventh and eighth place respectively, with Louise finishing first Master athlete.

Sarah Gill in 30th and Michelle Dale in 34th completed the scoring four with support from Ryley Malone-Priest, Sally Spencer and Joanne Congerton.

A fourth place finish on the day was enough to clinch the third promotion place and the women, like the men, will be

enjoying life in Division 1 of the Midland League next season!

Phoebe Dodd was fifth overall in the overall standings, Louise Collins was sixth and first Master in the overall standings and Ryley Malone-Priest was fourth junior.

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Back at the club, trophies were displayed and celebrations continued well into the evening.

A big thanks to everyone who laced up their spikes and competed in the cross country leagues this season and to our team managers Peter Dear and Mel Hepke for their hard work in getting teams out.

The countdown is already on to Saturday November 9th, when the club makes its triumphant return to the top flight cross country action!

~~ENGLISH~~ WELSH NATIONAL CROSS COUNTRY!

Although the course was a world away from the muddiness of the Midland 7 earlier in the season, the incessant wet weather and flooded car parks forced the late postponement of the English National Cross Country Championships which was due to be held at Weston Park on Saturday 24th February.

A new date in September is expected to be announced in the coming weeks.

That left Paul Allen as the club's only representative in a national cross country championship this season as he competed in the Welsh event at Brecon.

Paul completed the four and a quarter mile course in 42:19 and won M75 silver.

WMYACCL

Another great cross country League season for our young athletes came to a close with the final WMYACCL meeting at the Aldersley Stadium in Wolverhampton.

Lucy Hellingsworth was our star athlete on the day with a second place finish in the Under 15 Girls race.

Once all the points across all the season's meetings were tallied up, the Halesowen team as a whole finished in ninth place with 20,850 points.

The Under 15 Girls won team silver with individual series medals jointly won by Lucy Hellingsworth and Ffion Collins.

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TY CAREG 2024!

Apart from cross country and mud, the other stable in the Halesowen winter calendar is the Winter Training Weekend and 32 HACC athletes packed out our spiritual Welsh home of Ty Careg.

The first night was marked by the early stages of the pool and darts tournaments, various party games and Jamie's ultimately unsuccessful battle with the Jenga blocks and Messer Scmit shots

Saturday morning saw a record-breaking morning at Riverside Walk parkrun in Hay-on-Wye.



A Halesowen Ty Careg takeover at Riverside Walk parkrun in Hay-on-Wye!

24 Halesowen runners tackled the challenging course along the old Hay to Brecon railway line and the Warren riverside meadow, smashing the running club and course attendance records in the process!

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James Thomas was first HACC runner back in third and also clinched the third fastest time in event history in 18:04.

Phoebe Dodd was first female on the day and took 55 seconds off the course record finishing in eleventh in 21:23.

New age category course records went to Alex Taylor, Jessica Dale and Paul Allen.

And while parkrun's decision five days later to wipe such records was a tad controversial, it does mean that they will be held in perpetuity by Halesowen athletes!

Less contentious was the Saturday afternoon walk, in which the whole party enjoyed a scenic five mile stroll to Glasbury and back.

A fish and chip supper was the prelude to the Saturday night entertainment with games of Twister, secrets being spilled in a game of "Never Have I Ever" and some "distinctive" karaoke performances from James "Woody" Hoult, Spice Girls Ryley and Jess and Ade and Ollie channelling the spirit of Kenny and Dolly.

Keeping well away from the karaoke mic were our games tournament winners; Ian Priest on the pool table and Carl Follows on the table football ... table.

Hangovers notwithstanding, the Sunday morning run and walk up and down the Begwyns brought the weekend to a close.

Big thanks go to Peter Dear and Ollie Dodd for their hard work in organising a fantastic weekend away in while the spirit of the club from everyone who attended really shone through.

The date of the summer training weekend is already set for Friday 2nd to Sunday 4th August with further information on the venue to follow in due course.

BUCS BULLETIN!

Halesowen were strongly represented in the BUCS student championship events.

In the cross country championships held at Temple Newsam in Leeds, Abi Saker was 145th and Milly Allen was 356th in her debut race for Nottingham Trent University.

Meanwhile in the indoor championships in Sheffield, Jake Matthews was fifth in the Shot Putt with a throw of 15.04m.

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INDOOR ROUND-UP

Both our athletes in the British Indoor Championships at the Utilita Arena in Birmingham set new PBs.

Maddie Down was second in the 60m Para Final in 8.42 secs and Jake Matthews was fourth in the Shot Putt with a throw of 16.15m.

Sheffield was the venue for the England Athletics Indoor U20, U17 & U15 Championships.

Thomas Brookes reached the semi-finals of the U20M 200m with a season's best of 22.59 and Poppy Oliarnyk also recorded a season's best of 11.39m in the U20W Triple Jump.

Joe Rogers narrowly missed out on yet another club mile record in the Husky Classic in Seattle.

Held on a 307 metre flat indoor track, Joe took the win in his race in a time of 4:01.85, a frustrating 0.13 seconds off his Halesowen club record set in Boston in January.

And Sophie Cook cleared 4.00m in her latest Perche Elite Tour pole vault competition in Roubaix, France.

THE INDOOR ADVENTURES OF MARC AND PAUL!!

Marc Turner and Paul Bradley have been spending the month racking up the motorway miles chasing middle distance glory at various indoor meetings.

At the Run Jump Throw and Masters GP in Sheffield, Paul won his 800m race, dipping on the line to clock 2:01.09.

Marc was fifth in 2:08.60, his fastest two lap time in six years.

Next up for our dynamic duo was the season highlight, the British Masters Indoor Championships at Lee Valley in London with both going for the middle distance double.

In the M35 800m, Paul had a tough opening lap as everyone tried to settle into the race.

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Showing strong commitment to go with the fast pace, Paul held on to finish third in his heat with a 2:02.37.

Marc raced in the M50 category and powered around the four laps to finish in a time of 2:12.54.



Paul Bradley and Marc Turner with a mid road trip selfie!

The next day, the boys attention shifted to the 1500m.

Marc executed his 1500m to perfection, running most of the race in fourth before powering through in the closing stages to take M50 bronze, finishing in 4:36.84.

Paul was in a quality heat for the M35 1500m, with his fifth-placed finish securing a new indoor PB of 4:18.55.

Marc travelled solo the following weekend as he returned to Lee Valley for the English Masters Inter-Area Indoor Challenge where he won the M50 800m in 2:12:03.

He was, however, joined by a substitute Paul in the form of supervet Paul Allen, who won the M75 800m in 3:53.64 and was first in M75 1500m in 7:46.39.

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SPORTSHALL and ROAD



Jayden Hanson (left) won three golds in the Hereford & Worcester County Sportshall Championships in Worcester, winning the Under 13 one lap and two lap races and the triple jump.

David Lewis was first M55 at the Stourbridge Stagger, finishing 21st in 1:15:32.

James Parker was 33rd in 1:18:25.

Kirsty Price finished first F50 in the Hereford 10 mile road race in 43rd in 1:13:33.

And Jamie Sircom spent Valentine's night romantically finishing 71st in the Olympic Park Chase the Moon 10k in 48:07.

PARKRUN

Away from Hay-on-Wye, it was an equally dominant month for Halesowen's Saturday morning 5k'ers.

Lucy Hellingsworth finished first female on her 5k parkrun debut at Walsall Arboretum event #549.

Joe Donkin was first finisher at Penrose event #391 and Michelle Dale took first female honours at Sandwell Valley event #235.

Back on home ground, there was a clean sweep at Woodgate Valley Country Park event #126 with James Thomas finishing first overall and Sarah Gill crossing the line as first female.

And Phoebe Dodd made her English parkrun debut and maintained her 100% record in finishing first female at Woodgate Valley event #127.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

We would like say a fond farewell to our Monday night track coach extraordinaire Ollie Wright who after five years at the club is moving up to Stoke-on-Trent.

Halesowen's loss is City of Stoke AC's gain and we look forward to bumping into Ollie on the track and cross country circuit very soon.

And James Hoult and Betsy Cooper will be holding an Easter holiday camp packed full of athletics events, games and competitions for children aged 8-14.

The camp takes place on Monday 25th and Tuesday 26th March from 9.30 am to 3.00 pm and costs £15 per day.

Contact James Hoult for more details and to register for a place on the camp.

MARCH DIARY DATES

Sat Mar 9 Inter Counties Cross Country, Wollaton Park, Nottingham

Final Birmingham Sportshall League meeting, North Solihull

Sat Mar 16 British Masters Cross Country, Corwen, North Wales

Sun Mar 17 Droitwich Half Marathon (incl. Worcestershire Champs), Churchfields Farm

Sat Mar 23 Midland 12/6 Stage Road Relays and Junior 5k Champs, Sutton Park

Details of how to enter all the above events will be circulated via email and the relevant WhatsApp groups.

Latest club updates continue via the main HACCentral WhatsApp group plus Facebook, Instagram and the club website.

Up Owen!

JAMIE SIRCOM

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