

## GHOST AULD LANG SYNE

31/12/96

8m / 6m/100ft

*whist YORAS*

IN THE INAUGURAL RACE THE ROUTE HAD TO BE SHORTENED TO OXENHOPE STOOP AND BACK, 5M/800FT. LAST YEAR ALTHOUGH THE COURSE WAS COVERED IN SNOW THE AULD LANG SYNE RACE ROUTE WAS RUN. THIS YEAR THE SNOW WAS HERE TO HAUNT US AGAIN AS ACROSS THE WHOLE COUNTRY ARCTIC WEATHER CONDITIONS PREVAILED. THE RACE WAS ACTUALLY CALLED OFF AT 8.30am WITH HEAVY SNOW FALLING YET AGAIN IN THE KEIGHLEY AND HAWORTH AREA, IN FACT POLICE AND THE AA ISSUED A WARNING OF "ONLY UNDERTAKE A JOURNEY IF IT'S ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY", ADDED TO THIS LOCAL RADIO REPORTED THAT THE AREA WAS CUT OFF BY SNOW.

THE ORGANISERS, THE WOODENTOPS, REALISED THAT HARDENED RUNNERS WOULD STILL ATTEMPT THE JOURNEY TO HAWORTH AND EXPECT A RACE, HENCE THE WORDING GHOST AULD LANG SYNE.

THE CONDITIONS ON PENISTONE HILL WERE APPALLING WITH SEVERAL RUNNERS LEAVING THEIR VEHICLES IN HAWORTH AND JOGGING UP TO RACE HQ. THE TEMPERATURE THERE WAS MINUS 3 DEGREES WITH THE WIND CHILL FACTOR PUSHING IT A FEW NOTCHES LOWER STILL, WHILE THE RACE ROUTE WAS COVERED IN SNOW DRIFTING UP TO 3FT ON THE  $\frac{3}{4}$  MILE SECTION BETWEEN THE STOOP AND TOP OF THE STAIRS. REGARDING WHAT RACE ROUTE TO RUN A RUNNERS VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE START LINE, WHICH OVERWHELMINGLY WAS CARRIED IN FAVOUR OF THE ORIGINAL ROUTE.

69 RUNNERS TOED THE LINE ALL CLAD IN BUNDLES OF GEAR IAN HOLMES COULDN'T BE RECOGNISED WITH HIS BALACLAVA PULLED OVER HIS FACE. ONE ONLOOKER SAID "THIS WILL SORT THE LUNATICS FROM THE IDIOTS OUT". HOLMES OF COURSE WON FOR THE THIRD YEAR, BUT NOT BEFORE HE WAS AMBUSHED BY IAN FERGUSON AND COLIN MOSES WHO PUSHED SNOW INTO HIS EVERY ORIFICE AND ATTEMPTED TO DEPRIVE HIM OF ONE FELL SHOE. "IF HE ONLY HAD ONE SHOE, WE JUST MAY HAVE BEATEN HIM", CLAIMED HIS TWO TEAM MATES.

34 YEAR OLD, SARAH ROWELL DESCRIBED THE RACE AS "GREAT FUN", BUT CLAIMED THE SWIRLING SNOW HINDERED HER BECAUSE SHE WEARS CONTACT LENSES. IN FACT HER RACE PLAN WAS TO FOLLOW SHAUN ADDISON, AND BY THE STOOP CHECKPOINT WAS RIGHT BEHIND HIM, BUT THE DRIFTED SECTION TOOK IT'S TOLL, "I FELL INTO A RHYTHM LIKE YOU DO IN RACES LIKE THAT, IT'S DIFFICULT TO PASS WHEN EITHER SIDE IS DEEP SNOW, BUT I ENJOYED IT".

AS ADVERTISED THERE WAS BEER TO ALL FINISHERS, AND 30 BEER PACK PRIZES AWARDED EVEN THOUGH THE RACE HAD OFFICIALLY BEEN CALLED OFF. DUE TO THE LATE POSTPONEMENT THE BEER PUMP TROPHIES AND CASKS WILL BE ENGRAVED WITH THE APPROPRIATE WINNERS NAMES, AND AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO THIS GHOST RACE.

INTERESTINGLY ENOUGH THE SLOWEST PERSON WAS ACTUALLY 10 MINUTES FASTER THAN THE CORRESPONDING RUNNER LAST YEAR, WHILE HOLMES WAS 10 MINUTES SLOWER, WAS IT BECAUSE ONLY THE LUNATICS WAS OUT THAT DAY?.

SEYMOUR HILLS