

Yorkshire Corner

The 58th Three Peaks fell race, incorporating the 35th Senior Yorkshire Fell Championships

Yorkshire champion Rob Baker makes history by lifting the cup for Dark Peak Fell Runners



Yorkshire champion Helen Berry of Holmfirth Harriers



YORKSHIRE AT ITS FINEST

There cannot be a better venue in Britain than being surrounded by the most famous peaks of Pen Y Ghent, Whernside and Ingleborough and that was the setting for the 35th Senior Fell Championships. The 58th Three Peaks fell race dawned grey and threatening, but once underway it was a grand day, except for the gale force winds, which never seemed to be on the runners back. 34 year old Rob Baker in finishing third made history by becoming the first Dark Peak Fell Runner athlete to win the Tyke championship, many have picked up the silver medal, John Blair-Fish (1983), Ray Aucott (1984) and Andy Harmer (1990). Rob, with backing from John Roche and Oli Johnson, led the Dark Peak club to only its second ever championship team win, the other being in 1990 when Andy Harmer, Bob Berzins and Ed Hutt won at the Holme Moss race. 2010 champion Karl Gray collected the silver medal again like in 2009 and 2007. Former Three Peaks winner and Yorkshire champion, Rob Jebb, picked up the bronze medal.

The winner of the race outright was 28 year old Joe Symonds from Scotland, who emulated his dad Hugh, who won the race in 1984. Joe will have to win the event three more times however to get the better of dad, because he also won in 1985 & 1987. In fact Hugh could have won the Yorkshire championship if he had wanted to, as he was born in the old county boundary when Sedbergh was in Yorkshire.

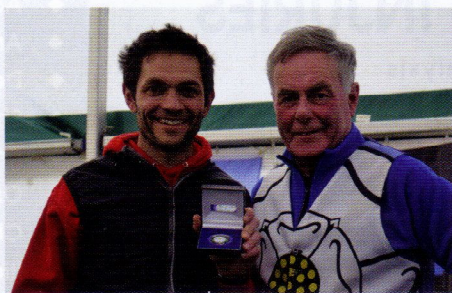
In the ladies race Helen Berry lifted the perpetual trophy which was donated years ago by her dad 'Storming' Norman which made it an even more significant win. Being champion

means she was automatically selected to compete in the UKA Fell Inter Counties. Helen had previously won the silver medal in 2010 at the Holme Moss event. Helen, a 'life time ago' as an under 18, won the championship in 1989, 1991 and 1992, and then as a junior intermediate, won the English championship in 1993 and 1994. 2010 champion Alison Raw won the silver and Jann Smith collected the bronze. Jann led Ilkley Harriers to team gold medals with Alison Weston and Diane Haggard. Alison was also a gold medallist when Ilkley won the team title in 2002, and with a team victory in 2005 this has

now made it a hat trick of wins for the club.

The famous Scottish club Hunters Bog Trotters provided the ladies winner outright in 25 year old Sarah O'Neill, with Swedish biology student Emelie Forsbery, who was running in the colours of Team Soloman International, finishing second.

Many thanks must go to The Wharfedale Clinic, now in Guiseley and sports retailer Up & Running for their kind co-sponsorship of these Championships. On the day it was a Yorkshire waistcoat clad Bryan Speight, father of Martyn Speight, the owner of Wharfedale Clinic, who presented the championship awards.



Silver medallists Karl Grey, with Bryan Speight, (above left) and Ali Raw (above right) and bronze medallists Rob Jebb, with Bryan Speight (below left) and Jann Smith

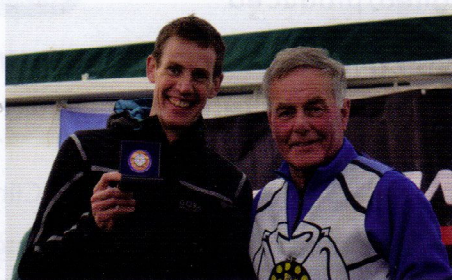
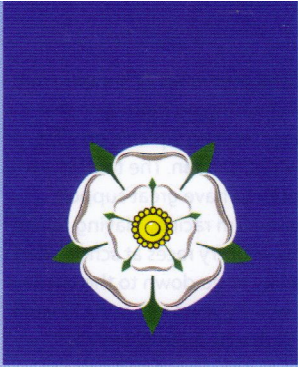


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Three Peaks winner Jo Symonds
from Scotland follows in his
father's footsteps

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Yorkshire Champion Rob Baker, men's winner Jo Symonds, ladies winner Sarah O'Neil and Carl Bell with the Newcomers trophy



Helen Berry at the Three Peaks in 2012 and at Coniston English Junior championship race in 1990



The trophy is like the who's who of English female fell running

BY 2012 YORKSHIRE CHAMPION HELEN BERRY OF HOLMFIRTH HARRIERS

I don't think there could be a more appropriate race selected to incorporate the Yorkshire Championships than the Three Peaks. This year was the third time I'd run it, and I love the race, so it was a bonus to me that I had the added challenge of the Championships to contend. I am so chuffed to have won the title, but I didn't realise until I'd actually finished! I had assumed that Natalie White had completed the course and was ahead of me, thus leaving me in silver medal position. Dave shouted something at me as I ran past him off Ingleborough, which I just thought were his usual words of encouragement, it was only later during his infamous photo call that he told me he'd actually said "well done, Yorkshire Champion!". May be the words were lost in all that wind....it was a very windy day, after all! I felt pretty good throughout the race and enjoyed it all, which I can't often say during a hard race. I

paced it well, felt really strong up Wherside (a first!) and once I'd got to Hill Inn, realised that I was on for beating my previous time, which I did by seven minutes, and finished fifth lady. I feel truly honoured to have won the Yorkshire title, and in such an epic race, and to have my name added to the trophy alongside some of the greats...it's like the who's who of English female fell running. Yorkshire is and always has been such a strong county. It seems very fitting that it is the Norman Berry trophy too! The icing on the cake was the automatic selection for the Inter Counties – a team place was something I'd been aiming for this year.

I started running as a child and had grown up spending weekends 'following' my parents in races; mum Hilary in road marathons and dad Norman on the fells. I'm sure that my brother, sister and I sometimes felt that we were dragged

along, but I have fond memories of hanging out of the car window cheering on mum (pre seat belt laws, clearly!) and having a picnic on a fell side somewhere whilst dad ran. The tables have turned and I am lucky to have great support from my parents when I'm racing. Having taken part in several cross country races at school, had suggested I might like to go down to the Harriers at Holmfirth. That was 25 years ago and I haven't looked back. The club was quite different then and I was one of only about half a dozen juniors and even fewer females, that included John Taylor, Will Styan, Simon Brophy and Sally Haigh. Between us all we won English Fell Championship titles; me as a Junior in 1989, 1991 and 1992 and as an Intermediate in 1993 and 1994. I seem to recall we won the English junior team prize one year, as a mixed team. I gained my England vest in 1992; for the inaugural Junior Women's race at the World Cup in Susa. I had been out to three or four World Cups on the 'FRA bus' before that, which was always great fun, but there was no doubt that being part of the England team was very memorable.

I had a slight lull in my racing at university. The running club members seemed more interested in discussing lactic acid after training than having a beer. I didn't even know what lactic acid was at the time! My dad once commented that I was on more pints than miles, but I soon got back into regular training and racing. If one has a genuine love and enjoyment of running, it never wanes.

I've been Ladies' Captain at Holmfirth for many years now and feel very loyal to the club, even though I've lived in Nottingham for 14 years. I still imagine that I'll settle in Yorkshire one day (when I grow up!), but it's only an hour or so up the motorway in order for me to get my fix of the hills and fells. My job in IT sales allows me to plan my own diary, so I try to schedule client meetings up north on a Friday or Monday if I'm racing at the weekend. And when I'm not racing I am spending weekends away socialising with friends or visiting family.... and with three young nieces and a nephew there is never a dull or quiet moment in my life! I look forward to being able to take them to some junior fell races in the future, which my six year old niece is very excited about already!

Living in Nottingham is not really conducive to training for the ascents we encounter when racing on the fells. The most undulation I see is around Wollaton Park, which used to host the Inter Counties Cross Country and as some readers will know, is not very hilly! Otherwise I'm running on the canal or river paths which by nature are as flat as a pancake. I do most of my mid-week training in spinning classes at the gym, which has no doubt benefited my strength and ascending ability, and certainly feels like I've been running up hill for an hour when I've finished! As well as the fells, I race a lot over cross country during the winter, and have run for the Yorkshire women's cross country team several times. I've enjoyed competing in the English Fell Championship over the last few years and this year hope to continue to improve on my previous positions.



Rob Baker seems to be enjoying himself at the Three Peaks in 2012

Photos © Dave Woodhead www.woodentops.org.uk

Just seems unbelievable to me

BY YORKSHIRE CHAMPION ROB BAKER OF DARK PEAK FELL RUNNERS

The 3 Peaks race has been my main focus for the Spring and I was pleased with how my training had gone in the build up to the race. I had no real expectations before the competition, but my priority was to run to my own limits and all the advice I had received was that the race does not really start until the ascent of Ingleborough. Whilst I was around people most of the way, I ran very much my own race, and couldn't quite believe that I found myself in second place at the top of the last climb. Carl Bell immediately passed me on the descent and got a 50m lead which pretty much stayed in place for the whole way to the finish. I was trying desperately to catch him and I think he was running scared of being caught. I was thrilled with my time and podium position, and my result was made all the more sweeter to find out that I had also won the Yorkshire champs. I found the whole race a fantastic experience, with great competitors support and atmosphere - I can understand why it has developed such a classic status. It is a great honour to win the Yorkshire Champs, and I am so proud to be the first person to do so wearing the famous brown, yellow and purple colours of the Dark Peak club, which just seems unbelievable to me.

I am an Essex boy by birth, but gravitated north after University and have lived in Yorkshire for over 12 years. At School I was involved in cross country and other activities, but our family got hooked on orienteering at the age of 10 - so

my sporting background has been very much rooted in orienteering and I have been fortunate enough to represent Great Britain internationally both as a junior and a senior.

Whilst the running in Essex could not be described as hilly, there were enough bumps and undulations in the area for me to realise that I enjoyed running up and down much more than on the flat. I ran and orienteered enthusiastically until about 16 when other attractions took hold... and then picked it up again at University in Loughborough.

Post University after a year spent travelling and having fun, I made the move to Sheffield in pursuit of good running terrain and friends to enjoy it with. There is a close affiliation between Dark Peak Fell Runners and Sheffield based orienteers and I have always enjoyed running in the local fell races and competing for Dark Peak in the big relays when I was running well enough to get picked for the team.

Over the last 3 years or so I have been seeking out new running challenges, so have tried my hand at marathons and spending more time in the hills and on the fells. In 2012, I am keen to try and tick off some classic fell races and complete an English champs season. This has previously proved almost impossible as there is quite a bit of overlap between the orienteering and fell running seasons. There is an added aim this year of trying to win the English champs team competition for Dark Peak and prove that the



FRA champs result in 2011 was no fluke.

I am now really excited to be racing for Yorkshire at the inter-counties. Whilst I have run the Shinning Tor race a few times before, I have never represented a county in fell running so am looking forward to wearing blue and white in the hunt for team glory. Here's hoping.....

Fell Inter Counties

Yorkshire just love gold

Commonwealth Mountain Running champion & North XC champion, Lizzie Adams, celebrated her 26th birthday in fine style at the UKA Inter Counties Fell Championships in Derbyshire with an individual gold, which was the sixth time Yorkshire have taken the title in the ladies. But the celebrations just carried on with the Tyke girls finishing with all four members of the team in the top ten, which easily won team gold medals for the eighth time. Lizzie last ran in these championships in 2009 when she finished fourth, but no one could live with her pace at the Shining Tor race, as Sarah McCormack of Scotland East and twice Inters winner Olivia Walwyn Bush finished in silver and bronze places. Recent winner of the Wray Caton Moor race Katie Walshaw finished fourth and wearing crisp new vests, both Helen Fines and Yorkshire Champion Helen Berry rounded up the team in seventh and eighth places. Helen Fines had a very late call up and considering she had in the last seven days finished second in the British champs at Slieve Bearnagh and won the Blackstone Edge race, both rough, tough events, this gives an indication of how resilient she is!

In the mens race, Greater Manchester did it again to us, providing the individual winner for the fifth time in the shape of Northern XC champion Steve Vernon and winning the team gold medals for the seventh time. Chris Smith of Middlesex collected the silver medal like last year and two times Inters winner Andi Jones of Greater Manchester had to settle for the bronze. Yorkshire champion Rob Baker was close behind in fourth, Tom Adams mixed it well to come seventh, Karl Gray came 13th and Graham Pearce 19th, which meant Yorkshire collected silver medals yet again.

The Tyke Juniors dominated the first ever Inter Junior champs, with team golds in BU16, GU16 and BU18 with silver medals in the GU18 where great rivals Lancashire won. In the U16 race, 2011

English champ James Hall and Lewis Byram ran away with the gold and silver medals leaving Iolo Hughes of North Wales with the bronze. Max Wharton, the other Yorkshire runner in his words finished a 'disappointing sixth', especially since he had the previous week won the Yorkshire T&F 1500m title. He did courageously run, despite being doubled up with pain for most of the race with stomach cramp. In the girls, Annabel Mason, the London Mini Marathon winner, along with Yorkshire XC champion, Bronwen Owen, just ran away with the gold and silver medals leaving Lancashire 1500m T&F champion Mary Hodgson with the bronze. Yorkshires newest young recruit and future star Molly Traviss finished in a creditable fifth. Bronwen, the Northern XC champion, over the previous weekends had won the Yorkshire 1500m T&F title and before that was running in the new London Olympic Stadium, competing in the UK Schools T&F Games where she finished with a bronze from the 3000m. James Hall, also experienced the Games venue and was so inspired in the 3000m that he set a new pb by 15 seconds in finishing fifth. James, Annabel and Bronwen showed such speed that they all ran faster than their U18 counterparts who ran the same race route later that day.

Tyke lads Brad Travis and Tom Saville never gave up chasing home Nathan Jones of North Wales in the BU18 race to collect silver and bronze medals, whilst Richard Powell achieved one of his many ambitions to wear the proud white rose vest to finish eighth. In her first fell race of the year, U18 Yorkshire champion Charlotte Edge, just could not catch race winner Sarah Hodgson, the Lancashire 3000m champion. Florence Haines a recent senior winner of the Cribyn race and Zara Knappy, both wearing the famous blue and white vest for the first time had a real tussle between them to place fifth and sixth. Lancashire Fell & 2000m steeplechase champion, Helena Leathley



Top: The golden girls – Lizzie Adams, Helen Fines, Katie Walshaw and Helen Berry
Below: GU16 team – Bronwen Owen, Molly Traviss & Annabel Mason



Above: BU16 team – Max Wharton, James Hall & Lewis Byram

finished fourth.

To end the day the senior and junior Yorkshire teams all celebrated on the Errwood Reservoir waters edge by spraying fizz, grand prix style before it was time to sing happy birthday to Lizzie again and present her with a yummy chocolate cake.

Roll on next year - we just love gold in Yorkshire, after all we did win 16 golds, 11 silvers and one bronze medal – not a bad day out.



Yorkshire celebrate