

Yorkshire Golden Girls for the 11th time

Yorkshire XC silver medallist, Katie Walshaw, won the individual Inter Counties silver medal for the second time, eight seconds ahead of Catriona Buchanan of Scotland Central with 2017 Cumbria XC champion Lizzie Browne winning the ladies title for her county. Katie led the Yorkshire Golden Girls to their 11th team victory in the races 19 year history, with eighth Helen Glover, 12th Kirsty Hall with backing from 31st Jo Buckley and 33rd Ellie Crownshaw who finished fourth FU23.

Katie actually ran her first Inter Counties at Broughton Heights in 2011 where she finished eighth and her record since then is impressive, fourth in 2012, third in 2013, second in 2014, fifth in 2015 and seventh in 2016 and along the way she has collected four team gold medals.

Wray Caton Moor winner Helen Glover has three team golds to her credit and first ran ten years ago finishing 11th at Crowden Horseshoe in 2007 and then eighth at Betws-y-Coed in 2015.

Cumbria finished second team with first Lizzie, tenth Lou Roberts, 13th Kelli Roberts, 14th Hannah Russell second FU23 and last years champion Heidi Dent 15th, while Scotland East took the team bronze medals. Lancashire's Ruth Jones won the FU23 title.

Champion Lizzie Browne, the 2011 Commonwealth Mountain Running Champion, last won the Inter Counties title under her maiden name, Adams in 2012 at the Shining Tor event and won team gold there when running in the white rose Yorkshire vest. The Hallamshire Harrier life member also ran for Yorkshire in 2009 collecting a team gold again at the Hutton Roof event when finishing fourth overall. Lizzie is now the fourth Cumbrian lady to win the individual gold medal the others being Lou Sharp (Roberts), 2002, 2003 and 2004, Sarah Tunstall 2014 and Heidi Dent 2016.

The Broughton Heights race last held the Inter Counties in 2011 when James McMillan of Surrey and Olivia Walwyn of Cheshire won the titles, this year over an improved and more spectator friendly course, 2015 champion Andrew Douglas of Scotland East won the mens race from Graham Gristwood of Scotland Central with Max Nicholls of Kent in third, Max won the MU23 title. Andrew, fourth in the European and 11th in the World Mountain Running Championships last year, recently ran 50.41 in winning the Edinburgh 10m and 15.52 at the Scottish 5k championships so this year looks promising. By a mere one point Lancashire won the team title from Yorkshire with Anniversary Waltz winner Chris Arthur fifth, Chris Holdsworth seventh and Gary Priestley 14th, Yorkshire were led home by Coniston and Long Mynd Valley winner Tom Addison in fourth, Jack Bloor winner Jack Wood in eighth and defending Inters champion Ben Mounsey in 15th, other Yorkshire runners were Andy Swift in 26th and MU23 Tom Saville in 38th, while Yorkshire reserve Joe Baxter finished second in the open race which placed him 18th overall.

For those who are or have been injured....and indeed those who think they may be ‘past it’.... I hope this gives you a tiny little bit of inspiration.... By Kirsty Hall

Two years ago I suffered a serious knee injury (The O’Donoghues triad) which meant I had to endure months in a leg brace followed by intricate ACL reconstruction surgery. There were times, especially when I had to learn to literally walk again, that I honestly thought I would never be able to run again. But fell running is my passion, I have been running and racing the fells for.....lets just say a ‘long time’ ;-)) and as you fellow fell runners know, we have a grit and determination that is unique to this sport. I was resolute in my desire to work hard to get back in to the sport I love, and enjoy the company and the camaraderie that makes it so special. I was very good and unbelievably patient for a fell runner and stuck to the recovery protocol to the letter. The result meant that not only could I run and race again, but have surprisingly been performing way above any expectations I have ever held. By working hard and listening to the experts, I came back a much stronger and improved runner, with renewed energy and motivation. 2016 was for me a successful year in terms of my race results, I managed to secure the 2016 BOFRA ladies championship title, gained a team gold and individual bronze medal at

the World Masters Mountain Running championship in Susa, Italy and was first lady to the top in the prestigious Ben Nevis race, note to self – must work on descending ;-).

My racing aims for this year have been and still are mixed, but it has been no secret that I have always wanted to gain a Yorkshire vest. Still feeling relatively strong from last years performances I secretly hoped I would be in the mix to at least be considered for selection. For me, racing for my county feels like an even greater privilege and honour than perhaps for my country!?!? So, you can imagine my elation when Dave Woodhead approached me at the Three Peaks race to ask '*are you interested in a Yorkshire vest?*'. Even though my selection wasn't secure at this point I think I actually kissed him and cried!! A couple of days later my long time wish came true, I received the official invitation to be part of the team alongside Katie Walshaw, Helen Glover, Jo Buckley and U23 Ellie Crownshaw to race for Yorkshire at the Fell Inter Counties championships at the Broughton Hills race, Scotland.

The course of the race itself was not as suited to my running ability as I had hoped and I was extremely nervous as I warmed up, worried that I would be letting the side down. But as soon as we set off I settled in and can honestly say I enjoyed every second of the relatively flat, fast course, well, maybe not that final little ramp up to the finish line! I felt I ran well and felt good and coming over the line after what I thought for me, was an accomplished run was an amazing feeling. At this point however, I had no idea how we had fared as a team, I just knew that I was the third counter for our team and prayed I'd worked hard enough to secure us a medal position. I crossed the line in 12th position, and bolstered by Katie's amazing second place result, and Helen's equally fantastic eighth position, there were rumours that we may have won. Finally the results were confirmed and the Yorkshire lasses had indeed won team GOLD, ahead of Cumbria silver and Scotland East bronze. The elation and sense of achievement I felt was beyond comprehension – my first county selection and a team gold medal for Yorkshire.....I couldn't have been more proud!