

38th Worksop Half Marathon – Sunday, 27th October 2019

On behalf of Worksop Harriers, I thank everyone who contributed to the great success of this year's 38th Worksop Half Marathon. Since the inaugural run way back in 1982 it has now become one of the largest annual events in Worksop, not just another race.

The event village is now well established at Outwood Academy Portland and this is proving to be a great success, as we can accommodate larger numbers of people and create a much better atmosphere for the runners, volunteers and spectators. The atmosphere was greatly enhanced by the presence of TRAX FM. This was the second year that they have given us their support, providing music, commentary and information throughout the day, and we have already had discussions with them in preparation for next year's event.

As for many year's now, our race incorporated the Nottinghamshire County Half Marathon Team Championships, and we are thankful to the Chairmen of Nottinghamshire County Council and Bassetlaw District Council for providing us with the trophies for the winning men's and ladies teams respectively. This year Holme Pierrepont were successful in both team events.

Both the Half Marathon and 2.6km Fun Run courses remained the same as last year and the weather was ideal for the runners of all ages who took part, resulting in new course records for both the Ladies and Men's Half Marathon (This particular course was established in 2016). For the Half Marathon, the distance runners had a perfect autumn day, in stark contrast to the day before, when it rained all day and presented awful conditions for our volunteers who braved the weather to set up the race village and the course. This very scenic course encompasses the tree-lined route of the National Trust property of Clumber Park and the grounds of Worksop College. Although the course can be described as more undulating than flat, the good running conditions produced many personal best performances, in addition to the course records mentioned above. We did have an additional water feature this year just after drinks station 1, courtesy of the rain on Saturday, which the runners couldn't help but notice, and commented accordingly! Year by year, more people are entering into the spirit of Halloween and adopting the fancy dress approach, in both races, which helps to contribute to a great atmosphere.

We are very grateful to Outwood Academy Portland and Barnsley Premier Leisure (BPL) for allowing us to use their facility for the whole weekend, which enables us to start our preparations from Friday onwards and ensures that we can fully utilise the space available to us. This does mean that several of our members and volunteers are on site for virtually all of the race weekend, and we are very grateful to them for their tremendous support for our running club and the Half Marathon.

In spite of continually rising costs, and the difficulty in obtaining financial sponsorship, we managed to maintain our entry price for a third year and we were still able to give the Half Marathon runners a finisher's medal to go with our highly sought-after T-shirt. We also welcome the continued support of our main race sponsors, Cerealto, who provided the nutritional breakfast biscuits, and Lincolnshire Runner and their shoe supplier HOKA One One.

Once again, I would especially like to thank those runners who have taken the time to place messages on the various social media sites, commenting on the quality of the organisation, the friendliness of the marshals, the scenic nature of the course (we are privileged to have National Trust's Clumber Park on our doorstep), the humorous signs around the sponge stations and the design of the T shirts & medals, they are extremely positive and are a great source of encouragement and inspiration to the organising committee and our large band of volunteers, without whom it would not be possible to promote such a large event.

Because of the success of the race village set-up last year, we made minimal changes this year and the location of our baggage drop and the issue of our T shirts and the race 'goodies', provided a smooth passage for the tired runners after the race, with minimal queues or delays. The smooth running of the baggage drop was due to the efficiency and hard work of the Outward Academy student volunteers and JOEL charity, who supplied a large number of their own volunteers.

This year we also issued race numbers on the Saturday for local runners, to ease some of the workload on the morning of the race. This was also a success, with over 400 numbers being issued early, resulting in less queues on race day and allowing both races to start on time.

The set race entry limit of 3000 runners was almost reached and we had over 300 people enter the Fun Run and it is likely that the event will sell out early each year from now on.

Set in, and around, the spectacular autumn woodlands of Clumber Park, this race regularly ranks amongst the most scenic, well organised and 'value for money' races, in the Country, according to those voting on Runner's World and has previously been ranked as high as the 2nd most scenic course in the UK Half Marathon list. We will, however, continue to take note of all of the comments again, this year, as we strive to improve even further.

I thank all the runners who have continued to support our event, in such large numbers, and all of the members, friends and families of Worksop Harriers who performed all the various tasks leading up to the race and on race day itself. We continue to take on-line entries on our own dedicated website, courtesy of xaffi Online Sports Event Management. I am also very grateful that the Highways Authority allowed the roads to be closed and to the Police, Traffic Management Services, Fire Brigade, St John Ambulance for their Medical support and Bassetlaw District Council workers who all provided a tremendous service on the day, ensuring that the athletes are able to perform to the best of their abilities and live their goals, in a safe environment.

Special thanks must go to Outwood Academy Portland, National Trust Clumber Park and Worksop College, who provide the facilities to allow this event to take place in such picturesque surroundings for the whole distance.

We now support four main charities, Sheffield Children's Hospital, Bluebell Wood Children's Hospice, Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire Air Ambulance and JOEL, and it is hoped that all of these charities, and the charities which individual runners support, will enjoy significant benefits from being part of our event.

This year, once again, Dave and Julie's 'Tea and Cake' stall did exceptionally well, raising over £1,700 for P.A.C.T. at Sheffield Children's Hospital – Oncology Department. They would like me to pass on a big "THANK YOU" to everyone who contributed to the baking of the cakes and to those who bought them. JOEL also give thanks to those runners who donated over £800 as a thank you to the charity for looking after their bags at the baggage drop.

I hope that the volunteers, as well as the runners, enjoyed this years' experience and that you will continue to give your support in future years, perhaps even adding a friend, or two, to our much needed band of helpers, and that the runners will encourage their club mates and colleagues to take part in what is becoming a "must do" event in the running calendar.

And finally, I thank all of our sponsors and supporters, because without their contribution the event would not be possible:

Outwood Academy Portland, TRAX FM, Sports Systems, The Lincolnshire Runner, HOKA One One, Perrys (suppliers of the lead and sweep cars), Cerealto (supplier of breakfast biscuits), Nottinghamshire County Council, Bassetlaw District Council, Live Trackway (suppliers of trackway and pedestrian barriers), Worksop Police, Worksop Fire Brigade, St John Ambulance (medical back up and support), Worksop Guardian, Nottinghamshire Highways Authority, Notts

4 x 4 Support Group, T Print (T shirts), Barnsley Premier Leisure, TMS (traffic management), The Green Toilet Company, xaffi Online Sports Event Management, One in Tent (Public Address), Worksop College, National Trust (Clumber Park), Sheffield Hallam University (Sports Physiotherapy), Mick Hall Photography, Running Imp – Lincoln, Bluebell Wood, Lincs & Notts Air Ambulance, JOEL and supporters (baggage drop), Lee-Anne and Mark Manley (Sunshine Coffee Van), Sherwood Fired Pizza, Big Bobble Hats, Spud Buddies and Madame Crepe.

Thank you ALL, for making this year's race such an enjoyable experience for so many people.

Peter Fendley
Race Director and Chairman of Worksop Harriers



