

Oakley 20 - 28th March 2010

A brisk, chilly wind and challenging course greeted Biggleswade Athletics Club runners at the Oakley 20 mile race on Sunday 28th March. Fifteen Biggleswade athletes were led home by Ed Jones in 2.21.53, followed by Julie Sutton and Isobel Everest. Both of these talented ladies were prize winners: Julie was 1st lady in the County Championships, in a personal and new club best time of 2.25.59 and Isobel gained 1st lady vet 35 for the race. They were joined by Val Kemp to make up the winning ladies team.

The men weren't left out, with a County award for first male vet 55, Ian Skerratt. There were several first timers at this distance, with, Paul Davies, Jon Balaam, Ruth Holmes, Steve Atkins and Sally Daniels all setting personal best times. Gavin Elliot, in his last race in a Biggleswade vest, Rob Morgan, Andy Bruce, Julia Mackay and Ray Dowse all know and love these hills as favored marathon preparation.

Bedford 'Clanger' - 14th March 2010

With the sun shining, on Sunday 14th March, 57 intrepid runners embarked on the 'Bedford Clanger' – a race organised by Noel Jones of Bedford Harriers to raise funds for the Bedford Hospitals Charity. The route was a 27 mile circular course, mostly off road following footpaths in open countryside around Bedford. A strong headwind provided an extra challenge in places!

Tracey Patmore (a St Neots Riverside Runner who is also one of Biggleswade AC's star ladies in the Three Counties Cross Country League) used this as a mere training run in preparation for the Virgin London Marathon, finishing in 4 hours 36 minutes in joint 14th place. Catherine Marriott (RSPB Staff Association Running Club) finished in 6 hours 2 minutes in 50th place. This was the first time Cat had followed a written route description on her own and was relieved to discover how accurate it was, despite having to cope with wearing a pair of uncomfortable shoes. "The scenery was amazing and helped me to take my mind off how much my feet were hurting", Cat recounts "but that aside I do hope the event will be staged again next year, it was really rather enjoyable, considering."

So, with maps in hand and a good supply of cakes and jelly babies at checkpoints around the course this appears to have been a very popular event, raising in excess of £450 for the Bedford Hospitals Charity. And to top it all off there were locally made Bedfordshire Clangers for all!

UK Intercounties Cross Country - 13th March 2010

Four junior members of Biggleswade Athletic Club represented Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire at the UK inter-county cross-country championships in Birmingham on Saturday 13th March 2010.

Connor Trudgill (Beds) and James Thomas (Cambs) came 140th and 240th respectively in the U13 boy's race, whilst in the U15 boy's race Sam Smith (Cambs) finished in 250th position.

Meanwhile in the U20 women's category Hannah Hutchinson (Cambs) did very well, to finish in 96th position in a very strong field.

Milton Keynes Festival of Running - 7th March 2010

Last Sunday a group of Biggleswade Athletic Club runners joined 3,500 other competitors for the Milton Keynes 'Festival of Running'. The event incorporated 5K, 10K and half marathon distance races and though the sun shone constantly throughout the morning the biting wind kept the temperatures hovering just a few degrees above freezing.

The start was a little chaotic, as the organisers battled against the noise from the gathering crowd of runners and supporters. The 10K race eventually got underway at 10.00am with the half marathon just a couple of minutes after that.

Craig Brown came close to a personal best time in the 10K finishing in 40mins 36secs (9th position overall), while Rob Rumble did exceptionally well, crossing the finish in 47mins 31secs. Mark Lowe also had a good race completing the slightly undulating course in a respectable time of 49mins 52secs.

In the half marathon, Jon Balaam looked very comfortable as he crossed the finish line in 1hr 31mins to be the first Biggleswade AC runner home, he also managed to shave 7 minutes off his previous personal best time. Another personal best time of 1hr 53mins was recorded by John Kenyon (could this be attributed to his abstention from alcohol we ask ourselves), and one of the club's newest members, Melanie Brooks, was thrilled to discover that she had completed her very first half marathon in a fantastic time of 2hrs 13mins.