



Mynyddwyr De Cymru

Newsletter – April 2005

MDC spearheads devolution

Probably the best independent fell running club in the world

www.mdcwales.org

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At the 2005 AGM, following a lengthy dispute with the Athletics Association of Wales, now Athletics Wales (AW), Mynyddwyr De Cymru (MDC) became, by unanimous vote, probably the best independent fell running club in the world. What does this mean and what lies behind the decision?

For most club members the most important consequence relates to participation in championship races and registration with AW:

- you will no longer be able to register as an athlete with AW via MDC;
- if you want to run for Wales or count in AW championships you must be a registered athlete. We think that you cannot do that as an individual and you will have to join an affiliated club (but check this out - Contact their main office in Newport on 01633 416633); and
- if you run in AW 'official' races you may be charged an extra pound.

The Chairman of MDC has noted his willingness to discuss this further with MDC members, as long as it is not during Sgorio or Doctor Who (presumably this is because Buffy has finished).

Other than that things seem to be business as usual. There was a bit of flurry about insurance cover. It seems that, following recent legislation, the various athletics governing bodies cannot sell insurance. What they can do is provide permits for races which then allows insurance cover to be obtained. Athletics Wales will issue permits to affiliated organisations, or to non-affiliated organisations for a cover, or joining, fee.

While the AW was setting up one version of insurance cover a whole new era was starting for fell running in Wales in the guise of the Welsh Fell Running Association (WFRA). The WFRA has arranged an insurance scheme along the same lines as that in operation in Scotland. This provides race organisers with a real alternative and one which, on balance, seems preferable. Consider that the AW scheme requires:

- being a registered athlete (£15);
- getting the support of an affiliated club for your race;
- preparing a risk assessment ;
- complying with AAW requirements re medical cover, police etc involvement; and
- charging unregistered runners an extra pound for the privilege.

While the WFRA scheme requires:

- the organiser joining WFRA (£10);
- the organiser depositing details of his/her race with the Fixtures Secretary for inclusion in calendar;
- agreeing to the safety rules (which are just about identical to the old FRA rules); and
- enjoying the race (a mandatory requirement).

This is an either-or option as it is illegal to insure anything twice, I'm reliably informed, so if you excuse me I'll just nip down to the old car insurance shop and...

Of course, there is a third option. There always is. You can become Scottish, if they'll have you, and do the same thing as you can with the WFRA but for six quid rather than a tenner. And anyway, who wants to be Scottish when you can be Welsh. After all, what have the Scots ever done for us? I know we've not done anything for the Scots, but that's hardly the point, is it.

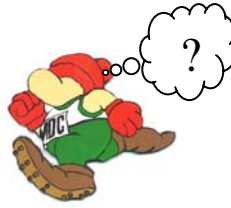
Pragmatics aside, what lies behind MDC's decision to disaffiliate from AW and become, probably, the best independent fell running club in the world?

The secretary of MDC has taken the time to write to AW and explain the arguments in some detail. The nub of the issue is an ongoing concern about breaches of rules, including safety rules, at the Waun Fach fell race, by the AAW. This issue in itself remains unresolved, and this generated concern on the part of the race organisers with particular regard to ultimate responsibility.

It was noted to the AW that the WFRA has an ethos in keeping with that of fell running, and fell running clubs, and has successfully established an insurance scheme. Therefore, it was felt more appropriate for MDC to disaffiliate.

Anybody who's been around for a while will, naturally, be familiar with the other big argument lurking in the background. What do the governing

bodies of athletics do for fell running in any case?



Editor's comment

Being new to editing the MDC newsletter I didn't quite know what to expect, and it has taken a while to get things underway. But we're getting there. One of the first things I've noticed is that OGB moonlights as a fell race reporter.

We'll be producing the newsletter quarterly and aim to build it up over the next couple of years. So, any news, stories, write ups, and so on – send them in. Contact details are provided on the front page of the newsletter.

You'll want to look at the MDC website as well, of course. It's under development, and has some glitches, but we're getting there and it should be fully up to speed within the next couple of months. You can find the website at:

www.mdcwales.org

I also want to plug the Welsh Fell Running Association. You can reach their website via a link with the MDC website. They have a great calendar of events and races.

We've included the Tuesday night running schedule in this newsletter and the membership form for MDC. If you haven't yet renewed your membership, now's your chance.

We're always keen to hear from you so get in touch.

Summary of the 2005 AGM

The Chairman reported that 2004 had been a reasonably successful year for the club with record Tuesday night attendances, 27 at the waterfalls, but poorly attended races such as Llanbedr-Blaenavon and Cribyn. The lack of a calendar may have played a part but organisers could have considered something more than a two line entry in the FRA calendar. Now that there were two or three calendars the same problem should not arise. Recent races had seen turn outs of 40 runners.

This year marked the 25th birthday of the Club which had started when it was suggested that there be a run from Llanbedr to Blaenavon by Doc Buffet and Phil Dixon, inter alia, both of whom were still 'around'.

The Club had also enjoyed a very successful social evening at which Dr Stroud had spoken and thanks were given to John Aggleton for securing Dr Stroud for the occasion and Jenny and Douglas for organising the venue and food.

The secretary reported on the situation with Athletics Wales, and the treasurer noted a healthy closing balance and a reserve of kit stocks.

At the time of the meeting the Welsh Fell Running

Association was established with a current membership of c. 150, a calendar, a website and an open championship. It was suggested that the vast majority of races in Wales were now WFRA insured rather than under the AAW scheme. Disaffiliation from AW was discussed and voted on, with the outcome as we know it.

Martin continues as president, Douglas as secretary and Fred will be treasurer. John Sweeting will continue as membership secretary.

The Club thanked Kay for her special contribution in marshalling everywhere (and getting a nice tan in the process), writing the Winter League results software, and designing/organising mugs, T-shirts, and so on.

25 years: Requiem or celebration?

Dr. Buffett wrote a rather wonderful letter to MDC members celebrating the 25th Llanbedr to Blaenavon Fell Race and asked was this to be a 'Celebration or Requiem'. Well, we know the answer to that. I decided to publish most of his letter in full for this edition of the newsletter as it heralds 25 years of fell racing in Wales.

By the way, in case you didn't know the answer I've also published OGB's write up on the race after Dr. Buffett's letter.

'I arrived in Blaenavon 26 years ago as a fresh faced GP having served my apprenticeship in Cumbria where I acquired a liking for long fell races. At the time this was not an activity the local populous was familiar with, rugby being the only sport worth talking about. So a GP running about the hills in shorts was definitely

a bit of an oddity so it was a great pleasure to discover another kindred spirit had also migrated south, one Phillip Dixon who at the time was pastor of one of the numerous chapels.

So with Philip's evangelical flare to the fore we set about bringing Fell running to the valleys of S Wales and the race was born. The first race was in 1980 when Phillip beat 37 other hardy souls

MDC committee for 2005/2006

- Chairman: Martin Lucas
- Treasurer: Fred Parry
- Secretary: Doug Adlam
- Membership secretary: John Sweeting

in 2hrs 10min, and with the exception of the foot and mouth year 2001 it has been held every year since. The route has undergone a few changes over the years due to changes of land ownership and access difficulties but has always featured the now notorious North face of the Blorenge as the final climb. MDC was formed about this time and with it came many other races in S Wales. So although Wales has an earlier fell running hero in Guto I guess we can claim to have reintroduced the sport to S Wales in the modern era.

The original route going E from Crug Mawr through Forest Coal Pit was my favourite even though it included a road section as it gave one a runnable route up Sugar Loaf. The way off the hill then got incorporated into a garden so next up was the direct route on this leg with the kind consent of the local farmers. I was never very keen on this one as it was a bit of a slog up Sugar Loaf which only the very fit could run. So when there were some changes in land ownership I took the opportunity to alter the route to its current format which though longer allows most people to run Sugar Loaf.



By far the most successful runner over the years has been Andy Darby who won the race no less than 8 times in the 80's and early 90's. His best time of 1.53.38 has never been beaten and 5 of his wins broke the 2hr barrier which has only otherwise been broken by 10 others over the years. I have excluded the 1986 race from these statistics as it was as a British championship race run over a slightly shorter route to accommodate the larger numbers, a record of 106. This was won by Jack

Maitland in the remarkable time of 1.50.17 with the next 2 also just under Andy's time but only Jack's record could be considered to have bettered Andy's performance. There have been 3 other multiple winners, Simon Forster with 3 and Mark Palmer and James McQueen with 2 each. Two vets have won the first being Les Williams in 89 and the other being John Nixon in 92 in one of the few times under 2 hrs (1.58.58). Of the ladies Lydia Gould in 92 set the best time of 2.16.13 on the old course but Menna Angharad's time of 2.19.03 is arguably better given the longer route.

Numbers have been fairly consistent over the years averaging 50-60 with the occasional 80 in years when the race has been included in the Welsh championship but since the foot and mouth year numbers have fallen worryingly to 40 in 02 and 03 and to only 25 last year and of those 15 were Veterans or older.

And so to this year our 25th anniversary and the title of this article

YES we are going to celebrate so after the race I have booked a proper meal in a local restaurant in the early evening which I hope most of the competitors will stay for and to which I shall also invite our helpers and of course we would love to see some of those who competed in earlier races joining us as well. I'm afraid I have no means of contacting most of them I can only hope they still read The Fellrunner and contact me.

Then on the Sunday we will organize a short fun race of about 5 miles as a handicap based on the previous day's times so in theory you should all finish together. So please come and make a weekend of it, have a look around our World Heritage Industrial landscape and visit Big Pit with its fascinating underground tour which incidentally is free. Also the Archbishop of Canterbury is taking the service in our 200 year old church on Sunday for the religious amongst you. We may be able to help

with basic floor space or camping locally if you need it.

BUT- There seems to be an undeclared civil war going on within Welsh Fell running between AAW and the reformed WFRA both of which are currently hoping to use our race as part of their separate Welsh Championships. Both have their own and separate insurance policies only one of which can be used for any given race. So at present I don't know under which banner the race will be run or if the other group whichever it is will turn up or boycott the race. Most of my helpers come from MDC which has mostly gone with the WFRA but my son needs to be associated with AAW for team selection purposes. So I am kind of stuck in the middle and with already lower numbers competing we can't afford to split our numbers further. We are traditionally the first significant race of the new season in Wales so time is short to sort out this mess.

So there we have it I'm planning to celebrate but without everyone's support this could be the 25th and final Llanbedr to Blaenavon race.

Gareth Buffett'

'It was one of those good-to-be-alive days in the Black Mountains, with a warm sun shining from a clear blue sky, the ground firm underfoot and a largish field for the 25th running of the Llanbedr to Blaenavon race, the original South Wales long fell race. Spectators with long memories and very limited outside interests would have recognised four starters from the 1980 race: the inaugural winner, Philip Dixon from Kendal (who is responsible for thinking

up many of the longer and harder events in the local calendar), Gareth Buffett, the organiser with partner Kate of all 25 races, Robert West from MDC (wearing the Springbok shirt as in 1980), and yours truly Old Greybeard who you will note doesn't feature in the results as he was in the later stages of flu and thought better of the long haul up the Sugarloaf.

While the old codgers mooched around at the back comparing injuries and noting how although the Blorenge seems much steeper these days winters aren't as cold as 25 years ago (*Ah, ou sont les neiges d'antan?*, as they say in Varteg) when we had to kick steps in the snow up the infamous climb, the younger generation were off and sprinting at the front. The leader for most of the race, Martin Humphreys from Stroud, at least gave a nod to the past with his 1970's hairstyle flowing in the breeze, and he had opened up a gap of over a minute on Crispin Flower at the summit of Crug Mawr, which he extended to 5 minutes at the summit of the Sugarloaf. However, Crispin had him in sight on the long drag up the north face of the Blorenge that has caused so many spectacular bonks in the past and which was voted Nastiest

Climb in South Wales in a recent poll of a totally unrepresentative group of MDC members, and by tippy-toeing silently but at high speed through the lock-up garages and burnt-out cars that typify Blaenavon's World Heritage Site

Crispin managed to sneak past Martin literally in the last 20 yards, much to the latter's surprise.

Further back the legions of MDC runners were split by 'foreigners' from a

Posn.	Name	Cat.	Time	
1	Crispin Flower	SM	2:22:11	1 st Man
5	Patrick Woodisse	SM	2:31:57	
6	Julian Carter	SM	2:41:35	
8	Rhys Williams	SM	2:42:05	
9	Dan Booth	SM	2:43:18	
10	Tom Gibbs	SM	2:43:38	
23	Dick Finch	MV60	3:05:50	1 st MV60
24	John Syms	SM	3:06:36	
25	Alwyn Nixon	MV50	3:14:05	
36	Robert West	MV60	3:39:10	
DNF	John Darby	MV50	-	
DNF	Eric Meredith	MV60	-	
DNF	Martin Lucas	MV50	-	
37 finish				

Note: only MDC members listed in the results here

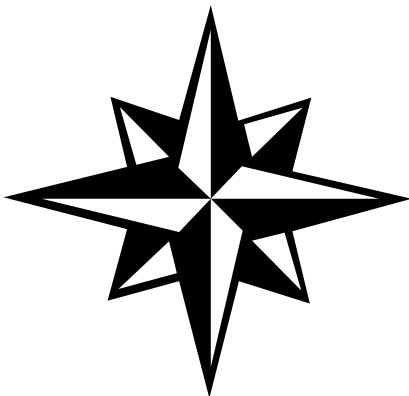
wide range of clubs, which seems to indicate that the Welsh FRA's policy of opening its championship to all comers is already paying dividends. Jackie Lee of Eryri held off the challenge of teammate Victoria Musgrove to be first lady: local lad Dimitri Vorres put his detailed knowledge of the back lanes of Blaenavon to good use to be first

veteran, while Adrian Orringe put a recent dose of the lurgy behind him to be first superveteran and to get some points on the board for his new club Mynydd Du. The evergreen Dick Finch had an easy win in the superdupervets over John Collins from Swansea, although John was giving away a good few years to his younger rival.

Two of the '25-year' men made it to the finish: Phil Dixon was 22nd in 3.03.50 and Robert West was 36th in 3.39.10. I wonder how many of this year's entries will be involved in the 50th race in 2030? I think I'll be hovering over the top of the Bloreng in my anti-grav Zimmer watching the fun.

So to the pub and then to the excellent 25th anniversary dinner. Many thanks to Gareth and Kate for a grand day out – all this and the Grand Slam too!

Old Greybeard



South Wales Winter Hill Series 2004-2005

The League consists of seven short and surprisingly steep races at various venues in the Brecon Beacons National Park and the Valleys, in which a runner's best five results score points. The scoring system is based on time, with runners' scores being dependent on their times in relation to the average time of the first five finishers. With me so far? Although the League is administered by me and John Sweeting, it is not an MDC production and normally features races organised by members of a few different clubs. The programme of races also varies from year to year. All distances and heights quoted are approximate.

Round 1: Fan Fawr: 2/1000.

9th October 2004

Straight up and down from Storey Arms, with some potential for route choice on the descent which in mist has caused embarrassment for several experienced runners in the past. There were no mistakes for Andy Jones (representing MDC at this stage but later 'defecting' to Mynydd Du) as he made his intentions for the League clear with a storming win in 16.42, which brought him a League record points score of 108. The majority of the rest of the field finished in a big rush between 18 and 23 minutes, with Peter Ryder of Brycheiniog impressing on his Winter League debut in third place, seeing off dad Chas by almost four minutes. Don't know where he gets it from!

Fan Fawr results:

Posn.	Name	Cat.	Time	
1	Andrew Jones	SM	16:42	1 st man
5	Douglas Adlam	SM	19:24	
6	Mark Bryant	MV40	19:27	1 st MV40
7	Rhys Williams	SM	19:42	
8	Mark Saunders	MV40	19:55	
12	John Darby	MV50	21:40	
14	Andy Stott	MV40	22:27	
15	Martin Lucas	MV50	22:35	
16	Alice Bedwell	FV40	22:52	1 st lady
18	Neil Lewis	SM	23:23	
21	John Battersby	MV60	30:17	1 st MV60
21 finish				

Note: MDC members listed in the tables only

**Round 2: Blorenge: 3/1600.
13th November 2004**

The steepest of the lot and the race that has caused two runners to be hospitalised in the past and which was voted 'nastiest climb in South Wales' by the MDC Tuesday night gang in 2003. The route goes straight up the north face and then takes a slightly more wimpish line down the first part of the descent (following yours truly's spectacular but painful triple somersault descent on the old 'direct' route in 1998) before the pitch-black plummet through the tunnel (mind your head!... oops – too late) under the canal to the finish.

It was that man Jones again, although latest MDC recruit Gareth Craft gave him a good chase to finish only 21 seconds adrift. Mark Palmer's 1997 record was always safe though, and it looks as though there's no-one on the local scene capable of challenging it at present. Ryder Junior again took third, a fine result on a more technical course than Fan Fawr. The facilities of Nevill Hall hospital were not required this year.

Blorenge results:

Posn.	Name	Cat.	Time	
1	Andrew Jones	SM	25:29	1 st man
2	Gareth Craft	SM	25:50	
7	Mark Saunders	MV40	28:26	1 st MV40
8	Douglas Adlam	SM	28:31	
12	Mark Bryant	SM	30:06	
13	Neil Lewis	SM	30:21	
14	Alice Bedwell	FV40	30:32	1 st lady
21	Andy Stott	MV40	32:56	
22	Dick Finch	MV50	33:08	
24	Paul Lewis	MV50	33:33	
26	Martin Lucas	MV50	34:06	
30	Eric Meredith	MV60	42:34	
32	John Battersby	MV60	46:14	
33 finish				

**Round 3: Abergwynfi: 3½/1500.
11th December 2004**

'The armpit of the Valleys' © Steve Littlewood but then he did pioneer the 'Littlewood's Folly' descent into the wrong village a few years back. Anyway, once past the burnt out cars and assuming the local hooligans haven't pinched the flags again, the running on the open hill is good and fast on short grass, interrupted only by the seriously vicious 'Bunny' climb up the steep side of Mynydd Caerau, from where if the red mist lifts there are views as far as Pen-y-fan one way and Lundy Island the other.

Now look here Andy, this is getting tedious. How about giving someone else a chance? Another 108-pointer from the league leader, finishing a huge 1.46 ahead of Stroud's Mike Duxbury. There was some close racing further down the field though, with the judges being unable to separate Simon Blease and Neil Lewis in 13th and a major battle between Chas Ryder, Chris Thomas, John Darby and Martin Lucas for the glory that comes as second supervet. Steve Littlewood of Hereford was already making sure of retaining his supervets title by winning that category in all three races. I've made no mention of the ladies yet, as no pattern had emerged, with MDC's Alice

Bedwell winning the first two but missing this one to allow Emma Seward a first win.

Race headquarters is in the Great Western Hotel, a seriously intimidating valleys pub. However, Mrs G used to teach the landlord more years ago than she cares to remember, and as usual their hospitality was in inverse proportion to the grimness of the immediate vicinity. The choccy Santas seemed popular as well.

Abergwynfi results:

Posn.	Name	Cat.	Time	
1	Andrew Jones	SM	28:02	1 st man
3	Gareth Craft	SM	31:12	
7	Douglas Adlam	SM	32:57	
8	Mark Bryant	MV40	30:06	1 st MV40
10	Rhys Williams	SM	34:22	
14	Neil Lewis	SM	35:14	
16	John Darby	MV50	36:11	
17	Chris Thomas	MV50	36:12	
18	Martin Lucas	MV50	36:29	
27	Dave Gilbert	MV50	45:07	
29	John Battersby	MV60	51:07	1 st MV60
30	John Sweeting	MV50	51:51	
30 finish				

**Round 4: The Darran: 3/1300.
15th January 2005**

An unrelenting road, track and hill ascent of Twmbarlwm from Risca, with an unrelenting etc descent the same way. Very quick and very painful on the long road finish and not a good way to start the new year if you've over-indulged.

With Andy Jones sitting this one out, Peter Ryder made good his early-season promise with his first win, taking the notable scalp of (perhaps a not fully-fit) Matt Collins. Mind, you don't easily see off the likes of Duxbury, Craft and MDC's Pat Wooddisse without having a bit of talent, and it will be interesting to watch how Peter's running develops. By this stage in the League you can put fairly firm bets on where everyone else will finish, with allowances for injuries and illness, so there were no big surprises. Brycheiniog's Chris Gildersleve, in his first race back after some chronic plantar fasciitis, pulled a hamstring on

the descent so that was him out for the rest of the series, while Satu Haikala must have thought she had done enough to win the 'furthest travelled for a Winter League race' by coming all the way from Finland, but as we shall see Brycheiniog's secret weapon Hiro Nakayama beat her by several thousand miles in the PCC race. Also worth a mention is Alice Bedwell's third win in the Ladies category, but her absence from the last three races meant that her quest for glory was at an end.

Darran results:

Posn.	Name	Cat.	Time	
2	Matthew Collins	SM	21:58	
4	Gareth Craft	SM	22:39	
5	Patrick Wooddisse	SM	22:56	
6	Rhys Manning	SM	23:05	
7	Mark Saunders	MV40	24:27	1 st MV40
8	Douglas Adlam	SM	24:31	
12	Mark Bryant	VM40	25:11	
14	Rhys Williams	SM	25:52	
16	Neil Lewis	SM	26:32	
18	Alice Bedwell	FV40	26:38	1 st lady
22	Andy Stott	MV40	28:24	
23	Martin Lucas	MV50	28:41	
24	Chris Thomas	MV50	28:50	
33	Dave Gilbert	MV50	34:20	
34	John Battersby	MV60	37:10	
35	Gareth Buffett	MV50	37:47	
36	Cledwyn Jones	MV60	38:52	
37	Les Pugh	MV50	39:25	
38 finish				

**Round 5: Llanthony: 4/1400.
12th February 2005**

One of the most beautiful settings for any race anywhere, with the start and finish at Llanthony Priory in the Vale of Ewyas, but with a long climb to Offa's Dyke and an interminable ridge run before a finishing plummet. Good views though.

The leading group, including Andy Jones, Danny Lewis and Matthew Collins, went astray on the first climb and ended up way to the south of the first summit, allowing Mike Duxbury and Ifor Powell to take the lead along the ridge (*Note: the first runner to the trig and along the ridge was actually me and not Mike! – Rhys*). A big effort by the errant three brought them back into contention but Ifor held them off on the long run in across the very muddy fields

to win by 3 seconds in 39.31. Jessica Turnbull of Cheltenham had an impressive run in the poor conditions to be first lady in 45.34, beating her father Ian by over 12 minutes. In yet another parent/child race Judith Powell took just double son Ifor's 39 minutes to get round.

Although conditions at the start/finish were quite pleasant, snow storms could be seen along the ridge and, worse, they were heading north-south whereas the race goes south-north. If the leading group hadn't gone astray on the first climb they might have missed the worst of the weather, but as they all lost about five minutes through their error they had to face the blizzard with the rest of us. Really it was very cold on the ridge and all the runners were glad to get into the lee of Loxidge Tump on the descent. John Sweeting, the marshal at the turn, was not envied. Helen Bennett turned an ankle badly at the top of the descent and she was fortunate that the MDC walking section (Kay, Fred and Clive) were handily placed with a supportive arm and extra clothes. Perhaps in these conditions the organiser should insist on full body cover rather than just recommend it?

Llanthony results:

Posn.	Name	Cat.	Time	
4	Rhys Williams	SM	41:11	
6	Matthew Collins	SM	41:22	
7	Gareth Craft	SM	42:06	
12	Douglas Adlam	SM	43:40	
18	Paul Lewis	MV50	46:30	
21	Andy Stott	MV40	47:55	
23	Martin Lucas	MV50	49:19	
34	John Ledsam	MV40	54:50	
37	Robert West	MV60	57:28	1 st MV60
41	Dave Gilbert	MV50	63:19	
42	John Battersby	MV70	63:24	1 st MV70
43	Gareth Buffett	MV50	63:51	
44	Les Pugh	MV50	65:20	
47	Rod Jones	MV50	72:45	
48 finish				

Round 6: Sugarloaf: 4½/1500. 5th March 2005

New for 2005, this takes a longish route to the top from the Crown Inn, Pantygelli. I had to miss this one with the lurgy so I can't say much more

except it was ***@!* cold waiting for them all to finish. Although the course was well marked and flagged, with marshals on the top and at the critical junctions, Danny Lewis and Matt Collins again thought the course wasn't long enough and decided to add an extra loop off the wrong side of the mountain. In the absence of Andy Jones this left the race open for others to record some high scores, with Mike Duxbury triumphing in 42.25 and Dave Burton (Tarren Hendre) second in 45.00. Matthew Stott ran an impressive 45.14 to be third overall and first junior, and in a season where children beating fathers was becoming the norm he saw off his father Andy by almost 7 minutes. Andy Jones's absence took him off the top of the leader board and meant that the overall champion would not be decided until the final race of the season. Exciting, eh?

Sugarloaf results:

Posn.	Name	Cat.	Time	
7	Mark Bryant	VM40	47:20	
13	Andy Stott	MV40	51:55	
20	Dick Finch	MV60	53:52	1 st MV60
22	Chris Thomas	MV50	55:50	
23	Patrick Wooddisse	SM	56:29	
27	Matthew Collins	SM	60:48	
29	John Sweeting	MV50	62:05	
30	Dave Gilbert	MV50	62:13	
31	Robert West	MV60	62:15	
33	Les Pugh	MV60	67:32	
35	John Battersby	MV70	70:30	1 st MV70
35 finish				

Round 7: Pen Cerrig Calch: 4/1800. 2nd April 2005

The traditional finale, with the highest summit of the season (2301 feet). A very long climb with a nice boulder field at the top, round the trig and back the same way and hope you're not involved in a sprint finish down the last field.

On a balmy spring day, when really the checkpoint marshals should have been charged for the pleasure of going up the hill, Andy Jones returned after missing Sugarloaf and was never headed as he made sure of the League title. The real excitement was in the Veterans, where Simon 'Wheeze'

Blease had to beat Mark Bryant to make sure of the prize. Wheeze's recent form had been very impressive though, and with Mark coming back from the flu and suffering an overindulgence in business trips to Europe it never came down to the finishing sprint the spectators wanted. South Wales's oldest 'independent' fell club, Brycheiniog, were well represented for a change, but whether Hiro Nakayama has Welsh ancestry remains unproved. He did pick up the 'furthest travelled for a league race' trophy though, as a quick check of Fred's 1947 AA Book of the Road showed Osaka is even further away from Llanbedr than Beddgelert.

Pen Cerrig Calch results:

Posn.	Name	Cat.	Time	
2	Gareth Craft	SM	29:58	
6	Julian Carter	SM	32:20	
8	Rhys Williams	SM	34:27	
10	Mark Bryant	MV40	34:49	
11	Doug Adlam	SM	35:04	
14	John Syms	SM	35:59	
22	Chris Thomas	MV50	39:20	
25	Martin Lucas	MV50	40:12	
26	John Darby	MV50	40:25	
30	Robert West	MV60	42:23	1 st MV60
31	Dave Gilbert	MV50	43:08	
34	Eric Meredith	MV60	44:37	
36	John Sweeting	MV50	45:56	
37	Cledwyn Jones	MV60	48:56	
39	John Battersby	MV70	52:47	1 st MV70
40	Les Pugh	MV60	53:09	
41 finish				

A quick session with Mrs Greybeard's new computer gave us the final League tables, and with the sun beating down on the field the crystal glassware and commemorative Walter Winterleague mugs were awarded. 94 runners ran at least one race, but only four did all seven this year. The full results are on the attached table but in line with our motto of participation being more important than results I won't bore you here with who-won-what.

On behalf of the League, thanks to all the race organisers for their very generous donations to the prize fund, to all the marshals for their efforts in checking we all stayed alive and to the various hostellers who seemed only too pleased to have 50 people in their bars on a Saturday afternoon. As is standard practice, there will be changes to the programme of races for next season and we hope some new venues may emerge. Meanwhile, have a good summer and we'll see you at Fan Fawr for Winter League 2005-2006 on 8th October.

Martin Lucas

For completeness; the category winners in the winter league were as follows: *Rhys*

Cat.	Name	Club
SM	Andy Jones	MDC/Mynydd Du
SF	Helen Bennet	U/A
MV40	Simon Blease	Clwb Rhedwyr Brycheiniog
MV50	Steve Littlewood	Hereford Couriers
MV60	Ian Turnbull	Forest of Dean

Other results

Llangynhafal Loop 4.5miles/1500feet AS. 9th April 2005

Posn.	Name	Cat.	Time	
26	Dan Booth	SM	44:38	
32	Nick Iliff	SM	45:43	
73	Adrian Moir	MV40	54:54	
98 finish				

The second race in the WFRA open championship (Llanbedr-Blaenafon being the first) saw a few MDC runners making the trip up north. Having entered both of the first two

races, our very own Dan Booth is currently placed at the head of the overall league table – probably not an easy position to hold as the season goes on.

Quantocks race 7miles/1900feet AM. 20th February 2005

Again, just a few members taking the trip over The Bridge for the Quantocks race, organised by club member Tom Gibbs.

Posn.	Name	Cat.	Time	
1	Gareth Craft	SM	50:15	1 st man
19	Martin Lucas	MV50	65:32	
30	John Battersby	MV70	85:50	1 st MV70
30 finish				

Râs y Moelwyn 10.5miles/2800feet AM. 23rd April 2005

Posn.	Name	Cat.	Time	
127	Richard Wilson	MV50	1:41:38	
173	Dick Finch	MV60	1:53:40	
218 finish				

The first race in the “official” AW Welsh Championships and also a British championship counter. Just two runners entered as MDC.

Away from fellrunning, a few other achievements also deserve a mention; on Saturday 5th March 2005, Julian Carter completed the Barry Track 40 race – 40 miles around Barry running track, that’s 161 laps of 400m! Jules finished 25 seconds over 5 hours and beat his father Norman’s PB in the process. Had Jules been an AW registered athlete, he would’ve collected the silver medal for being the second Welshman. Andy Cleeves was first Welshman and went on to be first Welshman again at the Anglo-Celtic 100K competition in Dublin a few weeks later. Jules was given the chance to run for Wales there, but declined the offer – perhaps he does prefer the mountains after all!

Congratulations also to Terry Caveney on completing the 6 day, 243K Marathon des Sables race out in the Sahara.

Rhys

Newsletter submissions

Send all submissions to bill@mdcwales.org. If you don’t have email then you can send to my postal address but please send on disk if you can. If you can’t then send us a hardcopy and we’ll fit it in.

Reminder:

Club subscriptions for 2005 are due/overdue!
Use the form at the end of this newsletter to pay

Club kit – show your true colours!

Vests - £12

White with green and red bands. MDC in red letters.

Shorts -£10

Lime green

Available through committee members. If sufficient people are *definitely* interested, the club could probably be persuaded to renew its T-shirts and or tracksters. Please advise interest via website or direct to committee members.

MDC: 25 years of uphill struggle. Accept no alternatives!

Tuesday Night Programme

May

- 3 **Cardiff Harlequins RFC**, Whitchurch, Cardiff. Joint run with Harlequins Runners.
7 (Sat) **From the Mountains to the Sea**. Brecon to Merthyr Mawr on bike and foot.
Details (to be finalised) from Martin Lucas on 01656 880009
10 **at home with Robert West**, Caerphilly Mountain (02920 882370 for directions)
17 **at home with Mark and Alice**, Risca (01633 615586 for directions)
21 (Sat) **Harlequins Big Day Out**: 80 miles and 16000+ feet of climb in a mass attempt at the South Wales (aka Brecon Beacons) Traverse. Details from Pete Morfey 029 2052 2197 email morfey@tiscali.co.uk or Ed Whiting 029 2021 2308 email ed@edwhiting.com. Complete this and you can call yourself a fell runner!
24 **Llantrisant Forest car park**
31 **Tintern Abbey**

June

- 2 *cycling from the Fox & Hounds, Blackmill (behind the war memorial)*
7 **Storey Arms: heading west?**
9 *cycling from Cardiff Harlequins RFC, Whitchurch, Cardiff*
14 **Cardiff Harlequins RFC**, Whitchurch, Cardiff. Joint run with Harlequins Runners
15 (Wed) **Coity Race**. 7.30 from the Whistle Inn nr Blaenavon. Doc Buffett 01495 791454
16 *cycling from the Fox & Hounds, St. Brides Major (yes, a different F&H)*
18 (Sat) **provisional date TRANSFAN**: 21 miles/8500 feet/navigation over the wildest parts of the Beacons. After 20 years the classic route is unchallenged as the toughest day's run in Wales. *Not a race but run/walk/limp at your own pace. Champagne bbq at finish with the awesome and magnificent Transfan Trophy (holder: Rhys Manning) being awarded for the best sporting performance. Details: Martin Lucas as above.*
21 **Cwm Llwh** followed by BBQ if dry
23 *cycling from the Fox & Hounds, Blackmill*
28 **Bargoed Leisure Centre**
30 *cycling: venue to be decided*

July

- 5 **Llangynidr Village Hall** (SO 155195)
7 *cycling: venue to be decided*
12 **Neuadd reservoirs**, north of Pontsticill
14 *cycling: venue to be decided*
19 **Llangeinor Arms**, on the hill between Llangeinor and Ogmor Vale
21 *cycling: venue to be decided*
26 **Storey Arms**: eastwards this time?
28 *cycling: venue to be decided*

August

- 2 **Angel Inn, Pontneddfechan**. The infamous waterfalls run with optional swim.
4 *no cycling this week: feet up to prepare for...*
6 (Sat) **Bob Smith Traverse**: The annual attempt at 45-50 miles of running over and cycling between the six 800 metre summits of south Wales, from Llanddeusant to the Grwyne Valley. *Not a race but a grand and rather demanding day out. Details as Transfan.*
9 **Pantygelli Inn outside Abergavenny**. Where the winter league Sugarloaf race starts
11 *whether cycling continues depends on interest post-BST. Check for details*
16 **Llanthony Abbey** (possibly no food at this venue)
23 **Torpantau** (highest point on Pontsticill – Talybont road)
30 **Maen Llwyd Inn**, Rudry

September

- 6 **Cwmcarn Forest Drive**
13 **Southerndown beach**, nr. Bridgend. A spot of easy coastering – tide should be out
17(Sat) provisional date another chance to do the **Bwlch Bike Bash**: Nantymoel, Treorci and Abergwynfi, starting, crossing twice and finishing at Bwlch y Clawdd. Just a fun morning out to end the cycling season. Lunch after at the Llangeinor Arms. Details: Doug Adlam 02920 566352
20 **Sirhowy Valley Country Park**
27 **End of the road, Gilfach Goch**. No idea what's there – let's live a little!

October

- 4 **Caerphilly Mountain car park**
11 **Storey Arms for Pen-y-fan in the dark**. Torch and high lunacy threshold essential!!
18 **Fagin's Ale & Chop House, Taffs Well**
25 **Merthyr Mawr Village Green** for the sand dunes in the dark followed by end of season feasting for all survivors at the Farmers Arms, St. Brides Major.

If you need more information phone me (Martin Lucas) on 01656 880009 or find me at:
greybeard@chestnutview.freeserve.co.uk

Membership form

Mynyddwyr De Cymru



2005 Membership Application Form

NAME

ADDRESS

TELEPHONE

MOBILE

FAX

E-MAIL

OTHER CLUB MEMBERSHIP

AAW REGISTERED? YES NO

CLUB THROUGH WHICH REGISTERED

MALE/FEMALE

DATE OF BIRTH

SIGNATURE

DATE

DATA PROTECTION ACT (If you have **NO** objections, leave blank).

These details are stored by the secretary on computer. If you object to your details being stored in this way, please state below:

I DO NOT WISH TO HAVE THE ABOVE INFORMATION STORED ON COMPUTER BY THE CLUB

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY _____ (signature)

These details may also be circulated amongst club members. If you have any objection to this, please state below:

I DO NOT WISH TO HAVE THE ABOVE INFORMATION CIRCULATED TO OTHER CLUB MEMBERS

_____ (signature)

Membership fee £5.00 (make cheques payable to M.D.C.)
Return form and subscription to:
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Tel: 01550 721086
Mobile: 07929 021897
E-mail: john@grottoview.demon.co.uk