

2017 Gargrave Show Fell Race Report

Regular competitors to Gargrave Show fell race would be aware that whatever the weather they would undoubtedly have wet feet when they crossed the finish line. Eshton beck provides the first obstacle in each of the five races in the day's calendar, commencing with the under nines through to the Seniors event. The overnight and early morning deluges on Saturday raised the water level to above average so measures were put in place to ensure safety was paramount. The river crossing was double roped and race Marshalls were in strategic positions. Why do youngsters generally hate having a bath but love this scenario and would have run through it time and time again if they could?

Despite six other major races taking place in the North West area, there was a good turnout of over one hundred athletes ranging from the novice to the experienced and from club runners to unattached. The local clubs of Wharfedale, Barlick Fell Runners, Settle, and Keighley and Craven provided many of the prize winners. The event was well supported by athletes from a wide area and there was a good turnout from the thriving Trawden AC, a club which was founded twenty years ago by local legend Gerry McCabe of Colne.

The under Nines competitors were the first to test the conditions which were soft to say the least and they also provided the closest finish. The two front runners crossed the line in tandem with little to split the times but mere points of a second. Eight year old Toby Allerton of Baildon Eagles just had the edge over fellow eight year old Freddie Ward. Lucy Bagot of Settle Harriers led the girls home.

Barlick Fell runner Jacob Reeday of Hetton was first home in the under twelves race with an impressive finishing time. One of the younger competitors in this section, Settle Harrier Jack Sanderson, was in second position. Otley AC runner Charlotte Rawstron ran a strong race as first girl to finish and she was also in third place overall. Charlotte's family have a strong connection to Gargrave as her great Grandma was brought up in the Village and other family members still reside in the community. It was Madeline Moorhouse Smith who claimed the first local prize though, living only a short distance from the Show field on Eshton road.

A smaller field of runners tackled the under fourteens course. Jack Villiers of Barlick Fell runners took the honours, followed by Keighley and Craven runner Donnabhan Rudden. Will Atkinson won the first local male prize with his fourth position finish. This was a rare fell outing for Will who has now chosen to concentrate on track events. First girl was Keighley and Craven's Beth Roberts who also won the first local girl award.

It was decided to let the under seventeens competitors start their race alongside the senior race and with a shorter course, they were able to finish comfortably before the Seniors began to return. Sixteen year old Tom Barrett from Gargrave was an easy winner. Tom will be hoping the victory stands him in good stead for next week's England trials in the hills above Sedbergh. Betty Bergstrand from Middlesbrough AC was the ladies winner with Katie Atkinson of Gargrave in second position. Katie, like her brother Will, is now concentrating on more track related events and was heading off on Sunday to tackle a steeplechase course in Birmingham.

A good field of fifty six runners lined up for the Senior race with a mere sixty years separating the youngest and the oldest competitors, seventeen year old Benjamin Bergstrand of Middlesbrough AC and seventy seven year old Norman Bush of Ilkley AC.

The weather had fortunately improved as runners gathered at the start and spectator vision was good. The runner's quest was to navigate the river crossing and a winding climb through long meadow grass, rough pasture, negotiate a wet woodland track, culminating in a clay mud bath,

climbing further woodland onto open field and the shoulder of Sharphaw to the summit with a final steep lung bursting climb before the descent back to the Eshton road showground. There were a number of likely contenders for top spot and many knew they had to push themselves hard as time was of the essence if they were hoping to make it up into Wharfedale for the Burnsall fell race held later in the afternoon, which some runners had planned to do. Last year's runner up, twenty one year old Wharfedale Harrier James Hall, went one place better than 2016 and claimed victory. He was followed closely by Barlick Fell runner Jimmy Craig of Hellifield and third was Wharfedale Harrier Ali Burns. An excellent fourth position went to the young seventeen year old from Middlesbrough, Benjamin Bergstrand. First local was Gargrave resident Gavin Smith in eleventh position, running in Skipton AC colours. The over 50 veteran award was won by Dave Hammond of Calder Valley. The top lady was twenty eight year old Jo Shelmerdine who was visiting her Mum in Grassington. Jo spent her early years in the Village until university and work called her further afield. Alison Eagle was to take the treble, she was second lady, first veteran and first local, the latter award due to a relatively new residency for Alison at the nearby hamlet of Winterburn. All fifty six competitors finished the course after enjoying excellent runs on the great multi terrain course which threw up numerous things to tackle along the way. Favourite for the Juniors was, of course, the river crossing and for the Seniors the shock of the clay mud bath!

Thanks to all landowners, Marshalls and timekeepers for without them the sport and the enjoyment would not be possible.

Prize winners:

Under 9's Boys:	1. Toby Allerton, Baildon Eagles	6.22.23
	2. Freddie Ward, U/A	6.22.55
	3. Isaac Reeday, Barlick Fell runners	6.27
Under 9's girls:	1. Lucy Bagot, Settle AC	6.25
	2. Bella McCredie, Barlick Fell runners	7.25
	3. Francesca Bagot, Settle AC	8.16
First local:	Aimee Lawn, U/A	9.25
Under 12's Boys:	1. Jacob Reeday, Barlick Fell runners	6.39
	2. Jack Sanderson, Settle AC	7.07
	3. Dylan Carr, Ilkley Harriers	7.20
Under 12's Girls:	1. Charlotte Rawstron, Otley AC	7.11
	2. Isabella Welch, Stowmarket Striders	7.23
	3. Anna Black, U/A	7.27
First Local:	Madeline Moorhouse Smith, U/A	9.15
Under 14's Boys:	1. Jack Villiers, Barlick Fell runners	9.46
	2. Donnabhan Rudden, Keighley and Craven	9.57
	3. Lewis Carr, Ilkley Harriers	10.08
First local:	Will Atkinson, Keighley and Craven	10.27
Under 14's Girls:	1. Beth Roberts, Keighley and Craven	10.29
	2. Scarlett Metcalfe, Keighley and Craven	11.35
	3. Holly Crook, Trawden	11.36
First local:	Beth Roberts.	
Under 17's: Boys:	1. Tom Barrett, Keighley and Craven	13.01 (also First local boy)
Under 17's Girls:	1. Betty Bergstrand, Middlesbrough AC	15.33
	2. Katy Atkinson, Keighley and Craven	16.40 (also First local girl)

Seniors Male:	1. James Hall, Wharfedale	23.05
	2. Jimmy Craig, Barlick Fell runner	23.25
	3. Ali Burns, Wharfedale	24.34
First local:	Gavin Smith, Skipton AC	28.28
Veteran over 50:	Dave Hammond, Calder Valley	29.01

Seniors Female:	1. Jo Shelmerdine, U/A	34.04
	2. Alison Eagle, Ilkley Harriers (also First local and First veteran over 50)	35.24
	3. Dawn Tibbs, Trawden AC	36.12

Weatherill shield for highest placed local female from any category: Beth Roberts.

Donald McKell trophy for highest placed male from any category: Tom Barrett.

Silentnight Trophy for Seniors Male winner: James Hall.