

Hawswick FRA Champs, Sun 30 June

George Elmes

A fantastic and record turnout for a Championship Race (I think?) of 20 JIH's made the relatively short journey up to Hawswick in the Dales for round 5 of the English Fell Championship.

The setting in Littondale was really picturesque with the start on the meadow next to the River Skirfare.

The weather was ideal for running with a slight breeze to take the edge off of the warm sunshine and we all looked forward to another great days racing for the ever increasing numbers of juniors successfully taking to the fells over the past couple of seasons.

As normal in the championship races the standard of racing was extremely high with some very (very) difficult technical climbing and descending. Some excellent varied techniques to be seen with a number descending on the backsides after having to climb on all fours to reach the cairn on the top of Hawswick moor.

A real challenge that they all passed with flying colours underlined by all the satisfied Ilkley smiles at the finish that showed how much it was enjoyed it.

As usual the encouragement for our runners from each other was magnificent to see and certainly spurred their club mates onto greater performances.

Some great efforts from all but stand out performances for Robyn Anderson 4th GU8, Max Bradley 3rd BU10, Euan Brennan 4th BU12, and top of the pile Lucy Haines 1st GU14, Full results -

U8's

Jonathan Archer 10th, Robyn Anderson 13th (4th Girl), Nicholas Archer 19th, Max Stead 28th.

U10's

Max Bradley 3rd, Joe Braham-Butts 6th, Lewis Carr 19th, Poppy Anderson 35th (8th Girl) Harry Stead 43rd.

U12's

Euan Brennan 4th, Robbie Matthews 33rd, Emily Elmes 44th (15th Girl)

U14's

Lucy Haines 11th (1st Girl) , George Hardesty 16th , Lucy Jaques 24th (8th Girl), Tilly Melechi 34th (14th Girl) Neah Weston 40th (20th girl)

U16's

Ruaridh Mon- Williams 25th

Lucy and Joanne Williamson - result TBA. Both ran extremely well in a race that was run in the same longer 4m race as the seniors. This included two very steep climbs and descents. Deservedly as the last 3 Ilkley runners to race Ruaridh, Lucy and Joanne received the biggest cheers from the Ilkley crowd as they finished.

A selected few comments from the FRA website underline my point of how well the juniors performed in their races

"proper fell races"

"Challenging races that were enjoyed by all our Juniors"

"A good, challenging, technical fell race"

"And as ever, astounded by the quality of all the young runners. Well done to all involved in both organizing and participating. Great day out"

"That was awesome racing over awesome terrain, well done; hope your legs aren't too sore

I think the last comment from someone who knows a fair bit about racing on the fells sums it up for me, everyone with an Ilkley vest on was a winner today.

The day was rounded off with a number of our runners cooling off by having a paddle together in the river in conjunction with demolishing ice creams

The result means that in the junior club championship Ilkley move up a spot to 6th place in the league out of 70 clubs competing. Everyone that has run in the Ilkley vest in a Championship race up to now should be incredibly proud of their efforts.

Finally congratulations to Robbie Matthews who was lucky enough to win a pair of Walshes donated by Pete Bland Sports in the draw.

Last race in the Championship series is in at Langdale next Sunday - hope that we have another cracking turnout to finish the series in style.