

Brough Park Running Club weekly Couch to 5K (05/08/17)

The Brough Park Couch to 5K event attempts to accommodate and encourage people of all ages, and those of little fitness or ability to take part and get fitter alongside of speedier athletes; all of whom may have their own agenda in mind; whatever and however they do, we applaud them all, equally.

There's usually a diverse-bunch, those who have yet to get to grips with the shortest distance, or even our new entry-level event of 800 metres, along with those that view the hill or hills, the next distance or not stopping as their challenge, and of course the more serious athletes who hare around to compete against each other.

There are many who have fallen by the wayside - not literally - lacking the impetus to carry out their initial goal, or the mind-set to give it another go. We are sure that all the regular entrants - many of whom have thought about binning their trainers in order to slouch on their sofas - along with the back-room staff, would like to invite them to return and fulfil their aim, at their own pace, as some have done today.

The 90th event encompassed both sides of the story with new chapters being penned by many; younger athletes racing each other with their own agendas in mind, individuals, couples and families out to enjoy themselves, some of whom find it difficult to get to the line without quitting; and not so much about the déjà-vu scenario of 5K leader, Isaac Elkington, who eased his way to the finish in a slower than usual 20.38.

Three of the youngsters in the frame were: 10-year-old Lewis Smith, 13-year-old Louise Hackett and 11-year-old Siena Phillips. As usual Lewis forged ahead of the two girls around the first lap before he led Oliver Bailey (10) to the 2.2K finish in a pre-holiday-mode time of 9.31, the latter sixteen seconds adrift; Sienna tried her best to make up the distance between them; as did Louise behind her, alas both to no avail.

The younger female athlete got off to a sound start following a lengthy warm up; whereas her older club-mate and adversary tried her utmost to make up the ground between them throughout the chosen two laps; however, as soon as a metre or so was made up it was taken back. The previous week's order being reversed with a PB of twenty one seconds for Sienna in 15.54, eleven ahead of the PB of four for Louise.

Eight-year-old Edward Dodd completed his first 3.6K in 20.10, forty six seconds ahead of father Richard, who initially escorted younger son William (5) to the 2.2K finish in 12.23; both incurred almost half a minute slower times than previous over their distances; 12-year-old Madeline Statham was unable to make up the gap between her and William and returned a slower time of 12.38.

Julie Smith was the only member of her family not to be in pre-holiday-mode, gaining a PB of thirteen seconds over the 2.2K distance in 12.05; Lara (8) and father Martin both endured around ten second deficits from their best, with Harrison (14) below par by over a minute.

Kerrie Nixon is now planning to meet the challenge of another lap, after eight weeks at this distance; an overall reduction of over three minutes to 11.24, following a PB of twelve seconds this week. Husband, Peter, escorted eight year old Amelia to her own PB of sixteen seconds in 13.51.

Alex Barker commented that 'his charge was fast', as he struggled to keep up over the first 400 metres; this was in reference to the speedy James Burgess (7), however, it seems that either he or his father, Jason, who along with their dog, Benson, joined the flow and slowed him down as he completed the 2.2K in 11.46, which is three quarters of a minute off his best. However, Alex went on to complete the full distance, bettering the ten-week old PB by over three minutes in a time of 25.50.

Both six-year-old Connie Statham and v50, Louise Rogers achieved new PB's; the latter with a one second gain and the former a sixty second gain, in 16.02 and 16.32 respectively.

Tony Williamson was forced to pull in way short of his targeted distance due to a calf injury.

V40, Joanne Phillips had no escort duties on this occasion and completed one more lap than usual with an inaugural 3.6K time of 22.55; completing the task of traversing the hill on both occasions without a pause, and was more than pleased with the result.

However, V55, Elaine Hargreaves has taken part on more than a dozen occasions over this distance, reducing the initial time from 27.50 to 24.11, with an eleven second PB. Sarah Garde returned after a six week absence due to a leg-operation and pulled in a lap shorter than previously in 25.28; obviously she has still retained the pace as it was a two minute PB.

Due to marshalling adjustments and guidance, no entrants went off route and all were able to complete their chosen distances; Pippa Waddell (6) and mother, Wendy, covering their first 1.5K in 14.23. At the same distance, Rees Soutart (11), escorted mother, Lisa, and reduced his PB by over two minutes to 10.06, which was five seconds behind four-year-old Bleu Bailey's PB of sixteen seconds; whereas, v65, Mary-Jane Searles dropped back by a handful to 11.42.

The full distance saw the return of Jack Birch with a personal best time of over forty seconds in 23.09; which seemed to urge father, Karl, on to an improved time of 25.40, which is only nine seconds off his long standing best.

Steve Massey and v60, John Lagan had off days with slightly slower times of 22.38 and 26.35, despite the former entrant easing past Jack Birch en-route; with Fifteen-year-old Archie Cooper and v60, David Edge returning after absences with slower times of 23.52 and 25.11. Charlotte Statham toed the line on time and recorded an official 27.16, which is only nine seconds off her PB; Cheddleton running colleague, Claire Williamson also clocked an improved time and is once again teetering on the verge of a sub-30 minute time.

V65, Bill Mould paced around with Jan Percival to finish six seconds adrift in 28.59 – both fifty seconds off their best - Dawn Brown and Lisa Soutart were also below par and recorded slower times of 35.22 and 40.02.

Thanks to: Rachel Massey and Sam Goldstraw for marshal and time-recording duties.