Brough Park Running Club weekly Couch to 5K (23/12/17)

What an enjoyable event the 106th Brough Park Couch to 5K turned out to be; as anticipated there was an array of Santas and Elves scattered amongst the odd - somewhat ‘personal’ -guise of some others; with only one pair of matching jumpers and seemingly more entrants in fancy dress outfits than not.

After a couple of weeks absence from the run - due to the weather - it wasn’t expected that many entrants would gain PB’s, many having not done much or any training during the break, however, there were a few and many others striving to get back up to speed.

Mixed in with the would-be Christmas parcel deliverers were one or two serious runners, two of whom, Gareth Briggs and Jason Burgess, paced around in close harmony before the former seemed to suffer with a outfit related occurrence of ‘acute bra-strap-nipple-itus’, which allowed the latter to gain the lead on the final incline to cross the line five seconds ahead in 18.40; however, despite any soreness, Gareth gained a PB of thirty seconds for his efforts.

At the tail end of the 5K were three ladies, Dawn Brown, Sarah Garde and Elaine Hargreaves whom paced around with a similar gait, changing places along the way, with Elaine thirty seconds from Dawn at the line in 34.26 and Sarah mid-way between; all were best part of a minute from their best.

There were also a couple of duos who took the route in their pre-Christmas stride: Charlotte and Matthew Statham, along with Archie the dog, in addition to Tony and Claire Williamson; on this occasion the individual couples finished almost hand-in-hand in 27.30 and 32.20.

More than one contestant had to carry their unstable, lightweight headgear, whereas, Steve Massey - one of Santa’s helpers - carried his heavy sack all the way around the three laps and struggled over the line in 24.24, dragging his sac behind. (Let’s hope Santa isn’t as fatigued)

On the solo front, Big Elf - aka Paul Goldstraw - seemed to be hampered by the burden of his woolly, festive jumper and leggings as he slowed to a 25.41 finish; John Lagan’s tutu did nothing to aid his time of 26.51 - but he did raise more than one eyebrow and a few tut tuts. Placed in between were newcomer and a previous Leek Half entrant, Sarah Nutt, whose friend, Caroline Baba, was unable to keep pace to record 29.05.

Despite Richard Dodd not doing any training for several weeks he was only thirty seconds from his best in 28.28, and was followed by Bill Mould who improved by almost a minute on his last outings’ time and was only nine seconds adrift.

This event saw the return of Helen Finney after an Autumn session of hockey playing to finish a minute from her best in 28.18, with on-the-day partner, Jo Phillips only a few seconds behind; another entrant who returned after a long absence was Christopher Nelson who crossed the line twenty five seconds ahead of Helen, with Mike Turner only sixteen behind him.

North Staff’s, Special Olympic athlete, Joey Courchene returned to the park and upped to the full distance which he completed in 27.59.

There seemed little point in Isaac Elkington chasing down the leading runners, so eased his way to almost identical time to his last effort in 20.52 and fifty from his best.

SMAC athlete and debutant, Daniel Frewer (14), finished seventeen seconds ahead of club-mate, v40 Martin Pigott, in 22.05; with the pig-tailed head gear not slowing Dan Knowles down too much as he completed the course a minute behind the latter and thirty seconds ahead of Jamie Carney.

Karl Birch was the only other entrant who gained a PB in the 5K, his 24.39 time chipped five seconds off his best as he led Donna Eames by two dozen seconds; whereas, thirteen-year-old Louise Hackett chose not to aid her mother’s return after a lengthy injury to broach the tape three and a half minutes ahead in 23.25 and only five seconds from her best.

Seven-year-old Eden Pigott set off with good intentions, however, a nagging cough got the better of her and she cut her distance short to walk over the 800m line; while Sophie Hinton (3) was escorted by Daisy Williamson to that finish in 8.34 with Pippa Waddell (6) setting a PB of over two minutes only twenty two behind; it must be in the blood as mother, Wendy created a PB of twenty seconds in the 2.2K with a time of 18.02, following a five event absence.

Rebecca Hinton was unable to match her last event PB as she finished the 3.6K in 22.27.

The Bailey family once again chose different events; Bleu (4) and mother Kirsten completing the 1.5K in 10.50, followed twenty seconds later by Martha Williamson (7), with Oliver Bailey (10) heading the 2.2k in 9.47 which is just a score from his best.

Sienna Phillips (11) seemed to be in holiday mode as she trailed the aforementioned by ten seconds and fifty from her seven month old best time.

The infrequent jousting between James Burgess (7) and Edward Dodd (8) didn’t materialise as they both returned below par times of 11.57 and 12.16. Madeline Statham (12) crossed the line just five seconds ahead of six-year-old Laurie Hinton’s 13.51, with Joshua Eames (6) recording an improved time of 14.46 and followed fifteen seconds later by Adam and Ben Geens (7).

Father, Nick Webster, escorted sons Rian (7) and Josh (8) to an inaugural 17.11 time.

V65, Mary-Jane Searles followed on to recorded a 17.46 time.

Thanks once again to Sam Goldstraw, Marie Phillips and Steve Massey, and a Merry, Merry Christmas to all.

Don’t forget we’re all here again next Saturday.