

March 2018



Image: Steve Brown

## Ambleside AC Newsletter Relunched

A few months back, an old copy of a newsletter from the club's early days made it out of one Mr. S Shuttleworth's archive and into the hands of a group who'd been out over Black Crag from The Drunken Duck. Informative, irreverent and hilarious; it was a right good read and proof that Ambleside AC always has been, continues to be and always will be the greatest fellrunning club on the planet! It was pored over and enjoyed so much that a decision was made to "get the newsletter going again". So here's the first of what we hope to be many. We're an enormously active, successful and vibrant club with many runners training/racing together and individually in a vast array of different events. It is hoped that a regular newsletter will keep all club members aware of what's going on and what's coming up. Loads of you use the club's closed Facebook page. This has proved to be an invaluable means of sorting out team stuff, arranging reccies, social runs, rallying help for races etc. However, it isn't used by everyone and it can be difficult to follow threads and re-find info in old posts. So, bear with us whilst we get this right and in the meantime, get up those hills with your mates. There are two great pieces for you to enjoy in this month's edition: from club legends Selwyn Wright (of chicken song fame!) about the benefits of training and racing together and from Jim Tyson about Ambleside Juniors "back in the day". Happy running.

Ed



Image: Vince Gregg

## Junior News

### Todd Crag Junior Races: Sunday 25th March 2018

#### Help Needed

Many of you are aware that our junior members scene is every bit as fun and vibrant as our senior scene. In short, they're an awesome group of youngsters who are fun, talented and a privilege to work with.

You may or may not have noticed that our Todd Crag race is part of the national FRA English Championship series this year (Sunday 25th March 2018). Eleanor Knowles is the Race Organiser for this event and obviously we will be hoping for loads of race participation from our team of juniors.

We need a huge team of helpers on the day to ensure this national event runs smoothly. You are guaranteed an amazing day out with these guys. So if you can spare an hour or two, the following jobs are up for grabs:

- Registration
- Marshalling (high and low!)
- Refreshments
- Providing cakes

All offers of help to Eleanor Knowles:

[eleanorknowles333@btinternet.com](mailto:eleanorknowles333@btinternet.com)



## A Busy Month of Junior National XC!

The juniors have been flying the blue and green, and the parents ramping up the miles, into the far flung corners of the country. Most recently at the English National xc at Parliament Hill, London. Never has a start line looked so long with 500+ runners in every age category (the biggest ever!). It was a sunny day but a strong, cold headwind seemed to follow you all around the surprisingly hilly course, with mud, ice and snow not fazing any of our bold fell runners who did us proud!

### The results were:

|                       |         |
|-----------------------|---------|
| U13G Sophie Rylance   | 145/467 |
| U13B James Bowen      | 29/570  |
| U13B Harry Bowen      | 47/570  |
| U15G Chloe Rylance    | 33/464  |
| U15B Daniel Sanderson | 45/504  |



*Sophie (left) and Chloe Rylance (right)*

# Club Champs 2018

2018 Club Champs are being organised by Jim Tyson. Again, he's put together a sweet selection of races. Something for everyone so lace up ya shoes, get yesel there and pick up some champs points. Your best 4 to count.



| Date     | Race   | Meeting Point                                |
|----------|--|--|
| 18/2/18  | Loughrigg - Silver Howe Chase                            | cattle grid on Under L'rigg Rd               |
| 27/3/18  | Heron Pike—Stone Arthur Round. 4m, 2000ft fully flagged  | Traveller's Rest, 6.45pm                     |
| 3/4/18   | Loughrigg Orienteering. 1 hour score event, map provided | zig zags on Under L'rigg Rd, 6.00pm - 6.45pm |
| 24/4/18  | Seat Sandal Scamper. 4.5m, 2500ft, partially flagged     | Traveller's Rest, 6.45pm                     |
| 22/5/18  | Fairfield, 7.5m, 3000ft, partially flagged               | Traveller's Rest, 6.45pm                     |
| 16/6/18  | Great Lakes Race. AL 21k, 2130m                          | Stool End Farm, Gt Langdale                  |
| 1/7/18   | Skiddaw. AM, 15.4km. 960m                                |  |
| July tbc | Uphill Race  |  |
| 22/7/18  | Coniston Country Fair, AS, 9.7km, 732m                   |  |
| 27/8/18  | Black Combe Country Fair. AM, 12.5km, 625m               |  |
| 6/9/18   | Downhill Race tbc  |  |
| Nov tbc  | Arnside Knott  |  |

Any questions? Ask Jim:

[jim\\_tyson@hotmail.com](mailto:jim_tyson@hotmail.com)

# Next Club Champs Events

## Heron Pike - Stone Arthur Round (proposed Leg 4 of the British Relays): 27/3/18



You are probably aware that Ambleside AC are organising the FRA (UKA) British Relay in October this year from Grasmere. It promises to be a real tough Lakes event with courses over Heron Pike, Great Rigg, Seat Sandal, Fairfield and Cofa Pike - proper fell terrain!



As Jim has mentioned elsewhere in the Newsletter, our Club champs this year contains 3 races round each of the proposed legs 1,2 and 4 in March, April and May this year. As well as giving us some excellent courses to race round on a Tuesday, it will also help us troubleshoot, get some feedback and obtain a better estimate of winning leg times. It will also be a good chance for a hard run out and a bit of inter club banter as runners from other Lakes clubs have been informally invited to join us.

Leg 4 of the relay is the first one up, on the evening of **Tuesday 27th March**, setting off from the fields south of the Traveller's Rest pub on the A591. It is based around Alcock Tarn, Heron Pike and Stone Arthur (see map). We estimate the men's winning time to be around 40-45 mins. This leg will be fully flagged and suitable for 16 year olds at the

relay in October and at the informal 'race' on March 27th. It will start at **6.45pm**.

Please note that runners will be totally responsible for themselves on the evening. This is not a proper race, there will be no entry fee, numbers, prizes or marshals. There will be published times for all runners. You may be asked to carry FRA kit to keep things fair and safe, so come prepared. Add a head torch to your kit! Spread the word and hopefully see as many Amblesiders there as possible.

The dates for the other 2 leg races are:

Leg 1 - Seat Sandal (45/50 mins) - Tuesday 24th April 6.45pm

Leg 2 - Great Rigg - Fairfield - Cofa - Grisedale Tarn (70 mins) - Tuesday 22nd May 6.45pm

Any questions, ask Dan:

[danmunro2014@gmail.com](mailto:danmunro2014@gmail.com)

## Loughrigg Orienteering Event: 3/4/18

Think you know every wee bit of Loughrigg? This 1 hour score event has become a firm favourite and guarantees to take you places you've never been before! Start from stile/path to Todd Crag at top of zig zags up Loughrigg any time you like between 6.00pm and 6.45pm. Juniors 14 - 18 most welcome to come if accompanied by a senior club runner. Maps provided. Bring rest of full FRA kit and a head torch. Prizes in Rule afterwards.

Any questions, ask Michelle:

[mcrowley@ghyllside.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:mcrowley@ghyllside.cumbria.sch.uk)



# Race Organisers' Corner

## Loughrigg—Silver Howe Chase Race Report 17/2/18

Dreich days can be beautiful days. The trees on the lower slopes of Loughrigg were veiled in the softest of mists; their dark, sable trunks a sombre background to the vibrant splashes of blue and green vests, the occupants of which shifted about restlessly from foot to foot, cautiously eyeing one another up for hints of form like highly strung race horses. And with lungs burning and calves quaking, they were gone. Gone up the unforgiving zigzags and on to the open fell. Simple and pure: touch the summit of both Loughrigg and Silver Howe and then Loughrigg again on the return journey by any route you like. Two minutes later, Selwyn trotted through the start line to give chase. And then, he too had disappeared into the soft mist.

Harry Shuell's rapid start was reeled in by Ben and Dan's pace and experience. Game on! With Ben running carefully to manage an injury, the battle for victory was left to Harry and Dan: one deploying the fast surge tactics and the other the persistent, even effort...you guess! In the end, youth won out and Harry sprinted into the park to finish in 1h 20mins and 28 secs, chased all the way to the line by Dan who finished just 12 seconds behind him. Ben, injury well under control and looking as fresh as a daisy, took third in 1h 25mins.

Thanks to all who turned out to have fun in this first Club Championship race of 2018: runners (club and guests) and spectators. Without your passion for our sport, your laughter and good natured banter, we wouldn't be the finest fell running club in the world. Here's to the rest of 2018!

Michelle, Race Organiser

## Pleas for Help

### LoughriggFell Race: 11/4/18

Registration, marshalling and finish line. All offers of help to Ben:

[ben\\_abdelnoor@yahoo.com](mailto:ben_abdelnoor@yahoo.com)

### Fairfield Horseshoe: 12/5/18

Registration, marshalling and finish line. All offers of help to "JP":

[jonpaulchallinor@gmail.com](mailto:jonpaulchallinor@gmail.com)

## UKA Hill and Fell Relay Championships 2018

As most of you will be aware, the mighty Ambleside AC is hosting this epic event in October. This is where you'll find updates. There's a strong team in place organising this. Read this update from the main man at the helm, Roger Bell.

### FRA Relay: Minutes from Tues 20<sup>th</sup> Feb 2018

Present: Roger, Ben, Paul, Michelle, Eleanor, Dan, Stu Shuttleworth, Jim, Chris (minutes)

Meetings: Relay meetings will now take place every 4 weeks starting on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> March at 8.30pm. Might be need for more frequent get togethers closer to October. Provisional dates for next few meetings:

Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> March / Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> April / Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> May / Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> June (locations tbc but all at 8.30pm).

# March's "Reet Good Reads"

## Joe Joggerby Selwyn Wright

For the first few years of its existence Ambleside Athletic Club was a collection of friends who went running together on the hills around the town, and did all the local fell races. One or two of the runners were capable of a good performance on their day and Andy Hyslop and Guy Russell could finish in the top half dozen if they really stretched themselves. Essentially though, for the rest of us, although we never stopped trying as hard as we could, it was above all a social occasion. We would run for an hour and a half or so in training, and then we'd have a couple of pints in the nearest pub. It was the same when we went to a race. The competition was great and we loved it - but we weren't there to win, and we would enjoy ourselves afterwards whether we'd run well or otherwise. Pretty much par for the course for most fellrunners up and down the country. In 1986 the first signs of a change began to show when Mark Rigby won the Three Shires Race. Mark's family had moved to Ambleside from Bradford a couple of years earlier and Mark was studying Veterinary Surgery at Cambridge.

The rest of us weren't really sure how to take this; we prided ourselves on the almost anarchistic way that we tended to operate. For example there never was such a thing as an Ambleside Club Committee until way after the Millenium. We had a President and a Secretary, we even had a Treasurer but if anything needed sorting then it would be done over a pint in the Rugby Club, which was the winter training venue. Whoever happened to be present took whatever decision was there to be taken, and the rest of us lived with it. This didn't stop us taking big jobs on and delivering the goods successfully - by the time of Mark's first victory we were organising the Langdale Race; the Three Shires and the Fairfield. We could put on a big race without any extraneous organisation, and we had enough energy left over to provide several members of the FRA Committee. The Club was growing in activity and in membership through the mid-Eighties but winning races was a bit out of our league! There's no doubt that until Mark came along we were short of competitive oomph! From 1986 onwards though a steady trickle of very talented runners started to join and because they trained together, they improved very quickly. This wasn't just blokes but women as well and as the eighties ground to a halt local lads like Robin Jamieson and Mark Fleming together with folk who'd moved to the Lakes to work such as Andy Ligema and Mick Hoffe, who were all capable of winning a race, along with Nicky Lavery, Mari Todd and Helene Diamantides on the womens side came together to give the club a strong core. Ambleside weren't 'also-rans' any more.

We needed something a bit more than that though to take the club to the next level - we needed Joe Jogger! To be fair it wasn't a nickname that he had until Brendan Foster gave him it at the Gateshead Cross-Country quite a few years later on. Keith Anderson joined Ambleside as a 13<sup>st</sup> colleague of Andy and Mick at the Impact Training Development Company. Keith was a chef, and in the early years of his time in fellrunning you could tell! But whatever Keith did he took it very seriously; I'm quite certain that I've never met anyone who took his running half as seriously as Keith did right from day one. Keith was always going to be British Champion, or he would have given up very quickly. If he couldn't be the best at something then he wouldn't bother with it at all. He became British Fellrunning Champion; he ran for England in the World Trophy, and he ran the Marathon in the Commonwealth Games at the age of 41, and all from a standing start well into his thirties. But Keith Anderson was something rather more than an exceptional runner with bags of determination. He may still be the holder of the record for the Dunnerdale and Sedbergh races 25 years on but there was much more to Joe Jogger than the ability to turn his legs over pretty sharpish.

There were two other characteristics that he owned in abundance. In the true sense of the word - and by that I mean the one that doesn't carry a negative interpretation- Keith was easily the most selfish athlete that I ever met. Once he had worked out what he needed to do to get better he had the capacity to go and do it whoever or whatever was standing in his way. If his coach told him he needed to lose half a stone (even though he might weigh just a shade over 10 stone) then he would purge himself by eating virtually nothing while

continuing to train twice a day. When you're training in a group quite a deal of compromise is required because most athletes' training plans won't be exactly the same. While one might want to run 400m uphill reps on steep ground on a certain day another would want to do shorter reps on less steep ground. For the sake of the group the corners of these plans tend to get ground down and folk end up doing quite similar sessions. Not Keith! If Keith wanted to do a certain session then you were welcome to go along and join in - but don't expect him to alter his session in any small detail to accommodate you. There was an occasion when Keith was training hard to get into the England Team for the World Trophy and he got it into his head that there were too many distractions at home. In the same circumstances Mo Farah would go somewhere else to train; Paula Ratcliffe would go somewhere else to train. Keith decided that the solution was to banish his wife and kids from the family home so that he could concentrate on his training. It wasn't even as if there was any financial gain to be made from his success! At the time Gill appeared to take this calmly - I can only imagine what my wife would have said.

And the second of Keith's characteristics? He was one of - if not the - best motivators of other runners that I ever saw. People found him almost magnetically attractive and would be pulled towards whatever he was doing; folk wanted to get his approval and would love simply to be in his company. So if he told you that eating chocolate was bad for you then you stopped doing it. If he suggested that a rep session on Steel Fell would make you a faster runner then you did it. Suddenly when he was a part of Ambleside AC everyone was running faster, was more enthusiastic, and was going to more races. Runners were joining Ambleside because of his magnetism and because there was a buzz going through the club. Even at my level runners were turning up at a session on a dirt track in Windermere purely because Keith and his coach, Fraser Rae, were always there. And the really bizarre thing about it was that we knew what was happening to us! The main, if not the only topic of conversation, was the latest bizarre stunt that Keith had pulled!

The fact was that he was exactly what the club needed to move on to actually winning things. By 1990 the Leeds club Pudsey and Bramley had won the British Team Championship, then decided over a series of four races, for three years in a row, and had achieved a dominance over other British clubs which was quite profound. That year Ambleside finished in second place in both the British and the English Mens Team Championships with Keith Anderson back in 10<sup>th</sup> place in the British, and true to form not contesting the English as being of only secondary importance!

After a heavy winter training load the club was completely ready for the first race of 1991 at Screel Hill, a small lump near Dumfries with very narrow paths surrounded by deep heather. About 15 of us went up for a recce and the importance of a good start was clear to us all. Keith won the race courtesy of a storming descent full of steep and heathery short cuts. He was fully backed up by a very solid team, which included Roger winning the Supervets. That wasn't it for the weekend though as about 20 of us drove straight up to Strathgryre to recce the Stuc a Chroin route and included a fairly riotous celebration in the pub where many of us had booked rooms. Keith saved the day when a mischievous Bingley superstar contrived to shift a snooker ball while two locals were in play. A fight seemed inevitable until Keith used all his charm, which led to us having some local support 'on the day'. Over 30 of us set off on the recce including a number of Borrowdale and Bingley folk. At the summit I remember a pair of hill-walkers clearly out for a very tranquil stroll being met by a large and vociferous bantering rabble of English fellrunners, the majority of whom were only in the early stages of sobering up after a five mile ascent.

Keith was at that time setting up his 'ETA' running shoe company and somewhere I have a photo of he and I 'sharing' a pair of Walshes and a pair of ETAs so that I would see how much better the ETAs were! It wasn't a top sales strategy. Keith won again and this time the ladies team of Nicky Lavery, Elaine Wright and Helene Diamantides joined him on the podium; so we journeyed down to Carneddau in pole position. Another win for Keith in Wales, well backed up by Robin, Mick Hoffe, and Mark Rigby; with Roger leading home the supervets; meant that by the time the first English race rolled round the club was absolutely buzzing. At Ingleborough Ambleside had 53 members competing out of a total membership of around 80! Apart from relays this is the club's best attendance at any race, and may just be the highest proportion of any club ever to compete in a

Championship race (or indeed any race). The headline was that Keith Anderson didn't win (finishing second to Mark Croasdale) but Ambleside did have 6 finishers in the first 21 and Roger once again took the supervets.

Borrowdale of course was home ground for Ambleside, and the perfect place to seal the club's first British Championship. Again a massive turnout and although local lad Gavin Bland pipped Keith for the actual race title, the pair were 8 minutes ahead of the third finisher. With Helene winning the Ladies and Nicky and Mari Todd third and fourth it was virtually a clean sweep for the club with a race still to go! Joe Jogger was British Champion; Ambleside had first Mens Team, first Ladies Team; first Supervet, and first Intermediate, (who was Ben Evans). The club was very firmly on the map and it would be three years before we were beaten to the British title.

'Joe Jogger' wouldn't have put it like this - but his message was a simple one:-

- If you want something then go and do what you have to do to get it.
- Train together and you'll get faster.

Selwyn Wright

## **Ambleside Juniors-A Blast from the Past! By Jim Tyson**

*This article originally appeared in a previous Ambleside AC newsletter 6 years ago. (Another blast from the past!) I have revised parts of it to make sense in today's context.*

6 years ago, on seeing the success of the then newly formed Ambleside Juniors, I was compelled to dig out a couple of old photographs featuring a few of the original incarnation of the club's junior division in the mid-eighties. Unfortunately they aren't action shots, but they do reveal some historical facts, namely-

1: The existence of a junior section of the club back then.

2: The existence of a full head of hair for at least some part of my life.

3: Judging by the trophies in evidence, I also used to be a half decent runner... how things change!

4: Sportswear fashions change throughout the years (dig those tracksuits!) but the mighty Ambleside AC vest design essentially remains the same. (Technical fabric innovations notwithstanding... (Perhaps it's time to reintroduce the matching retro short shorts also?))



*Above photo left to right:*

*Sam Tyson, Jamie (Jim) Tyson, Paul Singleton*





*Left: Me with hair and winning abilities!*

I remember the juniors at the time were coached by the late, great Geoff Clayton and Guy Russell. We would run from Charlotte Mason College around the streets of Ambleside. I also remember sessions on the track at the Phoenix centre, Windermere. Race wise, we would run the Kendal Winter League races, and in the summer the local shows and sports days with Ambleside and Grasmere sports being the highlights. (I have vague recollections of the amateur versus professional debates which raged at the time) We also had an Ambleside Junior School fell race on sports day which ran to the cairn on Todd Crag for which we had to wear gym plimsolls! Not exactly mudclaws...

Unfortunately my early enthusiasm for fellrunning waned during the course of my teenage years, and wouldn't fully return until I reached my thirties. After a couple of years of tentative trail runs over Scout Scar (and the odd trail race), the runs out got longer and hillier and started taking in the horseshoes of Kentmere and Fairfield. After running and chatting with school friend and former Ambleside member Paul Singleton (also pictured), I was encouraged to join the club again. That was back in 2010 and I'm glad I did- it really is great to be part of the friendly and engaging club that Ambleside AC is today.



*Jim at Dunnerdale, November 2011 (Photo courtesy of Dan Duxbury)*

So, to the current crop of Ambleside Juniors- I hope you stick with it and unlike me, avoid having a twenty year lay-off! But even if you do, perhaps you too will one day rediscover the youthful joy of bounding down a fellside at full pelt. Trust me, it never leaves you!

If anyone else has any vintage pictures of Ambleside AC members throughout the ages, it'd be great to see them. Perhaps someone out there has some action shots of the original juniors too?

**Jim Tyson**

## In Other News...



### Ambleside Men in Sausage Party Action

The winter sport of ski mountaineering was invented in 2003 by Killian Jornet and is better known to hipster mountain types as SkiMo. A decent chance of a high placing because nobody does it, lured a couple of our finer specimens to Glencoe for the National Championship where both placed in the top ten. But far more impressive than race positions were the quite remarkable all in one lycra body suits that these athletes 'had to' wear to achieve this feat. You see, when Killian invented the sport he felt that the physical element may not be enough so stipulated that athletes must suffer the public humiliation of skin tight lycra in garish colours to make the sport a true challenge. Bravo boys. Ladies of the club eagerly await the appearance of these outfits on club night or Lakes fell races.

\*\*\*We apologise but during this first incarnation of the magazine we were short on space so could not include a terrific 14 page piece Gary Thorpe wrote about Broughton Show fell race. We include a much edited version for your enjoyment.

### Broughton Show

The day dawned cold and bright - the time was here.

Go! We were off!

Passed Darren Fishwick like he was stood still.

6 pints of Loweswater Gold.

Covered in piss.

I'll be back for more next year.

Gary

## Who to send your information to

### For the Newsletter

#### We need:

- Updates and pleas for help from race organisers
- Info about social events
- Captains' updates
- Minutes from committee meetings
- Juniors updates- so the old gits know who's snapping at their heels!
- Club Champs updates
- Relay 2018 updates
- Articles written by you!
- Race reports either from the Race Organiser or a runner
- Pictures to go with any of the above
- Items for sale (running related!)
- Cartoons...Jim T:-)
- Banter and general mickey taking that we're renowned for!

SEND YOUR INFO AS A WORD DOCUMENT TO:

[mcrowley@ghyllside.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:mcrowley@ghyllside.cumbria.sch.uk)

### For the Website

Send your information to one of these people who regularly update that section of the website:

News section (including social stuff and trips away)- Neil Talbott [neiltalbott4@hotmail.com](mailto:neiltalbott4@hotmail.com)

AAC Races pages - Dan Duxbury [danmunro2014@gmail.com](mailto:danmunro2014@gmail.com)

Training pages - Michelle Foxwell [mcrowley@ghyllside.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:mcrowley@ghyllside.cumbria.sch.uk)

Club Champs pages - Jim Tyson [jim\\_tyson@hotmail.com](mailto:jim_tyson@hotmail.com)

Junior pages - Eleanor Knowles [eleanorknowles333@btinternet.com](mailto:eleanorknowles333@btinternet.com)

'Articles' for the 'blog' section - Neil Talbott [neiltalbott4@hotmail.com](mailto:neiltalbott4@hotmail.com)

## Website Update

With a view to keeping everyone in the club up to date, we need to make sure that all key info goes in the newsletter AND on the website. Our website is currently undergoing a revamp and update thanks to Neil Talbott's vision and technical skills.