

Bilsdale Fell Race 2022

The weather was the best yet for the third running of the Bilsdale Fell Race. Conditions were near perfect with wall to wall blue sky and a slight breeze on the tops. The recent dry weather had made the ground firm and ideal for fast running with new course records in both the male and female categories. Let's Run and Rab provided some fantastic prizes this year on top of the usual selection of beer, wine and chocolates. There were vouchers for the first three males and females along with a can of Rab beer for every runner who stayed for the presentation.

The brief summary is that the students from Durham University pretty much cleaned up all the prizes! It was great to see a large turnout of younger runners at the toughest fell race on the North Yorkshire Moors.

From the off Jacob Hiom and Luke Pettit established a decent gap over the rest of the field in the men's race and apart from a slight deviation on the way to CP3 worked well together to keep this gap throughout the race. Jacob descended quicker on the final descent to claim the victory in a new course record and a couple of minutes ahead of Luke. It was third time lucky for Jacob after finishing 9th in 2019 and missing CP7 in 2020. On the start line he indicated that he wasn't going to make the same mistake again this year! Luke Parker finished third to give Durham Uni a one, two, three and Oisín Brennan in 12th made up the team for the team prize.

In the ladies' race Emma Bramley opened up an early lead over Alice Crane and Rose Mather. Although the gap was never that big between Emma and Alice these positions stayed the same throughout the race with Emma winning by a minute from Alice and both women finishing inside the old course record. Rose finished in 3rd and Hannah Burnett in 12th made up the team to give Durham the team prize.

There seemed to be many happy faces at the finish and 125 of the 129 starters finished the race. Great credit also to the 4 runners who did not finish as they recognised that were going to be out for a long time, considered the marshals' safety and headed directly to the finish and letting me know they had dropped out.

Thank you to all the people who helped out and made the race possible. Many of these people have helped out every year so far with kit checks, handing out numbers, marshalling, road crossings and timings at the finish. Thanks to Rab for their vouchers, support and beer 'Top Out - Change Yer Attitude'. Thanks also to Shelli Gordon & Lee Kemp from Lets Run in Stokesley for their support in providing the numbers, Rab vouchers, marshalling CP2 and sweeping.

As usual, I relied heavily on two highly experienced race organisers, Clive Thornton and Bob Lillie, who went above and beyond as usual. Clive sorted out the numbers for the

runners as well as the prizes before the race. On the day he also worked out who had won what after marshalling at CP3. Bob arrived early to help get set up, organise the parking and check runners through at the road crossing and the finish.