

The Esker - Pre 2011 Blogs

The Esker - Festive Races & Other Stuff

The First Word

A big welcome to all the new members, membership numbers have really boomed in the opening races of the Winter Series good to see your names on the finish sheets. Competitor numbers are up in the races too, not even the truly autumnal weather has put you off.

Racing and training safely

Please be safe on the hills, so don't forget your kit, Rule 9 FRA Handbook states competitors should arrive prepared to carry Windproof whole body cover (or other whole body cover appropriate for the weather conditions), map and compass suitable to navigate the course, whistle and emergency food in the longer races. The winter and summer series races are usually partially marked, but please be prepared to navigate your way to the finish.

Dave would always love to hear from anyone who can help out with course marking and clearing, and/or sweeping on the race day, its good training or for easing back steadily from injury.

Training and Social

Training nights are taking off, **30th November** meet 7.00pm lay-by ¼ mile south of Great Broughton, headtorch and winter gear a must, click the link to the Alpkit Gamma headtorch - an effective good value headtorch, though there are many more on the market.

[Alpkit Gamma headtorch](#)

December - 7th and 14th from the High Green Car Park, Great Ayton meet at 7.00pm. The run on the 14th will be followed by our Club Christmas dinner at the Panda Chinese Restaurant in Stokesley at 8.30pm, contact Phil 'the chair' Conner to book your place.

December 5th Eskdale Hotel, Castleton, enjoy a club social after the race, book your Sunday lunch or just come for a drink, bring your target race, club champs, event ideas and any other thoughts for 2011.

Festive Season Races

Postponed – ESKDALE EUREKA - BM – 10.30am – 8m/1200' - Venue: Eskdale Hotel, Castleton (bottom of the hill next to railway line) GR 684084 Enter on day £6.00. APPROPRIATE KIT MUST BE CARRIED AS PER FRA RULE 9. Last counter in the club championships and 5th counter in the Northern Runner/NEHRA/Esk Valley winter series.

SUN 19 DEC – 27th LOFTUS POULTRY RUN – 11.00am – 8.1m/?? – Venue: Loftus Leisure Centre, Loftus. Advance Entry £10.00/£12.00 or EOD £3.00 extra. <http://www.loftus-ac.co.uk/PoultryRun.aspx> click link for website. A festive multi-terrain favourite, t-shirt for all finishers and usually a drink and mince pie.

MON 27 DEC – GUISBOROUGH WOODS RACE – BM – 11.00am – 6m/1000' – Venue: Guisborough Rugby Club, Belmontgate, Guisborough GR 616155 Enter on day £6.00. Enough to clear any hangover, the classic 3 lapper, includes a one lap junior race. 6th Northern Runner/NEHRA/Esk Valley winter series counter.

SAT 1 JAN 2011 – CAPTAIN COOK'S RACE – BS – 11.00am – 5.5m/750' – Venue: Royal Oak Hotel, High Green, Great Ayton. £6.00 Pre-enter or enter on day. Pre-entries on FRA form to avoid queuing. Start the year as you mean to go on, hit the hills! 7th Northern runner/NEHRA/Esk Valley winter series counter.

Next time

Race result round-up

Clive Thornton

The Esker - The 'Where was the September Edition?'

The First Word

Summer mmh, that's well and truly gone, but no let up in the racing, with 13 events in this season's winter series.

Training and Social

Training nights lined up, Tuesday – 26th October meet 6.30-7.00pm at the Car Park Great Ayton, for a mini orienteering event, head-torch and winter gear a must.

November – Tuesdays 16th and 30th, 7.00pm meet at the nursery lay-by on the bend just south of Great Broughton. Savour the joys of hill reps and intervals, with refreshments to follow.

December – Tuesday 14th, 7.00pm meet at the Car Park, Great Ayton, for group run and Christmas meal at 8.30pm. Venue to be decided, make your bids, £5 deposit per head.

Results

Grasmere Sports (29/08/10) – The world famous classic – Clive Thornton new club record 19 minutes 14 seconds 48th from 124 finishers. Stuart Backhouse continues his Lakeland visits with **Grisedale Horseshoe** (04/09/10) at 10m and 5000' climb finishing in 3hrs 8min and 56sec, and then the classic **Langdale Horseshoe** (14m/4000') a must for any fellrunners' palmares, where Stuart finished 220nd from over 350 starters and a time of 3 hours 23min 57sec.

Phil Conner returned to the **Yorkshire Off-road marathon**, finishing 26th from 145 finishers in 4hr 5min 01sec, just shy of his sub 4hr target. On the road Dave Dedman raced incognito in the **Loch Ness marathon** in a great time of 3hr 14min 33sec placing 132nd from 2489 finishers, still on the road Phil Conner placed 92nd in the **Middlesbrough 10km** in a time of 39min 40sec, with Dave Dedman finishing 107th in 39min 59sec.

Dave Gibson was sole Esker in the **Simonside** fell race (18/09/10 – 6.25m/1200') finishing in 1hr 4min 22sec this was the 9th counter in the club champs, so Dave grabbed top points.

The first winter series event the **Viking Chase** was held on 26th September, a late introduction to the winter series with a good turnout on the day with 121 finishers. Experience was the key in this event with 10 of the first 15 in the MV45 or MV50 category, including winner Andy Normandale (MV50) 1st and Joe Blakett (MV45) 2nd.

Esk Valley with 5 competitors placed 2nd in the team competition to NYMAC, with the improving Dave Keith 18th, Phil Conner 20th, Richard Clark 22nd and Ben Jones 48th, our 5th competitor was Jenny Hall, who takes the Esk Valley ladies record for the event, Brilliant.

Up and coming

SUN 17 OCT - SALTERGATE GALLOWS - BM – 10.30am - 9.1m/1430' - Venue: Saltergate Bank Top, nr Fylingdales on A169. GR 853937 Enter on day £6.00. A revised slightly extended course this year, so new records up for grabs all round! Second counter in the winter series.

SAT 30 OCT – GREAT WHERNSIDE – AS 11.30am – 4m/1555'. Venue: Kettlewell campsite. GR 975726 Enter on day £4.50. Tenth counter in the club championships and the last A category event of the season so race it whilst you can. A possible last awayday of the season for the Eskers.

SUN 7 NOV – THREE TOPS – AM 10.30am 8m/2000' – Venue: Guisborough Rugby Club, Belmongate, Guisborough. GR 616155 Enter day £6.00. 11th counter in the club championships, navigation could be the key on this one. Third winter series counter too!

Clive Thornton

The Esker - Esk Valley's Summer Series 2010

The Viking Chase marked the start of the Winter Series and the weather didn't disappoint with a truly autumnal day, but more of that next time, so just to wrap up the **Summer Series** and celebrate all that is [Esk Valley Fell Club](#).

Pride of place must go our Junior and Men over 40 competitors. In the Over 40's Esk Valley achieved a clean sweep of the podium places with Phil Conner, Richard Clark and Dave Keith taking the gold silver and bronze – **Well done!** Further down the standing and right in it until missing the last race was Mike McGough in 8th and Sean Kavanagh sneaks into the top 20 in 18th.

Over in the Junior section find of the year, with some tremendous late series running, Cameron Taylor placed 1st, 1st and 3rd in his three races to take the overall. In second also of Esk Valley was Thomas Hodgson, with Jake Harrison in 6th.

In the Over 45's Clive Thornton placed 4th, though may of taken sole ownership but for injury at Roseberry and a no show at Castleton. Completing 8 of the series races Ian Robinson placed 12th in the O45 and Dave Dedman 18th.

Dave Collett – Esk Valley a near ever present in the series completing 10 races, placed 2nd in the over 50 category to Andy Normandale (of York but definitely no disgrace as Andy won the Viking Chase), 3rd in category was another Esker, Colin Knapp. Also in the top 20, Andrew Johnson in 10th and Chris Jamieson in 16th.

Some good early series running took Bob Lillie to 6th in the over 55's, and over in the Senior Male, Dave Gibson and Richard Lindsay took 14th and 16th respectively.

Definitely not forgetting the ladies, Rosie Keegan placed 15th in the Senior Ladies category, it would be great to see a few more ladies in Esk Valley colours.

Finally our single top 20 in the overall male was Phil Conner in 18th; with just slipping from the rankings after missing the final event were Clive Thornton and Dave Collett.

Some terrific performances there right throughout the categories, keep it up for the Winter Series and just a bit more!

Clive Thornton

The Esker - August 2010 Part 2

The First Word

Now well into the second half of the year, no time to relax on the racing front, the summer series nears its finale, and races galore up and down the country and a few Lakeland Classics to come.

Lakelands Classic Trophy Results

First up, arguably the toughest pound for pound fell race of the season **Borrowdale** (07/08/10) – 17m/6500' - with four Esk Valley competitors, back to form and on his favoured terrain Richard Clark with a terrific result was first Esker home in 110th from 346 finishers in a time of 4h 13' 15"; followed by Phil Conner (176th), new member Graeme Shaw running in disguise as Pocklington Runners was (216th) and Dave Dedman (222nd), all under 5hours. The clagg was down again until near the end, so navigation skills were called on again, good running all!

Borrowdale is the first of the three long races (Three Shires and Langdale), that with the three super long races (Duddon Valley, Ennerdale and Wasdale) make up the **Lakeland Classics Trophy**. A sort of grand prix series started in 2002 to help promote the classic long Lakeland fell races which were in seemingly terminal decline, it did its job with entries now at record levels. With four races now completed in the trophy Esk Valley have three counters and a team in the standings, Richard Clark is best placed in 36th, followed by Phil Conner 53rd and Stuart Backhouse 68th, with Esk Valley 14th overall in the team standings and second to Northumberland Fell Runners in the local North Eastern Contest.

Results

Mike McGough scored a best time (1hr 43m) in the **Hanging Stone Leap** 13m event, organised by the Long Distance Walkers Association (LDWA). The events which a bit more relaxed than your day-to-day fell race, are well organised with well stocked checkpoints, they can be run or walked and there are usually a couple of distances to attempt, see the website for the numerous event organised locally and nationally.

Clive Thornton took in the **Chevin Hill** (4.5m/797') fell race whilst holidaying in the Derbyshire Peak District, placing 15th from 72 runners. And back on Chris Jamieson watch, Chris was racing the **Lakeland Country Fair** (6.5m/2350') held near Coniston, sounds a toughy, placing 81st from 97 runners.

A new North Yorkshire fell race was held in **Bransdale** (7.5m/800'), 10th August, starting at the head of the valley at Cockayne, 47 turned out for the National Trust organised event. The event was won by Joe Blackett of Dark Peak (56' 38"), who just pipped Lizzie Adams of Knavesmire. Clive Thornton was best placed Esker in 11th (64' 05"), with Richard Clark (18th), Dave Keith (20th) and Bob Lillie (29th) and first MV55.

Summer Series

August could be an important month in the summer series, with an old name creeping up on the rails for a possible overall victory in the men's series. Race 8 – **Gribdale Gallop** (03/08/10 – 8m/1400') was won by Drew Graham of Gosforth, with a seemingly never unfit Marco Cara in second, and good to see Rob Pollard of NYMAC back in the running in 29th. Rob has been an almost ever present, but injury laid him low in 2009. The race was also notable for a new ladies outright record by Katie Rawnsley of Scarborough AC.

For Esk Valley, new member Cameron Taylor (Junior!) was first home in 58m 27s and new open record for the club, good run Cameron. Dave Collett led home the older Esk Valley guard in 32nd. Esk Valley 'A' came 5th in the team standings, with Dave Keith 42nd and Richard Lindsay 50th. In another good turnout

Esk Valley also placed 9th team with, Andrew Johnson, David Gibson, David Gelderd and Chris Jamieson.

Race 9 of the series was the **Guisborough Grunt+** (17/08/10 – 8m/1200'), with the steep climb of Green Hill up to Highcliff Nab an early race test. Terrific turnout from Esk Valley with 12 competitors our best ever, Cameron Taylor led home again, placing 16th in 55 minutes exactly, with Dave Collett 24th, Richard Clark 26th and Clive Thornton 27th making up the 3rd placed 'A' team. Esk valley also placed 6th team with, Dave Keith (29th), Mike McGough (40th), Andrew Johnson (51st) and David Gelderd (54th). Richard Lindsay, Matthew Coleby, David Gibson and Ian Robinson round off the 12 Eskers and 10th placed team.

An on-form Katie Rawnsley of Scarborough AC clocked up another ladies open record in 14th and a time of 54min 11sec. For the record Marco Cara won the race after a race long battle with Paul Butler of Loftus and Whitby. The partial marking of the course caught a few out on the night, there were some less obvious route choices onto and off the moor, but all came home safe.

Third Summer Series race of August and Race 10, was the classic **Roseberry Topping** (31/08/10 – 1.5m/715'), a true short sprint fell race, to the top and back simple as that, and probably our longest lived at 65years or thereabouts. The race run-off in warm still conditions reminiscent of summer, was won by 13 year old junior Jack Willis in a time of 11m 59s, showing a clean pair of heels to Will Horsley of NFR and the rest of us for that matter; see how the race was won on the descent in David Aspin's terrific photographs, to scree or not to scree!

Esk Valley equalled their best turnout with 12 competitors again and three teams, the Winners! 4th and 6th – Brilliant! The winning Esk Valley 'A' team were led home by in-form Cameron Taylor (14th) in a new open Esk Valley event record of 14m 31s, there was a formation bunch finish by the three remaining team members, led by Richard Clark, from Dave Collett and Phil Conner in 20th, 21st and 22nd respectively and spilt by 2 seconds! The B and C teams included many of the usual suspects and two junior members Jake Harrison and Thomas Hodgson, good to see you guys.

There were a good number of juniors right through the field, including for Esk Valley – Jake Harrison and Thomas Hodgson, Annabel Mason first female junior (25th) – Wakefield Harriers, Mark Libby and Oscar Anglim of CLOK and Izzy Pearse and Natasha Thornton of New Marske Harriers. Great to see you all and really well done.

Up and coming

SAT 11 SEP CASTLETON SHOW RACE Billed as road race for fell runners and a fell race for road runners, it's about 6 miles long over an undulating road course, mmh! See the Castleton Show or NYMAC website for entry details. Final summer series counter.

SAT 18 SEP SIMONSIDE BM 6.75m/1200' Venue – Thropton Showfield, Croquetdale, North of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Enter on Day only; see FRA and NFR websites for details. This is the 9th counter in the Club championships.

SUN 26 SEP VIKING CHASE BM 7.8m/1800' Venue – Lordstones Café, top of Carlton Bank, Carlton in Cleveland £8 entry fee – This is now the opening race in the winter series and a toughy at that, it's not in the FRA handbook or on their website, but see the 'csrt' and Esk Valley (soon) websites for more details and funds from the race go to support a very worthy and potentially close to home cause – Cleveland Search and Rescue Team.

Next Time

Summer series league finale round-up, Club Championship update plus results and hopefully some pics from around the non-local series races.

Clive Thornton

The Esker – Summer Series Update - August 2010

Nine races down, two to go; **Roseberry Topping** (31/08/10) and **Castleton Show** (11/09/10) to complete the series and over half the titles and most podium spots still to be decided.

Firstly well done to the category winners so far:

MO50 **Andy Normandale** – Acorn
MO55 **Steve Mummery** – Acorn at the double – Seven starts seven class victories!
MO60 **Neil Scruton** – Scarborough AC - Another clean sweep, for our winter series winner.
MO65 **Ronnie Sherwood** – New Marske Harriers

FO40 **Nicola Kent** – Loftus and Whitby
FO50 **Jane Hamp** – Scarborough AC – A double for Scarborough too!
FO55 **Pam Costello** – Redcar RC

Categories undecided:

Men overall – *Mike Jefferies* leads, late starter and in-form *Marco Cara* can take the title with two good results, *Will Horsley* and *Nigel Tate* still in the running.

Female overall – *Nicola Kent* going for a double leads, but one or two more good results from in-form pair *Pippa Archer* (1) and *Katie Rawnsley* (2) or outsider *Caroline Warrington* could change things.

Male Junior – Late series entrant *Cameron Taylor* of Esk Valley leads with two straight victories.

Male Senior – It's down to five, *Mike Jefferies* leads, *Will Horsley*, *Giles Hawking*, *Nigel Tate* or *Chris Jefferies* can still win.

Female Senior – *Shelli Gordon* leads, six still in contention but a good finish or two from in-form pair *Pippa Archer* or *Katie Rawnsley* make them favourites to overhaul *Shelli*.

MO40 – *Graeme Addison* leads the most open class with 8 other possible winners, including *Richard Clark*, *Phil Conner*, *Mike McGough* and *Dave Keith* from Esk Valley.

MO45 – *Rob Williamson* leads, in-form *Marco Cara* coming up strongly on the rails but needs two finishes, *Anthony Harnett* and *Joe Blackett* still in with a shout.

Female Junior – No entrants in category!

FO45 – *Carol Dixon-Yeung* leads going for a winter/summer double, only local runner *Christine Devereux* can overtake, but needs two finishes to at least challenge.

Esk Valley competitor's current standings:

Male Overall, *Dave Collett* best placed in 13th, *Phil Conner* in 16th. **Male Senior**, *Dave Gibson* and *Richard Lindsay* 13th and 15th respectively. **MO40**, outside the top 10, *Sean Kavanagh* in 18th and *David Gelderd* 20th. **MO45**, *Clive Thornton* – 5th and *Jan Robinson* -10th. **MO50** – Silver for *Dave Collett* in 2nd, *Colin Knapp* is 10th, *Andrew Johnson* – 15th, *Chris Jamieson* – 18th. **MO55** – *Bob Lillie* lies 6th.

Clive Thornton

The First Word

A tremendous run from Phil Conner in the **Kentmere Horseshoe fell race** (25/07/10), in a field of 214 finishers; Phil was 35th in a time of 1hr 53m 27s and just 2 minutes shy of the leading North East runner in the race Phil Sanderson. Kentmere an AM of 12 miles with 3300 feet of climb takes in Ill Bell on the outward leg tops out at High Street at the head of the valley and over Kentmere Pike on the return.

Results

To continue the Kentmere finishers, Mike McGough placed well into the top half of the field in 90th in a time of 2hr 6m 13s, Stuart Backhouse was 153rd in 2h 18m 32s and Chris Jamieson 210th in a time of 2h 55m 36s.

Bob Lillie was sole Esk Valley representative in the 5th English Fell Championships counter – **Holme Moss**, a what I understand was a deceptively tough 17 mile AL West Yorkshire Bog Trot where he place 261st from 300+ finishers In a time of 4hr 16m 34s. Good one Bob!

On the local scene the Summer Series is well underway with 7 races complete, no category winners yet though the leagues are starting to take shape, but with 4 races left there is still opportunity for someone from the pack to make their dash for glory!

To round up the latest summer series events, **Ossy Oiks** (01/06/10), Charlie Stead on the comeback trail claimed his first victory of the series. Phil Conner was best placed for the Eskers in 23rd, followed by the improving Dave Collett (27th), Mike McGough (31st) and Richard Lindsay (40th) who together claimed 4th in the team race. 11 Esk Valley runners finished the race, Bob Lillie, David Gibson, Sean Kavanagh, Ian Robinson, Sid Bolland and Tom Yeoman.

Next up was the **Whorlton Run** (15/06/10), a very civilised race with its start and finish at the Black Horse in Swainby. Road and sometime hill runner Jim Bulman of NYMAC took the victory, and in 6th a returning Marco Cara (unfortunately another fast M45 darn-it!). Dave Collett was the leading finisher for Esk Valley in 26th, closely followed by Mike McGough (27th) and Clive Thornton (28th), Dave Dedman in 38th made for a 5th place in the team competition. Six more Eskers finished, Bob Lillie, John Williams, Sean Kavanagh, Ian Robinson, Tom Yeoman, Sid Bolland and great to see, Rosie Keegan as our leading lady!

A scent of sea-air greeted competitors at the **Maybeck Three Crosses**, held just outside Whitby. Home club Loftus and Whitby took the team competition placing four runners in the top 7 and winner Paul Butler. Second in the team competition was NYMAC just pipping Esk Valley, who had 5 runners between 11th and 18th. Phil Conner led home in 11th; Clive Thornton was 14th with Dave Collett, Richard Clark and Mike McGough in 16th, 17th and 18th. David Gibson and Ian Robinson made up the 7th Esk Valley runner who made the trip.

Last of the summer series round-up events; saw another victory and new course record for Jim Bulman in the **Cock Howe and Beyond** race (20/07/10). For the Eskers, in form Phil Conner placed 23rd, with Richard Clark (25th), Dave Collett (27th) and new name Dave Keith (30th). Team position 4th just behind Loftus and Whitby, and Acorn, we're improving all the time keep it going. Three other Eskers finished, with Colin Knapp (39th), a returning Andrew Johnson (50th) and Ian Robinson (89th) taking him to 4th in the M45 category.

Up and coming

TUES 3 AUG GRIBDALE GALLOP, BM, 7.15pm, 8m/1400' – Venue – Gribdale Car Park, Nr Great Ayton (look-up!) – Enter on Day - £6.00, 8th Summer Series counter.

SAT 7 AUG OSMOTHERLEY SHOW, BS, 2.00pm, 5.5m/1050' – Venue – Osmotherley Show Ground, Thimbleby Race entry free with show entry fee. Support a local event.

SAT 7 AUG BORROWDALE AL 11.00am, 17m/6500', Pre-entry only now closed, Club championships

counter. Best of North Yorkshire luck to Richard Clark, Phil Conner and Dave Dedman.

TUES 10 AUG BRANSDALE FELL RACE BM 7.15pm, 7.5m/850' – Venue - Cockayne, near Helmsley-ish. **New event**. Event details on NYMAC website, see the what's new list.

TUES 17 AUG GUISBOROUGH GRUNT PLUS BM 7.00pm 8m/1200' – Venue – Guisborough Rugby Club, £6.00 on the night, 9th Summer Series counter.

SUN 5 SEP SHELF MOOR AS 5.9m/1500' 6th and final English Championships Counter, see Glossopdale Harriers website for entry form, entries accepted from 1st July – 250 limit and filling up quick!

Next Time

Summer series league round-up.

Clive Thornton

The Esker – June / July 2010

The First Word

Not sure it feels right, but Fell racing is a summer sport! Events are held throughout the year though the racing calendar does really thicken out during the summer months, locally and nationally, this time it's an away-day round-up.

Now in its second year, Esk Valley's membership is really starting to flourish and the club colours are being seen across all the best hills and fells of northern England – Well Done Esk Valley and Welcome to all the new members!

Results

June and July are the months of the Lakeland Super Long Fell races – **Duddon** (18m/6000'), **Ennerdale** – an English Champs counter this year (23m/7500') and **Wasdale** (21m/9000'). Stuart Backhouse was our sole representative at **Duddon**, finishing well into the top half in 67th out of 171 finishers.

Ennerdale saw four Eskers finish, Richard Clark, Phil Conner, Dave Dedman and Clive Thornton. This event was real Lakeland day out, a classic horseshoe course where the tag line for the event 'don't start what you can't finish' is truly apt, there is no easy escape! The view from Green Gable at the head of the valley is a wonder and to cap it all a true fell running legend, Joss Naylor supported the event, handing out drinks at the Iron Crag check point on the return leg.

Wasdale was held in weather conditions that were all that Ennerdale wasn't. As most of England was bathed in sunshine, the Wasdale valley was deep in a Lakeland clag, comment from the organiser 'most competitors were lost at some stage'. Four eskers started the event, with Richard Clark placing 64th just outside the top half of the field, Phil Conner and Stuart Backhouse were the other two Esk Valley finishers and honest Dave Dedman disqualifying himself for missing the last checkpoint.

Two more club championship counters were held in June, **Pen Y Gent** where Dave Collett was sole Esk Valley representative gaining full points in the overall and male 50 category and a top half finish. Fourth English Fell Counter **Sedbergh Three Peaks** was held later in June, again like Pen Y Gent held on a hot sunny day, with sole rep blogger CT gaining full points.

So with 5 club championship events now complete the early leaders are; Overall and M40 - Clive Thornton; M50 - Bob Lillie, but with 7 events still to go, everything is still to play for.

The other non-local series event in the area was **Osmotherley Phoenix**, an established ultra-marathon event, with a choice of 17, 26 or 33 mile routes. In what was a record entry of over 400 for the event, we were blessed by a bright warm day, three Esk Valley runners competed in the shortest 17 mile event gaining excellent finishes of 4th – Phil Conner (2hour 36min), 6th – Clive Thornton (2-43) and 12th – Mike McGough (3-01) from 140 finishers.

Don't Forget – Your Series Needs YOU!

We are keen to improve Health and Safety, so we are looking for Course markers and Sweepers for the remaining events of the summer series and for the up and coming Winter Series to help spread the organisational load.

So if you are interested or want further details don't be shy and please contact Dave Parry on 01287 660309 or david@eskvalleyfellclub.org

Up and coming

TUES 20 JULY COCK HOWE AND BEYOND, BM, 7.15pm, 7m/1500' – Venue – Public Car Park, Chop Gate – Enter on Day - £6.00, 7th Summer Series counter.

SUN 25 JULY KENTMERE HORSESHOE, AM, 1.00pm, 11.9m/3300' – Venue – Kentmere Village Hall, Cumbria. Pre-entry £5.00 by 19th July. An Esk Valley awayday, this is a tremendous event and I think is one of the easier Lakeland Fell Races, but its all relative.

Early warning, **SUN 5 SEP SHELF MOOR AS** 5.9m/1500' 6th and final English Championships Counter, see Glossopdale Harriers website for entry form, entries accepted from 1st July – 250 limit and filling up quick!

Next Time

Summer series round-up, the leagues are getting interesting and plenty of interest for the Eskers.

Clive Thornton

The Esker – Events round-up

Results

Esk Valley was well represented in the 3rd Club championship counter, the fantastic 10 mile (3000' climb) trot around the **Fairfield Horseshoe** (15th May). On a bright warm sunny day with just a hint of breeze, in what could have been an English championship turnout, 379 crossed the finish line including six Eskers.

Dave Dedman led home for Esk Valley in 97th position in a new club and personal best time of 1hr 43m 29sec, Phil Connor in close attendance came in 99th, in a time of 1hr 44m 00sec, followed by Stuart Backhouse in 138th and 1hr 48m 50s, next Clive Thornton (152nd) 1hr 50m 24s, 158th Mike McGough 1hr 50m 48s and 301st Bob Lillie 2h 7m 7s. Rob Jebb took the victory in 1h 16m 0s!

At this time of year the summer series events appear with regularity. New event **Cock Howe North East** saw 58 hardy souls finish on a bitterly cold day, with hail, thunder and lightning thrown in, for that typical North East spring day feeling.

Dave Collett who is quickly returning to form led home for Esk Valley in 15th position in a time of 53m 02s (and EVFC course record), closely followed by Phil Connor (17th), Stuart Backhouse (19th), Colin Knapp (24th), Richard Lindsay (30th) and Bob Lillie in 40th.

Now in its 24th year, the **Fox and Hounds Chase** was held on an almost balmy night at Ainthorpe, with a terrific turnout of a 100 plus runners and 10 from Esk Valley, tremendous! Will Horsley of Northumberland Fell Runners took victory in 65m 56s over the 9 mile (1500' climb) course, which on a seemingly mostly single track route, is a battering for ankles and calves.

Richard Clark led home Esk Valley in 14th and a time of 74m 10s, Clive Thornton (27th) was next, followed by Dave Dedman (29th) and Dave Collett (34th) for a 5th place in the team competition. Colin Knapp placed 45th, John Williams (76th), David Gibson (85th), Chris Jamieson (91st), Ian Robinson (93rd), and Sid Bollands (98th).

Further afield our most prolific racer **Chris Jamieson** continues his quest to run seemingly every fell race in the handbook in one season. Chris races himself fit and his Esk Valley exploits are only half the story, as by day he competes for Hartlepool Burn Road on the road! Chris's most recent fell races include; **Glaramara** - 23/05/10, **Hutton Roof Crags Fell Race** - 29/05/10 and the **Austwick Amble** on 31/05/10, Terrific Chris, keep the Esk Valley flag flying!

Stuart Backhouse and David Dedman competed in **Helvellyn** (30/05/10), placing 56th and 62nd respectively in a field of 160+; Dave followed that up with a mid-week sortie at **Blencathra** a few days later.

Don't Forget – Your Series Needs YOU!

We are keen to improve Health and Safety, so we are looking for Course markers and Sweepers for the remaining events of the Summer series and for the up and coming Winter Series to help spread the organisational load.

For each role you will need to know the course particularly the course marker, the course is usually laid a couple of days beforehand. The Sweeper is required to follow the last runner of the race so we should know the last runner is in, they can also help to spot off-course runners and also bring in the course marking tapes. So if you fancy a training run with a bit of interval work! You won't be disadvantaged by sweeping as an average of your series points will be awarded for the event you sweep.

So if you are interested or want further details don't be shy and please contact Dave Parry on 01287 660309 or david@eskvalleyfellclub.org

Up and coming

SAT 12 JUNE ENNERDALE, AL, 11.00m, 23m/7500'! – Venue – Ennerdale Scout Camp, Ennerdale Bridge, Cumbria – GR 085153. Entries closed, 3rd English Fell Championship Counter. **Esk Valley Entrants**; Richard Clark, Phil Connor, David Dedman, Andrew Johnson and Clive Thornton.

TUES 15 JUNE WHORLTON RUN, BM, 7.15pm, 7m/1080' – Venue – Black Horse PH, Main Street, Swainby, near-ish Stokesley – Enter on Day - £6.00, 5th Summer Series counter.

SAT 26 JUNE SEDBERGH THREE PEAKS, AS, Ladies 2.00pm, Gents 3.00pm, 4.1m/1663' – Venue – Howgill Lane, Sedbergh – GR 656923. Entries closed, 4th English Fell Championship counter and 5th club champs counter. **Esk Valley Entrants**; Phil Connor, David Dedman and Clive Thornton.

TUES 29 JUNE MAYBECK THREE CROSSES, BM, 7.15pm. 6m/800' – Venue – Maybeck Car Park, nr Whitby – GR 892025 – EOD - £6.00, 6th Summer Series Counter.

And **SUN 18 JUL HOLME MOSS** AL 17m/4000' 5th counter in the English Fell Championships, I understand entries are still open for this West Yorkshire bog trot, check out the Holmfirth Harriers Website – Club events tab. Early warning, **SUN 5 SEP SHELF MOOR** AS 5.9m/1500' 6th and final English Championships Counter, see Glossopdale Harriers website for entry form, entries accepted from 1st July –

250 limit!

Don't keep your exploits a secret, and keep you eyes on the e-mail, midweek social to be arranged soon, in combination with a Tuesday training run.

Clive Thornton

The Esker – May 2010 Part 2

The Summer and Winter Series needs YOU!

We are keen to improve Health and Safety, at the Summer and Winter Series events, so following from a discussion at the AGM Forum, we are looking for a Sweeper at each event for the remaining events of the Summer series and for the up and coming Winter Series.

The role of the sweeper is to follow the last runner of the race so we should know the last runner is in, they can also help to spot off-course runners and also bring in the course marking tapes. The Sweeper isn't just limited to Esk Valley runners, it's not a newcomer's job and you will need to know the course, and we are not looking to disadvantage a sweeper who may also be competing in the Series, so series points will be awarded.

So if you are interested or want further details please contact Dave Parry on 01287 660309 or david@eskvalleyfellclub.org

Photographs – Fox and Hounds

Our usual photographic source Dave Aspin was not at the Fox and Hounds, so if you have taken some photographs, please get in-touch we would like to put them on the website.

Please contact Dave Parry on 01287 660309 or david@eskvalleyfellclub.org

Up and coming

SAT 30 MAY. HELVELLYN, AM, 12.00pm, 11m/4500' – Venue – Bram Crag Farm, St Johns in the Vale, Keswick – GR 319214. EOD - £5.00, Another awayday.

TUES 1 JUNE. OSSY OIKS, BM, 7.15pm, 8.5m/1800' – Venue – Sheepwash Car Park, Next to Cod Beck Reservoir, nr Osmotherley – GR 469993 EOD - £6.00, 4th Summer Series counter, the ascent of Black Hambleton. Car sharing advised.

Results

A results special to follow soon and Eskers don't keep your exploits a secret.

Clive Thornton

The Esker – Lakeland Special

Up and coming

SAT 15 MAY. FAIRFIELD HORSESHOE, AM, 1.00pm, 9m/3000' – Venue - Rydal Hall, Ambleside – GR

NY 365064. EOD, 3rd Club Champs counter, a classic ridge run, bit of everything, if you run one Lakeland fell race this year, make this it!

TUES 18 MAY. FOX AND HOUNDS CHASE, BM, 7.15pm, 9m/1500' – Venue – Fox & Hounds, Ainthorpe, nr Castleton – GR 704078 EOD, 3rd Summer Series counter.

Results

Two Saturdays, two Lakeland races, and two very similar and not so similar races.

Anniversary Waltz (11.5m/3600') – 24th April. This is a much talked about race and if the FRA forum is anything to go by, one not to be missed. Held on the warmest weekend so far, the North East fell race fraternity turned out in their numbers, with the competing Three Peaks being held on the same day, overall numbers were down, but still 270 made it to the finish line including 7 Eskers. The course is deceptive after a pleasant 2.5m trail race warm-up; you hit the wall that is Robinson, with the scale of the Lakeland fells dwarfing all that has gone before in the winter series.

After Robinson come the relative undulations of Hindscarth, Dale Head, High Spy, Maiden Moor and Catbells, (6 Wainwrights bagged – tremendous) with each one a lesser climb, but certainly no easier for it. The finale is a glorious descent off Catbells to the finish field, where a beer, hot food and cake heaven await.

Verdict: A terrific day out, a tough opener to anyone's Lakeland account, not sure we will hurry back, there are plenty more fells in the Lakes.

For the record: Terrific near top quarter finish in 73rd – Richard Clark 2-08-53; 86th – Phil Conner 2-12-59; Dave Dedman 2-13-58; 112th – Mike McGough 2-19-49; 128th – Clive Thornton 2-23-01;

206th – Bob Lillie 2-40-04; 227th – Chris Jamieson. Event won by Ben Bardsley of Borrowdale in 1-37-42.

Coniston (9m/3500') – 1st May. Second English Fell Championship counter, in many ways similar to Anniversary Waltz, just take out the 2.5m warm-up, within 50 metres of the start the road starts to climb, 300 metres later it's the grassy col, Mauldry Bank, a viciously steep starter to the 2.5 mile climb that is Wetherlam. A rocky descent off Wetherlam is followed by a rocky scramble up Prison Band to the highest point of the race Swirl How (804m). Coniston Old Man is reached via Brim Fell (4 more Wainwrights bagged). Then followed 2 miles of mad rocky descent off the Old Man, made all the worse on the day by a four seasons in a day Lakeland hail storm.

Verdict: Very similar style race to Anniversary Waltz, with a long steep ascent near to the start of the race, though we all liked Coniston more, never a dull moment, and a classic that we will come back to soon!

For the record: Excellent top half finish for Phil (Lakeland) Connor 203rd from 430 finishers in 1-36-33; 242nd – Dave Dedman 1-40-08; 286th – Clive Thornton 1-46-39; 308th - Andrew Johnson 1-48-52;

And 410th - Chris Jamieson 2-18-07 (who was planning to run Keswick half marathon next day!). The event was won by 44 year old Ian Holmes of Bingley for the 9th time in 1-08-39, Ian is a tremendous descender coming off Swirl How which is about mid race he was 9th and made up most of the places on the Old man descent.

In the running

Awayday to Fairfield 15th May, early warning target race - Helvellyn 30th May, Ennerdale (English Fell Champs) – 12th June.

Don't Forget

English Fell Champs entries opened on 1st May for Holme Moss (18/07/10), form available on the Holmfirth Harriers website see event list for link to entry form.

Clive Thornton

The Esker - May 2010 Part 1

There so much happening at this time of the fell racing year, so the blog updates will keep coming thick and fast.

Cleveland Survival

I promised a write-up from Richard C. following his best time in the Cleveland Survival, so take it away:-

“Try as I might just couldn't get the day off for the Blakey Blitz, so decided to enter the Cleveland Survival a couple of weeks before the start as it would be a good, long training run. I had done it before (3rd last year – blogger's note) and quite enjoyed the map reading side of it. Anyway, found out the start would be at Great Ayton the week before so at least I should know some of the route.

I decided to do my map reading on the run and not to waste too much time at the start plotting the route. First stop was Roseberry Topping then onto Highcliff Nab through Guisborough woods, then over the back and onto the Quakers causeway to a check point above Commondale. Bit of a route choice to get over to hob hole, so decided to go straight over the moors and I was the first one in to the next check point. Ran quite hard to try and get a lead, as I knew the route well as it was part of the Eskdale Eureka route and then over the moor top to little Kildale.

The next check point was at the other side of the railway line, followed by a bit of a drag up to Captain Cook's Monument, expecting all the time to be caught at any moment. It was then back onto the Gisborough moors route to the bottom of little Roseberry, with a final blast as fast as I could to return to Great Ayton via Newton Wood.

As this event is run on a staggered start I had a bit of a wait to see who was in next, it was John Duff of NFR six minutes behind me. My long training run turned out to be about 24 miles in just under 4hrs on a sunny spring day. The event is well organised by Cleveland search and Rescue team. (Helping to raise funds for their current appeal to refurbish their new premises in Great Ayton – Blogger's note).

Hopefully I'll be doing it again as long as it doesn't clash with anything else.”

Richard Clark.

Results

Stuart Backhouse travelled to the Lakes on 17th April to compete in the **Coledale Horseshoe Fell Race**, Rob Jebb won the event in a time of 1hr 13 minutes 29 seconds, Stuart finished 116th in 1 hour 46 minutes 13 seconds, well inside the top half of the field of 252 finishers.

The summer series is here, and it started with a snow flurry! On a chilly night, the 7.15pm start to the **Carlton Challenge** caught a few by surprise, with all signed on there was just time to walk to the start and we were off. On a mostly hard baked outward leg and stone slabbed return to the course **Jim Bulman** of NYMAC took the honours in 34 minutes 16 seconds, with 95 finishing the race and 11 Esk Valley, which is terrific.

The Eskers finished in 4th and 5th in the team competition, with new name Alex Bennett leading the way in 21st in a time of 40 minutes 5 seconds (new EVFC record), closely followed by Clive Thornton (23rd), Richard Clark (24th) and Phil Conner (25th), first prize for team massing. The B team, were led home by Dave Collett in 30th followed by Mike McGough (31st), Richard Lindsay (40th) and Colin Knapp (41st), nice symmetry. With nearly enough for a third team, David Gibson (63rd), Chris Jamieson (69th) and Ian Robinson (80th) made up the 11 finishers. Good effort all round.

Bob Lillie ventured over to Preston Park for the first of NYMAC's Tees Forest Trail Series; Bob completed the 5km course in 22 minutes 41 seconds (104th/259 finishers) and 4th M55 finisher, Paul Lowe of the promoting club led home in 16 minutes 18 seconds. There are six events in the series, each is run on a Thursday night at 7.15pm (registration opens 6.30pm), next event in Pinchinthorpe on 29th April, followed by Coulby Grange Leisure Farm, Coulby Newham on 13th May.

Club Championships

Early days, but with two events completed the first three in the Open and M40 categories are the same, Dave Dedman, Stuart Backhouse and Clive Thornton, and Andrew Johnson leads from Bob Lillie in the M50 cat.

Up and Coming

The entry form for **Holme Moss** on 18th July (AL/17 miles/4000' climb), 5th counter in the English Fell Championships is now available on the Holmfirth Harriers Website, so entries are now open. Don't forget **Cock Howe North East** – 10.30am, 3rd May – 6 miles/1200' - 2nd summer series and new course I think, start Chop Gate Car Park.

Next time

Report and photographs from what at times seemed like a home fixture – Anniversary Waltz, based on the company not the running.

Clive Thornton

The Esker - North Runner / NEHRA Winter Series 2009/10

The beating heart of North Yorkshire hill and fell running rang out loudly and declared itself in good health for the 33rd running of the **Guisborough Moors** race. On a cracking warm spring day, the sun shone and with a hint of a breeze all was set fair for a terrific contest, for the near 200 field who lined up for the start of the race at Guisborough Rugby Club.

Phil Sanderson – Northumberland FR with 4 victories from 4 winter series starts and **Matt Speake** – Dark Peak FR, victory at the first English Fell Champs counter Noonstone, made the early running, but Matt Speake pulled away to win by nearly five minutes in a new course record of 79 minutes and 9 seconds.

Esk Valley made another tremendous showing with 10 finishers and 6th and 10th in the team competition, Dave Dedman (37th) took the honours for Esk Valley, followed by Clive Thornton (47th), Richard Clark (56th) in a sprint from Stuart Backhouse (57th), Dave Collett (68th), Mike McGough (73rd), Andrew Johnson (80th), Bob Lillie (121st), Paul Lambert (127th), and Ian Robinson (169th). Well done everyone!

Coming into the final event of the winter series, more than half of the category winners remained undecided and there were still most podium positions to chase. This year's series has been the most popular yet, with 497 different male and 121 different female competitors and numbers in the events were

the highest yet.

Before I move onto the Series winners, special mention for Kath Aspin of New Marske Harriers and Ean Parsons of Sedgefield Harriers who both completed all 11 events in the series, as reward entry is free to your next summer series race.

Series Overall Winners

Men Overall **Richard Bewell** – Wetherby Runners,

Women Overall **Caroline Pollard** – NYMAC, confirms title despite a strong finish from Kath Aspin.

Male Junior **Elliott Jackson** – New Marske Harriers

Female Junior **Megan Ellis** – Loftus and Whitby

Category Winners

Male Senior **Giles Hawking** – Knavesmire AC, title decided at last race from Jim Mann.

Female Senior **Gail Bell** - Sedgefield Harriers & **Shelli Gordon** – New Marske Harriers, Amazingly they can't be separated, each has one first, three seconds and two thirds, so a tie for the title, (though Shelli beats Gail on the head-to-head basis just to add some spice)

MO40 **Paul Christon** – NYMAC

MO45 **Richard Bewell** – Wetherby Runners

MO50 **Paul Kelly** – Durham FR, with an age category victory Paul overtakes Karl Edwards.

MO55 **David Kirk** – Hartlepool BR

MO60 **Neil Scruton** – Scarborough AC

MO65 **Ernie Huck** – Thirsk and Sowerby, Title confirmed.

FO40 **Kath Aspin** – New Marske Harriers

FO45 **Carol Dixon Yeung** – Acorn, Carol was just too strong for Christine Devereux.

FO50 **Caroline Pollard** – NYMAC

FO55 **Jan Young** – Elvet Striders, Jan takes title with 2nd in category

FO60 **Pat Kirkby** – Thirsk and Sowerby, Title confirmed.

Best placed Esk Valley competitors, Men overall – Rob Williamson 9th, Senior male – Dan Middlemas 11th injury prevented higher finish, Male O40 – Richard Clark 3rd, Phil Conner 5th, Male O45 – Rob Williamson 3rd, Colin Knapp 5th (7 Esk Valley in top 20), Male O50 – Andrew Johnson 4th, Male O50 – Bob Lillie 2nd (Silver this time!).

See you all in the Summer Series, next race 2nd counter - Cock Howe North East – Monday 3rd May

10.30am, Chop Gate Car Park.

Clive Thornton

The Esker – April 2010 Part 1

Up and coming

Guisborough Moors (12.5m/2600') – 11.00 am, Sunday 11th April – Venue – Guisborough Rugby Club, Belmangate, Guisborough – GR 616155 -140 places available on the day, final event in the Winter Series.

Carlton Challenge (5m/850') – 7.00pm, Tuesday 20th April – The Summer Series starts here – Venue – Carlton Bank top café, Carlton-in-Cleveland – GR 522031 – A sprint start to the series.

Results

Some great results recently by Esk Valley runners, after a third place last year **Richard Clark** did even better and gained the best time of 3 hour 58 minutes in the Cleveland Survival (27/03/10), a 26 mile orienteering event, this year based on a start/Finish at Great Ayton, report from Rich to follow soon.

Away from North Yorkshire, **Dave Dedman** was sole Esk Valley representative in the classic Edale Skyline (21/03/10), an event of 21 miles and 4500' climb, finishing in a terrific 91st from 253 finishers in a personal best time of 3 hours 52 minutes, race winner was Simon Bailey of Mercia in 2 hours 39 minutes.

Summer Series

With the last winter series event this weekend, attention quickly turns to the Esk Valley Fell Club Summer Series, where the racing comes thick and fast between the Carlton Challenge on 20th April and the 10th and final event Roseberry Topping on 31st August.

Another series you might just consider is the NECAA/NEHRA fell running championships, a seven race series which started at Kielder in February, but includes; Gisborough Moors, Simonside (Club Champs) and Clay Bank West, four finishes are required to be placed in the series, two of the remaining events clash for some, but see the Northumberland Fell Runners website for more details.

AGM

As Esk Valley's first Anniversary of its formation approached, we held our AGM at the Downe Arms at Castleton. It was a celebration of a year of 'Firsts' for the club:-

First competitive race – Carlton Challenge (21/04/09), First away day – Fairfield Horseshoe (16/05/09), First Victory – Dan Middlemas – Maybeck 3 Crosses (30/06/09), First team win – Clay Bank West (22/11/09) and First club appearance in the English Fell Championships at Noonstone (27/02/10).

Election of Officers: Chairman – Phil Conner, Secretary – Dave Parry, Treasurer – Pat Parry, Membership Secretary – Bob Lillie, Welfare Officer – Dave Dedman.

Ordinary Member Posts – OM1 – Sid Bollands – OM2 – Blog and Records – Clive Thornton – OM3 – To be filled.

The format of the club fell championships was revised and extended, to include 12 races; with the

improved format including more local races and now extending over the whole year.

There was lively discussion on how to develop the club in its second year, including; event support and training groups, developing a family membership option, and encouraging a young and female members section. To encourage membership of the club, if a new member joins at the Gisborough Moors or at any of initially the first five summer series races and then entry to the race is free.

Esk Valley are looking to enter a team in the Cleveland Way Relay (Prov. 27/06/10), Mike McGough to send further details.

In the running

Away days up and coming; Anniversary Waltz and Three Peaks – 24th April; Coniston – 1st May.

Don't Forget

English Fell Champs entries open on 1st May for Holme Moss (18/07/10), form to be available on the Holmfirth Harriers website.

Clive Thornton

The Esker – March 2010 Winter Series Update

Up and coming

AGM – NEW VENUE – *The Downe Arms, Castleton – Up the hill on Main Street, times as before, 7.30pm for 8.00pm, Thursday 1st April.*

Guisborough Moors – *11.00 am, Sunday 11th April, entry form on the fixture list.*

Results

The blue skies and sunshine belied the strong chill wind that blew across the tops at Blakey Blitz, and where a drop down into the valleys found a tropical paradise. The course has a very long sting in its tail, the two ascents and one descent in the back half were hard enough, but combined with a fierce headwind it made for a difficult return to The Lion.

Phil Sanderson of Northumberland Fell Runners literally blew the opposition away; finishing over nine minutes clear of his nearest sprint finish rivals Gary Webb and a returning Charles Stead. To cap a fine morning's effort Phil set a new course record of 84 minutes 45 seconds beating Lewis Banton's mark by nearly two minutes, over in the Women's race Helen Gilbert of Totle AC took the honours.

Esk Valley were able to finish two teams in the first club championship counter, Stuart Backhouse in 21st lead home 'Esk Valley A' who finish 5th overall, followed by a still fresh after his fine run in Edale Skyline - Dave Dedman 28th, Phil Conner 31st and Clive Thornton 45th. 'Esk Valley B' represented by Andrew Johnson, Bob Lillie, Chris Jamieson and Ian Robinson completed the eight for the Eskers.

Winter Series update

*Blakey Blitz has helped decide three more categories, but over half still have some running in them and don't forget the podium spots, so plenty to run for at our final winter series promotion – **Guisborough***

Moors.

Firstly well done to the category winners so far:

Men Overall	Richard Bewell – Wetherby Runners	A 6th overall at Blakey Blitz seals it.
Male Junior	Elliott Jackson – New Marske Harriers	New winner
MO40	Paul Christon – NYMAC	A 2nd place category finish at Blakey nails it.
MO45	Richard Bewell – Wetherby Runners	
MO55	David Kirk – Hartlepool	BR
MO60	Neil Scruton – Scarborough	AC
FO40	Kath Aspin – New Marske Harriers	
FO50	Caroline Pollard – NYMAC	

Categories undecided;

Women overall – Caroline Pollard leads but Kath Aspin can still snatch it.
Male Senior – Its now down to two, leader Giles Hawking can still be caught by Jim Mann.
MO50 – Karl Edwards takes over the lead from Ean Parsons, Gordon Brown and Paul Kelly still in with a shout.
MO65 – Ernie Huck leads, but Ronnie Sherwood is a counter shy, so a good finish and who knows?
Female Junior – Title contender Megan Ellis is still open to challenge.
Female Senior – Gail Bell still leads, though Shelli Gordon closes slightly after Blakey.
FO45 – Carol Dixon-Yeung leads and only a category win will do for local runner Christine Devereux.
FO55 – Current leader Jan Young can seal the title by finishing Guisborough Moors from Sue Haslam.
FO60 – Pat Kirkby just leading, close rivals are Pam Sherlock & Marian Codling, but it's open to anyone.

In the running

Confirmed entries for the second English Championship Counter – Coniston (1st May) – Phil Conner, Dave Dedman, Chris Jamieson, Andrew Johnson & Clive Thornton. Anniversary Waltz (24th April) – Entries still open, already confirmed;- Phil Conner, Dave Dedman, Chris Jamieson and Clive Thornton.

Don't Forget

English Fell Champs entries now accepted for Sedbergh Three Peaks (26th June) and entries open for Ennerdale (12th June) after 31st March.

Clive Thornton

The Esker – March 2010

Has spring sprung? After 3 months of consistently cold weather, we are being rewarded with some spring warmth.

Up and coming

Blakey Blitz - 10.30 am, Sunday 28th March, start/finish at The Lion Inn on Blakey Ridge and
Guisborough Moors – 11.00 am, Sunday 11th April, entry form on the fixture list.

Results

The postponed Clay Bank East was held on 14th March, 83 souls risked the wrath of their Mothers on what was a glorious day, and still we had snow up-top to make things tricky.

Phil Sanderson of Northumberland Fell Runners made it three victories from three starts (BTW – Good run at Noonstone). Esk Valley achieved a terrific third in the team competition; Rob Williamson led the team home coming 14th, followed by Clive Thornton (27th), Mike McGough (29th) and Andrew Johnson (43rd), Chris Jamieson and Ian Robinson made up the six from Esk Valley who finished the race.

Winter Series update

With two events left in the winter series, most categories are undecided so plenty to run for, with a sprinkling of glory still up for grabs by Esk Valley, and of course for the rest of us, the joy of running in the beautiful arena that is the North Yorkshire Moors.

Firstly well done to the category winners so far:

MO45	<i>Richard Bewell – Wetherby Runners</i>
MO55	<i>David Kirk – Hartlepool BR</i>
MO60	<i>Neil Scruton – Scarborough AC</i>
FO40	<i>Kath Aspin – New Marske Harriers</i>
FO50	<i>Caroline Pollard – NYMAC</i>

Categories undecided;

Women overall – *Caroline Pollard leads but Kath Aspin is close.*

Men overall – *Richard Bewell is in pole, but Robert Addyman and our own Dan Middlemas can catch.*

Male Junior – *Elliot Jackson of New Marske Harriers leads, but it's still wide open.*

Male Senior – *Giles Hawking can still be caught by, Jim Mann, Chris Plews, Dan Middlemas and Andrew Minister.*

MO40 – *Paul Christon from local rivals NYMAC leads, James Lee, Esker – Richard Clark and Robert Addyman could still take the title.*

MO50 – *Ean Parsons is in a six way battle with Gordon Brown, Karl Edwards, Paul Kelly and Eskers Andrew Johnson and Dave Collett.*

MO65 – *Ernie Huck leads, but Ronnie Sherwood is one counter shy, so a good finish and he could take the title.*

Female Junior – *Title contender Megan Ellis is still open to challenge.*

Female Senior – *Good late season form means Gail Bell is favourite, though Shelli Gordon is still in with a shout.*

FO45 – *Carol Dixon-Yeung leads, but local runner Christine Devereux needs one good finish to make it interesting.*

FO55 – *A three way fight between current leader Jan Young, Sue Haslam and Pam Costello.*

FO60 – *Pat Kirkby just leading, close rivals are Pam Sherlock & Marian Codling, but it's open to anyone.*

In the running

Confirmed entries for Anniversary Waltz – Phil Conner, Dave Dedman, Chris Jamieson & Clive Thornton, (entries still accepted) and for the Three Peaks – Bob Lillie, Mike McGough, Dan Middlemas and Rob Williamson.

Don't Forget

AGM – 7.30pm for 8.00pm start on Thursday 1st April at Eskdale Hotel, Castleton and English Fell Champs advance entries opening very soon for, Ennerdale and Sedbergh Three Peaks.

Last Word

Did I hear a whisper of the Lakeland Classics Trophy?

Clive Thornton

The Esker – Winter 2010

What a winter, the coldest since 1978/79, still snow on the tops and its pretty cold outside. The January snow meant a catalogue of race cancellations, though not before the local festive favourites were run-off in the unseasonal snowy conditions.

A bit of catching up to do this time around in the blog.

Results

Guisborough Woods, with a possibility of cancellation the day before and melting snow on the day, Phil Sanderson of Northumbrian Fell Runners took the victory over Elliott Jackson (Junior) of New Marske Harriers. Esk Valley with a healthy 9 starters took fourth in the team race, with Rob Williamson best placed in 23rd, Richard Clark (31st), Phil Conner (36th), and Andrew Johnson (50th), followed by Clive Thornton, Colin Knapp, Bob Lillie, Ian Robinson and Chris Jamieson.

Captain Cooks, catastrophe Dave P sidelined by broken ankle, a snow storm during signing on leaves a very pretty scene, but much confusion amongst competitors as just what to wear. Darren Bilton of Leeds AC takes the victory despite giving everyone a chance by going off course coming off the monument. A good turnout from Esk Valley with 8 runners facing the starter, we were 9th in the team standings, represented by Phil Conner (50th), Dave Dedman (63rd), Clive Thornton (64th) and Dave Collett (71st), followed by; Andrew Johnson, Colin Knapp, Ian Robinson and Chris Jamieson.

Clay Bank East – Postponed until 14th March due to snow.

Up and Coming

On the local front there are the last three winter series events and the first race in the summer! Series.

14 th	March	Clay	Bank	East		6m/1100'
28 th	March	Blakey	Blitz		9.5m-ish/2370'	1 st Club counter
11 th	April		Guisborough	Moors		12.5m/2600'
20 th	April	Carlton Challenge		5m/850'		

Away-days

*The next club trip is on 24th April, with two parties, one to **The Three Peaks**, where entries are probably just about closed and the second to what has become by all accounts a modern classic of the Fell running calendar – **The Anniversary Waltz**, based on the Newlands Valley near Keswick, entries are still open, though it's an all on-line entry system.*

English Fell Championships

*We are targeting the whole 6 race series and aiming for points in one of the age categories at some stage. See Phil's report and the website photo's for a flavour of what was a terrific if arduous event at Noonstone. Next event is **Coniston** on 1st May, but entries have just closed, after just a week, hopefully we have at least three entries.*

*Following Coniston, are **Ennerdale** on 12th June – entries no earlier than 31st March on form from CFRA website, then **Sedbergh Three Peaks** on 26th June – entries no earlier than 26th March on an FRA*

standard form.

Training

We have a couple of what are becoming regular runs, Tuesdays about 7.30-8.00pm, Sundays about 1.00-1.30pm, and keep it quiet a little occasional speed work sideline at the Albert Park Run (5km) on Saturdays at 9.00am where the race is on the for the first sub-19 minute for an Esk Valley registered runner, which will then of course become the first sub-18.

AGM

Don't forget the AGM on Thursday 1st April, 7.30pm for an 8.00pm start at the Eskdale Hotel in Castleton, Dave P. has sent out an agenda so anything you want adding let him know by 17th March and for the Chips and Sandwiches order (£3.00 per head or thereabouts). And subs are due.

That about wraps it up for now.

Clive Thornton

Noonstone



Esk Valley put in a good show for the first English Championships race of the season, with a large field of 430. It was a chilly day with the clag down on the tops and snow patches on the tops. Temperature about 2 degC and freezing on the tops, but also very wet and boggy. There was a good representation from the top fell runners, with some familiar faces and names on show. Matt Speake won overall in 68.16 ahead of



a close finishing group of 8 including Lloyd Taggart, Rob Hope, and Rob Jebb . Richard Clark was first home for Esk Valley in 88.54 (183rd place). Then in a closely contested race for Club positions were: Dave Dedman - 96.03 (253rd place) Clive Thornton - 97.18 (264th place) Mike McGough -99.35 (286th place) Andrew Johnson - 100.54 (297th place) I enjoyed the day out, taking photos and videos of the proceedings and descents, whilst



nursing a very sore throat.

NB. Caroline Pollard (NYM) had a fine run, finishing in 3rd place in the F50 category, in 98.28.

I've attached a few photos to give a flavour of the event - note the deluxe washing facilities in the finest traditions of the sport.

Roll on Coniston!

Phil Conner

Wicked Witches and Warlocks Winter Wander 2009

I had some thoughts about what to call this newsletter. My previous thinking was to make up a new title each month. I started with The Bog Blog but in The Winter months we are a little more restricted on travel. So I am suggesting some target races up to February so that people have indications of what is happening some time ahead!

Fixtures For Nithering November.

We organise two races this month.

- **8th November** where the team put in a fantastic performance to finish 4th just behind NYMAC. This was largely due to a fantastic effort from Dan to finish 2nd. Rob 14th, Richard & Phil.
- **22nd November** 'Clay Bank West' 5.5 miles from Clay Bank Car Park. 10.30 start.

Outings:

- **21st November.** We will be travelling to The Tour of Pendle. This will be a day out at Barley Village Hall (Near Burnley.) 21st November. We will be meeting at Stokesley to travel across at 7.15a.m. in The Co-op Car Park. Hope to see you there.
- **29th November,** Esk Valley are having an organised recce of The Eskdale Eureka at 10.00.am. from our club head quarters at The Eskdale Hotel all are welcome.

Fixtures For Dark December.

We are organising Two events this month:

- **6th December;** The Eskdale Eureka 10.30 am from The Eskdale Pub Castleton. 8 miles.
- **27th December;** The day after Boxing Day Race or The Guisborough Woods Race 6 miles plus a Junior race of 2 Miles.

Fixtures for Jumping and Jiving January.

- **The Captain Cook's New Years Days Race.** 11.00 a.m. at The Royal Oak Great Ayton. Our main charity fund raiser. Be there early as the numbers just keep on growing. Volunteers to help at registration and marshalling!
- **10th January** Clay Bank East 10.30 a.m. 6 miles.

Best wishes

Dave E Mail david@eskvalley.org tel. 01287 660309

October Odyssey 2009

We managed a visit to The Autumn Leaves on 3.10.09. Where we ran a 'Lollipop' shaped race i.e. 3K out, then a moorland loop not unlike The Blakey Blitz but less climb, round a reservoir, across a golf course then the same 3K back. This was the first airing of the club vest. I will bring some to The Saltergate Gallows where club members will be able to purchase them for £15.00. There is also a club fleece priced at £21.00 should anyone want to order one. (see Dave Dedman who owns the only sample at present! Well done to Dave and Andrew Johnson our only two representatives who both finished in the top half of the field.

I am currently compiling a list of events that we can travel to as a club once a month next year, so if you have suggestions please let me Bob Lillie, Phil Conner or Dave Dedman know so that we can compile a list of perhaps ten races. Our next target race sees the beginning of the Winter Series:- The Northern Runner and Esk Valley Winter Series 2009/10; at the Saltergate Gallows on 18th October 2009.

The Series will consist of 11 races with the best six to count. There are 12 age categories including male and female. To count in the N.E.H.R.A. championship you would need to carry out a support activity on one event i.e. marshall a check point; mark the course; lift the tape after the event; help at the finish or donate a prize. You may also nominate a substitute to do this on your behalf. Hope that is clearer than mud!

Winter Fixtures will be Saltergate- 18.10.09. 3 Tops – 8.11.09. Clay Bank West- 22.10.09. Eskdale Eureka- 6.12.09. Guisborough Woods- 27.12.09. Captain Cook's- 1.1.10. Clay Bank East- 10.01.10. Castleton Beacon- 14.02.10. Commondale- 28.2.10. Blakey Blitz- 28.3.10. and Gisborough Moors 11.04.10.

Our next target race after Saltergate other than 'Winter Series' will be The Tour of Pendle on 21.11.09. It is likely that we will travel from Stokesley between 7.00 and 7.30 a.m. on that day. I know that some people are travelling independently but if you wish to travel as part of the main group please let me know soon.

Best wishes

Bald Eagle! E Mail david@eskvalley.org tel. 01287 660309

September Country Clart 2009

In this month's Blog I am pleased to announce the winner of last month's competition as Richard Clark who correctly identified Gary Devine and Dan Middlemas as the two runners on our 'Home Page' and the Castleton Beacon 2009 as the race. Well done Richard you are the winner of a bottle of wine.

This month's competition is:- Can you suggest 'Nick Names' for club members or other local runners? So far we have the following suggestions; Phil 'Razor' Conner, Dave 'Deadlegs' Dedman, Bob 'Bogjogger' Lillie, Kendra 'Crazy Banshee' White, Dave 'Bald Eagle' Parry.

We are organizing just one race this month

Tuesday 1st September, Roseberry Topping Race. 7.15 p.m. Newton Under Roseberry. Ages 11 plus.

There will be a special award nominated by the winners of the male and female categories this year. A local charitable organization is prepared to donate £100 to a charity of the winners choosing in each of the two gender categories.

Other Events

Saturday 12th September Castleton Show. We will be supporting Chris Wright and the show committee by organizing 'On the day registration and the start and finish.' You will need to pay for show entry if you do not pre-enter. Forms are available from myself and Chris Wright. Please ring or see me at The Roseberry event. This is the last counter in The North East Hill Running Assoc. Summer Series.

Sunday 20th September. The Viking Chase. A few of us will be running this event. See if you can fit it in!

Advance Notice:-

We will be travelling to;

3rd October 'Autumn Leaves' at Saddleworth. Group transport is to be arranged.

18th October 'Saltergate Gallows' Start of The Winter Series.

21st November 'Tour of Pendle' Group transport to be arranged.

We would be interested to hear news about your training and build up of racing as preparation for the Tour on 21st November.

Best Wishes

Bald Eagle! E Mail david@eskvalley.org tel. 01287 660309

I had some thoughts about what to call this newsletter. My current thinking is to make up a new title each month. I've started with The Bog Blog and have one or two others in mind but would welcome any comments or suggestions. This one was inspired by Bob the 'Bog' Lillie, who managed to fall into a bog that was waist deep in the recent Otley Race!

This Months Competition:-

Look at the home page. Can you identify the two athletes used as the basis of the art work? Can you identify the location of the picture? I can only tell you that yours truly took the original photograph. A suitable prize will be given for the best response.

A New Flag:-

Did you know that the club now has a flag. I was in Whitby recently when I spotted a flag that was flying on a local ship. It was The Esk Valley Flag – A white rose on a light blue background. I purchased a decent sized one from one of the local shops. I thought we could fly this at events when we travel away so that fellow members can identify where others are parked.

Fixtures this month:-

We are organizing two [races this month](#).

4th August Gribdale Gallop. 8 Miles 1400' of climb from Gribdale Car Park near Gt. Ayton 7.15 p.m.

18th August Gisborough Grunt. 7 Miles 1000' climb. From Guisborough Rugby Club 7.00p.m. Please note the second half of this course has been changed to include a loop through Sleddale Farm. Maps available shortly.

*We will be travelling to Grasmere Senior Guides Race. This will be a day out at Grasmere Sports on **Sunday 30th August**. We will be meeting at Stokesley to travel across and further details of travel arrangements will be given nearer the date.*

For Info E Mail david@eskvalley.org or telephone 01287 660309.

Best Wishes

Dave