

MALHAM SHOW TRAILQUEST 2008

After a consistently wet August, we were lucky to have another dry day for Malham show. And with most of the area on quick draining limestone the trails were mostly dry, although I encountered some extensive stretches of water on route to controls 14 and 13 - at least it was nice clean water!

After registering in the showfield, it was time to see where the controls were this year. I was convinced I needed to get over to Littondale and back, which with hindsight, was not a good idea. Too many miles and too few points for my level of fitness!

So where did the fast folks go?

Overall winner Chris Hope first collected all the controls to the west except the big drop down to Settle, then headed east to Litton and Arncliffe before climbing back over Nab End for all the controls near the Tarn. Then east again to collect all the controls over Malham Moor and near Threshfield, but no time for Weets. Nine minutes late, but still 645 points.

Nick Harmer set out in the opposite direction, and after Threshfield headed north up to Litton, doglegging up to Nab End en route. Then west over Cow Close for the controls above Helwith Bridge, back round the Tarn for a last climb up Kirby Fell and 617 points.

Third placed Andy Wrigley took on Kirby Fell then zig-zagged round the Tarn before setting out on a big loop west towards Helwith Bridge. east to Litton, south to Threshfield, then Malham Moor and Weets for 613 points.

Forth overall, and first vet, Andy Conn set off on a similar clockwise route to Chris, but hadn't time for the controls near Threshfield (600).

The top 3 supervets all took the anticlockwise route, but John Rawdon splashed to control 14, and a winning extra 30 points (510).

Top two masters also took the same anticlockwise route, with John Tiffany fastest back to the Tarn, but he didn't realise he had time for Kirby Fell and arrived at the finish early. Dave Day did go up Kirby Fell for the extra 50 points to win the class (501).

Leading woman, Emily Brooks went round the Tarn after Kirby Fell, then over Hawkswick Clowder and down to Threshfield to collect 433 points. The two vets took clockwise identical routes, but Helen Costelloe was a few minutes late so Nicky Jaquiere won with 430 points. It was close for the supervets, both going clockwise, but Dorothy Pelly had collected control 1 after the start, making 370 points to beat Clare De Faye by 10 points. I was the only women masters, tried to do too much and was late back, leaving me with 360 points.

Dennis Jaques and Shiela Pearce were clear winners of the mixed vets (545), and by climbing for the points on Chapel and Kirby Fell also beat the leading mixed team of Andy Beanland and Rachael Weston (376). Generation Team Andy and Tim Crozier took an identical route to Dennis and Shiela and got identical penalties, and clearly won their class.

My overall impression was that there was a wider scatter of route choices this year, with no really obvious "best route". It certainly had me thinking!

As usual for Malham, there was a good selection of prizes from Chevin Cycles, OMM Original Mountain Marathon and SIS Science in Sport, and these were given out earlier this year, which has to be a good idea when lots of us have a long journey home. Thanks also to sponsors Malham Youth Hostel.

Many thanks to the planners, organisers and helpers for another excellent day out in this stunning part of the Dales.

Karen B