

Chairman's Report for the year to 31st March 2017

It gives me great pleasure to deliver my final report on club activities during the past club year! Despite last year's optimism, club membership has once again suffered a small dip. It may just reflect the cyclic nature of the sport, but we shouldn't be complacent, and the committee would be delighted to hear any ideas people have for retaining and recruiting members! I remain puzzled by the poor attendances on club nights and at races. If anyone has any idea of why this might be, we would love to hear from you! We are also still struggling to establish a regular middle paced group but it is something we constantly look at. We have members to form such a group but it will only work if people turn up on club nights!

In performance terms, new club records were set by Gareth Dodd (10k) and Leah Leonard (Mile). There were also age records for: Mark Musgrove, Rob Sharam, John Dillon, Ken Robbins, John Morgan, Jo Grandfield, Mimi Owen and Leah Leonard. Apologies to anyone I've missed because their records were subsequently overtaken by those mentioned above. Best age graded runs came from John Dillon 86.23% (Ellesmere Port 5k) and Mimi Owen 80.67% (Cheshire 10k). 16 Club Standard awards were awarded at the Birthday Bash.

The Dearnford Lake Relay in July was again well attended. Fantastic weather saw 110 teams take part. The Men's race was again won by a team from Shrewsbury AC with Telford AC winning the Mixed and Ladies races. A Whippet's team made up of John Dillon, Dean Richards and Leah Leonard took fourth place in the mixed Team category. 15 club members ran in a mixture of Whippet and community teams.

For the first time, it was one of our own races, the Magic Mile on the 28th June that saw the most Whippets racing! Next most popular were the Market Drayton 10k, Ellesmere 10k and Lake Vyrnwy Half Marathon.

The Don Wilbraham Handicap saw 21 members taking part. The series was won by Dean Richards with Fiona Challinor and James Rainbow taking 2nd and 3rd places. Just 7 points separated the first three! Thanks again go to Simon Phillips for his excellent handicapping. The winter season saw the second running of the Winter Naked Handicap with members predicting their finish time and then racing without any technology. Ken Robbins was a worthy winner sneaking up on the winning post in the last race! Our Club Championship was as well contested with Mimi Owen and John Dillon crowned Club Champions.

We also had our usual quota of social events, the highlight of which must be the Bake-Off held in March. Congratulations to Adam Richards and all our master bakers! There was also the usual social run followed by a meal at the Horse and Jockey, Grindley Brook. The post-race butties in Welshampton also went down well after the Ellesmere 10k. Our thanks to Liz Featherstone for that one!

This year's beginner's' course was very well attended and many went on to join the club although not very many have renewed their membership.

The North Wales cross country league saw our teams improve on the previous year with our women holding on to 7th place while the men improved to 5th. Credit must go to team captains Simon Phillips and Rachael Foster.

Our Birthday bash was again held as a buffet at the Rugby club. The highlight of the night was Adam's delight at winning a place in the London Marathon in the club ballot!

Our club is only in such a healthy state through the hard work and support of many people, so I would like to end by thanking all those on the committee and anyone else who has given their time and effort on behalf of the club.

Simon Parsons

(Retiring Hon Chairman) 26th June 2017