

Potted History of Cleethorpes New Years Day Road Race

The first appearance of the New Years Day event was in 1976, soon after Cleethorpes & District Athletic club was formed. It originally started as a friendly get-together and a report in the Grimsby News of January 1979 states “Around 30 runners set off from the Birds Nest Café for a friendly social run of around four miles”. Only the first three are recorded with no times shown – John Barker, Harry Collett and John Wright.

A full list of finishers is reported in the Grimsby News for 1982 and 1983 with host club Jon Ireland finishing in first place in 1982, John Molloy was second with Peter Browning third. John Ireland repeated his victory in 1983 with track specialist, Mark Chapman, in second and Colin Wright, who was to organize the event for the next 12 years in third. Karen Powell and Barbara Brown respectively won the ladies race for these years. The event was over 4.8 miles from the club’s headquarters on Kings Road to the Yacht Club and back on the Marine Embankment, and included $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of dirt track. The course record for this distance is still held by Martin Anderson (25.02) which he set in 1994. Martin Anderson Insurance was race sponsor of New Years Day from 1989 to 2000.

In 1986 the event distance was changed to 10K on what was described as the St Anthony’s Bank Circuit. Brother and sister Neil Smith of Coventry Godiva and Kathy Palmer of Grimsby Harriers both winning their respective race in 31.15 and 37.20

The 1987 event was the first year that the event was run under AAA & NCWCCA rules and on the present day course, with slight start and finish variations used. This was also the last year that the old club headquarters, next to the Cleethorpes Leisure Centre, were used as the race headquarters. The inaugural winner on this new course was Carl Nightingdale of Sheffield AC in 31.15, with Neil Smith, Coventry Godiva, 31.24 in second, and Andy Frapewell, Gloucester AC, 31.33 third, and with Jane Finch, Grimsby Harriers, 37.29 winning the ladies event.

1988 saw the race headquarters moved across the road to the much larger Winter Gardens with Neil Smith repeating his 1986 victory with a 31.23 win, and Bridlington’s Denise Baker taking the ladies title in a New Years Day record time of 36.24. Also of note was the infamous ‘jogging granddad’, Eddie Kirkup, taking the M55 title in 34.59.

The year 1989 saw the 30 minute barrier broken for the first time in South Humberside, with the first two going sub 30 minutes. Winner Vincent Garner of Copeland AC recorded 29.36 and was clocked going through the half-way point in 14.38 and the five mile mark in 23.47, while runner-up, John Clark, Grimsby Harriers, clocked 29.53 and recorded 23.52 at 5 mile. Malcolm Martin, in third, led home Sheffield AC to the team award. Malcolm went through the mile in 4.38 and moved from 7th at this point to finish in third place and, at the age of 44, first veteran in 30.34. The ladies winner, Kathy Palmer of Grimsby Harriers, repeated her 1986 victory in a course record time of 35.11.



The start of the 1989 Cleethorpes 10K in Hardys Road with race winner, Vincent Garner (396) already to the fore.

The dawning of a new decade in 1990 saw a record entry with City of Hull's Andy Lyons recording the first of his four consecutive titles, winning a £100 training grant for his 30.12 clocking. He also took the Humberside Championship gold which was incorporated in the race that year.

Andy finally cracked the sub 30 minute barrier at the fourth time of asking on New Years Day 1993. A four year winning sequence of 30.12; 30.05; 30.03 and finally 29.32 saw Andy surpass Vincent Garner's 1989 record by four seconds. The ladies record also was broken in 1993 with Peterborough's Teresa Dyer, re-writing the record books with an amazing 32.43 clocking. Both athletes picked up £160 in training grants for their win. Teresa, having broken the Cleethorpes Guy Fawkes 10K record in late October of 1992, with a 33.34 clocking, was expected to record another fast time in only her second visit to the resort, and the expectations were certainly fulfilled as she knocked nearly two minutes off the previous record and 51 seconds off her personal best. Added interest was her five mile split of 26.30, a time that would have put her second in the previous year's UK rankings for the five mile distance. Teresa's 32.43 clocking turned out to be the fastest time in the UK in 1993 and put her 12th on the British All-Time list. Teresa's record for New Years Day still stands to this day.

Amazingly Andy Lyons course record of 29.32 was only to last the year as Skyrac AC's Peter Whitehead recorded 29.24 in the 1994 event, with both Rotherham's David Tune (29.56) and Leeds City's Julian Moorhouse (29.58) also going sub 30 minutes. Peter went on to finish in 12th place in the following year's London Marathon in 2.12.23. Host club's Lisa Melkevik Mawer recorded a fast 34.49 to win the ladies with Annette Bell, Lincoln Wellington, in second (35.09) and former Grimsby Harrier Kim Bennett third in 35.53.

With an icy blast of cold air blowing in from the Humber the 1995 race was won in dramatic fashion by Scunthorpe based, Julian Moorhouse, running for Leeds City who, despite losing the

lead at the 6K mark with stomach cramps, was able to overhaul England International Mick Thompson with 400 metres to go to cross the finish line in 30.42, five seconds in front of runner-up Mick. Olympian Jane Shields, who ran the 10,000m for Great Britain in the Los Angeles Olympics, was the first woman to complete the course, recording 36.10 - a reflection of the harsh conditions out on the route. In the M65 category, Eddie Kirkup, three times winner of the Morpeth to Newcastle New Years Day road race in the mid 1950's, clocked a national ranking 40.59.

The 1996 race saw Rotherham Harriers take the team prize, led home by David Tune who recorded a fast 30.15. Runner-up Robert Holladay, 31.18, was the second counter for the team, and Michael Thompson anchored the team in seventh position. Grimsby's John Clark was first veteran in third with a 31.42 clocking. The ladies race saw East Hull Harrier Melanie Hayward recording her first win in 37.10, with Carol Wild recording a world class 37.40 and W50 course record in fourth.

The weather finally took its toll on the New Years Day race with the 1997 race nearly being cancelled. The course was inspected by officials on the day and because of the snow underfoot the race was reduced in distance and only run on the main roads. Simon and Annette Bell, Lincoln Wellington's husband and wife team, ran out the winners on a course just under four miles in distance.

Business as normal was the order of the day in the 1998 race with Skrac's Peter Whitehead the 1994 course record holder returning to the resort and recording a strong 30.58 in first place. Rotherham Harriers repeated their team victory of 1996 with three different counters to their previous team victory. Paul Bennett, runner-up to Whitehead, recorded 31.34, with fellow team mate Darren Hale in third with 31.51, and Mark Ruddleston anchoring the team in fourth place to record 31.57. Lisa Mawer with 37.00 repeated her 1994 victory in the ladies event running for her new club, Harrogate Imperial.

Lincoln Wellington's Simon Bell repeated his 1997 win in the 1999 event, this time in better weather conditions over the full 10k distance. Wolds Veteran, Daphne Barclay ran out the winner in the ladies event recording a W45 category record of 38.38.

For the millennium 10K the race headquarters moved again, this time to the Wellow Hotel at the corner of Chichester road and Kings road The race took place in ideal conditions with Blackheath and Bromley International runner Andrew Arrand running an impressive 30.49, over a minute ahead of runner-up Cleethorpes AC's Philip Hinch, who led home the host club to first team place. Lisa Mawer, Bingley Harriers, recorded her hat-trick of victories in this event recording 35.05.

Simon Bell, Lincoln Wellington, notched up his hat-trick of New Years Day wins on the opening day of 2001 with Bingley's Lisa Moore keeping her title of the previous year, notching up her fourth New Years Day win. Daphne Ellmore ran one of the fastest times in the UK in the W50 category that year with a category course record of 37.22, surpassing Carol Wild's 1996 record by 18 seconds.

The highlight in the 2002 event was the performance of Daphne Ellmore in the ladies event, not only the fact that she won the event, but that she ran 36.24 in the W50 to record one of the fastest W50 times ever recorded in the UK. Kingston Upon Hull won the team event, led home in first place by Andy Swearman who recorded a fast 30.58 with team mate Gary Slater in the runner-up position and Andy Hughes, fifth overall, as the last counter for the north bank team.

Andy returned to the resort in 2004 this time wearing the colours of Birchfield Harriers and the outcome was yet another win (31.37) Melanie Hayward, this time running for Beverley AC, took the ladies title in 35.18 repeating her win of 1996.

Regular supporter of this event Mick Jagger of Lincoln Wellington ran out the winner in 2005 and 2006. Mick's best recorded time on New Years Day was way back in 1989 when he recorded 31.01 for seventh place. Ladies winner in 2005 was Peterborough's Tanya Taylor who recorded 38.31 whilst in 2006 Bingley's Lisa Mawer clocked up her fifth New Years day win clocking 34.51, thus recording a new W35 record, knocking one minute 43 seconds off Jane Colebrook's 1993 record. This was the third time Lisa has run sub 35 minutes on New Years Day; the first being way back in 1992 when she stopped the watch in 34.45. Also of interest in 2006 was Scunthorpe's Bob Newell recording a M65 time of 38.49 which put him third in his age group on the British All-Time list for that year and proving that it was a good year for veterans, Daphne Ellmore ran a W55 record of 39.07 which would have been the fastest W55 time in the UK in that year but for the fact that one month later Daphne ran 38.46 at Dewsbury !! The venue for the race moved yet again, this time to the host club's new headquarters, the Cleethorpes Cricket Club in Chichester Road.

In 2007 host club's Beverley Wilson, repeated her 2003 victory whilst 2004 runner-up, Pumlani Bangani, running for Salford Harriers, finally hit the number one position with his 32.31 win.

Lincoln Wellington's Mick Jagger secured his New Years Day hat trick in 2008 with Hermitage Harrier Gemma Steel taking the ladies title with a 36.14 clocking. In 2009 she repeated this victory with a personal best time of 34.50. Kingston Upon Hull repeated their 2002 team victory in this year, led home by race winner Robert Hodges (32.38) in only his second ever run over the 10K distance, with track runner Jarratt Perkins, making his debut over the 10k distance, third overall and team mate Gregan Clarkson anchoring the team in seventh position.

On the opening day of 2010 in the 35th running of the event, Redhill Road Runner, Leigh Stubbs, recorded his lifetime personal best of 32.02 for the distance with host club, Martin Formestone in second place (32.17) also recording his personal best. Not to be outdone, track specialist, Sam Atkin, in third place (32.22) clocked his best time for the distance. In the ladies event, Lisa Mawer, now running for Wetherby RR, recorded her sixth New Years Day win, stopping the clock in 37.00 beating pre-race favourite, Natalie Farrow by 25 seconds.

In 2011 two times runner-up, Gregan Clarkson, in his sixth New Years Day race finally hit the top spot recording 33.45 the fourth Kingston Upon Hull athlete to win the event. Mick Jagger, now running for Wolds Vets, was second (33.58) and first veteran with Mick's former Lincoln Wellington club mate, Richard Bateson, in third running a PB of 34.03. Beverley Wilson, from the host club, Cleethorpes AC, clocked up her third New Years Day win with Jacqui Khoueir running for Holmfirth Harriers in second and Mablethorpe's Janine Stones in third.

COLIN WRIGHT
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