

# "THE RETURN OF THE KING!!"

12th BRISCOES AULD LANG SYNE FELL RACE 31st DECEMBER 2005 6.5 MILES/1000FT

from Dave Woodhead

Due to the popularity of this race a new route was introduced for this the 12th running, considering the gale force winds and driving rain everyone was shocked that 442 hardy runners turned out of their warm comfy beds. As always Louis Holmes, now 5, set the runners off, this year with a mighty roar, since he was dressed up like King Kong, because he'd been enthralled by this epic movie. Ten times winner Ian Holmes, showed the 'king' is back by beating English champion Simon Bailey, and a host of other internationals, including Andy Norman, the new Whinberry Naze record holder, Lloyd Taggart and Alistair Brownlee, who had all run for England in the World Trophy, and also defeated the man who beat him here last year, Andi Jones. Now 40 years old, Ian took command after Stanbury Moor summit and showed why he is the best fell runner ever, with a formidable display of speed, strength and racing instinct on the return journey over the muddy paths and fields. This was Ian's 2nd outing as a veteran, having won the V40 at the Stoop race, but here he went one better to win outright. Remember last years ALS report was titled 'Ring out the old, ring in the new', how wrong Ian proved everybody. 2006 could be Ian's year, as he attempts the impossible to win the senior English title, as a veteran.

Alistair Brownlee beat 855 runners on Boxing Day at the Chevin Chase, but here finished 6th, and won the U18's with an impressive run, forcing the pace with the leaders but looked like he'd been bathing in the Haworth mud.

Norman and Jones thoroughly enjoyed racing in drag, as fetching WPC's, although it seems their legs and ..... were chaffed by the PVC skirts. Taggart ran as Boy Wonder - Robin, Phil Winskill - Batman, Jackie Lee - Spider woman, Tim Austin - a sumo wrestler, Emma Payne - a Bunny Girl, Julie Howarth & Claire McKenna - two cute kittens, Dale Foster - another Robin and Crosstrax's Ed Battye - a much fuller Batman, is this to become an Auld Lang Syne tradition?

Current English V60 champion Kieron Carr who has previously won the V50 here in 1994, 1995 & 1997, won the V60 over four minutes ahead of Graham Breeze, while Clayton team mate, V50 Peter Butterworth just had the legs on last year's winner and English V50 champion Steve Jackson.

23 year old Natalie White, now running for Bingley, won the ladies, to add to her Hot Toddy victory on Boxing Day, from Amy Green and Jo Smith with Jackie Lee 4th. 'Cheeky girl' Natalie says ...

*"I've never raced the Auld Lang Syne race before, only The Stoop and Stanbury Splash, which are held at the same venue. It was good to see lots of friendly faces and also to be greeted by my forum name of 'Fetlock'!"*

*I wanted to end what has been a successful 2005 for me, competing in an enjoyable, challenging race.*

*I decided along with my partner Timo Austino to race, although we didn't think we had made the right decision when we set off from home in the pouring rain with gale force winds!*

*For some bizarre reason Tim decided he would wear an inflatable sumo wrestler suit to complete the course.*

*To make it even more of a challenge we decided to have a bet - Tim stated that he could beat me whilst wearing his sumo suit and if he did then - - -*

*The venue for the race is notorious for its wintry weather and wind, rain, mud and the cold greeted the runners on the day. This though didn't stop at least 420 runners competing in the race. Never have I seen so many people at a non-championship fell race before.*

*The start was put back due to the numbers of runners still registering at the start time of 11.30am!*

*As the wind was blowing and the rain fell heavily, Tim had fully inflated his suit and I was looking forward to the challenge (of beating him, as he didn't know the type of terrain he was going to be running on).*

*The race was started by Louie Holmes (the son of Ian) who looked so sweet in his gorilla suit! The start was the usual mad dash out of the quarry and down the bumpy track onto the road.*

*The river crossing was fun, especially sliding down the muddy embankment and having my head being used as a step!*

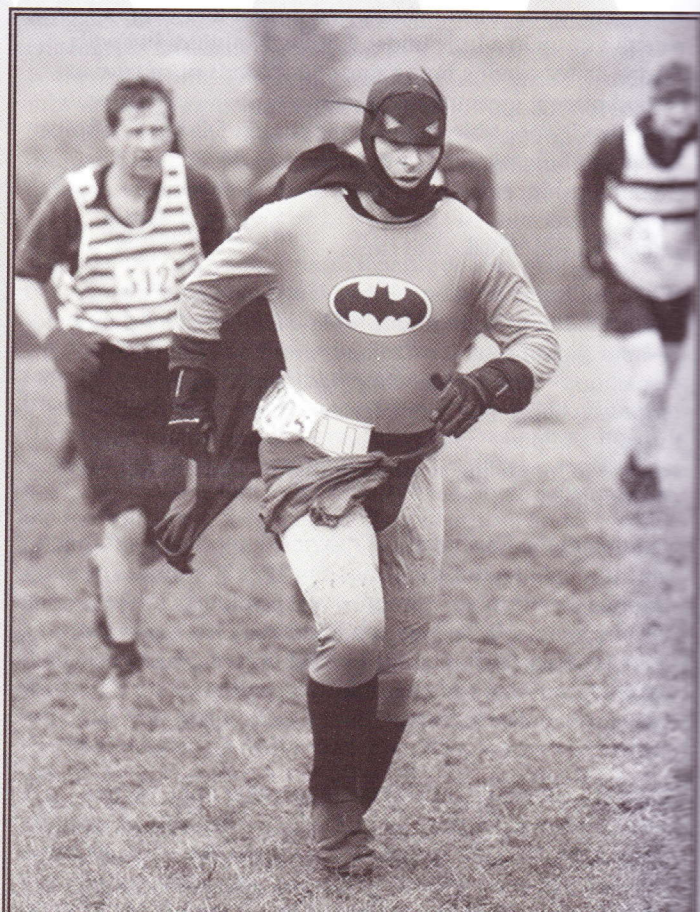
*Thankfully the rain had stopped, but the wind was still blowing and the course was very muddy (I had visions of Tim being blown away or swept downstream in the river!).*

*The course was fairly muddy, wet and boggy and I liked the idea of an out and back course with a clockwise loop in the middle. It would have been a fairly fast course if it hadn't have been so muddy or windy.*

*The run back towards the finish felt tough, as the last field was uphill and so muddy and I was really pleased to run all the way, as the guys in front were "walking"!*

*About five minutes later the finish arrived and my legs felt quite battered by this time and my long stripy socks felt like they had accumulated most of Haworth moor.*

*What was really pleasing was that I had arrived home 1st lady and had also beaten Tim! (Natalie only finished 5 places and 34 seconds ahead of Tim)*



Crosstrax director Ed Battye (get it??) answers the call (Photo Dave Brett)



The prize giving was fantastic – a typical Dave & Eileen presentation (always look forward to them!). I was amazed at how many goodies I won and must apologise to the guy who I told I wouldn't speak to again if he put the "Gromit" hat on my head! I must say a big thanks to Dave & Eileen who organised an enjoyable race and day out and a great end to 2005!"

Ten years ago to this day, Sarah Rowell won the ladies outright, but here she had to settle for 6th, but first FV40. England junior international and England FU18 silver medallist, Emma Clayton, won her age group for the second year from Kate Bell. While at the other age scale, Jan Atkins, now 60, says she is getting slower, but still had 78 younger athletes behind her finishing in 352nd, while daughter Dawn finished 11th lady in 175th position.

Obviously due to this new course, which can cope better with the numbers, all category winners' times will now be new records, since this course is to become the norm, and a on firm, less windy day, times should tumble by at least 3 to 4 minutes.

Crosstrax, a new company, generously donated 6 pairs of fell shoes to a free prize draw, and Caroline Harding - P&B, Steve Bamber - Preston, Suzanne Budgett - Horwich, Owain Matthews - Bedford, Kelly Harrison - Ilkley & Marcus Lancaster - Lincoln, all went home surprised and happy winners.

'We reached Penistone Hill Country Park about an hour before the start. Tried, but failed to park the car in a dry bit of the car park! Paid our £3 and received our number and plastic cover, a bottle of beer, (for after), with a picture of last year's winner on - (good idea for next years Wesham 10K!???), coffee and biscuits. The race got put back 15 minutes and I stayed in the car till the last minute as the weather was absolutely foul. I'd say a good 80% of the field chose to set off in their waterproofs. I brought my camera to take a team photo, but it would have been pointless with an icy gale blowing; nobody would have been happy posing for a photo!

One or two were in fancy dress – a Sumo wrestler, Batman and Robin etc. There were 400 or 500 in the race and I started somewhere in the middle, (to keep warm!!!). There were good trail paths initially, then down a muddy bank into an icy river, then hands on quads and up the other side. Some runners were avoiding puddles. I couldn't understand this when they had just waded through a river in full flow! It was hard to overtake and one or two runners got bumped as runners overtook. Once on the tops, it was head down to watch your step, but it was nowhere near as bad as Winter Hill. Round the trig point, then start the descent. I was overtaking on the way up, but now they were going past me. Got onto fairly good paths but parts were littered with large stones and I twisted my ankle on one bit, but it wore off after half a minute. We went back through the same stream where Steve Bateson seemed to be trying to straddle over an upturned tree. Up the other side I overtook a 'cat outfit' and a few other runners and the finish was now in sight. (A cricket pitch with whitewashed stone walls as side screens!) Saw a Preston runner at the finish and we smiled at each other. ("What were we doing there?!!")' by Martin Bates who finished in 60-21

Andi Jones had a competition on the FRA website to guess how many finishers would complete the ALS 2005, Roger Rabbit AKA Aaron Kelly of Rossendale, is now the proud owner of Andi's signed running vest from the World Trophy in Alaska – the correct guess was 432.

By the time you read this Andi, 'Roadrunner' will have his eyes on the London Marathon on 23rd April, and hopefully a finish time of 2hrs 15mins!

See photos on [www.photos-dsb.co.uk](http://www.photos-dsb.co.uk)

**Stop Press :** In the best traditions of the Auld Lang Syne race all of the category winners received a Lottery Ticket as part of their prize. Natalie White has won £5 on hers, re-invested it in Scratch Cards, won £10, invest..... and by the time you read this is probably a multi-millionaire!!

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