

The annual old beer handpump mens trophy is only engraved with one runners name, "since the first year three years ago, I've always tried to run it. I've won it each time including twice last year when it was re-run due to very deep snow on the original date, and a 'ghost' Auld Lang Syne was run," said Ian Holmes.

This year the first time snow wasn't underfoot, meant heavy conditions due to recent rainfall and mild weather, reflected in the winning time of only 37-02 by Holmes as against his own record of 34-20.

The main competition was for second as English M40 silver medallist Steve Oldfield got the better of nephew Gary by 9 seconds, although Gary had delivered the post around Bradford before pulling on his running vest.

Carol Greenwood the inaugural race winner in 1994 and 'Ghost' 1997 was once again in commanding form and probably reached the Stoop checkpoint in the first twenty. " I had a really good climb today, but lost about ten places at the top of the Stoop. There's a section where you can either go through a gap in the wall, or stay on the same side. Everyone went through the wall but for some reason I didn't. I lost a lot of ground there, but it wasn't too important. I still had an enjoyable run, despite finding myself nearly waist deep in a puddle on the water section."

One of the many talking points was the section along the water conduit; here a seemingly 5 foot watery puddle just too wide to jump met runners. Hands up, if you joined Holmes, Carol Greenwood, the Oldfields, Jon Wright, etc, in being sucked down to thigh level, when you thought it was only inches deep. Certainly the finish area looked like the 251 athletes had competed in a Haworth Moor version of mud wrestling, clean pink skin was rare commodity. But several hardy souls found the cricket hut water butts very useful in revealing the skin again, whilst clutching the free hot coffee.

Two records were set on the day, as England Intermediate International, Gareth Hird sliced 25 seconds off Adam Burnett's 1995 mark of 42-42. Showing no ill affects, Gareth won the Silsden New Years Day Resolution Run the day after. The other was by Essex girl, Linda Bates who despite descending to Harbour Lodge, a quarter of a mile detour still managed to set a new female over 50 mark in 1-36-10.

As normal every finisher received a momento, what else but a bottle of beer!

Whilst the fifty odd prizewinners took away enough drink to celebrate the New Year in style.

HAPPY NEW YEAR ALL

Bud Weiser