

## Duddon Valley Fell Race 1 June 2013

Has anyone ever noticed, how each time there is a 'modernisation' in quantification or measurement techniques, we seem to lose out? It happened when we changed to metric currency ... when we scrapped the ha'penny ... when we adopted litres instead of gallons for fuel ... kilos instead of pounds ...? No? Well on each of the previous 2 occasions that I have done this race it was a 20 miler. This year, when fell races are officially listed in kilometres ... it's only 18.3 miles?! Tcchh ... typical!

Our two elusive Championship race selectors have done a miraculous job so far this season in consistently providing us with great races, in lovely locations in wonderful fell racing weather. Well they did it again on Saturday.

Only 5 of us from NFR travelled over, but several members were entered in the British Championship race at Yetholm the following day, so that was perhaps understandable. You certainly wouldn't want to be doing Yetholm the day after Duddon would you? Well ... unless you're called 'The Mad Professor', that is. That nutcase Andy Russell did both ... and with a big smile on his face too!



**The Team (photo courtesy of The Mad Professor!)**

The route was quite dry underfoot, with lots of sunshine and enough breeze to prevent over-heating at any time, and 137 runners meant you

could follow people without having to worry much about navigation. With lovely views, a nice variety of terrain, and 6,000ft of ascent, it had a bit of everything. Including a brief bit of light relief running up a road ... up Hardknott Pass! Try telling your road running mates that running up Hardknott Pass was the easy bit!



**A well-earned drink**

The race was won by Simon Booth, with Will Horsley first in for us, in a very credible 18<sup>th</sup> position in 3hrs 20. I'd started very modestly, carrying a heavy cold, but seemed to run the worst out, and benefitted later from my cautious start, to pick up a number of places on the second half of the race and finish 27<sup>th</sup> in 3.34. I'd overtaken John Butters approaching Swirl How, and John was duly next in in 47<sup>th</sup> in 3.48, followed by Emma Bain in 5.17 and Andy in 5.46 ... who no doubt then stiffened up for 3 hours or so in Will's car as the pre-race preparation for his race at Yetholm the next day!

It took 2hrs 35 to drive there and 2.55 to drive back, with the sunny afternoon lakes traffic. So it was one of those days where the drive was longer than the race. But it was well worth it.

The next Championship race is also a beaut. Humbleton Fell Race at Haydon Bridge on 19<sup>th</sup> June. It's a short drive and very manageable, so the antithesis of Duddon. Hope to see you there.

Dexter