

Rotherham Harriers & AC Challenge Cup race, Christmas Day 2018

Harney achieves record breaking fourth victory.

Once again the race, the 131st, was held over the distance of 5 miles, the course being three laps around Herringthorpe Playing Fields on the pavements. The conditions for this year's race were excellent, being dry and virtually wind free. There were 19 starters. This year's race had three time previous winners Brian Harney and Malcolm Rhodes in the field. However there were other previous winners in the field, including Steve Dawson, Phil Smales, Tom Charles and James Gallacher

First runner off this year, as in 2017, was 73 year old Brian Harney. One by one the runners set off in hot pursuit, until finally the scratch runner, 23 year old Luke Cotter, started. After the first of the three laps on the pavements around Herringthorpe Playing Fields Harney was still well in the lead followed by Michelle Eddison and Phil Smales. Further down the field the runners were giving serious chase, with Elliott Smales and scratch runner Luke Cotter covering the first lap in a scorching 18 minutes 17 seconds and 18 minute 34 seconds respectively. By the end of the second lap, however, Brian Harney was still in the lead but being pursued by Phil Smales and Ray Howarth in second and third places respectively.

And so to the final lap. Harney, who first won the event in 1976, showed no signs of weakening though as he stormed home to win the event for a record breaking fourth time. The gaps were rapidly closing throughout the field with the fast finishing Steve Dawson storming through to take the runners up spot, with Matthew Asbridge finishing in an excellent third place. There was further drama though as Elliott Smales came powering through to smash the existing course record with a storming 25 minutes and 17 seconds clocking

Awards were made to Brian Harney (Challenge Cup), Steve Dawson (Bill Burns trophy for runner up), Jack Stokes (Sam Howis trophy as first under 23 athlete to finish), Elliott Smales for fastest men's time, and Catherine Eddison taking the fastest ladies' time trophy. The family award for the lowest aggregate time for two family members was won by Phil and Elliott Smales.

Results

1	Brian Harney	46:30
2	Steve Dawson	30:24
3	Matthew Asbridge	37:32
4	Olivia Neal	36:43

5	Elliott Smales	25:17
6	Phil Smales	43:17
7	Ray Howarth	41:24
8	John Comrie	34:28
9	James Gallacher	36:03
10	Cat Eddison	32:51
11	Luke Cotter	26:16
12	Paula Fisher	40:05
13	Mick Marsters	35:53
14	Jack Stokes	31:08
15	Tom Charles	41:28
16	Peter Neal	36:03
17	Malcolm Rhodes	46:52
18	Stephen Cotter	43:25

Race Analysis

Lap 1			Places gained/ lost
	Name	lap time	
1	Brian Harney	15:14	0
2	Michelle Eddison	16:03	0
3	Phil Smales	14:13	+1
4	Malcolm Rhodes	15:55	-1
5	Ray Howarth	13:44	0
6	Matthew Asbridge	12:25	+2
7	Tom Charles	12:45	0
8	Stephen Cotter	13:58	-2
9	Paula Fisher	13:02	-1
10	Olivia Neal	12:36	0
11	James Gallacher	12:11	0
12	John Comrie	11:25	0
13	Mick Marsters	11:59	0
14	Peter Neal	11:49	0
15	Steve Dawson	10:04	+1
16	Cat Eddison	11:04	-1
17	Jack Stokes	10:04	0
18	Elliott Smales	08:17	0
19	Luke Cotter	08:34	0

Lap 2			Places gained/ lost
	Name	lap time	
1	Brian Harney	15:54	0
2	Phil Smales	14:05	+1
3	Ray Howarth	14:00	+2
4	Matthew Asbridge	12:53	+2

5	Malcolm Rhodes	15:49	-1
6	Olivia Neal	12:36	+4
7	Paula Fisher	13:40	+2
8	Tom Charles	15:34	-1
9	Steve Dawson	10:27	+6
10	John Comrie	11:45	+2
11	James Gallacher	12:12	0
12	Stephen Cotter	16:40	-4
13	Mick Marsters	12:11	0
14	Cat Eddison	12:02	+2
15	Peter Neal	12:09	-1
16	Elliott Smales	08:37	+2
17	Jack Stokes	10:46	0
18	Luke Cotter	08:59	+1

Lap			Places gained/ lost
3			
	Name	lap time	
1	Brian Harney	15:22	0
2	Steve Dawson	09:53	+7
3	Matthew Asbridge	12:14	+1
4	Olivia Neal	11:31	+2
5	Elliott Smales	08:19	+11
6	Phil Smales	14:17	-4
7	Ray Howarth	13:40	-4
8	John Comrie	12:10	+2
9	James Gallacher	12:35	+2
10	Cat Eddison	12:53	+4
11	Luke Cotter	08:43	+7
12	Paula Fisher	13:51	-5
13	Mick Marsters	13:35	0
14	Jack Stokes	11:30	+3
15	Tom Charles	15:54	-7
16	Peter Neal	14:25	-1
17	Malcolm Rhodes	20:44	-12
18	Stephen Cotter	17:11	-6