

Rhobell Fawr race report 5/11/22

Saying the weather was better than expected is not to say it was good and the Meirionnydd Winter series 22-23 got off to a wet and windy start with rain throughout with much soggy moorland - though the fields have been worse. A combination of a short pre-entry period and entries on the day gave us 56 entrants, and only 7 no shows. Pre-entry is a pain but is a massive help for catering in a race renowned for its soup!

Navigation is no problem as the lower course is a well marked field path and the mountain route clings to the shelter of a wall all the way to the 734m summit. Unfortunately they are linked by an old coffin road which in the last few years has been trashed by off-roaders making a very nasty ankle threatening descent.

The race was pretty straightforward. Unfortunately Lizzie Richardson who won the women's competition last year had to stop with leg problems but everyone else completed the course without mishap. Of the leading runners Ifan Richards (Meirionnydd RC) made the most ground in the descent to end in fourth place but Joel Gomez (Wrexham AC) was leading at the summit and went on to win in 52:59 ahead of Sion Edwards in 54:26 and Tom Haynes in 56:36, both of Eryri Harriers. They, with Russell Owen (1:04:04) took the Men's team prize. Ifan Richards finished in 57:38 and course record holder Lloyd Taggart (Manx Fell Runners) was the only other runner to arrive in under the hour - 57:54.

Jackie Lee (Eryri Harriers) was the first woman home in 1:05:33 followed by team mates Suzie Richards in 1:07:18 and Jenny Heming in 1:12:47 giving Eryri a clean sweep and the Women's team prize.

Prizes were awarded to Ifan Richards (M40) Lloyd Taggart (M50) Russell Owen (M60) and M70 went to Pete Nichols of Meirionnydd. In the women's Age categories prize winners were Ali Grundy (Tattenhall Runners), Helen Jones (Meirionnydd RC), Juliet Edwards (Meirionnydd RC), and Maggie Oliver (Eryri Harriers).

One Meirionnydd runner Will Young ran the race barefoot! Will has experience of fell running barefoot and had recce'd the route so knew what he was to expect and finished a respectable 1:10:03 - 23rd- though he said afterwards he would have been faster in shoes!