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Weston runners reach their peaks

Weston Athletic Club's members have been out in force over the past week, taking part in a range of challenges to test their autumn training programmes.

First up was the club's own prom run last Thursday evening. The cool, calm evening provided ideal racing conditions for the 312 runners who took on the five mile course. Chris McMillan continued his great run of form to win the race in 26.50. Kieron Summers was the second club member home in 28.06 and fourth place overall. Ian Connock took third club spot in 28.29.

Susan Duncan worked hard again to finish second female overall in 31.25 with another personal best time. Michelle Fryer was second club female in 34.57 with Katie Gormley following in 35.30.

The second championship race was on Sunday at the Dartmoor Vale half marathon. Five club members travelled to Devon to take part in this picturesque but slightly hilly race. Phil Tomlinson finished 16th overall in a time of 1.33.32 and Bill Green followed in 1.36.58.

Nia Davies made a strong return from injury to cross the line in 1.44.05 and was second in her age category. Julie Shergold ran a strong race to win her age category and earn herself a new personal best time of 2.01.15. Julie Monaghan took third club spot with her 2.09.36 finish.

Not content with completing the course once, Matt Wheeler ran the route again to complete the Dartmoor Vale full marathon. His commitment to training earned him a new personal best time of 3.21.27 and eleventh place overall.

Matt wasn't the only club member putting his long distance training to the test at the weekend. An impressive field of 18 yellow-vested runners took a five hour road trip to Snowdonia to take on the iconic Marathon Eryri. The hilly route features breathtaking scenery every step of the way as well as a sting in the tale with a seemingly endless climb between miles 22 and 24 of the race.

Steve Kibblewhite was first from the club to return from the mountains to the cheers of the crowds in Llanberis with his time of 3.22.56. Susan Duncan was next to finish with a new marathon personal best time of 3.28.56 and ninth female overall. Maria Davidson and Carol O'Leary shared third club position with their identical finish times of 04.04.04. Carol was again rewarded with an age category win, to add to her growing collection.

Shane Connolly was second club man home in 4.17.01, taking over 20 minutes off his previous time, followed by Sheryl Selway in 4.19.00.

Sara Cronje covered the distance for the first time with an impressive debut time of 4.31.22, followed by Julia Withers in 4.31.24 taking 22 minutes off last year's time, and Vanessa Andrews in 4.32.14 - a new marathon personal best and ten minutes quicker than last year.

Sue Knight, Kev Howells, Adrian Marshall, Lisa Acton, Wendie Beardsall, Pete Bartlett, Rachel Stacey, Pete Stacey and Shaleen Summers also conquered the course and survived the hail storms along the way.

Not to be outdone by the other runners Steven Powell travelled to Ireland to take on the Dublin Marathon and finished with a fantastic new personal best time of 3.07.46.

Longest race of all though was run by Dan Potter who took on the 30 mile Exmoor Challenge Ultra with over 8000 ft of off-road climbing, finishing in 5.55.39.

For anyone wanting to run the club's biggest race of the year, the Christmas Cracker 10k, places are almost sold-out. This year's race takes place on Sunday 9 December and runners can enter online at www.westonac.co.uk/christmascracker.

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