

Harrogate District Summer Race League – Race No 1 – Skipton

19:30 Thursday 23rd May 2024 at Aireville Park

At around 5pm on Thursday evening Caroline Harland and I set off from Boroughbridge, the early start was to ensure we were some of the first to arrive, as I had to collect the numbers for our club, plus the added factor of the closed road at Blubberhouses. We set off from a lovely sunny late spring evening, as we drove over the moors the cloud cover descended, and we arrive in Skipton in autumn! After a slight sat-nav postcode hiccup we found and parked up at the Craven Sports Centre car park.

There were a few other keen Ripon Runners there when we arrived so we all walked down to the start/ finish and I collected the numbers. The start/ finish area was a little walk from the car park down in the park, which was made particularly unusual due to there being an old-fashioned gypsy caravan and horse parked next to it.

At race start time, we had 62 Ripon Runners, by far the largest turn out for the race than the other clubs in the league. A team photo was taken then strip off the hoodies and to the start line. The start was up hill on wet grass, I had a flash back to the winter cross country races, everyone slowed down to get through a narrow gap in the fence and onto road, the course was mainly road apart from the short section at the start and finish which was across the aforementioned wet grass. It went something like – up a hill through a housing estate, when you got to the top we went, on a bridge, across the Skipton bypass and downhill, at this point I came across the front runners that had completed the loop that I was about to start on. By this time we were out in the countryside along some lovely country lanes, the route then turned alongside the Skipton to Settle road, up a slight incline, then turned back into the country lanes and uphill back across the Skipton bypass, downhill through the housing estate and back into Aireville Park via the main road and sports centre entrance, with a short section across the grass to the finish line.

The route was very well marshalled they were friendly and encouraging, even at the end when the autumnal mizzle took hold. Everyone received a bottle of water, a banana and a tasty flapjack at the finish.

We had some strong finishes with Hugh Watkin finishing 5th overall and 1st in his age category, Emma Sorby finishing 7th lady and 3rd in her age category, Simon Arnold finished 3rd in his age category, Hilary Philpott finished 1st in her age category and Chris Brown for finished 2nd in his age category.

Well done to everyone for taking part, thank you for making Team Ripon Runners a strong team in the league. The next race is the 4th June a little closer to home in Ripley Village, I hope to see you there. You can still sign up for the league follow the link to the HDSRL website for details of the races and link to registering. [HDSRL – Harrogate District Summer Race League \(harrogate-league.org.uk\)](https://www.harrogate-league.org.uk)

If you haven't collected your number already, I will have them at the next race. If you do have your number don't forget to bring it to the next race, you use the same number for all the races in the series.



Michaela Graham
Ladies Captain