

Hanna Breaks through the Wall

By the Viking

The biggest difficulty for the race director in organising the Binnian Race is that without the assistance of a helicopter they can't be both at the start and the finish of the race. Joe McCann quickly volunteered to take one for the team, especially when he heard that Mary Knight had a wide selection of teas and sugary treats for those that stayed back at base.

The race director left McCann in charge for the start thinking nothing can go wrong. Tell them, "there is the top of Binnian, run to the top as fast as you can, if you don't know the route follow Willie McKee." McCann is unable to follow even the simplest of instructions and of course had to do his own thing. In the pre-race briefing he told the masses to turn right when they headed over the stile, instead of left. One can only surmise that he must have been thinking of all those laps in Marguerite. It appears the only thing McCann can follow is Ronnie Horrox or attractive women round London! McCann is now favourite to win The Lost in the mountains Category as he nearly mislaid 248 people! Thankfully

At the front McKee lead the race up towards the stile, with young Zak Hanna on his tail. In what was the move of the night, Hanna jumped through the wall 80 metres before the stile whilst McKee plodded on oblivious. Hanna put the foot down and got over the stile before McKee had noticed he was in front. Despite a valiant effort McKee was unable to catch young Hanna who reached the summit in a time of 22:08. David Hicks was third two mins back, with a trio of Mourne Runners in Timothy Johnston, David McKee and Jonathan Graham followed by a trio of Newcastle Men in Jack O'Hare (who toed the line with a broken foot), Barry McConville who just nudged past Colm Murtagh with two metres to the line.

In the ladies category Diane Wilson started steadily and went from fourth lady at the quarry, second at the quarry just behind Charlene Haugh to first across the line in a time of 27:17. Haugh was 13 seconds adrift with Shalene McMurray hot on her tail a further 5 seconds back.

It was great to see Michelle Mowlds return back to Binnian, especially after breaking her ankle at the race last year. Michelle made it safely up and down this year finishing in 247th position without the assistance of the Mountain Rescue.

In a night of firsts, the race director was pleased to offer a single toilet at a mountain start for the first time in the series history. It was followed by

a first complaint from Tracey Atkinson from Albertville Harriers who lodged a formal complaint that there was only one toilet on offer. The paper lodged with the complaint was used when the toilet roll ran out. Also lodging formal complaints were the marshalls at the top of Binnian that they weren't offered wagon wheels and a cup of tea from Mary Knight at the start.

The award for most dedicated runner goes to Pdraig O'Connor from Dublin who running his first Hill and Dale made a 190 mile, four hour, round trip for a 32:37 race. Best of all Pdraig even made an appearance at the Avoca for the prizegiving, showing up the locals who went home for their cups of hot cocoa before an early slumber.

Thanks to all the marshals, assistants at registration, the Marks Family for providing the field, shed and toilet and the Avoca for now the 4th cowboy supper of the series, again without the baked beans. Next week racing moves to Rocky starting at Leitrim Lodge at 19:30.