

Sunshine and Midges at the Meels

Report by the Terminator

On Thursday 15 June the sun was shining over Meelmore Lodge as the race organisers set up registration. The course had changed last year and now included Spellack which looked down directly over Meelmore Lodge.

The marshals started making their way up to the summits, having kindly given up their Thursday night to help with the event.



Marshals and Midges at Happy Valley – photo by Richard Cowan

Debbie and Richard had everything under control in the office (registration van) and at 7.15 everyone made their way up the lane to the start. After a quick race briefing by Sam, the Frank started the race and runners made their way in haste to the summit of Spellack. At this point the midges started to make an appearance and seemed to follow wherever Stevie was standing... Thankfully Debbie came to the rescue with Avon Skin So Soft!



Susan Lambe flying down the final descent – photo by Richard Cowan

There are several gullies to choose from to the summit of Spellack, and quickly the competitors split. This made for great spectating, to see who would summit first. Ashley Crutchley and Joshua McAtee picked different gullies, however there was not much in it as they both reached the summit cairn at the same time. The marshals ensured all runners ran round the cairn before making their way up Meelmore to the tower. Runners could be seen from Meelmore Lodge climbing the hill like ants in a line. From Meelmore the next checkpoint is the summit of Meelbeg. From there, a fast grassy descent to the river crossing at Happy Valley. After that, a deceptively long run back to the stile at the top of the lane, and to the finish at Meelmore Lodge.



Ashley Crutchley First Male – photo by Richard Cowan

First finisher was Ashley Crutchley, who completed the course in a time of 42 minutes and 4 seconds, followed closely in second place by Joshua McAtee (Mourne Runners) and third Andrew Tees (BARF).



Esther Dickson First Female – photo by Richard Cowan

First female was Esther Dickson (Newry AC) in a time of 50 minute 17 seconds, followed by Diane Wilson (Dromore AC) in second and Bernadette O’Kane (Springwell Running Club) in third.

Thanks to everyone who volunteered on Thursday evening at registration, marshalling, finish, results, and thanks to Greenans for hosting us.

Next week is the final race of the series; Drinnahilly, starting in Donard Park on Friday 23 June 2023. There will be prize giving after at O’Hares. We look forward to seeing you all there!



Marshals at the top of Meelbeg – photo by Richard Cowan