

## Northern Athletics 5k Champs

This year the Northern Athletics 5k championship was incorporated into the Pennine



Lancashire 5k road race, which also included the England Athletics championship.

The Northern Athletics championship race was again hosted by Blackburn Harriers, but this time the race was based not in the town centre, but at Witton Park, with the event again using closed roads. The out and back course started outside the park running towards Blackburn before finishing inside Witton Park.

The combined entry for the race was almost 250 athletes, with almost half being in the N.A. championships event. The race was started at the top of the hill on Preston Old road, and the early

fast pace never abated, despite the blustery conditions.

Matt Barnes, Altrincham, was the winner, retaining the title he won last year, in a time of 14.11, 1 second faster than last year. Only 4 seconds behind Matt, was Jonny Mellor, Liverpool Harriers, with Mark Buckingham, Holmfirth, 3rd in 14.21. These 3 were closely followed by James Smith, Leeds, Ben Fish, Blackburn, and Craig Gunderson, Liverpool Harriers, with Chris Livesey, Preston, just behind that group.

In the women's race it was the familiar figure of Helen Clitheroe, Preston, who won in 15.45, Kirsty Milner, Trafford, was 2nd 16.28 with Louise Gardner 3rd 17.05, and Jenny Blizard 4th 17.13.

Medals were presented to the first 3, individuals and teams.

**Team results were as follows:**

Men.

- 1) Liverpool Harriers 18 points  
Jonny Mellor 2, Craig Gunderson 6, Ricky Challinor 10
- 2) Blackburn Harriers 30 points  
Ben Fish 5, Karl Billington 12, Thomas Cornthwaite 13
- 3) Holmfirth Harriers 31 points  
Mark Buckingham 3, Matthew Pierson 11,  
David Turnbull 17
- 4) Leeds City A.C.



## Women

1) Blackpool Wyre & Fylde 41 points

Gemma Unsworth 6, Stasia Bligh 17, Carolyn Robbins 18

2) Liverpool Harriers 51 points

Maria Barrett 13, Sophie Whiteside 16, Jenny Pybis 22

3) Accrington Road Runners. 64 points

Sarah Ridehalgh 11, Victoria Mousley 26, Gretel Jackson 27

4) Bury A.C.

[Full Results](#)

*Report Ken Smith*

*Photos Eileen Ingham*