

The fourteenth Tunbridge Wells Harriers club cross country championship race took place in Hargate Forest on Saturday morning. The conditions were extremely testing, with driving rain, gale force winds, deep mud and large areas of standing water on the 1.8 mile woodland circuit. However, seventeen competitors turned out to contest the race with little chance of repeating the fast times set on last year's bone dry course.

New member Will Levett – a past winner of the club's Eridge Park 10 – used his experience on the terrain to set a rapid pace from the start, leaving his closest challengers Andy Howey and Chris Wolton after only half a lap. He finished in a time of 33:40 for the 5.4 hilly miles, a superb time for the freezing conditions and only a minute outside Mark Taylor's course record of 2000. Chris overtook Andy on the first lap, and gradually extended his lead, finishing in second place in a time of 35:43. Andy finished 26 seconds adrift, and in the process set a new M50 course record by over four minutes with a time of 36:09.

In the ladies race, Alice Heather-Hayes returned from the UK Inter Counties Championships to take both the senior and F35 titles in a time of 38:47. Stella Richardson chose a particularly testing event for her cross country debut, finishing the three laps in 1:00:04 to take the F55 title. The F45 title was not awarded.

Simon Whitaker finished in fourth place to take the M40 title in a time of 38:05, and Stella's husband Peter Richardson retained the M60 title in a time of 51:15. Bryon 'Spud' Taylor finished in 1:08:08 to take the M70 title.

Thanks to all of the runners for turning out in atrocious conditions, to Ed Steele for the timing and photography and Mark Taylor for helping to collect all of the course marking equipment. Thanks also to the Woodland Trust for their continuing support to the club in allowing us to use the woodland for our annual event.

1	Will Levett	33:40	(1 st Senior Male)
2	Chris Wolton	35:43	
3	Andy Howey	36:09	(1 st M50)
4	Simon Whitaker	38:05	(1 st M40)
5	Patrick Bareham	38:36	
6	Alice Heather-Hayes	38:47	(1 st Senior Female, F35)
7	Matt Clark	39:35	
8	Terry Everest	40:42	
9	Steve Woodruffe	42:20	
10	Mark Taylor	42:35	
11	Siân Roberts	46:28	
12	Derek Harrison	51:04	
13	Peter Richardson	51:15	(1 st M60)
14	Colin Fox	52:11	
15	Peter Nuttall	57:56	
16	Stella Richardson	1:00:04	(1 st F55)
17	Bryon 'Spud' Taylor	1:08:08	(1 st M70)