

## **Leek Half Marathon (sponsored by F Ball & Co)**

After successfully returning for the past two years, following a break in 2012, Leek Half Marathon is again being staged on 16 August 2014 marking the 29<sup>th</sup> running of the event.

### **Our sponsors**

We are proud to announce that the race is generously sponsored again by F Ball & Co, based in Cheddleton (<http://www.f-ball.co.uk/>) and the UK's leading manufacturer of flooring adhesive and floor preparation products for the contact flooring industry. We are also very grateful to the help received from Salt Brothers (Builders) based in Leek.

### **The course**

The course starts in the lovely surroundings of Leek's Brough Park before heading out past the remnants of Dieulacres Abbey at Abbey Green and onto the village of Meerbrook. Runners then cross the bridge over Tittesworth Reservoir with a slight uphill to the Three Horseshoes Inn at Blackshaw Moor. From there, it is a left hand turn on the main Leek-Buxton road for less than half a mile, which is coned and taped off for runners' safety, and another left turn to Upperhulme. The road then climbs for a couple of miles with respite from time to time. This is the toughest part but occasional glances to the left give fabulous views of the Staffordshire Moorlands countryside as a reward. At Roache Grange, the fastest part of the course beckons with descent for several miles before reaching Meerbrook again and back to Brough Park via Abbey Green. Most of the route is on quiet country lanes with markers every mile.

Drinks stations are at 3, 6, and 9 miles and also at the finish.

Runner's World readers gave it a total overall score of 89% with 96% saying they would do it again and scenery scored an impressive 94%.

### **Entries**

Entries are limited to 500. The cost is £12 to club runners and £14 to others if the entry is received on or before 3 August. Entries received by this date will be guaranteed a t-shirt – this is to minimise cost through reduced wastage and enable us to offer a great race for a very reasonable price. Entries can be made afterwards, including on race day (assuming the 500 limit has not been reached) and the cost is reduced slightly to reflect the fact that t-shirts will not be available. The cost after 3 August is £11 (club runner) or £13 (unattached runner). For those entering early, t-shirt sizes should be specified on the entry. Electronic entry is preferred as it is easier for everyone (there is a very small charge for applying via this route but is good value considering there is no need for printing, stationery, stamps and physically posting). The direct link is here:

<http://www.race-results.co.uk/onlineentries/user/login.php?raceid=2038>

The traditional entry form can be accessed here: <http://www.race-results.co.uk/results/2015/>

There is a time limit of 3 hours and 30 minutes which is stipulated to be fair to volunteer marshals and helpers.

### **Race numbers**

This year we will not be posting out numbers so they will need to be collected on race day from our temporary race day office in Brough Park Leisure Centre from 9am onwards. The leisure centre is only 200 metres from the start. The leisure centre is just off Fowlchurch Road, Leek with the post code being ST13 6AT (website: <http://www.leisurecentre.com/Centre-Home/brough-park-leisure-centre-swimming-gym-spinning-tennis/31.aspx#>).

### **Car parking**

There is lots of free parking at the leisure centre or at California Car Park on Vicarage Road. The latter car park is only 200 metres from the leisure centre and 400 metres from the start. See <http://en.parkopedia.co.uk/parking/leek/> for more car parks.

## **After the race**

There is a café in the leisure centre to replenish your reserves but why not head into Leek town centre as well? There is a good selection of quaint cafés and excellent public houses serving food such as Den Engel (Belgian bar), The Roebuck (Titanic Brewery), and Blue Mugge (free house) to name a few within 5 minutes' walk from the leisure centre – the traders would love to see you! You can also see the “Monument”, a magnificent structure which is the tallest war memorial and clock tower in the country and simply relax with a stroll around the town...

## **About our club**

We are Staffordshire Moorlands Athletics Club, a well-established, friendly organisation based in Leek with a membership list spanning all age ranges from juniors to veterans. We host numerous races including the Summer Series, which is a succession of races starting on the last Thursday in May or first Thursday in June (check the website) running until early August and which attracts runners of all abilities and ages. We also host regular informal training sessions each week. For more information visit <http://www.staffsmoorlands-ac.co.uk/>