

2023 – the second Mob Match – a report

Text drawn from copy to the Perthshire Advertiser

Crook of Devon recently saw the showdown that was the second Mob Match between Kinross Road Runners (KRR) and Perth Road Runners (PRR). First held in 2022 at Birnam – the race has alternate hosts each year – this is a trail race involving just the two clubs, but as many runners from each club as can compete. A larger team is almost always a better team. Separate matches are held for both men and ladies; this year, 55 men and 40 ladies lined up to start, a significant increase on the 63 of last year.



The 2023 course was an undulating 9km/5.5 miles, including plenty of bridges, narrow wooded tracks and an excursion into the gloom of the Devon gorge near Rumbling Bridge. Finished runners, busily regaining their breath, gathered around the finish line to cheer home their green- (PRR) or yellow-vested (KRR) teammates, as this is a race format that sees later-placed runners playing as crucial a role in scoring as the first athletes home. As the last runner came home in the fading light, organisers, marshals and runners all converged on Crook of Devon hall for tea, copious cake and the all-important results.



Perth claimed both individual winners: Paige Brown in a rapid 41:02, and James Waldie in a lightning 33:21. In the age categories, the fastest men were: M40 - David Scott (KRR), M50 - Scott Strachan (KRR) and Russell Thomson (PRR). Fastest ladies were: F40 - Caroline Jones (KRR), F50 - Fabienne Thompson (PRR) and F60 - Joan Wilson (PRR).

However, good individual placings are invariably outweighed by a solid team performance. Repeating their triumph of 2022, Kinross won both the ladies' match (178 points to 243; the lower score wins) and the very close men's match (606-669). Perth could only lament the loss of two or three key runners on race day to injury and illness. They must now look ahead to a home fixture in 2024 to regain the Peter Rabbit trophy, whose smart coat will now remain painted Kinross Yellow for another year. Congratulations go to KRR for both their wins and their excellent organisation of a superb evening's running, tea and camaraderie.

Photos by Gordon Donnachie (Fishygordon)