

The OSH v. The RSSH Annual Run on Saturday 6th December 2014.

There was a good gathering of spectators for this year's Annual Run with The RSSH on Saturday 6th December 2014. The chilly draught down Central made for an eagerness to start the run. However, there was the obligatory photo of Huntsmen present to be taken, under the watchful gaze of Mr. C.Darwin on The Drum. Six of us smiled for clicking shutters, namely, from the left, Richard Baker (1957-58), Stuart Morgan (60-61), Oli Mott (2002-03), Peter Birch (70-71), Tim Bedell (77-78), Adam Booth (1999-2000), before lining up across the start. In the absence of The Huntsman, Theo Clarke, I was enlisted to recall my days as leader of The Pack and utter the shortened cry of "All Hounds ...", before sprinting off for The Moss Gates. We totalled 12 runners against an impressive squad of 21 RSSH Hounds, which included 4 Hunt Girls. This year we missed the help of any Staff joining our ranks.

Even though our Captain, Oli Mott, ran a faster time to kill in 19 minutes and 2 seconds, we did not achieve the close result of last year, with The RSSH taking the Team Trophy with 28 points against our 84 points. The Hunt provided excellent young runners, with Will Hayward finishing some 2 ½ minutes behind Oli, with Senior Whip, Charlie Godman on his heels and Charlie Rogers making up a very close trio of finishers for The Hunt. Adam Booth at 7th, improved his time by 40 seconds and got 2nd place for The OSH. It was Pete Beer (Ch 91-96) who was our third man at 15th and James Adney was nearby at 17th. David Thomas improved his position at 19th and time by 7 seconds. Tim Bedell, at 25th, did his very best to encourage me, but in the end boosted our new visitor Julian Smout (PH 84-89) to take 26th place and I fell back to 28th. Even though Michael Johnson was "running-in" a new hip over a slippery School Bank, he still beat the best veterans of The OSH, Cliff Simpkin and Anthony Hickson.

As ever, I admire Richard Hudson's devotion to duty, by making sure everyone has finished the course ! The Hunt Team were missing injured Ben Remnant, Freddie Fielding and Tory Mobley, amongst others, but we were all grateful for their help as course markers, which does make a big difference and thanks also goes to the Ground Staff for all their preparation as well.

Spectators and competitors went to The Hunt Gym in The Stott Pavilion for Tea & Presentations and this year we were able to ask Elizabeth Hector, widow of our long time supporter Anthony , to officially unveil the New Display Cabinet. Oli Mott took "his cup" back home and Charlie Godman took The Team Trophy for The RSSH. After that, The OSH Committee assembled in The Hardy Room for the AGM where we had lively discussions, joined by The Huntsman, for the very first time. A more relaxed atmosphere at The Annual Dinner, in The Peterson Room, was enjoyed afterwards by 20 attendees, including The Captain of The Girls Hunt, Tory Mobley, which is another first.

I do have to add sincere thanks to Peter Middleton and Ian Haworth for all their hard work in organising this Annual Run and making us all so welcome. Lets do it all again next year !

Peter Birch.