

Merseyside Fell County Championship Race 2024

For 2024 our championship race returned to the popular August bank holiday Monday Cilcain Show Mountain race, 4.6 miles 1300ft of climb. This race continues to be a favourite with Merseyside runners, perhaps because it's one of our closest hills, but also, it's a very straightforward hill race as runners follow a marked course, this means it requires no navigation, no route knowledge and no compulsory kit. Two clubs battled it out for Men's team Gold and three clubs for the Ladies' team Gold. Pensby Runners and Penny Lane Striders turned out in large numbers and Penny Lane Striders did the teams double winning the Gold medals in the Ladies' and Men's team categories. Penny Lane Striders Ladies' making it team Gold two years in a row. Mersey Tri were 2nd Ladies' and Pensby Runners 3rd Ladies' teams. Pensby Runners were 2nd Men's team.

In the individual ladies' competition, this year's Merseyside's 2024 team first counter at the British Intercounties in May Helen Skipper (pictured just

approaching the turn at the top) continued her successful year on the fells for Merseyside and came home first lady for Merseyside Gold ahead of Lucy Milling (Silver) and Lenka Vidamour (Bronze) both of whom have been Merseyside County Fell champion in previous years. In the men's competition it also came down to a sprint finish and victory by 1 second between Merseyside county team mates for Gold, Chris Pownell (pictured approaching the finish line) taking the Gold ahead of Lawrence Eccles who took Silver with David Pastor taking Bronze.



Team Medals

Gold Ladies' Team Penny Lane Striders (Lenka Vidamour, Alice Fraser, Izzi Diaz)
Silver Mersey Tri (Helen Skipper, Shona Moore, Lorna Harper)
Bronze Pensby Runners (Julie Dala, Wendy Lee, Lisa Grantham)

Gold Mens Team Penny Lane Striders (Lawrence Eccles, Sean Richards, George Aylward)
Silver Pensby Runners (John Simpson, Keith Dunham, Paul Robertson)

Individual Medals

Ladies' **Open** Gold Helen Skipper (Mersey Tri) Silver Lucy Milling (Southport Waterloo), Bronze Lenka Vidamour (Penny Lane Striders) **FV35** Gold Helen Skipper (Mersey Tri), Silver Lenka Vidamour (Penny Lane Striders), Bronze Laura Hennahane (Penny Lane Striders) **FV45** Gold Wendy Lee (Pensby Runners), Silver Sarah Jackson (Penny Lane Striders), Bronze Lisa Grantham (Pensby Runners) **FV55** Gold Julie Dala (Pensby Runners), Silver Susan Davies (Pensby Runners), Bronze Catherine Lancaster (Pensby Runners).

Men's **Open** Gold Chris Pownell (Cybi Striders), Silver Lawrence Eccles (Penny Lane Striders), Bronze David Pastor (Warrior). **MV35** Gold Lawrence Eccles, Silver Al Smithson (Mersey Tri) Bronze George Aylward, **MV45** David Pastor (Warrior), Silver Stephen Dipple (Penny Lane Striders), Bronze Keith Dunham

(Pensby Runners) **MV55** Gold John Hunt (DPFR) Silver John Simpson (Pensby Runners), Bronze Paul Robertson (Pensby Runners), **MV65** Gold Jeff Adams (Pensby Runners), Silver Tony Green (Penny Lane Striders).

There was an issue with the four lead runners of the race, about which there was a discussion at the finish between the organiser and the North Wales Championship organiser, concerning what to do about the first four finishers having not followed the marked race course completely and taking their own lines. We don't need to comment about the organiser's final decision in the context of our Merseyside championship as with or without these four runners in the overall race results it doesn't affect the Merseyside Championship results as none of the four runners that failed to follow the race rules were in our Merseyside competition. To be clear though for those who don't do many fell races, the rules for a marked fell race course are you must follow the marked course exactly, if you don't you should be disqualified. If the course is not marked between checkpoints then in fell racing you can freestyle and choose your own lines.