

## Brass Monkey Half Marathon - 24th January

The road racing season made an early start for four club members when they travelled to York for the ever popular Brass Monkey Half Marathon which is now in it's 27th year and still remains over subscribed on each running. To put into context the high quality of this race over 270 runners finished inside the one hour thirty minute, good going by anyone's standards, and a fair percentage of the 1,539 finishers.

Conditions were as favourable as could be expected at this time of year, with very little wind and just drizzly rain to contend with on the mainly flat 13.1 mile route, and this probably helped to encourage fast times. None of the Retford athletes were expecting too much from the race especially with three of them already heavily involved in training for the spring marathons in London and Edinburgh, but amazingly these three all produced personal best performances.

Andy Sly was the first to finish after an extremely even paced run earned him a final position of 30th, his time of 1 hour 17 minutes, 50 seconds, shaving over 30 seconds off his previous best, this was also good enough for 5th place in his age group category. Becky Duggan took an incredible two and a half minutes off her previous best to record a time of 1:37:03, a remarkable improvement since her last half just two months ago, Becky finished 477th overall and was 72nd lady.

Martin Stanton's improvement was even more dramatic, smashing his previous best by five minutes, Martin finished in 726th position in a time of 1:44:34. All three of these runners will now be looking forward to their impending marathons with some confidence after these results. Derek Marsh was the fourth Retfordian to take part in the event, stepping up in distance after running mainly 10 km's last year, Derek returned in 2:17:39 to claim 1,477th position.