

Malcolm Fowler



When I think of Malcolm, I see him on his bike pushing anyone who's struggling up the toughest hills. Not many people can cycle AND push another cyclist up a 25% hill! That sums Malcolm up....a powerful athlete, thoughtful and very helpful to have around.

Malcolm was born in 1963 and is now 55. He retired from the Police two years ago after 30 years service. He's currently fit and cycling and running competitively.

He's the eldest of four boys, growing up in Raddcliffe north Manchester until he was eight, when he moved to Rochdale. He lived there until he became a student at Preston, studying Astronomy. He joined the Police in 1985 and was stationed in Wilmslow, living in landlady accommodation for the first year before buying a house in Macclesfield, where he has lived ever since.

At school he was always sporty but frustrated because he wasn't as good at football as his brother. He played football in the school team but was nearly always on the subs bench, playing just the last 20 minutes of the match. The thinking behind this seemed to be that Malcolm wasn't a skilful player, but could run around a lot and was most effective when everyone else was becoming tired. Malcolm was good at athletics and cross-country, always finishing in the top three at school. He did a 6-mile charity fun run for the Rochdale Observer for three years in a row and really enjoyed it. That was his initiation into road running.

When he got to Preston he "got caught up in the 1980's running boom", running with friends and representing the college for cross-country but no proper training started until he arrived in Wilmslow.

He initially trained at Handforth Athletics Club, which had just a handful of adult runners but was primarily focussed on youths. One benefit was that the Club got free entries for the London Marathon and four of them gave it a go. Malcolm was then 23 and ran 3 hours 28 mins. By this time, he had started to compete for the Police in various running events, triathlon and even Orienteering.

Malcolm was one of the founder members of Wilmslow RC. As his running times improved he was spotted by one of the bigger clubs in the area and persuaded to run for Salford Harriers, where he remained for 10 years, (although always a 2nd claim member at Wilmslow) Salford Harriers were a strong club in those days with about eight runners capable of running 30 minute 10k's so he found he was 'a little fish in a big pond'. Salford club coach Geoff Doggett did a good job of building you up when you weren't running well and knocking you off your perch when you thought you had reached the top".

Over the coming years Malcolm represented the Police in track and field including 800m, 1500m, 5000m and steeplechase. He also participated in the 10-mile road race championship, coming in second with his best performance of 51.35, a time that would have won it in other years. That's sport!

He won the Police National Cross Country Championship twice and the Police Fell Race no less than 19 times!

He believes he peaked between the ages of 27 and 31, when he was largely injury-free. His fastest 10k was 30.39 in Paris when he was 8th overall and the first Brit over the line.

His fastest marathon was 2 hours and 25 mins in Florence, his fastest mile 4.16 on the track, his fastest 5k was 14.40 on the track. He has won the Manchester XC League, but regrets never winning the Cheshire Cross Country Championships, finishing 2nd on three occasions.

Talking through the history and reliving the memories, I can sense how competitive Malcolm is and how much he likes to win. "I don't like to lose at noughts and crosses" he says with a big grin. "Coming second in a race is simply being the fastest loser". He believes that his competitiveness has really helped him in his running career. He tells me that he's not as competitive as he was but don't you believe it. That only means he's resigned to not winning races but he'll still bust a gut for every placing.

What did his training look like?

Tuesdays - Speed work at the Club (Wilmslow or Salford Harriers).

Steady run on Thursdays.

Lots of races, often on Wednesdays and weekends.

Recovery runs in between.

Regular hill sessions.

He didn't do any cross training or strength training. He was conscious of healthy eating but it was difficult when working nightshifts.

HIS ADVICE FOR NEWER RUNNERS:

1. Don't get obsessed with long distances. Park Runs are ideal for novice runners. Half marathons and Marathons can be tackled successfully later as a more experienced runner.
2. Don't be scared of running and racing off-road (multi-terrain races generally attract only 100 – 300 entries whereas road races often have over 1,000 entries and usually cost more!).
3. Include speed work every week to stress your body to improve it. It doesn't need to be excessive: a 3-mile run with a fast mile in the middle can still be a good workout.
4. You need to make the sacrifices and put the training in when you could be doing other things.
5. Train with someone who's faster than you. Malcolm trained through his peak with a local legend called Jimmy News.

Malcolm's favourite races:

- Boar's Head fell race
- Teggs Nose fell race
- Boggart Hall Clough Cross Country (muddier the better!)
- Favourite Parkrun is Lyme Park, where he still places in the top 5, with a course PB of 19.11

In his forties he was plagued with injuries (calf, Achilles, back and knees), which he puts down to general wear and tear from years of running. Recovery involved periods out of running, replacing it with swimming and cycling.

Malcolm has been a pillar in organising Wilmslow Half Marathon since 1990 when WRC took over and he became race secretary and treasurer, before handing treasury over to Les Rayner. Amongst many other tasks, Malcolm has managed the entries for the race until this year, an awesome 27 years of service. All race entries used to go to Malcolm's house, with 150 arriving in a single day once. I'm not sure the postman will have been too happy about that!

Malcolm also contributed to the running community by establishing more local races:

- The Mobberley Round the Runway race in 2008, which he handed over to Rob Downs
- The David Lewis 4 mile road race, which graduated to a 10-mile road race. Sadly, David Lewis pulled out and there is no longer a 10-mile road race in Cheshire
- The Goyt Valley trail race, which was hard to recruit volunteers for to keep it going
- The Wizard 5, which has now been handed over to Andy Watts



TRAIN WITH
SOMEONE
FASTER THAN
YOU

Malcolm Fowler

Success story just runs and runs

The Wilmslow Running Club success story continues apace with Jimmy News being selected to represent England in next weekend's European cross-country race.

Malcolm Fowler is also celebrating success, running 2hr 25min in the European Police Marathon Championship in Italy, helping the British team to overall victory.

The club has also achieved many other outstanding individual and team performances in the Cheshire County Cross-Country Championships.

There was a large Wilmslow turn out in the Cheshire Championships, held on a hilly and taxing course at Winsford, but pride of place must go to Arabella Woodrow, who came 3rd lady and 1st Vet 40, Jonathan Fairs, who gained the bronze medal in the Junior Men's race, Club coach Tony Hulme who was 2nd Vet

45, and the Wilmslow ladies' team of Arabella Woodrow, Diane Lenders and tendon twanging triathlete Joanna Batenian, who were the overall winners.

The Wilmslow ladies vets team of Denise Newton, Julia O'Shea and Sue Miller came an excellent 3rd vets team. Not to be outdone, the Wilmslow men's team of Nick Withers, Bill Heaton, Geoff Quinn, Paul Calderbank, Ray Hunt and the fast improving Mark Wrigley gained bronze medals as did their veterans team of Tony Hulme, Gavin Mendham, Keith Winterbourne and John Chadwick.

Also running for Wilmslow in the ladies' race were two more triathlon superstars, Jane Mellor, who came 21st, and Jackie Webb, who finished 37th, as well as Cathy Palmer, who was 25th despite having just returned from an exhausting holiday exploring parts of Ireland, and



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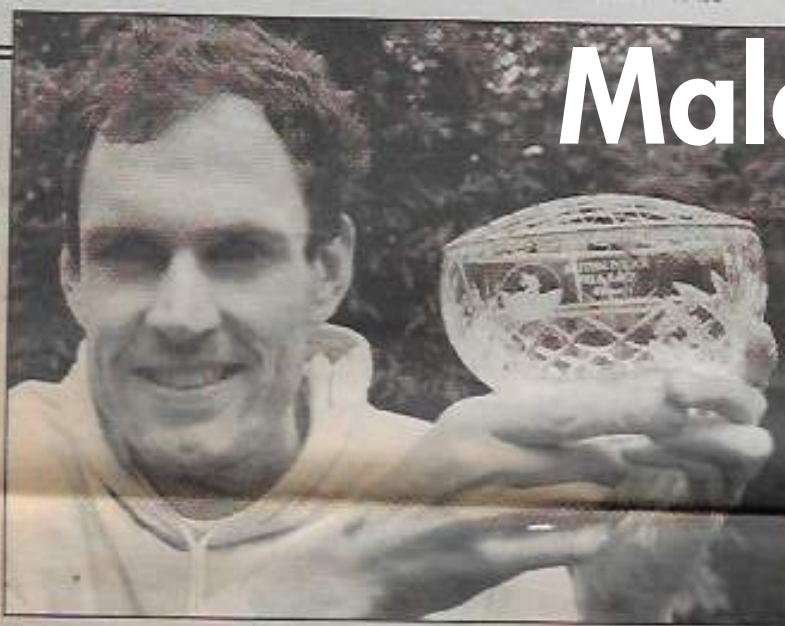


Jimmy News

Yvonne Brown, who came 42nd.

Also competing for the men were Dayne Reast, 71st, Paul Sanders 79th, Peter Nelson 88th, Bob Berry 97th, Andy Tubb 113rd, Andrew Gage 118th, Kevin Kelley 121st, Andy Watts 130th, Iain Paden 133rd, Trevor Faulkner 137th, Ron Reed 141st, Ken Smart 150th and Jeff Sherrin 151st.

Malcolm Fowler



Malcolm with his trophy 1991/92

Superfit cop is police fell race champion again

FACED with the prospect of scrambling through thick mud most runners would stay at home with their feet up - but for PC Malcolm Fowler the conditions are perfect.

The strapping 6ft 4in policeman, who weighs in at a hefty 13 stones, easily hurtles through wet mud while his daintier counterparts get stuck - which is why he is the national Police Fell Race Champion.

The fit PC runs 50 miles each week on rough terrain and was justly rewarded last week when he claimed the title for the seventh time - when no other police fell race runner in the country has ever won it more than once.

The reigning champ has only missed grabbing the title twice in the last nine years - one year he came third, and the other year he didn't make it.

"I was hoping to take part as usual in

BY LISA BINGHAM

93, but then I found out I had to miss it because I was on duty at the Cheshire shown, I was pretty disappointed," said Malcolm.

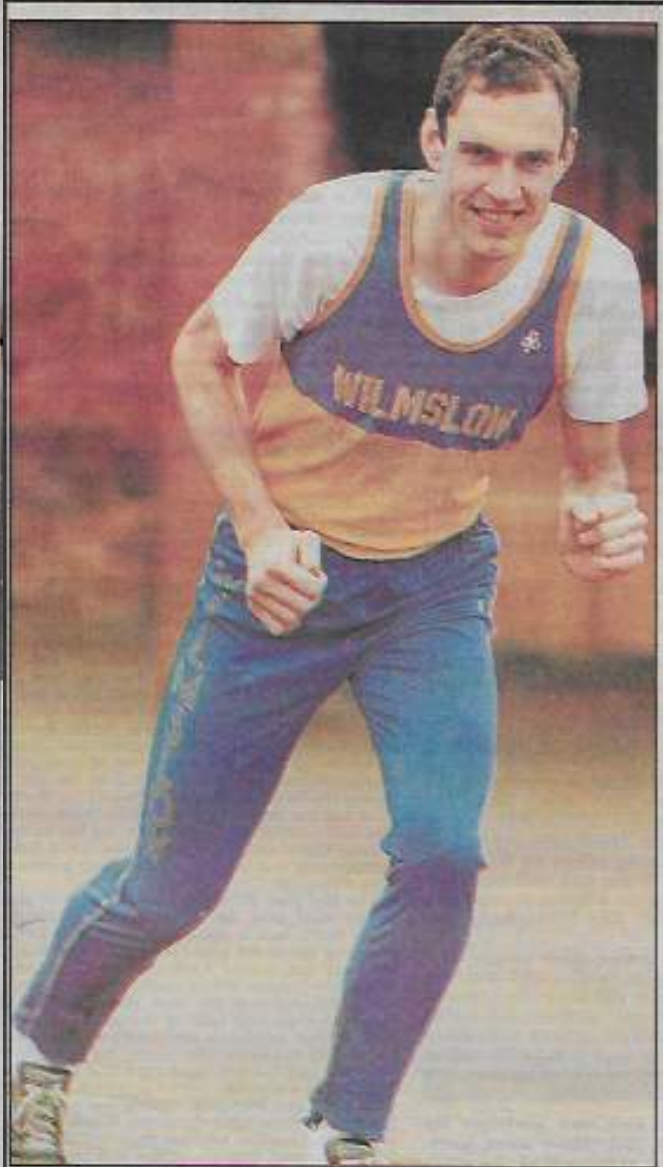
He has tried his luck in the police cross country and road running races - but without the same success.

"People doing those races tend to be super fast and I lose out to the quicker guys because I carry a lot of weight and can't keep up. But for that reason I tend to do better up hills when you need that bit more strength."

This year's battle was a bit harder for Malcolm, who lives in Macclesfield and at 35 is perhaps past his best. But even at his worst he seems to be streets ahead of the others.

"I'm not quite as fast as when I was younger, I'm getting to be an old codger now.

"But I'm not ready to hang up my boots, younger guys are joining the force all the time who will be fitter than me but I'll be going for a lot longer yet," added Malcolm.



WILMSLOW running club's Malcolm Fowler

Running club members make their mark

POUNING the beat has certainly put Wilmslow Running Club's Malcolm Fowler in top form - he performed his personal best at the men's northern cross-country championships at a windswept Arrowse Park, Birkenhead, his class with an exceptional run to finish 37th, his best ever position, in 42.30

And Malcolm was not the only fine performer at the club at the weekend. Lyn Chambers took part in her first ever race for the club in the Northern Counties cross-country championships, and Yvonne Brown, a hardened cross-country competitor, ran in her first ever half marathon race.

In the women's northern championships, held over a tough and hilly course at Blackburn, there were excellent runs from all three Wilmslow competitors with Diane Lenders leading

them home in a lightning 26.30, followed by Jo Bateman in an impressive 27.15 and Lyn Chambers, who performed admirably to finish in 34.33, leaving many other competitors trailing in her wake.

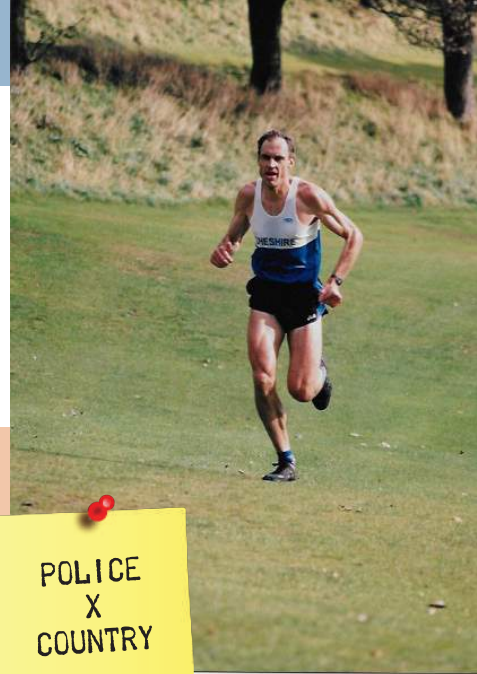
In the Four Village Half Marathon at Helsby, Steve Russell was the first Wilmslow runner to finish in 89.30, with the ever-green supervet Ron Reed coming 1st Vet 65 in 96.46, Trevor Faulkner setting a new personal best time of 96.03, Yvonne Brown completing her first ever half marathon in a very good 1hr 54min, Sue Walton in 2hr 10min, and Mary Evans in 2hr 19mins.



Cycling has featured highly in Malcolm's life. In the running years he'd cycle 15 miles to and from work in Middlewich as a means of getting some exercise into a 12-hour working day. About three years ago, frustrated by a knee injury that prevented him from running, he focussed more on cycling. He joined the Macclesfield Wheelers and started to compete in races, time trials and cycle-cross. However, still determined to run, he researched until he found a book called 'Beating Patella Tendonitis' (can you believe one exists?). He followed it to the letter and got himself back running and competing.

Whilst cycling, he completed some formidable challenges:

- He did the "Tour de Force" twice. That's the same route as the Tour de France, on the same days, one week ahead, over 2,100 miles. Mind blowing!
- He did the Three Peaks of Yorkshire, a cyclocross event (cycling and running carrying your hybrid bike). About 30 miles up and down Pen-y-Ghent, Ingleborough, Wharfedale
- His best 10 mile time trial was 23min 15 seconds. "Not that fast" he says but reluctantly admits to being pleased.



POLICE
X
COUNTRY

Malcolm Fowler

Some observations on running:

There are less top class runners nowadays. The growth appears to be at the slower end, which is good to see more people running, especially women (when the WHM started only 9% of participants were women). However, the times have slowed. In the early days of WHM, there were more runners timing under 90 mins and less timing over 2 hours and 30 mins. Over 60% of entrants used to belong to a Club, now it's less than 25%.

Looking ahead, Malcolm is toying with running the Athens Marathon as an icon of running on the original marathon course and never having visited Athens. He also wants to run more races abroad and enjoy the whole experience of the venue.

A HUGE THANK YOU FROM ALL OF US FOR WHAT HE'S PUT INTO THE CLUB AND THE LOCAL RUNNING COMMUNITY FOR OVER 30 YEARS. GOOD LUCK FOR MANY MORE YEARS COMPETING.

MALCOLM

GOES

Wilmslow
Running
Club

FLAT OUT

MALCOLM Fowler took time off from his intensive preparation for next weekend's inter-counties championship to lead the Wilmslow running club team in a Cheshire league cross-country fixture at Ellesmere Port.

The course, not surprisingly for that part of the Wirral, was flat, but it was also extremely muddy under foot, which made it very energy sapping.

For Malcolm, it was a good work out, and he was pleased to finish fourth and not to pick up any injury.

George Livesey, once again, ran strongly and led home the veteran's team, coming 77th, with Tony Hulme, despite having a cold and sore knees, pushing him all the way to finish 79th.

Dave Ambler, in 87th place, continued to show good form and rapid improvement, with Paul Sanders, thanks to a strong finish, coming 94th, and Richard Woodrow, 98th just managing to get the better of Rob Dunkley, who struggled a

little in the mud to finish in 100th position. Andy Gage ran another sound race to come 131st, as did the ever youthful and spritely Ron Reed, who finished 159th.

Meanwhile Geoff Quinn, Menai Edwards and the debonair Martin Wheelodon went to Anglesey to take part in the Menai 10km. Geoff Quinn had a good run, and for Martin and Menai there was a battle all the way to the tape with the judges unable to separate them as they finished in 48.15.