



**Northants Ultra 35**  
**"Shires and Spires"**  
**27<sup>th</sup> May 2012**

2012 turned out to be a sweltering hot day as over 140 runners toiled in the heat to complete the 35 mile circle of Northamptonshire's glorious countryside rich in history and stately homes.



Entries were 40% up on 2011 as awareness of this picturesque race continues to spread. Starting and finishing in the impressive grounds of Lamport Hall, and heading past Cottesbrooke Hall (The basis of Jane Austin's 'Mansfield House'), Althorpe (home to the Spencer family) and Teeton Hall, as well as the battlefields of Naseby where the Civil War was settled in 1645.

In the Men's race 4 runners set the early pace building a 20 minute lead over the rest of the field by the time they arrived at 'lunch' after just 16 miles. Shortly afterwards Andrew Pace started to drop back and 3 runners remained at the front as they passed the Althorp Estate and Checkpoint 4. First home at the finish in a new course record despite the temperatures were Craig Holgate & Duncan Harris who finished together in 4:16:07. Third place going to Ian Sharman, returning from the US to the trails he ran as a youngster growing up less than 2 miles from the course.



Some stunning scenery greets runners at the Northants Ultra

On the ladies side Victoria Mousley led briefly before injury prematurely ended her day after less than 10 miles. This left the way clear for Philippa Taylor and Helen Skelton, running together for the opening miles. It wasn't until the fields between West Hadden and Long Buckby that Philippa started to draw ahead. Initially opening a 3 minute lead which she gradually extended to finish first in an impressive 5:06:16 for a third successive title at Lamport Hall.



The Men's Podium

Craig Holgate

Duncan Harris

Ian Sharman



The Ladies Podium

Helen Skelton

Philippa Taylor

Claire Akin-smith

In total there were 132 finishers in 2012 well up on completions from a year ago as this race continues to capture the imagination of those looking for something more than a marathon and with a delightful mix of countryside trails and quiet country lanes the reputation is set to grow further.

A team Ultra Running Championships was introduced for 2012 which was won by local running club Wellingborough and District AC. The team of Roger Bullen, Colin Harris, Julian Blackwell, Israel Archuletta & Joanne Edwards finishing in a combined time of 34 hours and 51 minutes to claim the inaugural trophy.

Many thanks to prize sponsors Clif, Inov8, Elete & Silva, to Corby Photography for capturing the day and to the team from Moulton College for providing massage services at the end of a hard day, and finally Good luck to all runners in the remainder of the UK Run Further Championships.

