

2008 Algarve Running Challenge

5 – 9 November 2008

Report by Steve Smythe

Dave Mansbridge retained his Algarve Challenge in 2008. The tall Telford runner, who has also dominated the Malta Challenge in recent years, easily won the Challenge by 9 minutes. He won the 5 Miles Cross-country over the testing switchback course close to the Vila Real Athletics Centre Complex by 90 seconds to build up a good early lead. In the Track Mile his margin was down to 2 seconds but he resumed dominance in the Beach Race to win by 20 seconds. Though he didn't run well by his standards in the 10 mile road race from Portugal to Spain he broke the hour to easily increase his overall lead. With many of the other contenders falling by the wayside, Graham Chesters of the well represented Middleton Harriers was a clear overall runner-up.

The Manchester-based club also provided the women's event which proved far more competitive than the men's. **Kyrinda Hurst-Moore** who won the opening cross-country was only the fifth fastest woman miler but resumed head of affairs at the beach race and then extended her winning margin in the 10 miles as club-mate Teresa Hollins came through for second.

There was plenty of good battles in the age group races, the best being between M60 internationals **Mike Mann** and **Martyn Rouse**. Mike, in his first year of the age group, and in the week before running for England in the Vets International, ran away from Martyn in the cross-country to build a good lead, which he extended in the mile. However, Mike lost close on two minutes in the beach race to Martyn. Martyn built up a good lead early on the 10 miles, but Mike fought back and past him but couldn't extend his lead enough and though winning 3 of the 4 races, he fell just 23 seconds short as they both finished in the top 4 overall – the beach race had been decisive.

The **Guardiana 10 miles** with its 500+ runners also attracted tour package runners for the weekend of the event. W55 England international Ros Tabor was not only the first woman in the ARC beach race but also the first tour runner in the Guardiana 10 miles where she won her age group in the race.



2007 & 2008 ARC Winner
Dave Mansbridge



Middleton Harriers Ladies
led by Kyrinda Hurst-Moore (119)



Gardiana River Bridge
The spectacular half way point of
the Gardiana 10 Miles race at
the Portugal – Spain border



Shropshire Shufflers
on tour at the 3rd ARC in
before the Gardiana
10 Miles race