

A collage of 15 photographs featuring various triathletes and runners in action and posing. The images show athletes in various settings: running on trails, climbing, posing for portraits, and celebrating. The central text reads "ISSUE 128 AUTUMN".

ISSUE 128 AUTUMN

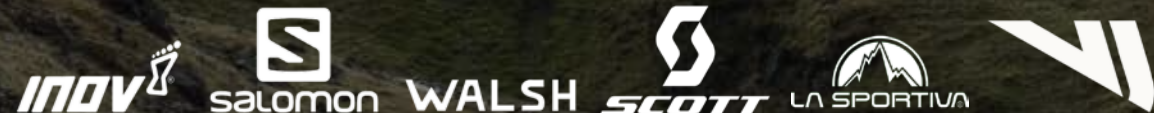
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If you have an idea for a story or would like guidance or support to develop your work then please email editor@fellrunner.org.uk. We regret that we cannot publish all submitted articles and images and there is no guarantee that your work will be published. We are happy to accept completed submissions up to 2,500 words. To avoid disappointment, please send an abstract or synopsis up to 100 words in advance to the editor. If you are submitting an article, please try to include a minimum of three images for publication with full credits.

We are always open to photos for cover images, features and possible photo features in future editions. For the main content of the magazine, the style of images we prefer place runners in the context of the landscape. We welcome race photos for the results and reports pages. If you’re a photographer, drop the photo editor an email at photo@fellrunner.org.uk

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We accept submissions all year round.



Helen Price, with support runner ‘Little’ Dave Cumins, on her successful Joss Naylor Lakeland Challenge ©Simon Franklin

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FRONT COVER:
A montage of some of the runners featured in Martin Stone’s Long Distance Round Up on page 88 - please see individual articles for photo credits

EDITOR’S LETTER

Welcome to the latest issue of The Fellrunner. It’s my first issue as Editor and I hope to carry on the excellent work carried out by Paul Booth and his predecessors. It has been a year when fell racing has had to take a back seat. For many of us, the racing season ended in March at Black Combe or Yr Aran where the championship season also ended prematurely.

But when one door closes another one opens. And as can be seen in this issue, some of the best fell runners flung the door well and truly wide open. I think we have managed (well Martin has) to get articles from most of the main protagonists which I hope you enjoy reading over the dark winter months. The FRA Long Distance Award could well be a difficult decision this year. I hope mail-in ballots, deceased votes and fraudulent voter counting don’t cause too much of a delay.

The magazine doesn’t work without fell runners sending articles and photos in. This issue has some great articles, some of which give a little historical context to the some of the records. With the long-distance achievements this summer, I have had to postpone publishing a few articles which will now appear in the Spring issue. I apologise to those who have submitted articles whose publication has been delayed.

With not much in the way of racing this summer, I looked back at the online Fellrunner magazine (which can be viewed on the FRA website) to see what was said in 2001, the last time that racing suffered such an interruption. Dave Jones, the Editor at the time, said in the Oct 2001 issue:

Well, things have not really improved to the extent we had all hoped – relatively few races have been reinstated over the summer months and even as we move into autumn the FRA website doesn’t exactly seethe with races clamouring to be publicised.

Fell running recovered from the Foot and Mouth outbreak. I’m sure that we can recover from Covid-19. In the meantime, keep an eye on the FRA website for the latest guidance and I hope we can soon be racing around the fells.

It is not only my first issue. I would like to welcome to the editorial team Natalie Hawkrigg who has taken charge of the Junior Fellrunner section. I would also like to thank Tory for all her guidance and help.



The late Pete Shields in 2006 ©Dave Woodhead

Finally, a request for help. The fell running community is a close-knit community, something that is immediately obvious to any newcomer. Pete Shields coached fell runners both nationally and internationally for the FRA and was a senior coach at Ilkley Harriers. I have received a request from Nick Pearce for anecdotes and stories about Pete who sadly died in May this year. His family and friends are planning a fitting celebration of his life next year and would like the fell running community’s help. Please get in touch with Nick at nickandpamp@talktalk.net



DAVE LITTLER, EDITOR OF THE FELLRUNNER

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STOP PRESS

The FRA Long Distance Award for 2019/20 was awarded jointly to Donnie Campbell and John Kelly. The jury was unable to separate the two runners in what has been an outstanding year of long distance running. In any ‘normal’ year, any of the nominees could have been expected to pick up the award. Congratulations to all nominees and especially to Donnie and John.

CHAIRMAN’S LETTER

I hope you all enjoyed the 50th anniversary Fellrunner. Many thanks to those who contacted me with kind comments and also to Craig Roberts (pictured below right) who told me that it was not Dave Lewis from Rossendale who won the Rivington Pike race in 1997 but Craig himself who was clearly too fast for photographer Gil Horsley. See Page 160 Summer 2020.

As we move closer to the end of what has been a very difficult year for many individuals and businesses large and small, the FRA has been active behind the scenes in an attempt to guide our hard-working race organisers towards a cautious return to some form of racing. I have attended a number of events, the first being at Lowther Castle at the beginning of August, then the Scottish uphill only Championship race at Comrie Croft and most recently the Wansfell uphill only race to raise funds for the 2021 International Youth Cup. The common factor from all of these races was the happy, smiling faces and the pleasure runners experienced just from seeing other competitors albeit socially distanced. There have been some innovative ideas to enable Government legislation and guidelines to be complied with and I must thank all the runners for adhering to all the additional requirements which I suspect will be in force for some time.

I am very grateful to Jamie McIlvenny from Trawden who has joined the FRA Committee in a co-opted role of Covid Coordinator. Jamie has the unenviable task of making sense out of rapidly changing Government legislation, guidance from our Governing Bodies and local restrictions due to the Coronavirus pandemic. We have created a Covid page on the FRA website with our most up-to-date guidance for race organisers and our members who want to make a cautious return to racing on the fells. We have included special consider-ations for Junior races and guidance for parents/ guardians of junior runners.

Membership of the FRA continues to grow and I was delighted to welcome Hilary Hallen who joined at the end of July and was our 8000th member. New to the fells, she was awarded a £100 voucher donated by inov-8 with which I understand she bought some shoes and she has written a short article explaining why she decided to click on the “Join Online” button and how she christened her new shoes on Red Pike.

It has also given me enormous pleasure to award Honorary Membership of the FRA to Alan Brentnall and his wife Alison.

Alan joined the FRA committee in 2000 as Assistant Secretary and then stepped up to General Secretary in 2002, a position which he held until 2011 when he served for a further three years as Member and Club representative. Alan then left the Committee but he continued to hold the FRA library and the Peak District radios which he has managed on our behalf ever since. Now he has plans with Alison to follow their dreams and move to Scotland and so the library will be entrusted to James Lowe in his role as Communications Officer and Geoff Briggs from Pennine FR has agreed to take on the management of the Peak District radios. We wish Alan and Alison the best of luck and look forward to seeing them at races in the future and at the British Relays where Alan has been the race referee for some years.

I would like to thank Sarah McCormack for organising last month’s Under 23 training camp in Ambleside (with financial support from Pete Bland Sports). This was a huge success and although Sarah has stepped down from the FRA Committee she has agreed to help out with this very important age group in future. My thanks also go to Dave Bowen (Fixtures), Cat Slater (Member Rep) and Britta Sendlhofer (Communications) who have supported me admirably and have now left the Committee. Dave has been succeeded by another Pennine member being Andy McMurdo and this continues a long association of the club with the Fixtures role. Ian Winterburn has accepted a co-opted role as First Aid



Craig Roberts, winner of the Rivington Pike race in 1997

Coordinator and we have welcomed three new Member Reps being Ricky Parrish (Todmorden Harriers), Scout Adkin (Ambleside) and Kelli Roberts (Helm Hill). It is very pleasing to have some new, young blood who are prepared to put something back into the sport. Finally, this is the first edition of The Fellrunner produced by our new Editor Dave Littler from Bowland. I feel privileged to work with such a strong and supportive team.

The FRA and Keswick AC were disappointed to have to cancel the FRA “Do” but there were simply too many uncertainties and with no trophies or medals to award, it was unclear whether we could sell any tickets. Lesley Malarkey is working with race organisers and it is hoped that we will be able to have some form of Championships next year using the races which had been planned for 2020. Similarly, Helene Whitaker and her Junior team are determined to have a Junior Championship and will trial digital timing at the Hoppits races on 28th February.

One unexpected consequence of the Covid-19 restrictions has been a tremendous year for long distance performances. As some athletes have been thwarted in their plans to race abroad, they have turned their attention to challenges closer to home. There have been some staggering achievements and I congratulate each and every one. A trophy which is sure to be hotly contested this

year is the FRA Long Distance Award and the first section of this magazine features articles by a number of contenders, with Martin Stone’s Long Distance Round-up (page 88) providing a comprehensive list.

I am optimistic about 2021, and although there will be further challenges, I know we can work through them together to find creative solutions to ensure our sport can continue to thrive.



CHARMIAN HEATON, CHAIRMAN

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Kong Mini Mountain Marathon, Round 1 North Wales - James Harris (Ambleside AC) and Jason Lewis ©Stephen Wilson www.granddayoutphotography.co.uk

SECRETARY’S CORNER

As Economics Correspondent Peter O’Hanrahan once said: agreement was a long time coming, but in the end the decision was unanimous.

From the start of 2021, the use of electronic aids such as (but not limited to) GPS devices will be completely prohibited for navigation in all FRA races – even momentarily, to show current position or for relocating to the race route. This replaces the previous stance, in place since 2018, whereby Race Organisers (ROs) could choose to allow or prohibit such devices by declaring their races ‘G’ or ‘NG’ respectively; those annotations are now discontinued.

This decision follows a thorough review this year of the FRA’s principles, rules and policies. The proposed changes summarised in the last magazine (issue #127, pp10-11) have all been finalised and/or ratified. A summary of rule changes for 2021 is available on the Documents page of the FRA website, but the most important changes are covered below.

FRA AGM

Owing to ongoing social restrictions, it was not possible for the FRA to hold its 2020 AGM in the usual format. Instead, most proceedings were conducted electronically with a minimal Committee attendance at the AGM itself, sufficient to satisfy our articles of association and company law.

Many thanks to everybody that took the time to submit a proxy form to ensure that the meeting was quorate and adequately represented from the membership. The minutes of the meeting are on the FRA website. Charmian has covered the Committee changes so I will not repeat them, but I would like to warmly welcome our six new members and thank all those standing down for their hard work during a very challenging year.

The 2021 AGM will, COVID permitting, follow the intended plan for 2020 by being aligned with the Langdale Horseshoe Fell Race in October.

GPS

The FRA’s review of the policy on GPS usage and the G/NG categories coincided with a series of regional RO meetings in fell running heartlands at the start of this year, allowing us to consult in person with more than a hundred ROs. Several topics were discussed, but on none was such a clear consensus established as this: well over 90% of ROs supported a full ban on navigational aids such as GPS, with a total of just five objections.

The concerns raised by ROs (and many other FRA members) over the use of GPS in fell running were legion, but a common thread was the desire for the sport to maintain its unique character. As other disciplines such as trail running and sky races increase in popularity, any ‘grey area’ carries a serious risk of fell running being subsumed into those sports – or at least, that competitors would not appreciate the difference.

A crucial related point is that of liability on ROs and the FRA. The risk to competitors in fell races is considerably higher than in most other disciplines, with higher ground (and therefore often worse weather), tougher terrain and more difficult navigation. As noted in the last magazine, it is essential above all that entrants in fell races understand what they are committing to, but ambiguity in the rules between different races (as with the G/NG system) makes this very difficult. And with clear evidence obtained last year that many fell racers have not even heard of the FRA, how could they possibly be expected to understand (and adhere to) the G/NG distinction?

Some opponents of this change have claimed that prohibiting GPS would be “elitist”. The FRA completely refutes this: requiring competitors to possess certain fundamental skills (relative to the difficulty of a given race) is part and parcel of any sport, not to mention essential for safety. And surely requiring everyone to own an expensive watch in order to remain competitive is much more discriminatory, in a sport which is traditionally ‘grass roots’, low cost and entirely meritocratic?

There were some more cogent arguments against a full ban. Some pointed out that many competent self-navigators are also capable of using GPS devices effectively, and for certain activities this can provide an excellent backup. Whilst true, this does not mean that fell running should change its very nature to accommodate this, any more than orienteering or mountain marathons should. Others claimed that allowing GPS would reduce the benefit of local knowledge; again true, but it would also reduce the need to recce, practise and acquire mountain skills which are so essential for the sport, especially in poor weather conditions and low visibility. Moreover, a strong counterargument is that “home advantage” is not necessarily a bad thing: it adds to the variety of a sport where any given race is so much more than just a distance/height profile. And to change the essence of fell racing to cater for people living in (e.g.) London who find it difficult to recce routes – as some on social media have claimed we should – would be the epitome of the tail wagging the dog.

To clarify, it should be noted that carrying a GPS device for emergency usage is not prohibited. However, if you do use such a device, **even momentarily**, you must retire and go straight to the race finish by the shortest route. If this is the race route, you must declare yourself non-competitive at the finish to the RO. You may also carry a GPS 'logger' for post-race analysis, as in orienteering; however, ROs may require you to keep this out of sight (e.g. in a bum bag) during the race. ROs are entitled to require such logging devices to be placed in sealed bags for post-race verification, and this is standard practice in some mountain navigation races.

With this issue now resolved, it is perhaps worth taking a moment to reflect on the process. In a previous edition of *The Fellrunner*, Helene Whitaker (née Diamantides) wrote a letter railing against the use of GPS in fell races:

"GPS devices - are they in the rules or the spirit of the event to use on fell races? And surely a straight-line reference is a great way of running straight off a cliff on Jura? It really is unforgivable and irresponsible to be on the hills in a race in bad weather if you are unable to look after yourself. The organiser and marshals do their jobs out of the kindness of their hearts. You should never take their generosity lightly and owe it to them to be able to complete the event safely and without relying on them to rescue you – which you are if you are unable / unwilling to navigate. Those not making any effort to navigate endanger themselves and potentially the future of the races we love."

The date? Spring 2009.

Nearly a decade later, when this issue came to the fore on social media, many FRA members wrote emails along similar lines to the FRA. These members came from all sections of the sport, from race organisers and Championship winners to back-of-the-pack runners. The consensus of this correspondence was clear: the use of electronic aids for navigation was not felt to be in the spirit of fell running.

There are a number of lessons that can be taken from this saga. One is that the pages of social media do not provide a reliable or acceptable gauge of genuine fell running opinion, especially when set against a wealth of highly articulate correspondence from FRA members. Another is that we should not attempt to be all things to all runners: we should welcome athletes from other disciplines but not change the sport to accommodate them. But perhaps most important is that key decisions which strike at the heart of the sport should carefully consider the views of those people most vital and integral to fell running: Race Organisers.

Following January's RO meetings, and to ensure the most representative view possible, votes were sought from the full FRA Executive Committee on this topic, as well as from the FRA's honorary committee members and all members of the FRA's Safety, Equipment and Rules sub-committee. The result was 26 votes in favour; none against; no abstentions.

This unanimous vote is a resounding endorsement of the decision to ban GPS usage in FRA races and of the core principle of self-navigation. As one former FRA Chairman has simply stated: "it's obvious". In the words of another, "using GPS in a fell race is about as ethical as using an electric bike in *Le Tour*".

And so, with this long overdue resolution, let us look forward to many more stories that will never happen in trail races: mid-race confabs in the mist with everyone pointing in different directions; unlikely Lakeland Classics winners on zero-visibility "car-wash" days; and eminent fell runners getting a lift to the finish of the Duddon race on a tractor from Torver. Ich nichten lichten, as Peter might have said.

DIFFERENTIAL ENTRY FEES

Following feedback from ROs, and given the lack of fell racing this year and sadly the likely impact on 2021, differential entry pricing (whereby FRA members may be charged a lower race entry fee than non-members) has been made optional for 2021. Additionally, ROs who apply this dual pricing have been given extra flexibility over the price difference. These decisions were communicated to all Race Organisers at the start of August and were positively received.

To summarise, ROs of races in 2021 will be permitted to charge a higher race entry fee for non-members of the FRA, but this difference must not exceed £2 for short races, £3 for medium races and £4 for long races.

We will continue to ask all ROs to report the numbers of FRA members and non-members entering their races, for reasons previously covered.

RACE LICENSING POLICY

Following the RO meetings in January it was clear that there was a strong desire to preserve and protect the essence of fell running in a world increasingly driven by commercialism, technology and social media pressure. A working group was therefore established to review the FRA race calendar and our policy for registering races. The result was a new FRA race licensing policy, shown on page 16. This was ratified by the FRA Committee in July and is effective immediately.

A key statement in the policy is that fell running is a **non-commercial sport** – something that has also now been written into the FRA's Principles of Fell Running. Of course, commercialism is not black and white and all fell races are different, so there is no algorithm to determine which races we should or should not license; the Chairman and Fixtures Secretary will retain substantial discretion. This also applies to other aspects of the policy such as the need for "genuine fell terrain", which is more difficult to achieve in some areas of the country than others.

As we have reassured some concerned ROs, we will not be culling swathes of races from our calendar by applying this policy to the letter. However, we do need to keep the total number of FRA races to a manageable level, so we reserve the right to reject some applications for new races which might previously have been accepted and we may ask a few ROs whose races fall well outside the policy's bounds to consider registering with other organisations. There is no charge for an FRA licence, so above all we ask ROs to support the FRA by making it clear that your race is a fell race run under FRA governance, and to provide conspicuous links to our website and rules.

COVID-SECURE RACING

The FRA is very grateful to those ROs who pioneered COVID-secure protocols in July and August, particularly Martin Stone, who organised the first such FRA race at Lowther, and James Sheard, who worked so hard to put on the Saddleworth Round only to be scuppered by a localised COVID outbreak. Many ROs have since followed their lead, despite the ongoing uncertainty, and we thank them all for their efforts whether or not they were ultimately successful.

As Charmian mentions in her letter in this magazine, Jamie McIlvenny has joined the FRA as COVID Co-ordinator and we now have a dedicated COVID page on the FRA website. We will continue to support ROs as much as possible during this difficult time and offer guidance where we can. Whilst fell racing, especially with staggered starts, is undoubtedly one of the safest sports from a COVID perspective, ROs unfortunately face many obstacles beyond their control, especially regarding land access, so please be understanding of those ROs who may need to cancel their planned races at the last minute through no fault of their own.

FRA HANDBOOK

For obvious reasons, this year's FRA Handbook will not contain the usual race calendar, so we ask members to use the FRA website to keep abreast of the latest information regarding which races are

scheduled. We hope to revert to the usual format for 2022. **Please remember to renew your FRA membership ASAP** to ensure that the 2021 Handbook reaches you before Christmas. Many thanks to Dave Bowen (outgoing Fixtures Secretary) for editing the Handbook and to Britta Sendlhofer (outgoing Communications Officer) for the design and typesetting.

HISTORICAL FRA RESULTS AND REPORTS

With the FRA entering its second 50 years, this seems an appropriate time to reflect on the history of the organisation and especially its races. Following an initial suggestion from Ruth Thompson, we are now embarking on an ambitious project to capture FRA results, race reports and other memories for posterity. In the fullness of time, it is hoped that the fruits of this initiative will be available on the new FRA website which as I write is in the early stages of development.

We are indebted to Ruth for offering to co-ordinate the pilot stage of this project to gauge feasibility, and all those that have already provided assistance. Please see page 19 for more details.

I hope that you are all staying sane during this latest period of lockdown. It is a little early to wish everyone a happy Christmas but let's certainly hope that 2021 is a lot better all round.



NEIL TALBOTT, FRA GENERAL SECRETARY

secretary@fellrunner.org.uk

Above photo: Neil on his way to winning the Kong Mini Mountain Marathon Round 1, in North Wales 2020 ©Stephen Wilson www.granddayoutphotography.co.uk



FRA RACE REGISTRATION AND LICENSING POLICY

A GUIDE FOR RACE ORGANISERS

INTRODUCTION

The FRA licenses fell races in England and the Isle of Man (and occasionally other home nations). Insurance for FRA-licensed races is provided via UK Athletics. The FRA also lists (in its Handbook and on its website) races outside England which align with the policy below and which may be of interest to FRA members.

LICENSING POLICY

The FRA only licenses fell races which are in keeping with the FRA's "Principles of Fell Running"¹. In particular, core principles include the following:

1. **Unique character.** Key words are "fell", "runners" and "race"! The FRA does not license trail races, cross-country races, "challenge"-style events or walks.
2. **Non-commercialism.** Fell running is a non-commercial, low cost sport. Races should be run on a "break even" basis or to raise a modest amount for a stated good cause. Entry fees are expected to be priced at levels in line with what is "normal" for the sport, though the FRA recognises that all races are different and that some races have hidden costs. Guidance is available on request.
3. **Self-navigation.** The use of electronic aids (such as GPS devices) for navigation is strictly prohibited in all FRA races. Use of such devices both is contrary to the ethos of the sport and may bring seriously increased risk in cases of overreliance. ROs must make this principle clear to entrants and in particular should not provide electronic "GPX files" (or equivalent) of the route.
4. **Self-sufficiency.** Aid stations are not expected in fell races. Provision of fluids at road crossings on very dry courses may be acceptable.

Races should meet the criteria in the FRA Requirements for ROs and FRA Rules for Competition² and in particular must include **genuine fell terrain**; races entirely on trails will rarely be licensed. (It is accepted that some leeway may be afforded in certain geographical areas and for historical FRA races.)

Flagging should usually be minimised, and in particular the "open fell" parts of a fell race should be unflagged except where essential because of landowner demands or other access restrictions. (Short sections may occasionally be flagged, e.g. to guide runners into a checkpoint or to avoid a dangerous area.)

There is no charge for an FRA race licence. However, in return for a licence we ask the following of ROs:

1. Races should be organised, promoted and run in a manner commensurate with the FRA's "Principles of Fell Running".¹
2. ROs must read and carefully adhere to the FRA's Requirements for ROs² and other supporting documentation.
3. ROs must ensure that participants are made aware, especially at the point of entry, that the race is a fell race (not a trail race) run under FRA licence. The FRA logo should be displayed with a link to the FRA's website, and the FRA's key rules and "absolute no-nos" must be highlighted to entrants. In other words, entrants must be absolutely clear what they are "letting themselves in for".

Further information and guidance are available from the FRA Fixtures Secretary or General Secretary.

*The Fell Runners Association
19th July 2020*

¹ available towards the front of the FRA Handbook and on the FRA website

² available on the FRA website



Nine Standards Fell Race - Rob Brown (Keswick AC) ©Stephen Wilson www.granddayoutphotography.co.uk

ACCESS REPORT

With Covid restrictions in place for most of summer no racing was taking place. In August there were roughly half a dozen races that took place and with the easing of restrictions more RO's have looked at putting races on over Winter 2020. The problem seems to be more with the venues than with the access across the land, so make sure you check out your venue first. I would recommend having a Covid event plan and risk assessment to show the venue and the landowners as per the FRA guidelines (see COVID page of our website) when you contact them initially.

NATIONAL TRUST

National Trust were on furlough until August 2020 but are now allowing Covid compliant races across their land with varying Covid restrictions as the government guidelines determine.

YORKSHIRE WATER AND UNITED UTILITIES

Both landowners in the Peak District did not allow races in September/October due to local lockdown restrictions. UU have said that in November races can commence.

FORESTRY COMMISSION

I pursued Chris Jones attempts at agreeing a blanket licence, similar to what we have with United Utilities, with the Forestry Commission and had made contact with the relevant person. However, during Covid the FC were on furlough and I have not had a reply. I will continue to work towards this.

NATURAL ENGLAND

- 1) There is now a centralised office dealing with the initial application and Notices of Proposals which is: ProtectedSites@naturalengland.org.uk
- 2) The Four-month Timescale has been tightened so that the four months start from the date of initial application instead of when the preliminary checks are done.
- 3) The best way to ensure a smooth and quick process is to submit a full application with:

- a) A good map that shows the route, only highlighted faintly, so that the detail underneath can be seen.
- b) Notices of Proposals for ALL the landowners on the route and signed by the landowner. OR
- c) One Notice that has ALL the landowners listed on it and signed by all of them. Natural England lose time trying to collate all the separate Notices and so if you can alter the form and include all the landowners it will make the processing much easier and quicker.

National Trust and United Utilities send their own SSSI application to Natural England.

NICKY SPINKS, FRA ACCESS OFFICER

access@fellrunner.org.uk

DONATIONS TO THE FRA

The FRA benefits from a large number of donations, for which we are very grateful. During the year we receive lots of donations, including very large individual gifts, some for specific purposes and some with no particular activity in mind.

The majority of our donations come from members who include a donation amount with their membership renewal. It is taken along with membership subscriptions by direct debit at the end of the year. This can be set up or modified in your SiEntries page if you wish to check or change the amount. In recent years the FRA has received over £2,000 from these donations alone.

Until this year these general donations have gone into the FRA account and have not been allocated to any specific activity, though they have allowed us to continue to support junior fell racing, including the 'Junior Do', and the hoodies and tee-shirts given out to championship participants. In future we would like to identify a particular area of activity and devote the donations to that activity – this is to focus on areas where more funds would really help the sport, and also to make sure that it is quite clear to anyone who chooses to spare a few pounds where that money is being used.

For 2021 we propose to use general donations to support Junior Championship races to offer online entry and automated timing at no cost, or reduced cost, to the race organiser. This will allow these races to keep their entry fees very low – junior races at the moment normally cost only a few pounds to enter and the additional cost of online entry and chip timing would be a major blow without this subsidy. This will help to encourage junior participation, and may allow many races to keep going, especially if online entry becomes essential in the 'post-Covid' era!

So if you currently donate to the FRA with your membership renewal – THANK YOU for that support which we know has made a difference. Whether you donate at the moment or not, if you feel that you would like to support junior running in this way please review your membership entry in SiEntries and add a small amount to the annual membership. We will report how the funds are being used in each Fellrunner.

ANDY WATTS, FRA TREASURER

treasurer@fellrunner.org.uk



2018 Hoppits Junior Race ©Dave Woodhead, Woodentops



©Dave Woodhead, Woodentops

HISTORICAL RESULTS CAN YOU HELP?

The FRA are piloting a project to collect and preserve race results and reports which currently only exist in a paper form. Many may be in someone's drawer or garage! Old race results can add so much to the history and richness of Fell Running. We want to celebrate the achievements of all our fellow Fell Runners, and the Organisers and Marshals who made the races possible.

Historical FRA magazines and websites cover many race results and information, but by no means all. We are interested in any FRA races, mountain navigation events, mountain marathons or other fell races that would be of interest to FRA members.

We know many Clubs and Organisers have done a splendid job of keeping results, and adding them to their websites. This has been very helpful. Now we are trying to find those results and reports which don't appear to be out there.

Many Clubs are celebrating milestone anniversaries of particular races or even the founding of the Club itself. We know this is generating some interest in the history of our sport.

Can you help?!

For the pilot we are taking two paths!

1 We are looking at races alphabetically i.e. beginning with the letters A & B. Do you have any results or reports from a race you ran in, organised or marshalled?

AND

2 We are looking at races beginning with any letter which took place in 1991 (nearly 30 years ago!). Other years to follow!

We hope by exploring by year and alphabetically we will not miss any races out! Eventually we hope to build the archive that can be searched by year and by race.

In the first instance, would you like to either text, phone or email if you think you have information which would help?

We will then get in touch and let you know of the results which we don't have. You may have the missing pieces of the jigsaw!

It would be lovely to hear from you!

RUTH THOMPSON, FRA HISTORICAL RESULTS CO-ORDINATOR

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CHASING GIANTS

THE SECOND FASTEST BOB GRAHAM ROUND

WORDS GEORGE FOSTER

It has been a year of unexpected events. I didn't expect to be wiping the whiteboard in my classroom at the end of a Friday afternoon's teaching and not to be writing on it again until the start of September. Similarly, when I discussed plans for a 'fast' Bob Graham Round with my coach, Martin Cox, on hearing of the cancellation of the GB World Long Distance Mountain Running Championship Trials (that's a grand title for an event that's almost as long to read aloud as it is to run!) in early September, I didn't expect to be writing this article for the Fellrunner.

I knew that I was in good shape and was keen to have a crack at bettering my previous, and only, time on the Round back in 2015. I managed a very uncomfortable, backwards-facing-descending-down-the-fells time of 20hrs 52mins. I'd had an excellent period of training, which was pretty much uninterrupted since March/April, and had ran some long efforts on the fells that I was pretty pleased with. I was also lucky to have sneaked some time in France and Switzerland over the summer at a poor man's altitude training camp with Matlock AC's Dan Haworth. This culminated in our hanging onto the coattails of Stephan Wenk at the Matterhorn Ultraks race towards the end of August.

However, it was only really since that first week of September that I gave 'the Bob' some serious thought, dropping it in almost as an afterthought when chatting through plans for the winter ahead. What followed can only be described as a shitshow of 'organisation' – I'm not the best with admin – trying to cobble together a schedule and hope that I could coax, coerce and flatter some of the best fell and mountain runners in Britain to help me on the day.

We were blessed in the Lakes with two cracking weekends of dry, bright, cool weather at the back end of September, which I was able to use to the fullest for getting out and reacquainting myself with some of the knacky lines on the Round. I was also acutely aware that my longest run in recent memory was the Old County Tops in 2019, some 16 months previously! The reccies went well enough, complemented by the sage advice from knowledgeable folk like Kim Collison and Neil Talbott. These culminated in one of those purple patches you sometimes get in running where I was able to do a complete round of the BG over two days (Legs 1 and 2 on Friday, and 3, 4 & 5 on Saturday) in a time that was a little under Billy Bland's incredible record from 1982. That changed things a bit in my head. Exciting times.

The confidence gained from those recces, mostly on my own and carrying all my food, was enough to alter the schedule that I'd originally sent to the 'Dream Team' from a sub-15hr possibility to a sub-14hr possibility.

An anxious period of weather-watching followed (I'm pretty much a qualified meteorologist now) and the slim smidgen of a window appeared for the middle weekend of October – Sunday 11th. I made a last minute change to the start time on the (prophetic) advice of Neil Talbott and just before 5am I was stood at Moot Hall fannying about with my headtorch (well, Ben's headtorch) about to do my best to not waste everyone's time and make a complete fool of myself!

LEG 1 – 05:00

PACERS: Jacob Adkin and Billy Cartwright

We almost took the wrong ginnel out of the market square but soon found ourselves basking in the early heat of an October morning on our way up Skiddaw. It was a lot warmer lower down than forecast but the fresh (-6 on the summit, allegedly) wind proved that a hat and gloves were a good call once we'd left the familiar shadow of Skiddaw Little Man. We were up on Skiddaw after 54 minutes or so and heading off towards the peaty trenches and the climb up to Great Calva. The ground here was pretty sapping, and we did well enough to get to the second summit a minute 'up' on my 14hr schedule. The line off Calva was perfect and we hit the crossing

of the Caldew at an ideal spot for a refreshing dip and swig of water before the long drag up to Blencathra. The sunrise to the east was absolutely incredible, a genuinely life-affirming spectacle. We reached the summit as Ben's headtorch (it's my headtorch when it's working, and Ben's when it isn't) failed, just as we were descending the Parachute Drop. No bother, Jacob and I had recced this section enough to know it pretty well. 12mins 30secs later I was at the beck at the bottom and charging onwards to the A66, which I reached three minutes after, sans Jacob (and Lord knows where Billy went).

LEG 2 – 07:20

PACERS: Neil Talbott and Jacob Adkin

No stopping here. We met Ben and Britta on the lane by the cricket club where headtorches and hats were deposited, before carrying on up for a morning brew from Paul and Lou, waiting with their dogs on the fell under Clough Head. That's a hard climb as you'll all know, but it went quickly enough I guess, reaching the summit by 0756. The Dodds passed relatively quickly, though we unfortunately lost Jacob to a slight feeling of illness – he'd been immense on the first Leg – leaving Neil to be the steady head that I needed to help consolidate on this section. It was very tempting in the new dawn light to keep pushing on, but the guidance and experience of Neil paid dividends. Although we were managing to stay ahead of the schedule, the splits felt comfortable. A Brocken spectre on the ascent of Whiteside provided a magical image and good omen for the day. I'm not a fan of Leg 2 usually, and this was no exception as on Seat Sandal heinous calf cramp set in. We arrived at Dunmail in glorious sunshine.



MARTIN STONE'S LONG DISTANCE ROUND UP

Previous page: George on Dollywaggon Pike, Leg 2 ©Samuel Biram; Above: George and Neil Talbott, Dollywaggon ©Samuel Biram

LEG 3 – 09:59

PACERS: Ben Abdelnoor and Tom Simpson

My calves were still giving me a bit of bother and I confess to having a minor (read: major) hissy fit (my wife’s used to it) when trying to change shoes and de-robe the fetching three-quarter length tights in favour of some ‘Colin Valentine specials’ (short shorts). After around five minutes we were a merry band again and on our way up Steel Fell. We crossed the boggy sections between Steel Fell and Rosset. I had no real idea how I was doing in relation to Billy’s times and simply content that I wanted to be at Wasdale no later than 1400. My legs were starting to complain, which put me in a bad mood with Tom and Ben when they lost a soft flask between the Langdale Pikes (I’m really sorry guys!) but this soon passed. Tom’s line up from Rossett to Bowfell was a game-changer for that Leg, gaining us a full five minutes on Billy’s split. A chance encounter with some of the Ambleside AC lads around Ore Gap provided some light entertainment as they didn’t realise what we were up to. The rocks from Bowfell to Scafell were bone dry, which was my biggest source of concern in the lead up to the day, and allowed for some quick progress past Ill Crag and Broad Crag and through the thronging hordes of walkers on England’s highest peak.

Paul Cornforth, resplendent in tighter-than-tight tights, and my good buddy Liam Taylor were there to greet us on Broad Stand. Ben, having pooped his pants at the thought of climbing anything more exposed than his staircase, headed directly down to Wasdale. The long descent off Scafell was a bit slower than I’d hoped as cramp returned once again and my calves seizing up on anything that bordered on steep.

Britta and Lou met us at the NT carpark where I was treated to an ‘out of body’ experience with Ben and Paul emptying my shoes of scree and rubbing my feet whilst I stood wolfing down rice pudding.

LEG 4 – 13:53

PACERS: Calum Tinnion and Kim Collison

Yewbarrow’s a bit of a bugger but I kind of enjoy it. Wasdale is one of the most beautiful places on Earth and the view you get from halfway up the fell at the start of this penultimate leg is hard to beat. But this leg makes me feel like I am stuck in some kind of vortex. It is a rough semi-circle and it’s only after you’ve descended Gable that you stop seeing Wasdale down to your right. I was lucky having Cal and Kim on this Leg as they both have excellent pedigree on the longer stuff. I was now starting to believe that I could do a respectable time. But I was also beginning to feel more fatigued and was in danger of losing focus on the fuelling front, which until now had been going well. It took some urging and prompting (and some Ready Salted crisps) to get me over the slightly thoughtless patch, and we were soon ahead of schedule again, powering up Gable. An incredible sight was waiting for me at Honister. Not Martin Mikkelsen-Barron in luminous, box-fresh, Scott shoes, nor even Dan Haworth with a headtorch on his head in broad daylight. A line of the entire Lucozade original collection in all sizes allowed Kim finally to bin the litre and a half bottle of Coke that he’d been lumping around the western fells for me for the past three hours!

LEG 5 – 16:56

PACERS: Martin Mikkelsen-Barron and Dan Haworth, with best supporting actors Cal Tinnion, Kim Collison and Jacob Adkin

I jogged a bit up Dale Head and if I’m honest the final 2 tops passed by in a bit of a blur. My legs were quite sore and I was getting a bit bored of gels. I was getting some great encouragement from the team, urging me along. But it felt a bit like being a tourist in a foreign land, getting shouted at by friendly people but not really understanding what they’re saying. I was running scared by this point, acutely aware of how close I was to Billy’s time and not knowing if I was ‘comfortable’ or not. We had found a great line off Robinson and were soon on the road passing Newlands church, a beautiful building. I was so lucky to be joined by friends from Keswick and the earlier Legs - Billy Cartwright, Nic Jackson, Neil Talbott and Sam Hill. It was only at Portinscale that I realised that as long as my legs didn’t fail me, I could nudge in front of Billy’s time.

The final run up the streets to Moot Hall was simply amazing and I’m not afraid to admit that I had a good old cry on the steps under the green door.

“ I’m not afraid to admit I had a good old cry on the steps under the green door. ”

I didn’t want this to be a ‘big thing’ and hope no-one feels slighted or disrespected by my not getting in touch beforehand to ‘announce’ it. For a start I wasn’t sure what I should be ‘announcing’, would it be death or glory.

There is NO WAY that this could have been done without the support and friendship of the following people, who helped me more than I can ever hope to repay... Esther, Martin Cox, Jacob Adkin, Billy Cartwright, Neil Talbott, Ben Abdelnoor, Tom Simpson, Paul Cornforth, Liam Taylor, Britta Sendlhofer, Lou Roberts, Calum Tinnion, Kim Collison, Martin Mikkelsen-Barron, Dan Haworth, Sam Hill.

My time was 13hrs 44mins 26secs. There are plenty out there who could do some damage to Kilian’s benchmark and I hope fast BGs will catch on next year.

Kilian’s 2018 Record is 12hrs 52, Billy’s 1982 Record was 13hrs 53mins

MARTIN STONE’S LONG DISTANCE ROUND UP



Below: Running into Keswick, with Martin Mikkelsen-Barron, Goerge Foster, Neil Talbott, Kim Collison, Dan Haworth and Jacob Adkin pictured left to right. ©Tom McNally Photography. Next page: George on the steps of Moot Hall after finishing ©Tom McNally Photography

SETTING THE BOB GRAHAM LADIES' RECORD

WORDS BETH PASCALL

PHOTOS SAM BÉNARD



ON FRIDAY 24TH JULY I RAN THE BOB GRAHAM ROUND IN 14 HOURS 34 MINUTES, SETTING A NEW FEMALE RECORD.

It was back in March that I decided I'd do a Bob Graham Round. As soon as it became apparent that there'd be no racing for the foreseeable future, it was the obvious thing to do. It was meaningful and prestigious enough to motivate me to train whilst the rest of the world turned upside down. I admit that during the lockdown months when I was chasing vert through doing 1km loops of my local woods, my enthusiasm for the challenge did dwindle slightly. But as soon as the fells were open again I put in a lot of hard work. My running-work-life balance tipped further in favour of running than perhaps it ever has before. I was working longer hours in the hospital (I'm a paediatrician) but training even harder. It was a 3-month period that seemed a little risky, and perhaps unsustainable, but I knew that to get fitter than I ever have before I had to take some risks. In terms of volume and consistency, it was probably the best training block of my life.

My pacers and a few other friends were aware of my ambitions to have a crack at Jasmin's record. I didn't make it public as I thought I'd get laughed at. I had run all the legs at (or faster) than record pace in training, with tired legs, a pack and in bad conditions. This was a maximum of two legs consecutively though. It did give me some confidence, but I still would have bet against myself breaking the record.

LEG 1

PACERS: Rhys Findlay-Robinson, Josh Bakker-Dyos

We topped out on Skiddaw after 58 minutes. The climb had been relaxed, chatting all the way up, so I was genuinely surprised. Ricky Lightfoot was out for his pre-work run and met us at the summit – 'Beth, are you trying to break Jasmin's record or Kilian's?'. Although meant as a joke I was mildly concerned about the pace.

MARTIN STONE'S LONG DISTANCE ROUND UP

Above: Chasing Neil Talbott down the Parachute route on the descent off Blencathra, Leg 1, with Rhys Findlay-Robinson behind. Next page: Running past Grisedale

Tarn on Leg 2, with supporters Chris Richards (left) and Jacob Adkin; Climbing Seat Sandal.

“I think a faster round is to be had, but I certainly won’t be repeating it any time soon.”



I did take note and did my best to temper my effort up Great Calva and Blencathra. Neil Talbott met us on Blencathra and led us down Parachute drop, as he had done for Jasmin 4 years previously. I was fairly confident with the line, but it is always faster to follow. I had debated whether to take the Parachute or Hall’s Fell Ridge, but in the end was happy with my decision and chasing Neil down to Threlkeld was exhilarating. We crossed the A66 17 minutes later.

LEG 2

PACERS: Jacob Adkin, Chris Richards

Setting off up Clough Head I was amused that Jacob asked if I normally ran all of the climb. I would certainly be hiking; I didn’t imagine that anyone ran up Clough Head, but clearly he normally does! We chipped away at the splits on every summit although the pace still felt comfortable. We were 22 minutes up on record pace at Dunmail. I had no idea whether this was stupidity or whether I should trust my body; after 6 years of running ultras I ought to know what a sustainable pace felt like. Had this been a race, or had I not been wearing a watch, this was the speed I’d be running at. But still I felt doubt.

LEG 3

PACERS: Shane Ohly, Gary House

Broad Stand: Matt Bennett, Joe Farnell

Up until now we’d been chipping away minutes on every summit. Then I was down by 2 minutes on Sergeant Man. I had been quite meticulous with writing my schedule; I used the data from my record pace training runs to tweak Jasmin’s schedule. The result I thought would be quite accurate. Although I had told myself it was just a guide, there is actually very little else to think or get worried about during the round. So when, for the first time, I was struggling to hit the splits I did get worried, although in hindsight it was more a blip in my schedule. Thereafter we kept moving up again.

Matt and I had climbed Broad Stand for the first time a couple of weeks previously and I admit that I found it surprisingly tricky. I can climb, but I wouldn’t describe myself as a climber, and I was a little nervous about it. I was roped into a harness plus had a fixed rope to pull up, but it was still hard work with 40 miles of running in my legs. After the climb Shane and I both developed copycat cramps in our quads which I’m certain was due to the strain of the climb. I’ve not had cramp before (in the context of running a long way) but the occasional crunched up electrolyte tablet kept it at bay. The descent to Wasdale was probably the most joyful section of the round. I love the scree on this downhill and I had started to relax a bit more by this point.

LEG 4

PACERS: Neil Talbott, Rich McGrath

With three legs done, if I was running too fast it was too late to do anything about it. The climb up Yewbarrow isn’t something anyone relishes, even with fresh legs. In a way it was the defining point of the round. I didn’t know all my splits off by heart but there were around 20 numbers my brain had labelled as ‘important’ and had stuck in my mind. If I could get up Yewbarrow in 37 minutes or less the record (barring disasters) was mine. I was still a little anxious about the cramp in my quads and kept the effort measured, but despite this we were at the summit in 35 minutes. I was moving well and it was another really enjoyable leg. Neil and Rich showed me a couple of great lines that I hadn’t taken in training, something I was very grateful for. I’d only stopped very briefly at the road crossings thus far; but arriving at Honister I seemed to have lost my sense of urgency and had to be prompted to leave again.

LEG 5

PACERS: Kim Collison, George Foster

I’ve done plenty of races where the final stages are plain miserable and I’m counting down the miles until I can stop. This wasn’t like that. I’m not saying I was fresh and would have run further, but I wasn’t in pain or feeling so exhausted I couldn’t hold a conversation. Climbing Dale Head, Kim & George updated me with Damian Hall’s progress on the Pennine Way. I was delighted to hear that Damian was on track to break the record and this fired me up even more. Even the road section at the end was enjoyable. Running towards Moot Hall was surprisingly emotional. Despite my attempts to keep it under the radar, a fair few people must have got wind of my round and came out to cheer me in. It was a truly heart-warming moment. I had to fight back the tears standing on top of the steps.

It had been a good day. The weather had been kind and I couldn’t have asked for better support. I doubt anyone finishes a BGR and doesn’t think they could have shaved a minute off here and there, but I’m perfectly content with what I did. I certainly didn’t have the dry underfoot conditions that Kilian did in 2018, but in terms of the physical shape I was in I couldn’t have asked for much more. I do think a faster round is to be had, but I certainly won’t be repeating it any time soon.

Jasmin Paris’s 2016 record was 15hrs 24mins.

MARTIN STONE’S LONG DISTANCE ROUND UP

SETTING THE RECORD FOR THE PADDY BUCKLEY ROUND 'HANES Y DDAU PADDY'

WORDS MATH ROBERTS

The Paddy Buckley – an ultra-distance round along Snowdonia's wildest peaks, with a record held by a trail running ultra-runner, who says he isn't a fell runner, from the Cotswolds. Also, correct me if I'm wrong, but also a round that has never been completed by an indigenous local. Therefore, for the scenario to change, the global consequences of a pandemic had to kick in.

Following a dreadful run at the first, and last, championship race at yr Aran and then the inevitable lockdown and end of racing for 2020 I naturally began to appreciate where I lived to a far, far deeper extent. Living at the foot of the Carneddau meant I could run on the mountains through the whole lockdown. The odd glamorous challenge came and went, the infamous Rachub 6 and the legendary Carneddau 7, with all 8 of its completions. As the lockdown eased a few pivotal factors fell into place. Fortuitously bumping into my future girlfriend on a mountain, Emma Smyth, as well as big club mate Karl Gray arranging to visit to reccie bits of the Paddy – Karl having infamously

bailed on Hebog the previous year was keen on another attempt. We decided on doing the iconic, though in my view exaggeratedly so, boggy Capel to Nantmor leg, followed by the Hebog and Nantlle Ridge with an added bonus of Mynydd Mawr and finishing with dinner at my parents in Rhosgadfan. 9 hours later – my longest ever run by 3hrs - at Rhyd Ddu and all going surprisingly well, Karl decided to call it a day and walk the last 6 miles on the ROAD... I opted for the added bonus of Mynydd Mawr and dinner. It was such an enjoyable day and it all went weirdly well that 9 days later I opted for Paddy attempt #1.

It was all a little last minute but I spotted a weather window between the 6 weeks of rain that followed the easing of the lockdown. A group of loyal close friends came together to help whilst also the kindness of my girlfriend and Field Marshall Emma Smyth joining as the pivotal road, and all else support. A solo leg 1 start from Llanberis at 4am – mainly as I preferred not to put anyone else through the dread of running at that time over the Glyderau. Leg 2 witnessed big friend John Rowley join - despite months of heavy training, John was dropped on the climb of Pen Llithrig y Wrach, I then bashed my shin on that descent. On the so-called horror leg 3 from Capel, I was joined by Rich Roberts. All was going well until Rich started cramping ascending Cnicht, Rich was dropped! On arrival to Nantmor it all felt too good, at some 20mins up on the record. Next though came the horror of Hebog – and Bryn Banog of course – with the able support of Johnny Moore. The head dropped and I realised the splits I quoted were race pace splits. Johnny dragged me along though and wheeled me into Pont Cae Gors. A big crowd awaited, followed by a 15-minute stop to dither and dally before finally departing with Rhosgad legend

Darren Roberts and a brave Johnny Moore. At this stage we were some 20mins down on the record, so hope was gone but we continued. Some dreadful lines along Craig Wen and off Yr Aran meant it was now more of a social night out on Yr Wyddfa. But then at the foot of the Wyddfa climb, the body seemed to miraculously jettison into gear. From then we motored on, Johnny left us before the summit of Yr Wyddfa. Callum O'Donnell joined us on the Snowdon Ranger and to top it all off, Noel Craine, Ed Harmer and a returning John Rowley met us at Bwlch Maesgwm. As we hit the slopes of Eilio, all hell broke loose, the clag was down, and pacers were being dropped left, right and centre. Ed Harmer finally led us through the maze of gardens in Llanberis – thank god avoiding the washing line and finishing with a 5-minute mile into Llanberis. 17:37mins, so 6 mins slower than the record. We were only 30mins up on the schedule for the final leg.

Following a few hours of pain and contemplation, we decided on another attempt, of course no competitive element here whatsoever. There followed a few weeks of drinking far too much home brew, eating homemade peanut butter brownies and plotting with Emma on how we annihilate the record. A few more key reccies and pacing Karl Gray to finally set a half decent time for the Josh Naylor Lakeland Challenge meant a weather window was the only issue in the rematch. The JNLC had led to Scoffer volunteering to help, and therefore the stage was set to prove to him that tough fell running does exist outside of a 30-mile radius of Braithwaite.

Roll on to Sunday August 30th and the best weather forecast since the easing of lockdown. A troop stronger than the Russians sent to



Above: Approaching Tryfan summit with Matt Forbes ©Gareth Wyn Hughes

MARTIN STONE'S LONG DISTANCE
ROUND UP



Above: Approaching Copa Wyddfa ©Emma Wood; Bottom right: Math with his support team at the finish ©Emma Wood

the Donbas was assembled, all planned and managed with a similar level of military efficiency by Emma, despite Scoffer's grumblings! Llanberis strongman Gareth Wyn Hughes and Matt Fortes led brilliantly over the Glyderau, the steep gully of Tryfan being the only tricky section though a cracking sunset made up for this. Gwyn Owen and Mark Davies paved the way with some excellent lines over the Carneddau. The foreign legion of Karl Gray, Gav Roberts – last minute call up – and of course Scoffer were assembled for leg 3. I felt leg 3 was apt for Scoffer, just to have the best chance of tiring him out. The Siabod climb felt too easy – with the impromptu addition of Dylan Webber for the next 10 miles - and the 6-minute gap on that split worried Scoff. The infamous bog nearly witnessed the disappearance of Scoff but thankfully his big beard held him afloat. Come Nantmor and pacers holding on and it all felt too good, with us some 20 mins ahead of schedule. The bogey leg was up next. The first 100 metres saw Welsh legend James McQueen pick up on the fact it was going to be a tough day. Johnny Moore and Emlyn Owen worked excellently throughout, with Trefor Jones joining for sections and leading us over

the round highlights of Y Gyrn and Mynydd-y-ddwy-elor. The final fire road run-in saw Felinheli star Dils Rowlands, as well as Tom Wood, who completed possibly the youngest ever Paddy a week previous, and Ifan and Ioan Oldfield join in. A 3-minute stop at Pont Cae Gors meant we were now some 40 minutes up on the schedule and it was time for the dream team of lifelong friends John Rowley and Darren Roberts to join for the last leg. A sore belly and the incessant minute by minute encouragement from John were the only negatives as the day came to an end. The weather was incredible. The Snowdon welcome party led to us taking a direct line off Crib y Ddysgl with Noel Craine and the posse scurrying us along the Eilio ridge. With a group now seemingly bigger than the Covid guidelines allowed I decided we had to start dropping people on the final descent. A 4minute 40secs / mile pace last half a mile sorted that whilst again, avoiding that washing line. An enormous entourage gathered at the finish – even Scoffer – all socially distanced and a half decent new record of 16 hours, 38 minutes and 30 seconds, 59 minutes quicker than a month ago and around 53 minutes off the record.

To summarise, it's a special feeling to hold this local and iconic record - though I doubt I'll hold it for long, perhaps a few weeks – over a round that I'm hesitant to call an 'ultra', more so a good, long fell run. To have two opportunities within a month and to complete it with the essential help of my girlfriend Emma, some really close friends and family is even more special. And to top it all off, no poles were used! Take heed.

Damian Hall's 2019 record was 17hrs 31mins



MARTIN STONE'S LONG DISTANCE ROUND UP

FINLAY WILD

MY RAMSAY ROUND

WORDS FINLAY WILD

For a runner living in Fort William, Ramsay's Round presents one of the most obvious long-distance challenges. I took a long time to feel ready to go the distance, but in doing so had the pleasure of many fine days out exploring progressively longer days in the wonderful hills of Lochaber. I first ran the 60km Tranter's Round in 2016, after my first forays into longer distance races in the shape of the Tromso and Glencoe Skyline races earlier that summer. On that 2016 Tranter's I remember briefly looking east to the greater Ramsay's route beyond and not really being able to visualise running that far.

Finlay at the Glen Nevis Youth Hostel after completing the Ramsay Round ©Roger Wild

In 2020, as COVID restrictions eased, I was able to build on my distance base training by spending a lot of time in my local hills. I then ran record times on some great routes, like the Ring of Steall, the Mamores Round and the Lochaber Traverse. Something had clicked for me through a combination of increasing experience, confidence in my endurance and pacing, as well as more solid racing nutrition and hydration. I redid the Tranter's Round, taking 75 minutes off my own 2016 record. This time, at Sgurr Eilde Mor looking east, I could imagine continuing out along the Abhainn Rath river section to Beinn na Lap and beyond.

Add in a few more reccies and another long race-pace run in the form of a record for the Mullardoch Round, and I felt ready. I could visualise the whole round, what it would feel like and how I would pace myself.

I don't have much experience of running with support runners: I like the simplicity of just heading out into the hills on my own. The Tranter's Round felt fine as a self-supported effort and by now I felt confident that adding another 30km and 6hrs wouldn't need a significantly different approach. It was great not to have to worry about the logistics and dates involved in arranging support. I decided to set off boldly, on a 15-hr schedule; this was slightly faster than my 2016 Tranter's split times but slower than my 2020 repeat. I had a good handle on how much I would need to eat and drink, and thankfully it all fitted in my race vest. I took a dozen raw bars, about a dozen gels in soft flasks, fruit and nut mix, some energy chews and Tailwind energy drink powder. Knowing the route well I was confident in finding plenty of water on the way, so I took 1L water capacity. Running in good weather at the end of August I was able to take the bare minimum of extra kit - a headtorch, spare layer,



emergency blanket, map, compass, phone, jacket and gloves. Before I started scoffing food my race vest weighed about 3.6kg with full water bottles.

A weather window arrived and I knew it was time to go. I didn’t sleep much the night before, due to a mixture of nerves and anticipatory excitement which I haven’t felt so strongly for a long while. Leaving the Youth Hostel at 4am exactly it just felt great to have started - I’d spent a lot of time thinking about this route over the past four years, now all I had to do was run. In the dark going up Mullach nan Coirean I felt I was working quite hard, and my pack felt heavy. I felt a bit apprehensive but tried not to worry about it. As daylight arrived I felt better and my confidence grew as I got slightly ahead of schedule on the technical familiar ground. By the end of the Mamores I had found my pace, felt good, and was looking ahead with focus. I had imagined still feeling relatively fresh for the Abhainn Rath section and this is how it was. I smiled to remember jogging this part in the opposite direction last winter with Es Tresidder on a Skimo Ramsay’s Round attempt - the 10km low level run had felt much harder then, laden with skis, boots and heavier bags.

Up Beinn na Lap I remembered a comment that “Jasmin had been running this bit” so I tried to keep the pace solid. There was a strong southwesterly wind so my jacket, buff and gloves came on and off frequently depending on my exposure to it. I’d only seen two people thus far, but from Stob Coire Sgriodain there were more walkers out enjoying the perfect visibility of this last day of summer. The descent to Fersit dam is quite awkward and tussocky but I actually didn’t find it as bad as expected. The long climb up onto Stob a’ Choire Mheadhoin was my low point however: I felt some nausea and had to ease off on fuelling and drinking for a while. This was a concern as I knew from experience that I needed to consume lots to keep this effort up. The bad patch passed though and I was eventually up onto Stob Ban, still on schedule.

A quick selfie going up Sgurr Eilde Mor in the Mamores (Leg 1) ©Finlay Wild

Getting to Stob Choire Claurigh is a favourite section as you suddenly see the stretch of the Grey Corries merging into the Aonachs and Ben beyond. It was still windy but the sun came out intermittently from here on. I was on the final stretch and I felt confident that - barring any major catastrophe like a fall or injury - I was on for the record by a fair margin. I wondered if sub-15 hrs would happen, and dug in to try and make this a reality. Particularly going up Carn Mor Dearg I pushed to stick to the split time (and actually ran faster than my Tranter’s record split here).

Descending Ben Nevis was a great way to finish: the sun came out and I took the paths I know so well from years of training and racing on this hill. I felt quite emotional as the Youth Hostel came into sight: one of my most memorable long mountain days was coming to an end. It had basically gone exactly to plan; I lay down in the grass at the hostel feeling deeply satisfied. My new record was 14h42m40s.

FINLAY’S RAMSAY
ROUND SPLITS

31 AUG 2020	SPLIT	CUMULATIVE
Glen Nevis Hostel	00:00:00	00:00:00
Mullach nan Coirean	01:01:12	01:01:12
Stob Ban	00:28:10	01:29:22
Sgurr a’ Mhaim	00:33:49	02:03:11
Sgor an Lubhair	00:14:44	02:17:55
Am Bodach	00:13:01	02:30:56
Stob Coire a’ Chairn	00:16:30	02:47:26
An Gearanach	00:13:27	03:00:53
Na Gruagaichean	00:34:50	03:35:43
Binnein Mor	00:15:40	03:51:23
Binnein Beag	00:22:33	04:13:56
Sgurr Eilde Mor	00:35:58	04:49:54
Abhainn Rath	00:31:20	05:21:14
Loch Treig	00:30:22	05:51:36
Railway	00:17:49	06:09:25
Beinn na Lap	00:39:48	06:49:13
Chno Dearg	00:54:01	07:43:14
Stob Coire Sgriodain	00:21:59	08:05:13
Fersit	00:27:21	08:32:34
Stob a' Choire	01:04:20	09:36:54
Mheadhoin		
Stob Coire Easain	00:14:03	09:50:57
Lairig Leacach	00:17:20	10:08:17
Stob Ban	00:37:28	10:45:45
Stob Choire Claurigh	00:28:13	11:13:58
Stob Coire an Laoigh	00:25:13	11:39:11
Sgurr Choinnich Mor	00:22:16	12:01:27
Aonach Beag	00:49:29	12:50:56
Aonach Mor	00:14:47	13:05:43
Carn Mor Dearg	00:32:17	13:38:00
Ben Nevis	00:29:16	14:07:16
Glen Nevis Hostel	00:35:24	14:42:40

COMPLETING
THE GRAND
ROUND

WORDS JOHN KELLY

When my wife and I decided to move to the UK I immediately started researching what adventures I could have. I became fascinated with the rich history of fell running and the creative license it provides in imagining entirely new challenges. The Big 3 Classic Rounds stood out to me in particular.

I saw the opportunity for an incredible adventure, combining my passions into a grand challenge while exploring my new island home. I would do all 3 rounds and ride my bike between them. I started referring to the project as the Grand Round, and set about planning how I would complete 190 miles of running with 84K feet of ascent plus 400 miles of cycling in a continuous effort within 5 days.

THE “FUN RUN”

I first attempted the Grand Round in 2019, not long after my arrival in the UK. I had done what recces I could, poured over

maps and reports, and formulated what I believed to be a solid plan. The weather made quick work of that plan as I got a rather rude introduction to British mountain conditions. After sub 24-hour Paddy Buckley and Bob Graham rounds in torrential rain and gale force winds, I was too exhausted to safely make the 230-mile bike ride to Fort William.

In a nod to my Barkley Marathons roots, I called the completion of 3 out of 5 sections a fun run. Immediately I began reformulating my plan and incorporating lessons learned. I learned more in that failure than I could have in years of recces or successes on the rounds individually. Above all, my failure showed me that success was possible.

In a way, the very fact that I failed showed it was a good challenge – one that forced me to learn, grow, and develop a better plan. If a grand challenge doesn’t teach us anything, doesn’t force us to improve ourselves or develop a better strategy, then is it really all that grand?

Photo above: John Kelly on the Ramsay Round ©La Sportiva



THE GRAND ROUND 2.0

I created a much better schedule based on a completion goal of 120 hours (24 hours for each round and each bike section). I aimed for more sleep, and planned on having support riders on the bike (begrudgingly allowing myself to draft). I also learned to better interpret British mountain forecasts, became comfortable on the left side of the road, and learned all the UK's best snack foods! While my plan was better, the circumstances were more challenging. Due to Covid19 restrictions and an upcoming addition to our family, there was a very short time window available. The Grand Round would start exactly one month after my run on the Pennine Way to set a new but short-lived record. I combined the two efforts into one larger challenge I called the Hartley Slam in honour of Mike Hartley, who held the Pennine Way record for 31 years and was the only person to have completed the 3 rounds consecutively (driving between them).

PADDY BUCKLEY ROUND

COMPLETION TIME: 22h 7m

SUPPORT: Tom Hayward, Jen Scotney, Jack Scott, Mark Davies, Damian Hall, Andy Ford, Paul Swindles, Michael Corrales Mills, James Ritchie, Suzy Whatmough.

At the start the forecast didn't instil confidence, but relatively speaking it wasn't too horrible. After an actual halfway decent night's sleep, I got to Capel Curig for an 11 am start. It was wet underfoot and periodic rain made the rocky sections over the Glyders and Tryfan as precarious as ever, but the temperatures were

good and I enjoyed a few incredible views. The sunset as we climbed Craig Wen was amazing.

We made it around in good time, at an effort level that felt reasonable and without any worrisome niggles. Just as importantly, I was eating! The severe stomach troubles that had plagued me during the Pennine Way had not appeared. After finishing I had a full pizza and then a cheeseburger and fries post-nap. The goal of ticking off Paddy Buckley with minimal damage was complete.

CAPEL CURIG TO KESWICK – 167 MILES

COMPLETION TIME: 9h 59m (16.7 mph), 12h 45m incl. stops

CUMULATIVE TIME AT FINISH: 39h 36m

SUPPORT: Gav Roberts, CJ Johnson, Bruce Gray, Jen Scotney, Martin Stone, Dave Boothroyd

Finishing Paddy Buckley early gave me more time for sleep. Unfortunately, I wasn't sleepy and it was noisy outside the van. I don't think I slept more than 30 minutes. It didn't make sense to leave early because I would have to wait in Birkenhead for the Queensway Tunnel to open to cyclists at 8 pm. I hopped on my bike just before 2 pm and headed off into the rainy Welsh afternoon.

I stuck to my plan of creeping up the climbs with minimal effort. We made good time to Birkenhead, where I got a full meal from McDonald's, for probably the first time since high school, and then an hour of sleep. We arrived at the tunnel right at 8 to find it was closing for maintenance, right at 8. I chose this route because last year the bridge in Runcorn had been closed. After a brief interminable moment the supervisor let us through. Crisis averted. Once out of Liverpool it was pretty smooth sailing. The rain picked up, I had a minor spill when I hit a curb, and the final climb up Dunmail Raise was as pleasant as ever, but we were relatively unimpeded by traffic and navigation. Even with the Birkenhead stop I arrived 1h 45m quicker than last year, giving time for nearly 3 hours of sleep.

BOB GRAHAM

COMPLETION TIME: 23h 40m

CUMULATIVE TIME AT FINISH: 67h 55m

SUPPORT: Martin and Lisa Bergerud, Martin Stone, Paul Wilson, Matt Neale, Zepp the Collie, Darren Moore, Matthew Beresford, Richard White, William Laye, Marcus Scotney, Sally Fawcett, Elaine Bisson, Brian Melia.

For as much as Paddy had better than expected weather, Bob paid us back with worse. I got 20 minutes ahead of schedule on leg 1,

but on leg 2 the conditions deteriorated rapidly. Despite feeling like we were moving well on leg 3 I was frustratingly losing ground. Still, I felt relaxed and in control. Until leg 4. We had a great climb up Yewbarrow before visibility dropped to zero. I got separated from my pacers and had no food, water, extra kit, or communication device. I avoided panic, but for the first time urgency set in. I pushed over the remaining 5 summits, taking care to ensure I hit each top. I was relying on just my watch and my own memory of the maps and terrain. Then on the final descent I was treated to a true bog swim, having to slowly lay backwards until I could float enough to reach back to firm ground.

I finished the leg having not eaten in 3+ hours and with my only water having come straight from a puddle on Great Gable. But I still had time. We pushed over the last 3 summits and I just had to make the final easy stretch before I could rest. I was feeling fatigue for the first time and also some tightness in the tendon above my ankle, a feeling familiar from last year. I wasn't sure how much was related to the extra push and calorie depletion. When we arrived at Moot Hall I was in a rough spot, but there was no doubt this time that I would be continuing to Scotland.

KESWICK TO FORT WILLIAM – 231 MILES

COMPLETION TIME: 13h 6m (17.6 mph), 19h 2m elapsed

CUMULATIVE TIME AT FINISH: 92h 29m

SUPPORT: Martin and Lisa Bergerud, Martin Stone, Sam Booth, Lee Wright, Jack Peasgood.

After 3 hours of patchwork sleep, I was up and on my way to Scotland. The weather was kind initially but it was a struggle to get going. I got a 30-minute nap at the Haggis Playpark in Ecclefechan and felt much better. We continued on and through Glasgow. It was odd seeing everyone go about their daily lives. At Inverbeg, on the bonnie, bonnie banks of Loch Lomond (stuck in my head for the remainder of the Grand Round), we got news of a road closure before Glencoe. I decided to sleep there to delay our arrival past the reopening time.

We set off back into the night. Fortunately, there was little traffic and we made good time despite horrid crosswinds and driving rain as we crossed Rannoch Moor in the dark. The sun came up on the final climb and on the descent to Glencoe I let my bike run free - hitting 50 mph and fighting to keep it stable in the crosswinds.

MARTIN STONE'S LONG DISTANCE ROUND UP



We arrived in Fort William in good shape, but the ride had definitely fatigued me - the conditions requiring focus and effort beyond what I had hoped. Those 231 miles on the bike were 70 miles more than I had ever cycled in my life before in one outing!

CHARLIE RAMSAY ROUND

COMPLETION TIME: 34h 43m

CUMULATIVE TIME AT FINISH: 130h 43m

SUPPORT: Spook Munro, Martin Stone, Bill Johnson, Paul Wilson, Jayson Cavill, Brian Melia, Ally Beaven, Martin Wilson, Finlay Wild, Graham Briffett, Alex McVey, Luke Arnott, Stacey and Max Holloway

The schedule shift due to the road closure left me only 1.5 hours to nap. I set off at 11 am, right on schedule for my 120-hour goal. For a few hours, the weather was wonderful and I felt strong - moving ahead of my 23-hr schedule.

Then Storm Ellen arrived. My temperature plummeted; my depleted body unable to regulate its own temperature. I was broken. Mentally and physically, completely shattered beyond anything I had experienced before. As everyone threw layers on me, I was forced to accept that I could not continue on sub 24-hour pace. The goal became to finish - moving fast enough to stay warm but slow enough to avoid complete exhaustion. Martin Stone assembled an all-star cast of Scottish hill runners and there is zero chance I could have made it or remained safe without them. I was wearing 10 layers, with my 7 zippers providing manual temperature regulation. To add injury to insult, the tendonitis became absolutely debilitating over the final stretch. I was strong on the climbs right till the end, but on descents all I could manage was a one-legged hobble.

The summit of Ben Nevis brought with it every emotion I had felt over the past 5 days. Happiness. Anguish. Determination. Despair. Triumph. Disappointment. Gratitude. Then the long, incredibly

painful descent took me 3 times what was scheduled. But I made it, and sub 24 or not, I could not have been more elated and grateful for the grand adventure and achievement the week had been.

BACK TO SOMERSET

The literal trip home took a day, but it was longer before I was “all there.” The mental recovery, sleep deprivation, and overwhelming feelings of exhaustion were the biggest hurdles, but I also had a lot to process. The journey took me to incredible places with wonderful people and to some of the highest points in the UK, but also to some of the deepest places within myself.

Massive challenges like this are where I truly discover how I can improve - how can I best use my strengths or mitigate my weaknesses, what do I truly value, how can I respond to the real problems that life brings, where do I seek refuge, what is my source of courage? When all of the noise, pretence and luxurious comforts are stripped away, and I am left to my bare essentials and unavoidable truths, that is when I can best answer.

I fell short of my 120-hour goal, but I achieved everything I truly sought. The goal was perfect: hard enough to force me to reach as far as possible, but reasonable enough to stay within sight and keep me motivated. In the right conditions, I believe it is still achievable. But even if no one else ever attempts it, I hope this challenge does encourage people to get out and pursue their own adventures, with goals that align their passions and motivate them to reach toward their limits.

As much as this was a personal journey, I could not have come close to completing it without those who joined me (for both years, as well as Ry Webb, Phil Hill, and Jon Fairey who were documenting and supporting throughout). They all very much own a part of the success. I can never sufficiently thank them, but I hope that my own efforts helped make theirs worthwhile.

MARTIN STONE'S LONG DISTANCE
ROUND UP

John Kelly on the Ramsay Round with support runner Paul Wilson ©La Sportiva

Setting the record for the 282 MUNROS SELF-PROPELLED

WORDS DONNIE CAMPBELL

So, June 2019, I was sitting at the breakfast bar waiting for my wife Rachael to come home from work to tell her about what I had decided during my training run that day. I always do my best thinking when I am running up and down hills. As she walked through the door, I was excited to tell her my plan for next summer! I was finally committing to taking a year off racing to do a self-propelled round of all the Scottish Munro's (282 hills over 3000 feet in Scotland). I have always wanted to climb all the Munro's in Scotland and for the last few years I have thought about the idea of doing them all in one go in a self-propelled style of kayaking, cycling, running, walking, scrambling or crawling!! So, May 2020 was going to be it!

Fast-forward to 6th March 2020. Covid-19 is starting to take hold

all around the world and I am on my way to Edinburgh for an MRI on my lower back as I have not been able to run since Christmas day. Every time I try to run I get pain in my right groin which feels like a muscle strain but after numerous trips to the physio I have been referred for an MRI as the pain is neural which has not been getting better with all the rehab work (stretching and strengthening) I had been doing since the start of January. The strange thing was, I could go ski-touring, cycling or use the stair master machine in the gym, and it would be fine. But soon as I tried to run it would flare up instantly. The MRI showed some disk degeneration, but the main problem was L4/L5 bilateral foraminal stenosis which was causing the neural pain in right leg and numbness in left quad. As I was about to be referred for a lumbar epidural to try and calm the inflammation down in the L4/L5 region, Scotland went into

lockdown which meant I was unable to get the injection and also made the Munro Round very unlikely to happen at the end of May.

Luckily as the lockdown restrictions came in, the neural pain started to ease and I was slowly able to build up the running. By the beginning of June I was able to get a good block of training in on my local hill Dunain Hill (281m) and was confident if the Covid restrictions were lifted in time I could potentially have a crack at a self-propelled Munro Round in August.

August 1st 0600. I am off! Running up the landrover track that leads to the path up Ben More on the Isle of Mull. It has finally stopped raining and the clouds are starting to break up, but that is the least of my worries. Full of nervous energy and worried about my support crew, my wife Rachael, missing the ferry to

the mainland as there are only two sailings this morning due to Covid-19, I work harder than I would like for the first Munro of 282. But it felt good to have finally started the Munro Round after over 12 months of planning and all the uncertainties of the injury and Covid restrictions. On paper I did not look at this day as a big day, but it took me fourteen and half hours to climb Ben More, Sgurr Thuilm, Sgurr nan Coireachan and Gulvain and get to Glen Nevis. This definitely confirmed my 33 day schedule was very ambitious and to be able to stick to it I was going to need to be on top of my game and require a fair bit of luck with the Scottish weather.

Week 1 was fairly straightforward with big mountain days, bashing through bogs, peat hags and slogging up steep heather slopes. The



Devils Ridge ©Steve Ashworth

weather was a usual Scottish summer with some okay days, some gale force winds, and horizontal rain. Day 7 is when the suffering really began! My right tibial tendon was grumbling big time and not happy with all the bogs and rough terrain. Day 6 saw me traverse the Cairngorms from Glen Feshie to the Cairngorm Ski Resort car park with Ally Beaven and Holly Page; so Day 7 all I had left was Bynack More, Beinn a’Chaorainn, Beinn Bhreac, Beinn a’Bhuird and Ben Avon before finishing the day in Ballatar. This however turned out be one of the worst days of the round. Every time I had to descend I was in severe pain as when I put my right foot down I got a shooting pain through my ankle that would bring a tear to my eye.

The eastern Munros turned out to be a very painful experience, but by the start of day 10 - which I thought at the time was going to be longest day of the round 80km with over 5k of ascent from Glen Shee to Bear Atholl - the right ankle was getting more manageable. I had been doing intensive rehab on it when not running with ice, elevation and compression, along with some anti-inflammatories. I tried to protect it as much as possible when running by favouring my left side and using poles, which brought the pain down to a more tolerable level.

Scotland was starting to bask in a mini heat wave. When I say heat wave, as soon as the thermometer hits double figures it is taps aff weather for the locals!!! Day 12 saw me take an afternoon bath in the River Lyon to try and cool down after climbing Meall Ghaordaidh. For about 2 days bagging the most southerly Munro’s (Day 14 & 15), I was greeted with almost constant cloud inversion which was spectacular and one of the highlights of the round.

Shortly after that I hit the lowest point of the round, day 17. I had hit Groundhog Day so far from the start yet so far from the finish. I felt like I was getting nowhere after putting in some massive days

and I still felt no closer to Ben Hope, the finish. I had lost focus on just taking one day at a time, one munro at a time and was looking at the big picture. As they say, the straw that broke the camel’s back was my left tibia tendon starting to grumble very loudly that it was not happy that day. All I could see ahead of me was daily 12-14 hour days of pain with no real reward.

With a bit of schedule shuffling, I managed to clear the Glencoe and Lochaber area still on my schedule, but it had taken its toll on me by day 21. I was feeling pretty fatigued after putting in some big days and there was no let up as day 21 was the Knoydart Munros, 64km with 6,000m of ascent. It is safe to say Knoydart delivered, the Munro’s were spectacular; the views were amazing (until the weather crapped out about midday) but the terrain was brutal. By the time I got back to my support van after 14 hours I was completely broken physically after battling the weather and relentless steep rough terrain.

Day 22 was Sgurr a’Mhaoraich, Gleouraich, Spidean Mialach and South Shiel ridge, but with the weather being very dreich and windy and being very fatigued I was struggling to stay warm. With big days coming up, the realisation was starting to hit me I was going to have to drop a day and at the time Day 22 seemed the right time to drop a day rather than trying to battle through weather and end up even more fatigued. So, I finished that day in Cluanie at lunchtime after bagging Sgurr a’Mhaoraich, Gleouraich, and Spidean Mialach which gave me the opportunity to catch up on sleep and food.

With over 12 hours of sleep and a belly full of food I was off again at 4am on day 23 as I had another timing I could not afford to miss - the 16:00 high tide at Glenelg. Miss this and I would have a very long cycle to get to Glen Brittle on Skye. I had 12 hours to bag South Shiel Ridge, the Saddle and Beinn Sgritheall. With the extra rest and sleep I felt recharged and banged out the Munros in



Cycling from Glencoe to Kinlochleven, Day 19 ©Rachel Campbell



Kayaking over to Skye, Day 24 ©Rachel Campbell

plenty of time, confirming that I had made the right decision to cut the previous day short. The next day was the highlight of the round. Back home in Skye and it did not disappoint with perfect weather conditions. Blue skies, sunshine and a cool breeze to keep the notorious Skye midges at bay. The Cuillin Ridge was spectacular, and I was able to share it with John Smith and Jordon Young.

In the planning I had convinced myself if I made it to Skye I knew I would make it to Ben Hope, in reality even after Skye there were still some big days left but I was starting to see a glimmer of light at the end of a very long munro tunnel. Day 29 I finally got to meet Spyke (Steve Pyke), the previous Munro Round record holder. He had travelled all the way up to Scotland from the Peak District to run with me.

“I was enjoying his company so much going up Moruisg, we missed the summit in the clag and only realised my mistake when we got to the bottom, so we had to do it again!!”

After a fairly easy day bagging the Torridon Skyline 28km with 3000m ascent on day 30, I was scheming on how I could make up a day and get back on my 33-day schedule. I decided I would stick with the schedule for Monday (day 31), then go big on Tuesday with an early start doing the Fannichs, Wyvis and Ben Dearg 6 Munros leaving the last 4 Munro’s up in Sutherland for the Wednesday.

As I was climbing A’ Mhaighdean the weather was turning into a stunning afternoon and I started thinking. I am feeling good, I have just had a solid 12 hours in bed, the weather is good, the weather is going to crap out on Wednesday, should I keep going and do a night raid on the Fannichs... Then the call was made as I summited An Teallach, I called Rachael asked her to get my dinner ready for when I came off An Teallach as I was going to carry on and do the Fannichs. The new plan was to try and get as much done before the weather broke on Wednesday. I knew when I have trained and tapered that I can go for 48 hours in the mountains without sleep. But the question now was could I do it after 30 days of Munro bagging? This is what I wanted. I wanted to find out how far I could push myself physically and mentally, there was no point in holding back. I had Ben Hope in my sight and now was the time to completely empty the tank!

My heart was thumping louder than it had for the last 31 days, my legs were screaming, I was red lining, I was chasing a time. With about 400m of ascent left to go on Ben Hope, I realised if I could climb it in under 18mins, I could finish on an hour, the time I was chasing was 31 days 23 hours. I had dropped my friends that had come to climb the last Munro with me, and my focus was touching the cairn before 5am. I had no idea where the energy came from as the last 100m of climb I was sprinting through the clag. Finally I can see the Cairn and a few friends waiting for me at the summit. I touch the cairn look at my watch “bugger I missed it by 2min” then collapse to the ground. My time was 31days 23hrs 2mins 48secs.

Spyke’s 2010 record was 39 days 9 hours.



Donnie and his wife Rachel at the finish at Ben Hope ©Simon Willis



WORDS KIM COLLISON

PICTURES STEVE ASHWORTH, LA SPORTIVA

Setting the
LAKELAND
24 HOUR
FELL RECORD
78 PEAKS

MARTIN STONE'S LONG DISTANCE
ROUND UP



Above: Climbing Pike o’ Blisco. Previous Page: Descending Hall’s Fell © La Sportiva

Standing in Braithwaite at 2.50 am on Saturday 11th July I was nervous and excited for the adventure ahead. Confident the 24-hour Lakeland peaks record was achievable and I didn’t want to regret never having given it a go.

To break Mark Hartell’s 1997 record of 77 Lakeland peaks I would to have to run the same peaks and finish at the same point as I had started, then either go quicker than 23 hours 47 mins or add an extra peak. In 1989 the rules for an extra peak, stipulated by the Bob Graham Club, were a fell over 2000 feet, 1/4 mile away from a previous top and with 250 feet of descent and re-ascent. The logical additional tops were either Haycock or Fleetwith Pike and my plan was to go for Haycock.

Having only decided to attempt this record 4 weeks before, my focus in the last few weeks had shifted to learning the unfamiliar lines. With an incredible support team on the fell and at the road crossings I knew I would get the best lines, be well fuelled, encouraged to push on and make every second count. Preparation in the week before included visualising the route, the effort required, where I was going to eat, what the hard parts were likely to be and how I would keep pushing my boundaries when it got tough. My legs were conditioned with a massive block of specific fell miles starting in March and my form had peaked where running up a fell at a hard pace felt comfortable; I was ready to race.

At 3 am I raced down the A66 at pace, turning towards Appletwhaite and skipping up the hill to Lonscale Fell via a route well-rehearsed. A positive start was made with four minutes

gained, which reaffirmed my belief and desire to make this the day to break the record. Pushing on at a comfortable hard effort being careful to pull back from the red line and the risk of an early blow up. Navigation had to be my focus from Great Calva to Blencathra with a few extra tops and a few pathless sections to negotiate, I did not want to look a fool so early in the day with a tracker detailing my every move. The long drag up to Bowscale Fell is slow going and full of tussocks but my memory is one of admiration of a glorious sunrise; I just love those moments of awe in the mountains. With dry rock I descended freely down Hall’s Fell feeling the flow and absorbed in the moment.

Flying straight through Threlkeld without stopping I was determined to cement the progress I had made so far. Up Clough Head, the Dodds and Helvellyn, via a quick out and back to Catstycam making sure not to catch a toe on Swirral Edge. For this leg I was following the footsteps of Adam Perry and Mike Ainsworth, keeping me entertained and cutting every corner with near perfection.

Arriving at Dunmail 27 minutes ahead of Mark Hartell’s splits my mood had changed from free-flowing bouncy legs to steely determination and focus, having to push through my poles and drive through my legs up Steel Fell. I often find the first few tops on leg 3 of a Bob Graham Round is a mental hurdle to overcome, so I focused on keeping the motor driving forward towards the Langdales. Before long I was descending the great scree chute into Langdale, after a brief spell on my back writhing in pain with calf cramp soon relieved with the help of Rhys Findlay-Robinson. After emptying the pebbles out of my shoes and collecting a new team of pacers at Stool End Farm it felt like I was crawling up the steep fell side to Pike of Blisco.

There was no let up or easy miles over the rocky central fells from Pike of Blisco to Lingmell Fell with plenty of decent and ascent on tough terrain. I believed this would be the crux of the round and I knew I would have to work hard to hold the schedule. I was moving ok and it wasn’t falling apart, but my early effort was starting to take a toll and food was not going down well. My mind was still in good place and the journey still fun until I reached Broad Stand; suddenly, while getting tied into the rope, the spaced out feeling of a sugar low was upon me. Finding it difficult to focus on each step with blurry vision and coordinate my legs while scrambling up the cliff, I started sipping a bottle of cola while repeatedly asking Paul Aitken which way to go. After stabilising the initial crash by the summit of Scafell the energy crisis would last until Red Pike, and I had started to lose some ground. The climb up Yewbarrow was brutal. Despite not wanting to eat I continued to stuff food down and kept grinding upwards.



“78 peaks in 23 hrs 45 mins having covered 96 miles, 12,000m and with the biggest smile on my face.”

Coming off a low patch, and while climbing Red Pike, I looked over to Haycock looming large and I quickly changed plan. Taking Scoffer’s advice, I decided that Fleetwith Pike would be a better option as I would have more time to decide whether the extra peak was on. The energy started to return; I picked up the pace and started to make a few gains. Ticking off the big tops of Pillar, Kirk Fell and Great Gable brought me ever closer to the crunch point. By Grey Knotts there was only one way I was turning - towards Fleetwith Pike. We didn’t get the optimum line, but it was good enough and the extra peak was touched before descending into Honister, still with 20 minutes up on Mark’s splits. The thought had started to pass through my mind that this was going to happen today, but I was getting weary and my stomach was churning.

The euphoria drove me up Dale Head, and then overcooking it by running up Hindscarth which caught up with me on top of Robinson. The same jelly legged feeling returned trying to run down the steep rocky path, through the tussocks and the steep grassy gully which led to Newlands Pass. We ran through a wild camp party having a good time (or at least I think we did!) I somehow managed to find the strength to power straight though and onto the last leg. This now became a battle of mind over body and the body was winning on the climb to Ard Craggs. Adam Godwin told me I was losing time and this gave me the kick I needed to fight. Digging deeper than ever before, shouting at myself to push on, I picked up the pace making good progress to Causey Pike but then

the nausea slowed me down again up Sail. The tension rose further as we were enveloped by mountain fog on Crag Hill, barely able to see our feet. With Matt Stapley out front doing an awesome job of keeping us on track, Adam Godwin being the enforcer and Jim Scott the encourager, we kept getting closer to the finish, losing a little bit of time on the schedule but keeping those losses under control. Finally standing on the top of Grisedale Pike I knew it was going to happen. The pain disappeared and the smile spread across my face. I danced my way down the hill, finding the strength to race down the road to break the Lakeland 24 hour peaks record with 78 peaks in 23 hours 45 minutes having covered 96 miles, 12,000m and with the biggest smile on my face.

A big thank you to Ally Love, Simon Franklin, Jim Scott, George Foster, Martin Mikkelsen-Barron, Adam Perry, Mike Ainsworth, Andy Thompson, Rhys Findlay-Robinson, Steve Birkinshaw, Rob Jebb, Paul Aitken, Carol Morgan, Scoffer (Andrew Schofield), Matthew Atkinson, Carmine De Grandis, Matt Stapley and Adam Godwin for whose support I am grateful for making this dream a reality.

Mark Hartell climbed 77 peaks in 23hrs 47mins in 1997

MARTIN STONE'S LONG DISTANCE ROUND UP

SETTING THE LAKEDALE 24 HOUR LADIES' FELL RECORD 65 PEAKS

WORDS CAROL MORGAN

24 hours. It seems like a short time and a long time all in one go. It started at a lovely green, slightly old-fashioned bench at the edge of Braithwaite, at the foothill of Grisedale Pike. But would it finish here?

Off I set, down the road towards Applethwaite, starting with the road section, I am no longer much of a road runner, so it was a relief to open the gate and get onto the soft stuff. I felt nervous and sick before the low-key start, but as I headed up the gill, I just felt excited and free. Released from the constraints of tapering and resting, free (well, temporarily) from the new world that is

Covid and the shitstorm that it has covered us with. Up the first hill, nervous about the route and my navigation, nervous about the climbs and the excited by the thrill of it all, supported by Matt and a tired Stevie B. I've never knowingly beaten him up a hill before, I used this to spur me on (sorry Stevie!) across the mass of Skiddaw up to Lonsdale Pike. I thought about my Lonsdale friends and had a little smile to myself about my sentimental thoughts. '2 minutes up' Matt said as I touched the top. No unique distinct top means I try to hit all of them in case anyone questions it afterwards. Skiddaw wore a hat of clag and we struggled to find the line to Sale How, suddenly the clag lifted and the lovely soft fell pulled us down towards Skiddaw House. A short trip up the Cumbrian way and back to the familiar black heavy eroded earth of Great Calva, just on a different track to normal. A quick dip into the Caldew and then the long pull up Blencathra. I think about my very close unintentional dive into a startled wild camper's tent on my last trip around here in the dark and clag. I follow Matt down Halls' Fell and run though the gloomy Threlkeld streetlights before the ascent up Clough Head. I put a tick beside my mental list of leg one, mumble gratitude for my leg one team too late to be heard and push on.

The new team forms around me and I fill them in on leg one and the banter starts early and easily. I wonder how many ascents of Clough Head this will be and if this one will be easier than previous ones. I push this away and think about the lovely tops of leg two. I start to run at the top and my legs feel great, I feel alive and happy, my nerves have settled with a close to schedule leg one and my enjoyment of being here feels almost too big to contain inside. I push away anxieties about details like schedules and we tick off the Dodds tops and chat chat chat. Suddenly the night lightens up and we experience a fantastic sunrise to our left, with lots of the round to come lit up with the soft, pink-red dawn light over to our

right about the time we get to Helvellyn. We all ogle over it like new parents over a baby and trot onwards and I stop apologising for disturbing their night's sleep to start the leg at silly o'clock! The line off Dolly (wagon) has kept Paul T(ierney) awake for a few nights, but I can't imagine it any better than we hit it, and before I can think about it we're half way up Fairfield. The multiple tops issue plays its card again and I run around Fairfield tipping lots of them for surety. Seat Sandal tries to make a stand, but we quickly descend, and I remember to be more vocal about my gratitude this time.

A quick husband hug and over the stile up Steel Fell, I try not to remember that it's one of the smallest tops of the Bob Graham with one of the biggest climbs and listen to the new team chat and settle into running together. The day now feels fully formed and as ready for action as do I. Off we trot, picking up the tops, new and old; get wet in the saturated bogs, enjoy the views and all that the Langdale Pikes have to offer, and then, I grind to the slowest pace ever up Bowfell. I stuff sweeties in my mouth, glug lots of water, repeat Helene (Whitaker's) mantra about 'eating and then eating more and then eating more until it gets better' to myself. 'Keep moving' I say under my breath, then 'keep chewing'. Somehow we get to the top. My team rally around me, seeing a critical point in this game - I am grateful for their support and keep moving. The usual sense of achievement of hitting the halfway (ish) mark at this summit is delayed for another bit and we trot on. I feel a bit better going up Esk Pike and Andy reminds me of my anger after some recent sexist incidents (including Facebook comments about my navigation on my solo Bob) and I use this to push myself on. He's right I try to rationalise, they can't win when I'm this strong. 'The Rocks' roll by with many scattered walkers and day trippers to the top of England to pass by and smile at. Stevie R and Paul assist at Broad Stand and Paul guides me back to the top of Lords' Rake, I



MARTIN STONE'S LONG DISTANCE
ROUND UP

Previous page: Carol descending Lord's Rake ©Paul Calderbank; Above: Sunrise on Helvellyn ©Andy Berry

slither and slide down it, enjoying the natural adrenaline boost of being out of my comfort zone, catch the contouring line across the Scafell motorway and hit Lingmell and the line off it perfectly. My legs start to complain on the way into Wasdale, I distract myself with the views and slither into Bracken Close.

Another husband hug and a tough trip up Yewbarrow. More cajoling and support from the brand-new team, I struggle to figure out what to eat. My shoulder monkey lets me criticise myself and I start to question myself for the first time since I started. I feel dizzy at the top, rationally I understand this is dehydration and hunger. I let this eat a bit more confidence. My team push me on. I struggle down the rocks of Stirrup Crag. My legs feel weary and I want to cry. I push myself on, my team start to chat around me and I start to listen and eat and drink again. Red Pike feels huge, but then I start to move more freely again. Haycock looked a million miles away, then suddenly we were on our way back again. I felt like I'd turned for home. My legs felt tired going up Kirk Fell and Great Gable, I tell myself that these big climbs will soon be over if I just keep moving. The team multiplies and I feel tearful about the effort that others have put in for me. In my head I acknowledge the love of my friends, some of whom I have spent many hours on the fells with, some of whom are new friends. I realise I need to get moving and that I have some work to do to claw back some time. I feel like I am flying again.

Honister comes and another new team, one with my husband and a very close friend, Kicks, whom I will always be able to blame on me becoming a runner. I feel confident and have run this leg five section in a faster time than my schedule early in the week. I make up some time and hit Newlands quickly. More thanks and off again. Leg six feels nervous. James 'Pup' Harris has reccie'd this numerous times this week and is concentrating hard on getting the very best lines. Night falls and I lose a little more time. I don't really register how much until we hit Whiteless Pike.

“**I suddenly realise
that this is neither
in the bag, nor out
and push myself
harder and harder.**”

Grasmoor feels huge. I listen to Steve pushing me, I stop talking back. It seems like wasted energy to talk. I feel like Sand Hill has grown upwards and struggle up in the dark on the scree and loose rocks. Steve keeps up a steady mantra of support and positivity, a side I have never seen in him before. We're off and then onto Grisedale Pike. It seems a million years since I sat at the bottom. I push myself up the last hill, digging in with my poles and exerting myself hard. I drop them at the top for Steve to pick up on the last time and start to let my legs loosen on the downhills. Around a few rocky sections, where James has carefully picked out lines for me. along the lovely sloping path to the drop down. My aching legs hate the steepness. I push myself harder, 'nearly there, nearly there' I don't want to look at my watch. We hit the flat path and run, run, run along, I fret about how far we have to go and not being able to hear where the finish is. I turn into the last short drop; I feel the well of emotion that I have suppressed over the last 24 hours bubble. I blink a few times and listen to the whooping at the finish and see Martyn's face, I turn the last bend and see the bench and plonk my little bony Irish arse firmly down on it at 23.57 and something seconds thinking that I might never move again.

This round would never have been completed without the team that came out on the fell, the team who supported at every checkpoint and would never have been started without the support of Simon (Franklin, husband) and Kim (Collison, coach). I have no words to express my gratitude to them all.

Nicky Spinks climbed 64 peaks in 23hrs 15 mins in 2011

Carol, seconds after finishing in Braithwaite ©Simon Franklin



BREAKING THE STEVE PARR ROUND RECORD THE LAKELAND 2,500 FOOTERS

WORDS HOWARD DRACUP

I'd just finishing off a training block for a 100-mile mountain race in Snowdonia in the middle of September. With only 5 days to go until race day I received the dreaded email to say the race had been cancelled!

I was gutted but already thinking of another alternative to fill the void. Do I go for a Bob, Paddy or a Ramsay? Nahhh too short I hadn't really trained that way. I had a suggestion from Paul Wilson who told me that the "Steve Parr Round/Lakes 2500" is one of the toughest challenges out there. I'd first heard about the Steve Parr Round earlier in the year when Paul Nelson completed it in July. The challenge is to run approximately 118 miles and 45,000ft of climb in under 48 hours.

I'd never organised a challenge like this. I didn't know where to start but I knew I better start fast as it was Saturday afternoon and I had to set off the following Friday at the latest. I was governed by a specific window of opportunity because my road support (my girlfriend) had booked time off work to come to the race in Wales.

I messaged all my running friends and the most common answer I received was "Sorry, I'm helping on a BG on Saturday", or they had already organised and planned their own personal challenge. My prospects weren't looking very good. By Saturday evening I had a few friends saying that they could help and a few "maybes". It was a good base to start from and could make this thing happen.

©Max Driscoll

It was time to start looking at the route in finer detail. I hadn't had chance to study the route map yet! That was my Saturday, in between spending time with family as it was also my son's 14th birthday.

I'd messaged Martin Stone letting him know that I was interested in having a go at the round and he said he could email me some documents from past attempts. Between Martin & Paul Wilson I now had enough information to start putting a plan together. I was left with the final piece of the puzzle. How the hell do you put times on a schedule when you haven't even reccied any of the legs and it's a 48-hour challenge?!

There are few rules for the Steve Parr Round. You must visit Moot Hall and complete a round of 62 Wainwrights over 2500ft. You must start and finish at the same place which can be anywhere. 48 hours is the target time, but any continuous round will be recorded. You can travel clockwise or anti clockwise and you can complete the peaks in any order you wish. I'd chosen the traditional route to set off from Moot Hall and go clockwise.

We met outside Wetherspoons in Keswick. There was myself, Maggie and my support crew for Leg 1 - Jacob Tonkin, Liam Mills and John Parkin. We set off a few seconds after 9pm.

LEG 1: The weather was perfect, not a cloud in the sky and only a gentle breeze. We had 3 summits to hit - Skiddaw Low Man, Skiddaw & Blencathra – which we hit nicely with Tonkin's perfect lines. We arrived at Threlkeld about 20 minutes up on schedule. I gave Maggie a quick kiss and carried on running leaving John and Liam to quickly refuel. Jacob sadly departed as he had work in the morning.

Howard on the climb to Kirk Fell ©Scott Newburn



LEG 2: It was quite a big leg. The climb from Threlkeld to Great Dodd was a long, boring, grassy, tussocky climb that seemed to go on forever. When we finally got to the Dodds, we stopped for a minute and turned our headtorches off to look up at the millions of bright stars above us - it was amazing!

My favourite part on this leg was the out and back scramble along Swirral Edge in the dark to climb Catstye Cam. I had some fun and ran right down the centre of the ridge. We left the Helvellyn range and headed over to St Sunday's Crag. The line off St Sunday's didn't follow a path. "Just think like a sheep" I shouted back at John & Liam, before heading down to Brothers Water, finding my own line down amongst the heather, bracken, rocks, and crags.

I felt the temperature plummet, it was freezing. The grass had turned white at the side of the road on the approach to Brothers Water. I was around 1 hour up and feeling great. When I reached Maggie, I quickly changed my top, necked my lukewarm coffee, and was greeted by my next pacer Nathanael Ingram. Off we went and let Liam refuel and catch us up.

LEG 3: I was really looking forward to this next section as it was local territory & the sun would soon be out! Everything was going smoothly. Nav cock up number 1 was made here. Somehow, we kept on the left-hand side of the river on the climb to Hayeswater (being complacent & nattering) and ended up fighting with knee deep bog and bracken.

We hit Rampsgill Head & High Raise. By now the headtorches were off as it was first light. We saw a family of deer galloping in the horizon, out for a morning play. It was a beautiful sight to see. On the way from High Raise to Kidsty Pike it happened!! The sun finally came up and it was the biggest, brightest, ball of fire I'd ever seen! It was amazing.

I was moving well now and making good ground, everything was clicking into place. I bounced over to Harter fell and had the sun on my back on the return. It soothed me but I began to feel a bit sleepy. More coffee at Kirkstone would help. Admiring the cloud inversion in the Patterdale valley, I enjoyed the descents down Thornthwaite Crag and Stony Cove Pike to Kirkstone pass and was met by Steve Birkinshaw who was ready to exchange roles with Liam.

LEG 4: The sleepy moment had passed, and I arrived at Kirkstone feeling fresh. It was around 9.30am and warming up fast. I got changed and before I knew it we are halfway up Red Screes. All I remember on this leg is feeling talkative and over-enthusiastic. I think Maggie had given me a really strong coffee! Poor Steve and Nathanael.

The views were amazing over Red Screes, Dove Crag, Hart Crag, Fairfield, and Greatrigg Man before dropping off Great Rigg towards the White Swan Pub in Grasmere via Stone Arthur. To my surprise I was greeted at the White Swan by Joss Naylor. I stopped and chatted for a few minutes before he told me to keep moving. Nathanael & Steve finished here, and I was joined by John Knapp, Max Driscoll, and Ben Turner.

On the way up to Wetherlam I began to feel a bit nauseous and had to slow down a little. I thought I was going through a little rough patch, but it turned out it was just the fizz off the Coca Cola! Another good leg, spirits were high, and we smashed on through to Cockley Beck over Wetherlam, Swirl How, Great Carrs, Brim Fell, Coniston Old Man, Dow Crag and Grey Friar.

After running continuously through every support point, I was convinced to have a good pit stop at Cockley Beck. This next section was going to be the toughest. I was going out on my 2nd night without any sleep and crossing some rough ground.

LEG 5: I was greeted by 3 new runners - Scott Newburn, Andy F and Paul Nelson. It felt good to have new people joining the group. Ahead of us we had Bowfell, High Raise, and the Scafell Massif down to Wasdale. It was a monstrous leg! As we headed out of Cockley Beck for Long Top, the initial slog up Little Stand was horrible. I was slowly fading going into my second night, and as the sun lowered, I began to feel tired and sleepy.

The climbs seemed to get tougher and tougher and I was sinking lower rapidly. As the sun went down, so did my self-confidence. I felt a little bit of self-doubt. I just needed to sleep for a little while, but here wasn't the place as we made our way over the Scafell Massif. The wind had picked up and the temperature had dropped. Tim Ripper joined us halfway through this leg. I'd never met Tim,

so it was a nice surprise and it perked me up. I was beating myself up over being so slow. My legs were good, but my eyes and brain were shutting down. I couldn't wait to get to the camper to sleep. We agreed I would sleep for 30 mins in Wasdale.

I was thinking of ways to bail out at this point. Sleep deprivation had taken over! I got to the van and hit the deck. What seemed like 2 mins later the camper van door opened. It was Maggie, "Right Howard, you need to get up. It's time". I said I'd only just fallen asleep and that I'd not had enough time, so they gave me 5 more minutes.

LEG 6: I put my layers back on and we were on our way again! I felt slightly better. Only three more hours until sunrise. I took the climb up to Red Pike nice and slow and we began chipping away at the rest of the tops - over Haycock, Pillar, Kirk Fell, the Gables & High Stile.

This was one of the best sections. Combine that with the amazing sunrise we witnessed, and you have the perfect morning! I felt better when the sun came up, but only for a little while. I had to have a 5-minute micro nap between Kirk Fell and Great Gable.

On the way down to Buttermere I had been working things out in my head and said that going under the record was well out of the window and I was more than happy to finish the round in a sub 48-hour time after. But when I arrived at Buttermere I had quite a surprise!

Martin Stone was there telling me that the record was still in sight! "I'll give it a go" I said, "but I very much doubt I'll do it!" I don't think I had a choice to be honest! I was back with Jacob Tonkin again, young Chris Richards & Dan Armstrong. The craic was high and they literally bullied me over the last few summits.

They kept telling me there's only one more climb and then I would be met with another! Finally, we were descending Grisedale Pike. I was on the pain train now but knew I had to keep running if I wanted to come in under the record. I kept asking "How many miles is it now?" and 2 miles seemed to be the answer all the way!

I finally made it back to where I began on Thursday night at 9pm, 42hrs, 36mins and 07 seconds later! Shaving a mere 19 minutes off Steve Parr's time of 42hrs, 55mins and 40 seconds.





I’ve long been intrigued by the Pennine Way, partly due to my fascination with The Spine Race. After winning the Winter race, I knew I would return to explore the route and see what I could do under different circumstances (in daylight!). Mike Hartley’s 31-year-old record provided the perfect goal for that test, one I felt was just at the edge of possible that would force me to reach towards my absolute limits.

PREPARATION

I planned my attempt before the pandemic began, but needless to say it altered the journey to the start. I changed my start date many times, and leading up to it I wasn’t able to spend any time in the mountains; instead running on my local hills in Somerset. With family and professional life also affected, I topped out at about 70 miles per week, well short of what might be expected before a 260-mile challenge. Still, my fitness felt great and I was itching to get out and use it.

TACTICS

I can’t anticipate every obstacle in a challenge of this magnitude, but I can anticipate that I won’t anticipate everything. My schedule

was 5 and a half hours faster than the record, but my plan revolved around strategically letting that schedule slip. I think of that time buffer as my bank account. I need sleep, or run into tough weather? Make a withdrawal and carry on.

It’s no secret I’m a data nerd. Splits for that schedule were created by analysing my Spine pace with the help of Karl Shields, adjusting for terrain and conditions, and planning a pace degradation based on world best 72-hour track performances. With my plan in hand and a fantastic support crew, led by the incomparable Nicki Lygo providing road support throughout, I was ready to go.

DAY 1

I started at 10am, trying to ensure I got a good night’s sleep before meeting Tim Budd and Dave Beales in Edale. They led off a relay of pacers, with hand offs to Carol Morgan, Suzy Whatmough, James Ritchie, Mark Rochester, Steve Rhodes, and John Knapp on the way to Lothersdale. We made great time over that first 60 miles, and despite my aggressive schedule I was over an hour ahead. Underfoot conditions had been quite muddy, and the weather ranged between fair and rainy. Unfortunately, the tide was starting to turn.

My stomach wasn’t behaving as expected. I was trying to get calories down, but nothing seemed to be working. I could move well, but my caloric deficit was growing. I knew that if I couldn’t correct it I would be in trouble.

I continued on to Hardraw with Sam Booth and Julian Jamison, clocking a personal best 100-mile time of 19:50. On arriving I crashed into the back of the car for a 30-minute nap hoping it would reset my stomach. It provided a mental refresh, but my stomach was no better. I arrived at Tan Hill Inn with Matt Neale and Darren Moore about 25 hours in and got a welcome boost from seeing Mike Hartley and Martin Stone there, but otherwise I was in complete misery.

DAY 2

James Elson navigated the tricky path through Sleightholme Common while Ry Webb attempted to get jelly babies in my mouth. On the way to Middleton I tried every trick in the book to get my gut working again, but the few calories I managed to get down came back up and I arrived looking like a ghost. I had never experienced gut issues of that intensity or duration. Although none said it at the time, few people there believed I would continue. The diagnosis after the fact was that I had an ulcer – not a dangerous condition, but I was bleeding somewhere in my GI tract.

I slept another 40 minutes in Kim and Jayson Cavill’s van, then moved on. Fortunately, the next section is my favourite. Up the River Tees, by Low Force and High Force, up Cauldron Snout, then along High Cup Nick before descending into Dufton. Paul Wilson joined the fun along the way. One thing that kept me focussed and moving was the accuracy with which my pace continued to match my target schedule. I continued to feel worse yet I was moving between checkpoints on time. My bank account was only shrinking when I stopped. My degradation was actually matching my predictions, so I knew I was still in it.

After fighting horrid weather and severe drowsiness as Martin Wilson led us over Cross Fell, I slept for 40 minutes in Sharon Dyson’s van, waking only to jump out and keel over with uncontrollable vomiting. The weather remained poor, but I had a boost from a bit of trail magic – a walker offered his tent for a 15-minute nap. Jayson Cavill led on to Greenhead where I arrived 47 hours in, a few hours behind my schedule but still ahead of record pace.

DAY 3

I had been looking forward to seeing Hadrian’s Wall in the daylight, and redeeming myself for my worst stretch during the Spine. I hit 200 miles in 47:49 and continued with a shot of resolve that only comes from having the goal within reach but in danger. Brian Melia,

Elaine Bisson, and Raj Madhas helped get me to Byrness still with a chance, and I attacked the climb into the Cheviots with everything I had left. Suddenly, I had a remarkable feeling: hunger! I began actually asking for food. Howard Dracup and Max Wilkinson were happy to oblige, but everything that went down seemed to be instantly incinerated and do nothing to satiate me. The wind and rain continued to worsen, but by that point my determination was unshakable. Bob Neill joined me mid-Cheviots for the second time this year, and John Knapp returned for more. We all went up to the Cheviot and turned for Kirk Yetholm, with what seemed like a sprint over portions of the final descent.

I touched the wall of The Border Hotel in 64 hours and 46 minutes, breaking Mike Hartley’s record by only 34 minutes.

POSTSCRIPT

I owe a tremendous thank you to my support. I was again overwhelmed with the selflessness of this community in helping each other reach otherwise impossible goals. I was thrilled with the record – it seemed like a nearly impossible challenge and I feel fortunate to have even been able to pursue it. I was also happy with my time, but as these things often go, I wasn’t 100% content. My goal for an iconic, personally meaningful route like the Pennine Way is always to test the limits of my capabilities and to leave my mark for others to do the same.

Now we all know the story, that my good pal Damian would break my record a week later. This is how we planned it – to push each other to do something neither knew was possible. Without being challenged or targeted, records mean nothing – they do not inspire, they do not cultivate progress, and unless we are to become complacent and say we have already reached our collective peak, they say nothing about the limits of human potential. My record served its purpose. I’m happy it did and there’s no one I would have rather seen it go down to. But happy does not equal content... For the moment, though, I had to shift my focus. My Pennine Way run was part 1 of a challenge I called The Hartley Slam (in honour of Mike Hartley). Next up: The Grand Round.

Summit Fever Media’s Totally FKT, a film about Damian and my runs on the Pennine Way this summer will be available in November and can be pre-ordered from www.summitfevermedia.com/pennine-way-fkt

Mike Hartley set the previous record of 65hrs 20mins in 1989



Setting the record for the PENNINE WAY

61HR 35MIN

WORDS DAMIAN HALL

I love a good bog, me. And I love the Pennine Way, our oldest National Trail. I hiked it in 2011 when I was lucky enough to be commissioned to write a guidebook for it. I love how bleak and boggy it often is, how it feels paradoxically both repelling and compelling. And the link to the Mass Trespass – a wonderful piece of civil disobedience which feels salient today, when the likes of Extinction Rebellion may be the best way to help save our planet from politicians not overly burdened with ethics.

Mike Hartley's record fascinated me since that first Pennine Way experience and I revisited the lumpy backbone of England on two Spine Races. Despite some records/FKTs of my own, I didn't dare think of myself as an athlete in his class. The Pennine Way record terrified me. And yet it called me too; with gradual, increasing, loudness. For four years I'd been pondering an attempt, but always found a convenient excuse to shirk out of it.

When John Kelly told me he was going to have a go, I told him I might too, if UTMB was cancelled. As well as lockdown, his boldness shamed me into finally committing.

We discussed running it together or starting from opposite ends at the same time. Though my keenness for that idea did waver, in the end we simply couldn't find mutually agreeable dates.

PREPARATION

I didn't plan for my wedding as thoroughly as I planned for this. I phoned the legendary Mike Hartley, who was generous with his time. I wanted to go south, as I'd gone north three times and didn't want to get bored of the route. Mike went south to get the remote Cheviots done first and the psychological advantage of 'running home'. I was awed to find he didn't really suffer any sleep deprivation. He added: "I think the secret is to be able to run fast early on without damaging yourself too much." Mike ran 170-mile weeks in training. I wouldn't be doing that, because I'd like to keep my marriage intact. Also, as John and I have the same coach (David Roche), I figured there might not be a huge difference between us physically. Logistics, team composition and psychology seemed extra important.

I worked on my perennially awful technique with The Lost Art Of Running-author Shane Benzie, tweaked my nutrition with sports dietician Renee McGregor, got a bespoke hydration plan from Precision Hydration, did ample strength work with Strength For Endurance, and even spoke to sports psychologist Dr Josie Perry to fine tune my motivation. Fuelling without animal products (easy), plastic waste (less so) and collecting litter would give me strong impetus to get it done. Nothing motivated me more though, than a side bet with determined tea-dodger John; whoever ran slower

had to drink the tea of choice of the faster runner. inov-8's new TERRAULTRA G 270 proved excellent on three recce runs and I felt confident they'd give me no foot problems.

TACTICS

I had an amazing team. Though I've set some records unsupported, to try and match Hartley's (or Kelly's) times I felt I had to be fully supported, like them. I asked my good friends Tim Laney (who also paced Hartley and even donated him a shoe mid-run) and Mark Townsend to crew me, both ultra and fell-running veterans who'd completed the Spine Race and know when I need a foot up the backside. Vivacious Pennine Way fanatic and doctor Nicki Lygo, who had also crewed John, jumped in too, at the last minute. She knows the Pennine Way better than some guidebook authors and had a knack of producing fresh mango at crucial times. Plus, Jess Palmer and Jen Scotney kindly volunteered to help out. I didn't mean to have such a big team. It just kind of happened. I'd never got a group of pacers together before and I tried to cherry-pick those who'd done well at the Spine or knew the Pennines well. I felt very chuffed and flattered that so many great runners were willing to help out.

I created my first ever spreadsheet, which caused confusion and prompted deserved scoffing, from Martin Stone, Nicky Spinks and others. I felt happy with a conservative schedule, aiming to get me to Edale just ahead of John's new record and in time for last orders (by then I hadn't drunk alcohol for four months). That way I felt I'd spend more time feeling relaxed and happy, rather than stressed by chasing a semi-arbitrary target.

I wanted to be running well on day two and three. But also gradually build a buffer for any setbacks and power naps. I'm not the go hard and hang on type. At least, I thought not...

DAY 1

Kirk Yetholm to Middleton-in-Teesdale, 114 miles
It couldn't have started any better. The skies were overcast for my 6am start, temps around 10-12°C. I was determined not to go out too fast as Andrew Higgins and Mark Clarkson led me over the big grassy volcanic lumps of the Cheviots. But that's hard after weeks of intense anticipation and I was a little up on schedule (and would later find I'd bagged a KOM on one of the first climbs, oops) by Byrness. But everything felt comfortable.

My ace crew bought me chips at Bellingham, which mixed well with a brownie. I was almost an hour up when Jayson Cavill joined me for Hadrian's Wall. Then it was on to the infamous Blenkinsopp Common and a bleak and fiddly section, enlivened by John Knapp,

Kim Collison and a small noisy crowd in Slaggyford. Unbeknownst to me meanwhile, my crew were dealing with burst tyres and head injuries.

Cross Fell brought the sort of weather it's known for and in Dufton, at 2am, I had my first sit down, in a collapsable chair my crew would then 'lose'.

DAY 2

Middleton-in-Teesdale to Pinhaw Beacon, 186 miles
The super-efficient Elaine Bisson, Max Wilkinson, Martin Wilson and (for a shorter time) Paul Tierney had put up with me for some 30-plus miles and a long night. We arrived at Middleton-in-Teesdale at 7am, nearly four hours up on schedule. But mentally I was beginning to slide. I probably hadn't eaten enough.

The next section is classic Pennine Way. Undulating, unspectacular, boggy terrain. Gwynn Stokes, Alastair Black and Chris Davies pulled me along efficiently enough. Until I kicked a rock and totally stacked it. A 15-minute lie-down at the A66 seemed to reboot me. For a bit.

Mike Hartley was at the Tan Hill Inn and the legend told me I was looking good (the kind fibber). Matt Neale, Andy Berry and Martin Low dragged me across the moors and up mammoth Great Shunner Fell, in the wind and rain, which took forever. I tried another power nap at Hardraw. Which failed. I whinged, at one point, to my pacers, for going too fast (sorry guys).

We reached Horton-in-Ribblesdale, 170 miles in, at around 7pm, over three hours ahead of schedule. I was feeling kinda seasick (but the crowd called out for more) and the long steep climb up Pen-y-ghent, aided by Simon Franklin, Sabrina Verjee and Dan Bye, didn't help. I tumbled down the peak and into a waiting van for a 45-minute snooze.

After treating myself to fresh socks (whoop!), Ben Mounsey, Kirsty Hall and Jason Millard, pulled me up Fountains Fell and into a second night, which I always imaged would be the hardest spell. My crew would later tell me this was when they first felt concerned, the only time I got crochety with them (something about a toothbrush). I really, really, really wanted to sleep. But Nicky Spinks, now accompanying me with Jason and Sam Green, wouldn't let me. She would instead thrust sweets into my face and trick me into chomping

MARTIN STONE'S LONG DISTANCE
ROUND UP

on a coffee bean (I hate coffee). I was fantasizing about sleep. And I was losing time.

DAY 3

Pinhaw Beacon to Edale, 60 miles

As dawn broke everything changed. I was joined by Mark Rochester and Galen Reynolds, Spinksy gave them some strict instructions and suddenly we were scooting along. By the White House pub at around 11am, we had rebuilt that three-hour buffer plus change. With some 32 miles to go, it was beginning to feel a done deal. People were turning up to run with me, friends surprising me, strangers cheering me on. But it got warm. I stopped looking at the schedule. I relaxed too much. I forget to eat and drink. I bonked. Wessenden Moore sapped the life out of me. Black Hill felt like a Himalayan mountain. My three-hour advantage felt like sand running through my hands.

Spinksy re-joined me, with David Riley, Paul Clough and Jamie Rutherford for the final stretch, 16 miles over Bleaklow and the iconic Kinder plateau. There was still a chance I could break the record by three hours. I regretted telling Nicky that. She grabbed my schedule and shot up Bleaklow. I had my lungs in my mouth trying to keep up. Devil’s Dike was a torturous labyrinth, Nicky constantly disappearing around a corner ahead. At Snake Pass, Jamie saved me from tumbling into the road ahead of a car.

“I don’t care about the three hours anymore, Nicky!” I yelled, more than once, as we chugged over the flagstones towards Kinder. She pretended not to hear me. She didn’t want me to have any regrets, she told me later. I sort of hated her, for a bit.

Finally, we tumbled down Jacobs Ladder and into hallowed Edale. I touched the wall of the Old Nags Head and stopped my Suunto at 61 hours, 35 minutes and 15 seconds.

I couldn’t believe the size of the crowd. Even a magnanimous John Kelly was there, Mike again, plus Mark Hartell, Mark McDermott, Martin Stone (who’d been unable to resist jumping in to update my shonky schedule as I ran).



I felt overwhelmed. Very grateful. And quite tired. A chair was pushed towards me and soon a magnificent pint of ale was in my unsteady hands.

POSTSCRIPT

I wore my boxer shorts the wrong way around the whole of the next day. Annoyingly I had to get used to opening doors and gates for myself again. And it turns out yelling “Coke” or “tea” gets a very different response at home to when in the Pennines.

The two runs on the Pennine Way seemed to transcend our little niche corner of the world and go very briefly mainstream. As I endured night sweats and scoffed cheesecake for second breakfast, I went on BBC TV (with John), spoke to the Guardian and yabbered away on a gazillion podcasts. I may be reading too much into it, but running seemed to be presented as an antidote to lockdown, a rare good news story in a strange and stressful time.

I feel immense gratitude to all the people who helped, especially my amazing road crew and pacers. But also those who turned out unexpectedly en route and even non-runners who tagged along for the ride or just clapped or cheered.

Though I feel bad for John that he only got to be the record holder for eight days after an incredibly gutsy (pun unintended... maybe) run. But he merely rested a bit, then got back out there and did something just as, if not more, amazing...

Summit Fever Media’s Totally FKT, a film about Damian and John’s runs on the Pennine Way this summer will be available in November and can be pre-ordered from <https://www.summitfevermedia.com/pennine-way-fkt>



MARTIN STONE'S LONG DISTANCE ROUND UP

Setting the ladies record for the
PENNINE WAY
74HR 28MIN



OR, HOW TO ORGANISE A SOCIALLY DISTANCED PARTY FOR RUNNERS...

- 1 Choose a challenge
- 2 Invite some friends and new acquaintances who might be entertaining and provide banter
- 3 Devise a schedule
- 4 Pack a lot of food and kit
- 5 Hire a tracker from James Thurlow at Open Tracking so that everyone can watch

WORDS SABRINA VERJEE

2020 will forever be remembered as the “year of lockdowns”, and if running was ever needed as an escapism and for improving mental health, it’s now. After attempting the Wainwrights Challenge in July I worked hard on my recovery and was back running well after three weeks. The mind could not help itself – what next? I should have been racing Tor des Géants in the Alps in September, but that all got cancelled so how to fill this week? I knew my adductor muscles had not recovered well enough to take on the rough fells again so I chose a less mountainous challenge, the Pennine Way.

I knew what was involved as I’ve completed the Spine race twice (summer and winter). I didn’t want to repeat the same journey so decided to do it the other way round, North to South. I wanted to see the Cheviots while I was fresh and in daylight and also visit The Cheviot summit, which is not part of the Spine race. However, the downside to running in that direction is that the prevailing winds

are headwinds. Unfortunately, the winds were a little stronger than forecast which certainly made things more challenging.

So, the party was planned: start date Saturday 12th September, 6am, Kirk Yetholm, and the guests invited. First to show up were my road crew – Team Maxted and campervan (Claire and her mum Sharon) and Gary Marlow. We took a photo of me with the pile of shoes that marks the “end” of the Pennine Way and just before dawn Mark Clarkson and Andrew Higgins started me off. It was certainly breezy, but these lovely chaps broke the wind (as it were) and I trotted easily behind them in the glorious sunshine. It is a beautiful part of the route up high and easy running along the slabs - I was pleased they were dry.

After the descent into Byrness I was joined by Paul Nelson and Christine Findlay. I was amused to see that Christine was carrying all my kit, all my food and about 4 litres of fluids, while ex-military

“**Sorry I am late darling,
I was putting on this
nice little red number
for you and couldn’t find
any matching shoes**”



Above: A surprise meeting on Green Fell with her husband, Ben Turner ©Gwynn Stokes; Previous page: Dropping down to Edale in the early morning light ©Mark Clarkson

Paul was carrying the map. This section was quick with mainly fireroads to run on and then just a short section of boggy heather ground across Padon Hill. At Bellingham we were joined by Kevin Robinson, about an hour up on my 72-hour schedule. The wooded section to Hadrian’s wall was less boggy than expected, so I arrived at Twice Brewed 1.5 hours up.

As it turned out I was not the only one hosting a party this Saturday night. We ran into John Kynaston supporting Alex Morley who was running the length of Hadrian’s Wall and there was also a wedding at The Sill.

I arrived at Greenhead glad that there was still a little daylight but getting increasingly annoyed with the headwind. We were joined here by a bouncing ball of energy and smiles – Kimmy Kens – much needed for this rather dreary section of darkness, fields and bog. Kim sprinted ahead to the gates but each one provided a new conundrum – the hinge alternating from one side to the other, awkward catches, stiff gates, broken gates, heavy gates.... Oh yes, I remember having fun with this lot on the Spine!

11pm in Slaggyford – time for Kim and Kevin to head off for a well-earned rest and for me to meet my pal John Knapp – oh good driving wind and rain! This short section seemed to take forever, conditions were boggy and slippery underfoot and I almost got taken out by a sheep! At Alston I was joined by the “Men in Black” Alistair Black, Gwynn Stokes, and Cees Van Der Land, but even the short, flat trot to Garigill behind three tall wind-shielding men was hard work. We made a quick stop at Annie’s house (Annie had welcomed me into her home on the Spine in January) and I ate as much as I could of her delicious beef stew - exactly what I needed to get me up Cross Fell in these blustery conditions.

The battering wind was like overly loud music at a party – you wish someone would turn it down so you could have a decent conversation. The windbreakers did their best, but on reaching Greg’s hut we had all been beaten up and were ready for a warm brew. If you’ve watched the Japanese Spine film, you’ll know that Greg’s hut is inhabited so it was no surprise to find Mike and Steph there. They’d stoked up a fire and we hid in the hut listening to the raging winds. It was 3am and the winds were forecast to die down so we decided to rest. It was not what I had planned, and it was too early for me to be able to sleep but there was no point fighting the weather.

At 5am the winds were noticeably quieter but it was still hard work, especially as the trail was rather indistinct and boggy. The sun came up and revealed a beautiful valley and a fun, runnable descent into Dufton. Soon I was charging off to Middleton with Al, Gwynn and my husband Ben. High Cup Nick was stunning, glinting in the sunlight and the firm tracks to Cauldron Snout made for a quick descent as well as picking up the tail wind as we turned eastwards.

At this point I was just over 100 miles in, Ben had to turn round and head back to his car: he explained “his legs were very tired...” No comment.

After two unplanned hours in Greg’s Hut I had left Dufton just behind schedule but had now regained an hour: it was back on! A quick massage from Colin Green, super refuelling from Team Maxted, a cheering crowd and new pacers Maddy (by name and nature) and Jacob – what could go wrong? Well, the route turns south-westerly from Middleton... straight into the wind! Jacob did his best as a windshield but this section was really hard and I could have thrown the towel in at Tan Hill pub if it weren’t for Mike Hartley. I confessed to him that I was wanting to quit but he simply said “but you know you’re not going to don’t you?!” Good point! I was halfway and still on time.

I couldn’t have been luckier than to be joined at this point by Darren Moore and Rich White who were clearly in competition to see who

could be the best party guest. The nav was spot on, I was handed all kinds of food unwrapped and the gates would be held open well in advance of my arrival. It seemed no time at all before I arrived in Hardraw although I did manage a proper face plant into a bog!

Greg (fellow Spinner) and I pushed on through the windy darkness to Horton arriving 1.5 hours behind schedule. Here I met adventure racing friend Ant Emmett and I was feeling good, but for the first time my right glute area started to hurt. It was a frustrating pain but after an elbow massage I felt great ascending Fountains Fell to reach the summit at dawn and soon was charging along a misty Malham Tarn enjoying the sun. At Malham I was joined by Tom Hollins and Paul Nelson for his second stint. I ran hard through the day – it was hot and sunny and I loved it – and managed to get an hour up. Around Hebden Bridge I was delighted to be greeted by more adventure racing friends, Dr Al on his bike and Phil and Jackie Scarf. Despite this pick-up I was losing time: I wasn’t eating enough and my right glute was getting worse.

At this point we were scratching around for pacers and decided that Damian Hall would be better than no-one – although clearly he was going to need some educating on gate opening etc! It’s a good thing someone gave him a plate of food to carry as this party was missing a waiter. There was a nice selection, none of which I could eat but it was much more fun to watch Damo balance this plate of food down the technical descents!

Sinead Batterby very kindly came out to Standedge and I got a massage and a stretch. I was on time at Crowden, not far to go but now the sleep deprivation was kicking in and I remember my eyelids so heavy I couldn’t keep them up. I had flashes of the works on Torside Reservoir in between micronapping and sleepwalking. That 500m probably took half an hour but eventually I got to a support point and Debs’ campervan and managed a micro-nap.

A stunning dawn on the peaks, Sally and Colin egging me on, bobbing along the slabs through this last bit to Kinder Scout to be greeted with a cup of tea from Damian – he was disappointed I wouldn’t eat his bruised banana or his salty nuts. I was disappointed he hadn’t brought a silver platter.

After 74 hours and 28 minutes I reached Edale. The sun shining, I collapsed and fell asleep in the chair in front of the Nag’s Head. Did everyone enjoy the party? Thanks for coming, I had a great time!

A massive thank you to everyone who helped and got involved – without you it wouldn’t be fun.

Sabrina already held the Ladies’ Pennine Way record set on the Summer Spine Race (no Cheviot) in 2019 of 82hrs 19mins.



Running in the Cheviots with Ben ©Darren Moore/ Richard White



Above: A late night face plant in the bog ©Damian Hall; Below: At the Old Nags Head in Edale, surrounded by her support team after finishing ©Sharon Maxted



MARTIN STONE'S LONG DISTANCE ROUND UP

THE STEVE PARR ROUND

RUNNING THE LAKELAND 2500' SUMMITS

WORDS LIZ WAKELIN

Summer 1984, outside the Moot Hall, Keswick, a twenty-eight-year-old man prepares for a run. He is stocky and bearded, with weather-beaten skin that belies his relative youth. Close to forty-three hours later, after many hours of steady rain, low cloud and poor visibility, Steve Parr will be back at the Moot Hall, tired but satisfied.

Seven am, July 2020. The street below the Moot Hall is deserted save for a figure in running gear surrounded by a small group of supporters & pacers. In just under forty-eight hours, Paul Wilson will be running back up the High Street to climb the steps to the Moot Hall door.

Midday, August 2020, Wrynose Pass. A group of runners appears over the skyline, moving slowly down the fellside. Toward the bottom of the slope a small figure in a blue t-shirt detaches itself from the group, followed by a man carrying a child in a backpack. She reaches the Three Shires Stone and sinks gratefully to the ground.

The woman is Kirsty Hewitson and the pacer with the child is Tim Ripper. Kirsty is about to join a small but growing number of fell runners who have completed the Lakes 2500' summits, a route that has recently started to be referred to as the Steve Parr Round. Paul Wilson had completed the route a month earlier, Tim Ripper a year before and Kirsty was the first woman to complete it, starting from the Three Shires Stone. Although their rounds included a variation made by Martin Stone in the early '90s, adding in another

summit to bring the total to sixty-two, the main route is the one devised by Steve over thirty years ago. John Fleetwood had also completed a round of 2500' summits in 2007 but without visiting the Moot Hall as the others had done.

This year has seen a renewed interest in anytime rounds, understandable during the Covid-19 race cancellations. Records have been broken on so many well-established routes but the time set by Steve Parr on his 1984 round of the 2500' summits had not yet been matched. Steve had based his route on a number of runs undertaken in the '60s and '70s, and by hours of poring over maps laid out on the living room floor. In a time before the internet and GPS, information was disseminated through running clubs and it was fellow runners in Clayton-le-Moors Harriers who had planted the seed for this venture. So how did someone who had only taken up fell running four years earlier come to devise a route and set a record that has stood for thirty-six years?

Climbing was Steve's first passion, running came later. In the words of Bob Milward, one of Steve's climbing partners, the 1970s were a 'Golden Age'. The air was filled with a sense that everything was possible. It was a time of total self-reliance, with no mobile phones or tracking devices. In 1977, aged 21, he and Bob made the first British, and first winter ascent of the N Face Direct of the Sassolungo in Italy, six days of climbing in below -20C temperatures. He remembered ploughing for hours through chest deep snow as neither of them could ski or owned snowshoes. Bob recalls that "A chilly gap between gloves and sleeves let the



Main Photo: Steve Parr in 1978 ©Bob Milward; Above left to right: Steve on the summit of the Aiguille Verte, Chamonix 1974 ©Bob Milward; Steve load hauling on the north face of the Sassolungo Italian Dolomites Winter 1977 ©Bob Milward; Steve supporting Keith McKay on his 1984 BGR ©Martin Bluer



draught in. A fortnight later I shed two rings of skin from my wrists like dirty cuffs. The cold had frost nipped a layer of skin which turned brownish and flaked off.”

A year later, he took part in a four-man expedition to the Himalayas. Disaster struck the expedition whilst attempting a new route on Darban Zom, an unclimbed peak in the Hindu Kush region of Pakistan. Close to the summit, the expedition doctor fell, hitting his head and losing consciousness. A YouTube video entitled ‘Four Men and a Mountain’ (<https://youtu.be/VJpCtkrLf50>) tells the whole remarkable story of more falls and avalanches and granite blocks bigger than houses crashing down around them.

Running was a way of staying fit to climb and, after moving to Preston in 1980, Steve joined Clayton-le-Moors Harriers, completing the Bob Graham Round less than a year later, fuelled by his favoured hill food - rice pudding with a dollop of strawberry jam. He reached the Moot Hall 17hrs and 58mins after he set out, which was, at the time, the second fastest completion ever. Unlike today, when information is so readily available, he was unaware of how close he was to Billy Bland’s record (broken again by Billy Bland shortly after). That same year, he broke the record for the Bullock Smithy Hike, a 56-mile LDWA route across the Peak District.



Left: Kirsty Hewitson ascending Whiteless Pike ©Paul Wilson; Above: Kirsty Hewitson and Tim Ripper (and his daughter) descending to Three Shires Stone ©Liz Wakelin

Having completed the Bob Graham Round, he was looking for new challenges and settled on a round of the Lakes 2500’ summits, a route pioneered in 1975 by Jim Loxham, Pete Dawes and Ken Brooks, and again in 1983 by Jim Loxham and Barry Johnson. The original 1975 route had selected Wainwright 2500’ summits but was not a ‘round’, which Steve felt was more satisfying and in the spirit of the BGR. Even in 1984, he described the BGR as ‘well-trodden’ and wanted to create something less likely to receive such footfall. With a feeling for the history and tradition of the BGR he started from the Moot Hall, just as Paul Wilson did this year, and Tim Ripper a year earlier. Just under forty-three hours later he ran up Keswick High Street to the Moot Hall, having covered 116 miles, 61 summits and 42,550’ ascent, travelling anti-clockwise as was traditional for Clayton Harriers. In his report, he says that he completed it in 43 hours 1 minute 40 seconds, but a recent checking of the schedule arithmetic reveals that he actually did it in 42 hours 55 minutes 40 seconds, six minutes faster than his account states. He went on to make attempts on a winter BGR, being beaten by severe blizzard conditions in the winter of 1985, and January 1986, before eventually succeeding in December 1986 a week after Selwyn Wright and John Brockbank had completed the first winter round.

Climbing was still part of Steve’s life and, in the autumn of 1990, he was on his third expedition to the Himalayas. It was during that time, on a solo exploration above the Rowaling Valley, that he disappeared and, despite extensive searches, has never been found.

In his report, Steve stated that he felt that this route should stand as a challenge ‘beyond the Bob Graham Round’ with a time limit



of 48 hours. He saw it as more than just a physical challenge, requiring considerable mental strength and logistical skills. Tim Ripper has remarked on how logical a round of all the high tops it is. He sees it as a true fell runners route, covering both classic lines as well as new ground, although the vicious ascent and descent between High Raise and Glaramara may not be fully appreciated at the time. It was the length of time spent on such familiar territory that pleased Kirsty Hewitson, along with the fact that it is truly a test of stamina and determination. She particularly noticed the pleasure of spending such an extended time with her pacers and other supporters. Paul Wilson has compared it to the Ultra Tour de Monte Rosa which has a similar amount of ascent. He rates it as one of the best UK running challenges that he’s completed and unlike any other UK hundred mile plus mountain run that he has done. What makes it particularly pleasurable is that it takes you into every area of the Lake District National Park.

The route which Steve called Beyond the Bob Graham is now being referred to as the Steve Parr Round and his time has never been bettered - until now. As these last words were being written Howard Dracup completed the route setting an incredible new time of 42 hours 37 minutes.

This could not have been written without the help of Steve’s family and friends - grateful thanks to all who contributed. For Steve’s report, and other background information, visit <https://www.gofar.org.uk/lakes-2500s>

For more information about Steve’s climbing and running achievements see the June 1991 Fellrunner magazine, available on the FRA website



Top Photo: Paul Wilson and Rob Allen climbing Glaramara; Paul descending Lord’s Rake, Scafell; Paul and a support runner climbing out from Cockley Beck in the early hours ©Victoria Rose (Tory) Miller.



“
I never really ran that much before I met Eric.”
– JOSS NAYLOR

WORDS ALLY BEAVEN

ERIC BEARD

A mountain running legend’s untold story

Fell running has its share of idols: Joss Naylor, Nicky Spinks, Kenny Stewart, Angela Mudge, Billy Bland. Remarkable athletes, some with remarkable stories, all deserving of their place in the pantheon of fell running greatness.

One name which is all too often missing from that list of greats is Eric Beard. A well-known and much-loved figure in his own time, history has been unjustifiably cruel to Beardie; many may know the name, a few may know something of what he achieved, yet I’ve spoken to no one who was aware of the breadth of his achievements.

Born in Leeds on the 20th of October 1931, Eric Beard left school at 14 with little in the way of qualifications and a similar scarcity of athletic promise. Embarking on what might best be described as a portfolio career, he found work as a salesman, a labourer, a greenkeeper, a tram conductor and, reportedly, a jockey.

It was while working on the trams, at the age of 24, that Beardie found running. Drawn in by a bet with a colleague, he joined Leeds City AC and over subsequent years became a prominent member of the Road Running Club.

In the winter of 1955, while out training, he met Dennis Gray, bouncing by with apparent ease as Dennis struggled for breath. Eric stopped to introduce himself and the pair became friends, exchanging passions; through Beardie Gray came to join Leeds City

AC, through Gray, Beardie discovered climbing and the mountains. This was to be a pivotal moment for Beardie, as his love of the hills came to dominate not only his athletic career but his entire life.

Beardie’s first fell race came in 1957 at the Yorkshire Three Peaks Race, an episode which provides evidence of his legendary zeal. Having run an 8-mile road race the day before, he hitch-hiked from Lancashire to Chapel-le-Dale and slept outside, the next day finishing in sixth place in a time of 3.59.45.

As the hills came to exert a more and more dominant influence on Beardie’s life, his career, such as it was, took a turn and he began to work as a transient instructor and general dogsbody at outdoors centres, most notably at Plas y Brenin in North Wales and Glenmore Lodge in the Cairngorms. It was during a spell at the former in 1962 that he broke the first of his fell running records, that of the Welsh 3000s.

Arriving at the summit of Snowdon by the ultimate tourist path, the Mountain Railway, he set off at 10 a.m. into a cold, snow laden northerly and, despite the conditions, succeeded in traversing the 14 summits in a time of 5 hours 26 minutes, an improvement of thirty four minutes on the previous record.

It was the following year, 1963, in which we find the most compelling evidence of Beardie’s greatness as a runner.



Above: The first four members of the BG Club pictured on Eric Beard’s 1963 record round. Left to right: Eric Beard, Des Oliver (not a member), Stan Bradshaw, Alan Heaton and Ken Heaton. ©Fellrunner; Previous Page: Beardie in the Cairngorms, Feb 1966. ©John Cleare

“ **In a single year he set records for the Cuillin Ridge, the Cairngorm 4000s, the Mourne Wall, the Arrochar Munros, the Welsh 3000s (again) and broke Alan Heaton’s Lakeland 24 Hour Record** ”

Surely the most prolific season of fell running record setting there has ever been.²

Although Alan Heaton reclaimed the Lakeland record a few years later, it would take decades for others to be overcome. His time for the Cuillin Ridge, an hour and thirty five minutes better than the previous mark and thought by many to be invincible, would stand for seventeen years until Andy Hyslop bettered it by just four and a half minutes in 1984; the Cairngorm 4000s record survived until 1979 and it took the great Joss Naylor to wrest the Welsh 3000s crown from his head, the mark having been lowered one more time by Mr. Beard himself in 1965.

In subsequent years Beardie took his fascination with longer distances to an extreme, reaching some kind of logical endpoint in 1969, a year in which he completed four colossal pedestrian journeys. In May he ran from Ben Nevis to Snowdon via Scafell Pike, the Three British Tops, in a little over ten and a half days. The next month he ran the so called ‘Rooftop of Wales’, a 5 day journey from north to south taking in Snowdonia, the Rhinogs, Cader Idris, Plynlimon and the Brecon Beacons.³ Later in the year came two long road runs, first from Leeds to Downing Street and then from John O’ Groats to Land’s End by a somewhat circuitous route.

A further outing, an attempt on the world 24-hour track record, was scheduled for later in the year. Unfortunately it never happened. On the 16th of November 1969, while hitch-hiking from the Lake District back to Leeds, Eric Beard was killed in a car crash on the M6. He was 38.

The merit of Eric Beard’s running palmarès is self-evident, but that’s not all that makes him worthy of note. As well as a phenomenal runner, he was also something of a pioneer. The history of the Cairngorm 4000s record only goes back as far as Beardie, before him there was no one. His time for the Cuillin Ridge surpassed the previous mark by such a margin that it is difficult to think of the two traverses as being examples of the same type. His continuous run over the Three British Tops has yet to be repeated.

Yet there was more to Beardie than a pair of pumps and a vest. Fell running may have been his main drive, but as a mountaineer he was more than capable. Self-effacing about his skill on more technical terrain, the lie is given to his modesty by mixed ascents of the Zmutt Ridge on the Matterhorn, the Brenva Face of Mont Blanc and the Kuffner Ridge on Mont Maudit, as well as difficult rock climbs on the north-east face of Piz Badile and the north face of Cima Grande. Serious enough undertakings now, more so in the early 1960s.⁴

For much of his life Beardie lived the way many people wish they could, staying in one place and saving his money just long enough to fund the next trip. Walking and climbing in the Alps, cross country skiing in Norway, driving to Iran in a Landrover; Beardie was in thrall to the mountains, driven not by the fanatical obsession of a top end climber, but by a simple love of spending time in the hills.

And therein lies the explanation of one of the most perplexing aspects of Beardie the athlete. In all his running career I can find only one instance of him appearing on a podium, victory at the 1960 Dovedale Dash. Initially it felt incongruous for someone of such clear ability to meet with so little competitive success. Yet

the more I read, the more I hear from others about his nature, the more apt this seems. For all his fitness, his training, his strength in the hills, Beardie lacked the killer instinct which is the mark of a great racer. It was enough for him just to be there.

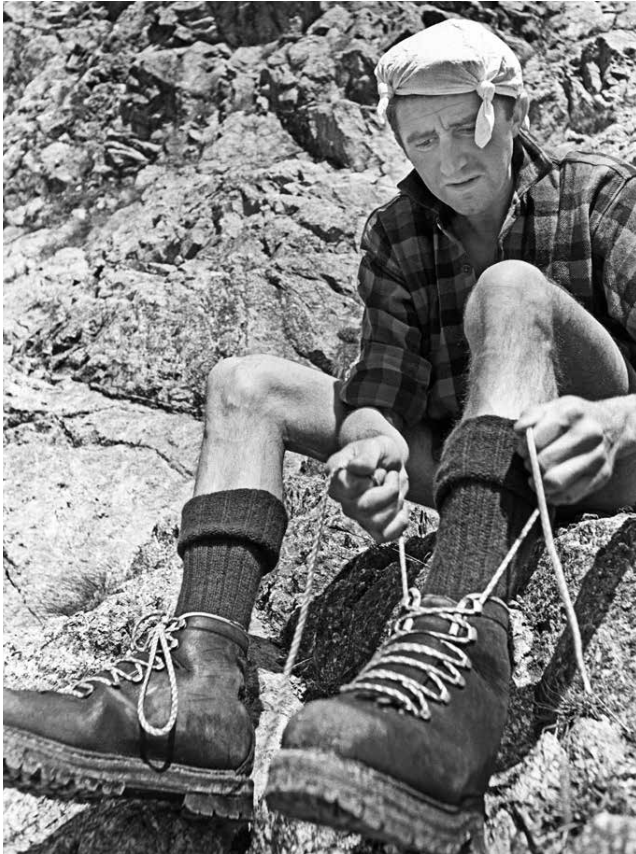
The kind of peripatetic, carefree lifestyle which Beardie led is written off by many as purely selfish, yet to level that accusation at Beardie would be both grossly unfair and wildly inaccurate. If he had one passion greater than running it was helping others, especially children. In his work as an outdoor instructor Beardie was “a genius with children”. Chris Brasher described him as “the finest natural teacher of climbing to young people”, telling of an incident at Plas y Brenin where Beardie “led a group of children off a mountain after being out all night in the mist, and they were all smiling.”

The mammoth road runs of 1969 were all undertaken to raise funds for The Save the Children Fund, or for children’s charities in his native Leeds. Beardie’s willingness to lend himself to any cause which asked him to complete such a journey is testament to both his charitable nature and his prowess as a runner.

From all I’ve heard from friends of Beardie’s, I have no doubt that it is his work with children and charitable contributions, rather than his many records, of which he would have been most proud, and which make him most deserving of adulation. All those who knew him speak of his kindness first and his athleticism second; “always willing, always helpful.” One of the most charming Beardie facts is that in his early twenties a customer poll voted him Leeds’s most courteous and cheerful tram conductor.

This enthusiasm for helping others inevitably extended to running. Indeed, Beardie could even be held responsible for the running career of a certain Wasdale shepherd.

“I used to spend quite a bit of time training with him and he encouraged me to run a lot as well. I never really ran that much before I met Eric” - Joss Naylor.



Lacing his boots en route to the Rifugio Grandes Jorasses, 1965 ©John Cleare

Eric Beard’s death came as an enormous shock. Hundreds attended his funeral, among them hordes of climbers and walkers, and many children. Dearly missed by those he knew, for years his Bob Graham Club certificate hung in the bar at Glenmore Lodge, and in the early seventies Bearnais Bothy near Loch Carron was renovated by friends in his memory.

Writing about Eric Beard in a coherent way is challenging. Although he died young, he fitted more into his 38 years than most would manage in 70 and did it all with such enthusiasm and at such pace that even decades after his death, it is still difficult to keep up with Beardie.

Footnotes

1. In so doing he became only the fourth person to complete the Bob Graham Round at the time.
 2. This was written in 2016. Jasmin Paris, and others, may now have something to say on the matter.
 3. -This was nearly twenty years before the publication of John Gillham’s book Snowdonia to the Gower: A Coast-to-coast Walk Across Highest Wales described a very similar journey and provided the inspiration for the Dragon’s Back Race.
 4. Some explanation for Beardie’s prowess in the mountains, and some rationale for his self-effacement in this regard, may be found in the company he kept, the mountain glitterati of the day; sharing raucous lock-ins in Carrbridge with Tom Patey; playing the part of Sherpa to Chris Bonington on numerous televised climbs; a member of the infamous Rock and Ice Club along with many of the big names of the day, such as Joe Brown and Don Whillans. Anyone would think of themselves as a punter when their friends are among the best in the world.
- The article was originally published on Ally’s Blog QuickQuickPotato <https://quickquickpotato.wordpress.com/> in April 2016.



WORDS PETER MCDONALD

This article is the second in a series on the history of the Lake District 24-Hour Fell Record. Fellrunner 125 (Winter 2019) told the story of the pioneers of the record, from the early Victorians to the turn of the twentieth century. This piece goes on to describe the history up to the Bob Graham Round, concluding with how the BGR became distinct from the Fell Record. Future articles will chart a course to the modern era, a story recently and magnificently extended by Kim Collison’s round of 78 fells in July this year.

FROM HELVELLYN TO THE HIMALAYAS

Our last story ended with Dr Arthur Wakefield’s inaugural and pithy codification of the Fell Record: “The aim of these walks is to ascend the greatest possible number of peaks above 2,000 feet, and to return to the starting point within 24 hours, or as much less as is possible.” By the point these words were written, the age of the spontaneous amateur was over: the record had been pushed to a league requiring both proper preparation and excellent fitness. Wakefield was a strong climber and local physician, well placed to apply the necessary professionalism.

After an initial round of 11 fells in 1904 (adding Kirk Fell to the previous record), Wakefield pushed himself further in 1905 with an anti-clockwise round of 21 fells, consisting of half the peaks that would go on to make the Bob Graham Round. While he benefited from perfect August weather, his success came despite a series of minor calamities: a gammy knee gave way while descending Yewbarrow; he lavishly refreshed himself at a local inn before realising he had no means of payment; he ran short of the verification slips which he was leaving on each summit; and a farmer had cut open his shoes to relieve pressure on his toes. But he made it round.

Wakefield went on to serve his country in many ways, most notably in the Royal Army Medical Corps during the First World War. Following the war, and partly on the basis of his Fell Record performance, he was selected as the Medical Officer for Mallory’s second Everest expedition in 1922. It started with the explicit aim of reaching the summit but tragically ended with the death of seven Sherpas in an avalanche. Wakefield was the first to attend the fallen, but all were lost.

On his return, he was instrumental within the Fell and Rock Climbing Club (FRCC) to organising the memorial plaque atop Great Gable, leading a ‘service in the clouds’ on the summit in 1924. The impact of the war had taken an inner toll and, while he rarely showed emotions, his “voice was shaken by sobs of grief” during his speech commemorating fallen comrades. Although no one would ever hear him speak of the war again, his letters home from the battlefields of France provide an apt conclusion: “May every one of [our fellow serving FRCC members]... [know] that he has done the biggest bit in his power, and has strained every ounce with the grit, determination and patience bred in our northern hills.”



Previous Page: Vintage photograph of Helvellyn over Thirlmere; Above: Wakefield (8th from left) when he was Medical Officer on Mallory’s second Everest expedition in 1922.

RACING OVER THE FELLS

Despite the achievement, the concept of a ‘Fell Record’ was not warmly endorsed in all quarters of the Lakeland community. An FRCC President remarked that Wakefield’s peak-bagging was a case of “doing the right thing in the wrong way” and he was practically apologetic when he wrote an account of his round for the Club’s journal.

This came to a head in 1916 when Cecil Dawson went out and beat Wakefield’s record – or so he claimed. Dawson was a Manchester cotton merchant who specialised in Peak District ‘bog-trotting’. His legally-dubious walks over private land became so well known that he acquired a group of followers who christened themselves as “Dawson’s Crowd”.

Dawson added at least two extra fells from the Helvellyn ridge to Wakefield’s record. He returned to Keswick in under 24 hours and though he took ten minutes longer than Wakefield, this should not have mattered. However, the community took against him and the prevailing mood was not to endorse it as a record.

It is unclear who led this disqualification or for what reasons. Some evidence suggests George and Ashley Abraham assumed officiating duties, claiming that Dawson was not witnessed on every peak (where was his crowd?). But in all likelihood, this was technical cover for a deeper wound: the fact he completed his round during war time. Wakefield would have been preparing for the Somme offensive just as Dawson set out on his walk in June. By the standards of the time, this would have been considered a highly improper act.

Rightly or wrongly, Dawson developed a “pathological grievance” against this repudiation. For their part, the FRCC were unequivocal that they intended to play no part in refereeing so-called “racing over the fells”.

A SYSTEM OF MOUNTAIN ENDURANCE

By the time most fellwalkers have reached their physical peaks, Eustace Thomas had not even begun to climb the fells. In his late thirties, he was an unathletic Manchester businessman; by his mid fifties, he would be one of the most prodigious walkers of the interwar period.

He was only introduced to the Lakeland fells after the war. But some inner, ready-kindled fire must have been lit as within a year he decided to take on the Fell Record. In 1919, he made it round Wakefield’s course but not within the 24 hours. This led him on a personal mission to define a “system of mountain endurance”, to train body and mind for another attempt. He left no stone unturned – from training, to breathing, to nutrition, to sleep, to pacing: his method was the original marginal gains. (He would go on to apply these skills in other fields, most notably working with Roger Bannister to design lightweight shoes for the four-minute mile.)

Digestion was core to his approach, which led him to adopt a vegetarian diet and heavily restrict food intake in the weeks before the challenge, the intention being to cleanse the body of what he termed “fatigue products”. During the round, he favoured “liquid food” and...

“...the mountain gel of the time appears to have been a concoction of hot milk, egg and soda.”

In 1920, he succeeded in completing Wakefield’s round in a quicker time, thus taking the record. In what has since become a treasured tradition, Wakefield paced Thomas to break his own record. Unsatisfied with his achievement, he made a number of further attempts to add more peaks, acquiring a large support team who turned crewing into a regular summer holiday. But when the big day came it was all work and no play, as evidenced by an extract from the timetable (starting from the prior evening): “5pm, try [motor.] car; 5.30pm, meal; 6pm, bed; 11.35pm get up; 11.45pm meal, as per separate sheet, and rest; 12.30am, [travel to] Keswick, compare watches; 1am, Thomas starts, car keeps within call in case Thomas wants to decrease or increase clothing; 2.10am, leave road for Robinson summit, milk, one minute’s rest.” I need not go on...!

Thankfully, for man, team and plan, it all came good eventually.



Previous Page: Vintage photograph of Helvellyn over Thirlmere; Above: Wakefield (8th from left) when he was Medical Officer Mallory’s second Everest expedition in 1922.

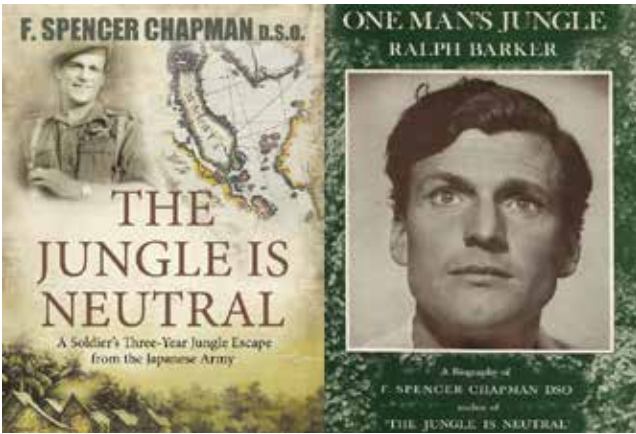
The 1922 season saw Thomas take the Fell Record to 29 peaks. In addition to Wakefield’s 21, he added Great Calva and the full set of fells along the Helvellyn ridge. As he returned to Moot Hall, Thomas decided to carry straight on after only the briefest of rests, heading up to the north-western fells to gain five further peaks. While this would not be achieved within the 24 hours, his object was to complete a continuous walk with a total climb in excess of 30,000 feet. This was far more than just a neat number; it was an intentional act to ascend by more than the height of Everest, perhaps even to subtly demonstrate that he could have performed similarly in the Himalayas. As it happens, Ken Heaton was the first man to reach this altitudinal mark within 24 hours, which he did when he extended the Fell Record to 51 peaks in 1961.

CHAPMAN'S 42 FELLS

A small number of unsuccessful attempts were made to beat Thomas’s record in the subsequent years, including by Bob Graham in 1931 (who failed owing to poor weather). The next notable assailant was Freddie Spencer Chapman, a man whose later career would involve the professions of explorer, mountaineer, soldier, schoolmaster and author. He was led to the Fell Record by Wakefield, who was keen to coax – and then coach – a hardy protégé from his alma mater so that a ‘Sedburghian’ could hold the record.

In May 1932, one month before Graham’s eponymous round, Chapman set off from Keswick for a circuit of 42 fells. This was a huge leap on Thomas’s 29 and – I surmise – based on a route developed by Graham for his abortive attempt the previous year. The additional peaks came largely in leg 3 after Bowfell; instead of heading down the Langdale valley, to Grasmere and then Fairfield, the plan was to stay on the tops and only descend at Dunmail Raise.

Going anti-clockwise, he was met on Bowfell by none other than Bob Graham, hot cocoa in hand and primed to pace him for the remainder of the leg. Sadly, Chapman flagged on the final leg, ultimately becoming enmeshed in bracken while attempting a shortcut down Skiddaw. He made it back to Moot Hall, just not within the time. But he was the first person to complete the Bob Graham Round of fells, albeit in 25 hours. Having come so close, newspaper accounts tell us “Mr. Chapman hope[.]s to make another attempt on the record in June.” In the end, he did not. Graham, on the other hand...



Chapman’s World War Two exploits inspired a number of biographical accounts ©Peter McDonald



BOB GRAHAM AND THE FELL RECORD

On 13 June 1932, Graham finished what Chapman could not manage and the Fell Record was taken to 42 peaks. The tale of his round is told splendidly in books such as ‘42 Peaks’, ‘The Round’ and ‘Stud Marks on the Summits’. However, a little-known epilogue is that, just like others before him, Graham was not satisfied with his achievement and sought to better his own record in 1933. His aim was to reach the landmark 30,000 feet by adding “two or three” fells from the Grasmoor massif. Frustratingly, he was beaten by weather on two occasions. His second thwarted attempt ended on Pike o’ Stickle, 22 fells and 12 hours into the round. Remarking to a local reporter, he reflected: “I enjoyed what I did do – and I feel fine.”

For our purposes, what is most interesting is how the histories of the Bob Graham Round and the Fell Record diverge at this point. Why did Bob Graham’s round become immortalised over any other?

There are, perhaps, three reasons. The first is the untiring commitment of Fred Rogerson, inaugural Chairman of

the Bob Graham Club. The second is the prominence of Graham in Keswick society and the fact he was – and still is – the person who has held the record for the longest period. Finally, by the early 1970s, competition between the Heatons, Eric Beard and Joss Naylor had pushed the 24-Hour Fell Record out of reach from all but a handful of gifted athletes.

In establishing the Club, Rogerson’s aim was to “keep the achievements of [Graham and his pacers.] alive, otherwise it might well have been another 28 years before any new attempts were made.” His nurturing of the BGR was a way to help maintain, promote and celebrate the challenge of 24-hour rounds, even if the actual Fell Record could not be furthered by mainstream contenders. With every successful completion, the round laid down stronger roots.

Nearly 100 years on, I suspect Bob Graham would be more than a little amused that his, rather than any other, round has been granted such iconic status. It is here to stay. Happily, so too is the Fell Record, reinvigorated by Kim Collison’s latest achievement.



AMPHIBIOUS AMBITIONS

WORDS MARTYN PRICE, SECRETARY, FROG GRAHAM ROUND CLUB

Welcome to what we hope will be first of a regular column detailing the background and activities surrounding the Lake District swim/run challenge known as the Frog Graham Round or FGR. There have been previous articles on this subject in *The Fellrunner*, these were largely personal accounts and detailed what was a relatively new challenge at the time. Now it's time to tell more of the story as it's something worth telling. "The Frog" has become much more popular over the last two years and I hope to give you some background on what is becoming a popular endurance challenge and test-piece among the fell-running community. If I manage to dispel some myths along the way, that will be nice too.

The Frog Graham Round was devised by Peter Hayes and his successful completion was on 14th May 2005. He first described it in his book *Swimhiking in the Lake District and North East England* (ISBN 978-1-9998871-1-7). Peter comes from a real fell running background; his father Mike Hayes was an excellent fell runner and indeed still gets out there aged 82 – I last saw him Walsh-shod and running on Ilkley Moor just before lockdown restrictions began.

Peter can't recall much of his dad's running history (*editor's note*: I bet Mike can), but says that his memory is of him always coming in after a certain J. Naylor esq in the Vets category and Joss scooping all the prizes, although he clearly remembers Mike getting a podium place in the Karrimor Elite one year. His younger brother John is a keen member of Ilkley Harriers and I see him and his wife Sarah regularly at local fell races where he always beats me without too much trouble.

Peter ran cross country as a boy and began fell running in his early teens. He helped out on a Dark Peak Bob Graham "train" in 1979 and really enjoyed it and this obviously sowed the seed for future ambitions. He ran extensively on the fells the following year and joined the Dark Peak ACW attempt in June 1980, but was in such a state of nervous excitement that it all went terribly wrong and he pulled out on the climb up Robinson – something that he claims is a contender for the earliest ever Bob Graham abandonment, perhaps one for the BGR 24-Hour Club to answer!

He launched another BGR attempt in early July 1980 but was defeated by bad weather, then tried again a few weeks later (CW) on 26th July and successfully got round, becoming member 173. Aged 16, he was then the youngest person to have completed it, however it wasn't an easy ride by any means, he was injured on one of the later legs and the pain became progressively worse over rough ground and slowed progress, so much so that when he finally dropped down to Newlands his supporters (Mike Hayes, Chris Worsell and Mick Eaton) thought he wouldn't make it in time and had given up hope. However, he practically sprinted the last few miles to finish in 23:40, slapping the Moot Hall in triumph. He says that knowing how bitterly disappointed he would have been not to go sub-24 after all that effort, when devising the Frog Graham Round he vowed that there would be no time limits and indeed, that remains the case today; as long as it's done in one continuous effort, you can take as long as you like.

He spent several years of his adult life in the USA but returned to the UK in 1993 to settle in the north-east. By that time a keen open water swimmer, in 1994 came a peculiar incident that was reported at the time in the Sunderland Echo: Peter had gone for a swim in

the sea, leaving his clothes on the beach. A well-intentioned passer-by had observed this and thought that he had witnessed Peter in the throes of a “Reggie Perrin” style attempt to do away with himself and called the police, who thoughtfully took his clothes away as evidence for the inevitable enquiry that would follow. As you might imagine, this left Peter in an embarrassing situation when he got back to the beach, refreshed and ready to go to work. I bet that took some explaining.

He claims this was what gave him the idea of using a “swimsac” and taking his kit with him on his long-distance swims and he started occasional experiments. The first was in Hayeswater. These experiments gradually became more ambitious and more frequent, until he began to define himself as someone whose primary sport was “swimhiking”. By 2005 therefore, he had already done a number of shorter routes in the Lakes and elsewhere and would surround himself with maps of an evening and plot out longer and still more ambitious routes, some of which involved overnight wild camping. He says he never really did manage to create a swimsac that would comfortably contain enough kit for overnight stays, so his swimhiking was largely limited to day trips. And thus, to experience the full potential of a Lake District swimhike in a day, the Frog Graham Round was born.

The route that he chose paid homage to the Bob Graham Round of course (Moot Hall, Skiddaw, Robinson) and he made every effort to take natural lines. He was already familiar with the lake crossings and most of the land route, but on the day still managed to go the “wrong” way up Barf via SCAPE Crag (a known MRT black spot) before retreating, and then a bad line down from High Stile, but as anyone who has done this will attest, I think we can forgive him for that. He also, incidentally, went between Skiddaw and Bassenthwaite via Ling How and at the end jogged back into Keswick via Friar’s Crag. Definitely the scenic route, but not the shortest.

It was several years before anyone else had a serious attempt at completing the Frog Graham Round. In 2014 Tim Mosedale – a well-known Keswick mountain guide and climber with several Everest summits to his name – completed the round in 15:59, followed a few weeks later by Keswick triathlete Craig Dring. Tim’s wife Ali was the first lady to complete a round a year later along with friend Fiona Groves. It was about this time that the round attracted the attention of Richard Walsh, an outstanding long-distance swimmer and IT consultant. He launched a website to document his own obsession with the Frog Graham Round and this eventually morphed into the fantastic website we have today.

For me, it was Richard’s website and Tim’s personal account of

the Frog Graham Round that gave me the idea of doing it. In typical fashion I recce’d every inch of it, worked out faster lines off Skiddaw etc and became member 006 on 23rd July 2016 after a tremendous day out, arguably equally as special as the day I completed the BGR (which had dominated my life for a couple of years). I didn’t stop grinning for weeks.

It didn’t take long for the round to attract yet more attention and Mike Vogler (Black Combe) very soon completed, closely followed by Steve Wathall. The FRA’s very own chairmain Charmian Heaton became member 009 and the first person to complete in 2017, followed by a whole slew of successful contenders. It was clear that the Frog Graham Round was now a thing and something other than just a clever play on words.

It was also about this time that we put the round onto a more formal basis. Peter was and is a very busy man and didn’t stand a chance of keeping up with the increasing admin load and IT burden, so happily ceded these responsibilities to Richard and me. It’s been an interesting and sometimes controversial job, but very rewarding and we’re all very pleased with the way “The Frog” has gained traction and evolved.

One of the big difficulties we faced was the cost of running the website. It gets a large amount of traffic and we felt it was essential in communicating the safety message. The cost was becoming prohibitive and Richard and I were faced with funding it ourselves or letting it (and probably the Frog Graham) quietly fade away. In the end, the solution was to charge a minimal fee (£10) for lifetime membership of the Frog Graham Round Club which included the admin cost of certificate production etc. It still didn’t quite fund our IT bill, however Pete Bland Sports generously stepped into the breach and we are very grateful for their support – we literally couldn’t do it without them.

We’ve tried to make the website the oracle for the Frog Graham Round. The most difficult part was (and is) defining and communicating the “spirit” of the round and we still get numerous questions on this subject. The basic ethos of the round is one of self-support both on the fells and in the water, however this is a very much a personal preference and categorically not something that we enforce. How an individual tackles the round is totally up to them and it’s perfectly acceptable to do a fully supported round in the same manner as a Bob Graham and be led across the lakes by canoe/kayak. However, most contenders do prefer a degree of autonomy and do their rounds in a partially supported manner. As an example, very few contenders swim all four lakes totally alone and this makes perfect sense from a safety perspective – particularly if swimming in the dark.

THE ROUTE

People frequently comment on how the round follows an elegant and logical, exciting route. As has been said, it pays homage to the Bob Graham Round inasmuch as Skiddaw is the first summit on a conventional ACW round and starts/finishes at the Moot Hall. Peter designed the route with certain restrictions in mind, largely so the swims would always be roughly along the same lines, and it’s for this reason that some of the mandatory points to visit are not fell summits. As an example, Bassenthwaite Church is CP2 after Skiddaw. How a contender finds their way between the two points is totally down to them.

There is a description of the route on the Frog Graham website, but we do recommend the Pete Bland Sports/Harvey Map in 1:40,00 scale as that has the recommended lines for any aspiring contender. Plus it’s waterproof.

One point that’s worth mentioning is that there is a very feisty colony of gulls in residence on Rampsholme Island and they don’t like visitors, so being dive-bombed by them is a regular occurrence. I first encountered this when doing a training swim across Derwentwater and kept thinking I could hear a child crying. The noise got progressively louder. I flipped over onto my back for a look and my view was filled with a very angry gull who looked like it was about to bury its beak in my head. It was all the inducement I needed to get a bit of a wiggle on. I’ve heard multiple reports of gull harassment since then, but no beak damage so far, thankfully.

Below: Martyn Price on the High Spy climb ©Emma Kicks; map of the Frog Graham Round ©Peter Hayes

Mandatory Summits/CPs

Start: Keswick Moot Hall

1. Skiddaw
2. Bassenthwaite Church
3. Barf
4. Lord’s Seat
5. Ullister Hill
6. Grisedale Pike
7. Hopegill Head
8. Sand Hill
9. Crag Hill
10. Wandope
11. Whiteless Pike
12. Rannerdale Knotts via Low Bank

[Bassenthwaite Swim]

13. Low Ling Crag
14. Mellbreak (southern summit)

15. Red Pike

16. High Stile (806m summit)

17. Horse Close

[Buttermere Swim]

18. Robinson

19. Dale Head

20. High Spy

21. Catbells

[Derwentwater Swim]

22. Otterfield Island

23. St Herbert’s Island

24. Rampsholme Island

Finish: Keswick Moot Hall



BIOSECURITY

The biggest issue facing the long-term future of the Frog Graham Round is, without any doubt, biosecurity. Both Bassenthwaite and Derwentwater are contaminated by INNS (invasive non-native species), and while Crummock Water and Buttermere remain pristine, it's crucially important that they remain this way. New Zealand Pygmyweed – or *Crassula* as it's known – is a particular problem and it would only take a tiny fragment of this invader to cause a major problem to the delicate ecosystems of the two "clean" lakes. Organised sporting events such as the popular BRECA Swim/Run in Buttermere have been banned and while we have not reached that stage yet with the FGR, serious concern has been expressed by various local authorities. Lots of wild swimmers enjoy swimming in these lakes, several local residents also earn their living via guided swims and it would be an absolute tragedy if all swimming was banned. Clearly we must make every effort for that not to become necessary.

The Frog Graham Round Club works closely with the excellent West Cumbria Rivers Trust and has come up with an agreed protocol to make cross-contamination between lakes impossible and I urge any contender to read the guidance on our website and to take heed. You should also note that we now require details of what biosecurity measures will be taken as part of the registration process. It's crucially important that we all pull together on this one and I beg your support.

CONTROVERSY

This is the tricky bit. Peter never envisaged this becoming an issue, but it was inevitable from the outset that the FGR was going to attract the attention of serious athletes and there have been some formidable performances and amazing times recorded. The controversy is that for several reasons we don't discriminate between unsupported, partially supported or fully supported rounds – if you meet the criteria and want to have your efforts recorded, we'll add you to the Roll of Honour. This policy has been met with mild disapproval from certain quarters who argue that for a record to be valid, it should be fully unsupported and it was this discord that led us not to recognise records on the website for a while.

We've rescinded on that and do actually recognise the fastest times nowadays as we believe that these outstanding efforts deserve to be recognised; what we don't do – and I'm afraid will not do – is to specify that for a round to be recognised as an record it has to be unsupported. The Frog Graham Round is not about the finishing time, it's a personal journey that can be accomplished however the individual likes and thus is the most inclusive of rounds – something

we hear echoed on a regular basis. I do hope this is appreciated going forward.

Underpinning it all is the fact that we never want contenders to compromise their personal safety; we're talking about a formidable challenge here and people should do what they feel best for themselves. As an example, we frequently have contenders who arrive at the shore of Derwentwater in darkness. Clearly, swimming across and finding all three islands is going to be a major challenge without some kind of guidance (canoe, kayak etc) and we categorically recommend this approach. The simple message is this: BE SAFE.

NOTABLE ROUNDS

I hesitated before writing this because to my mind, ALL successful rounds are notable, however some definitely stick out and deserve to be noticed. Dan Duxbury's 11:52 round in June 2018 was an indicator of just what could be achieved, while Jenny Rice and Kate Charles both went round a month or so later in 13:47 with just seconds separating them and were the fastest ladies rounds by some margin. Some people have used the Frog Graham Round as a key milestone in recovery from personal injury and illness and these are really impressive. Jane Reedy (Ambleside AC) went round in 15:15 in September 2018 when recovering from invasive surgery, chemotherapy, and radiotherapy for oesophageal cancer. She also had to undergo preventative surgery as a carrier of the BRCA1 gene, meaning she was at high risk of breast and ovarian cancer. Tom Phillips (Dallam RC) – already a completer of the "Big Three" in both summer and winter – survived a horrendous cycling accident on Buttertubs in September 2016 that resulted in him having an appreciable amount of titanium inserted in his back, it was touch and go whether he would walk again. He went on to complete the Frog Graham less than a year later in 13:57 which was just astounding; both truly amazing examples of what determination and fortitude can accomplish. It would also seem that age is not a barrier. In September 2018 no less a person than the legendary Wendy Dodds showed her pedigree (she was an outstanding swimmer when a young girl) to complete in 15:52.

While we don't recommend winter Frog Graham Rounds for obvious reasons, it was inevitable that people would one day try and for that reason we do recognise them, using the same criteria as the Bob Graham 24-Hour Club. Tim Mosedale was the first to complete on the 9th December 2018 in 24:13, but just a few hours later Rob Davison and Matt Rigby (both Dark Peak fell runners and very experienced open-water swimmers) completed fully unsupported rounds in 18:44. I still shudder to think how cold that must have been.

The current records for summer and winter are of course seriously noteworthy. Until very recently Ben Abdelnoor (Ambleside AC) held the record and was the first contender to dip under eleven hours in 10:55, but a chunk was taken out of that recently when Carlisle-based elite triathlete Richard Anderson (whose previous wins include the Helvellyn Triathlon) lowered the time to an astounding 10:25:06. Natalie Hawkrigg (Northern Fells RC) holds the record for ladies, she went round in July 2019 in a very swift 13:19. The current winter record is Simon Gray (Cumbria Police AC) in 11:49. All these are fantastic achievements.

TADPOLE ROUND

It would be wrong of me to finish without mentioning the Frog Graham's little brother – the Tadpole Round. This is a low-level circuit of Crummock Water and Buttermere that diverts through Rannerdale on the return leg and has proved incredibly popular, with approaching 100 completers as of September 2020. The nature of the round means it is suitable for under-16s to attempt as long as they have the appropriate safety equipment and are supervised by responsible adults. The youngest to complete is Ruby Duxbury who was aged just eight at the time. I hasten to add that many adults

have also completed the Tadpole and used it as a "warm-up" for the full and somewhat more challenging Frog Graham Round.

LOCKDOWN YEAR

Once lockdown restrictions were lifted we received a record number of registrations and as we draw to the end of the "season" we have had no less 25 successful, ratified completions and are rapidly approaching 100 members; quite a milestone for something that has only recently gained in popularity.

In closing I would like to stress that the Frog Graham Round remains a formidable challenge and not to be underestimated. If you are serious about attempting it you should have amassed some proper open-water swimming experience and practised the transitions from fell to water and then back onto the fell as it can catch the unwary by surprise. The Frog Graham Round Club has no authority and no remit, so our most important function is as a resource where people can find advice on the best way to approach the round in a safe and enjoyable manner and I hope we have achieved that.

Anna Carter swimming across Buttermere ©Mike Children

THE ISLE OF MAN AND COVID



Above left to right: Eleanor Miklos, 1st female Carraghan fell race, IOM ©Deniese Smith; Carraghan fell race, IOM ©Philip Crowe; James Coulson Laxey Race ©Philip Crowe

WORDS CHRIS KIRK

St. Patrick's Day seems like a lifetime ago now, but that was the week the Isle of Man stepped up its response to the developing Covid-19 situation. We had a race scheduled for Saturday 21st of March and as things were kicking off in the UK, we seemed to be fine, with our government holding a 'business as usual line' right up until the 11th hour. The race was cancelled at short notice as the orders were given that people had to do this new thing called social distancing and that groups of 4 or more were banned. Next to go was the 50th Anniversary Manx Mountain Marathon and the island was in step with the rest of the world as 'lock-down' took hold.

However, the decision to close our borders to all travel was to prove a game changer. The numbers of new cases started to drop, and we quickly found ourselves counting the 'zero days'. Confident that the island was in a state of 'local elimination' things started to improve quickly. First, we could meet outside with friends and family, then in larger groups in public spaces and finally we got the nod that

restrictions were to be lifted. So, on Monday 15th June, we moved towards our 'new normal'. Borders were still shut, but in our little bubble, we were pretty much back to doing what we were doing pre-lockdown.

So, we started racing!

We were the first club on the island to get a race on and have managed to re-start our Fell Running League by adding in extra fixtures. As restrictions were fully lifted, there were no additional procedures needed. Tubs of hand sanitiser were still seen kicking about, but we're currently back to sweaty post-race handshakes. We consider ourselves extremely lucky to have a government that made tough decisions and stuck with them. The cost? Well most of us have family and friends in the UK who we can't visit and who cannot come here. That stretch of water has never felt so wide. We don't know when the borders will re-open. That might change things...

SHROPSHIRE FELL RUNNING

is on the up!

WORDS DANIEL CONNOLLY

To many people, fell running is associated with the northern counties such as Cumbria, Yorkshire, and Lancashire. And to many extents, this is quite right because the history and tradition of fell running stems from these regions. I certainly love fell running trips 'up north' and to me, the Lake District epitomizes everything a fell runner could possibly want. However, I also love where I first discovered my passion for fell running. This place, historically, has not always been associated with fell running, but nowadays, this place has a booming community of passionate fell runners and has many top-quality races all year round. Several championship races have been held here in recent years and people are becoming more aware of the fantastic running potential in the region. This place is Shropshire.

Shropshire fell running stems from the 1970s, when an influx of northern fell runners came to Telford which was then a 'new town' offering a new, attractive environment for workers. These individuals laid the foundations of a new sporting community in Shropshire: the Shropshire fell running community. 'The Godfather' of Shropshire fell running is Paul Sanderson who is the founder member of Telford AC and has

been its secretary since 1976. Paul initiated the original Shropshire fell races: the Wrekin fell race and the Stretton Skyline. These are also, arguably, still the most iconic fell races in their respective areas which form the core training and racing grounds of Shropshire - these areas are The Wrekin and Long Mynd.

The Wrekin is a very distinguished looking hill on the outskirts of Telford that rises to a height of 407 meters (1,335 feet). It is a prominent and well-known landmark, signaling the entrance to Shropshire for travellers westbound on the M54. When driving to championship races in Shropshire or Wales, you are likely to have passed this wonderful hill. For fell runners, the Wrekin is often ascended by the highly runnable main path which has a steady climb for 2.1km and the potential for very fast downhill running. There are some very steep climbs and descents up and down the Goaty and South Spine. There is also a great variety of technical running with some exciting scree descents, alpine-like trails and BMX tracks. It is a fantastic area to train and race.

The Wrekin Fell Race is 8.8km/5.5 miles with 519m/1700 feet of climbing. It starts and finishes at Ercall Wood School, Wellington with a route that starts by climbing The Ercall, before descending to the Forest Glen; from there runners climb to the Wrekin summit and return by the same route. It is a fast and highly runnable race taking in some enthralling descents and arduous, varied ascents. The race record was set back in 1980 when John Wild, the 1981 and 1982 British fell running champion, ran 34.27. Carol Greenwood from Holmfirth, Yorkshire holds the women's record of 40.47 set in 1986. If any fell runners fancy a change of scenery and a classic AS race, then the Wrekin Fell Race is a fantastic option.

Jack Agnew ascending Caer Caradoc in the 2019 Cardington Cracker ©Charlie Leventon



Left to right: John Taylor of Mercia Fell Runners. 2017 Callow Fell Race ©Colin Williamson; Jez Brown of Buckley Runners, 2018 Breidden Hills Race. ©Colin Williamson



The Wrekin also hosts two other fell races. The Wrekin Streak is an eyeballs out effort up and down the main path that usually takes place in May. With a distance of 4.5km, and an ascent of 247m it has arguably one of the fastest descents of any fell race in the country. The record for the Streak is held by Tim Davies, the 2010 British champion, with a time of 16:38 in 2003. The Wrekin also hosts The Wrekin Wrecker which does exactly what it says on the tin. The Wrecker, hosted by Newport and District running club, takes place in November and is almost alpine-like in nature. It is characterised by undulating trails, steep climbs, and technical descents. Highlights include a descent down a steep scree gully often covered by leaves, a full throttle descent of winding BMX tracks, a steep climb of the infamous Goaty and a descent of the even steeper south spine before finishing on a mile of undulating trails. The course record stands at 00:55:10 by Michael James of Shrewsbury AC in 2006. For any fell runners keen for a change of scenery, competition and want a unique fell race experience, then the Wrekin is a great area to achieve this.

Moving on from the Wrekin to what is the main hub for 'fell' running in Shropshire: the Long Mynd. The 'Mynd' is characterised by steep valleys, hollows, and batches, with lots of highly runnable, fast terrain and some brutal although relatively short climbs. In recent years, the Long Mynd has hosted several Championship races including Stretton Six Summits, Long Mynd Valleys, and Stretton

Hills in 2019. Fell runners can now look forward to the first AL race in Shropshire, The South Mynd Tour. However, the original long race in Shropshire is unquestionably The Stretton Skyline.

The Stretton Skyline was the first 'fell' race in Shropshire, initiated in 1982. Again, organised by Telford AC, the Skyline is without a doubt the classic long race in Shropshire and if it did not cross the A49, I and many others are sure it would be a classic championship race. The 'Skyline' is a 19 mile / 30.5 km BL race with 1357m/4,450 feet of climb. It is characterised by 5 separate steep climbs and lots of fast runnable sections in between. The Skyline starts in Cardingmill before climbing to the highest point on the Mynd, Pole Bank at 516m. A long speedy section down to Little Stretton follows before 3 tough climbs on the ridges of the Mynd. The second half consists of fields, a gruelling climb up to the top of Mott Road before a speedy descent and sprint down Cardingmill Valley before finishing at Church Stretton football pitch. The course record stands at 2:17:57 by Ken West in a close fought battle with Steve Hughes in 1986. I would encourage any fell runner to try, what they would surely discover, is one of the best fell races in the UK. The Stretton Skyline is also suitable for road runners or cross-country runners due to the wide range of areas to safely drop out but also because of the runnable nature of the course.

The other major driving force in Shropshire fell running was formed in 1986 by Richard Day and David Smith – Mercia Fell Runners. The club was created with two overarching aims: to promote fell running in the Midlands and to allow Midland's athletes to compete for a fell running club in the same team. By 1987, the club had already established the Trig Points race (27km, 500m) on Cannock Chase which takes place in January and the Titterstone Clee race (4.1km, 229m). Eddie Harwood who established the Titterstone Clee race also wanted to create a longer race the next day, and so devised the classic brute of a race: Long Mynd Valleys (18.5km, 1370m). The Valleys race was used as a Championship race in 2017 and is renowned for having most of its 4500ft of climbing in the last 4 miles. For any fell runners looking for a good weekend, I would encourage them to participate in the Valleys weekend and take on both races; with rankings over the weekend marked with three times the Titterstone Clee Race added to the time taken to complete the Long Mynd Valleys.

The next race to come to Shropshire was the Cardington Cracker, initiated by Paul Ratcliffe of TAC in 1988, with a course change in 1995. Anybody who has ever come to Church Stretton has no doubt noticed the ridgeline of The Lawley and Caer Caradoc to the east of the A49 and every year on the first Sunday in December, the Cracker traverses this stunning ridge. With a distance of 14.5km / 9m and an elevation of 793m / 2602ft, this race also stays true to its name.

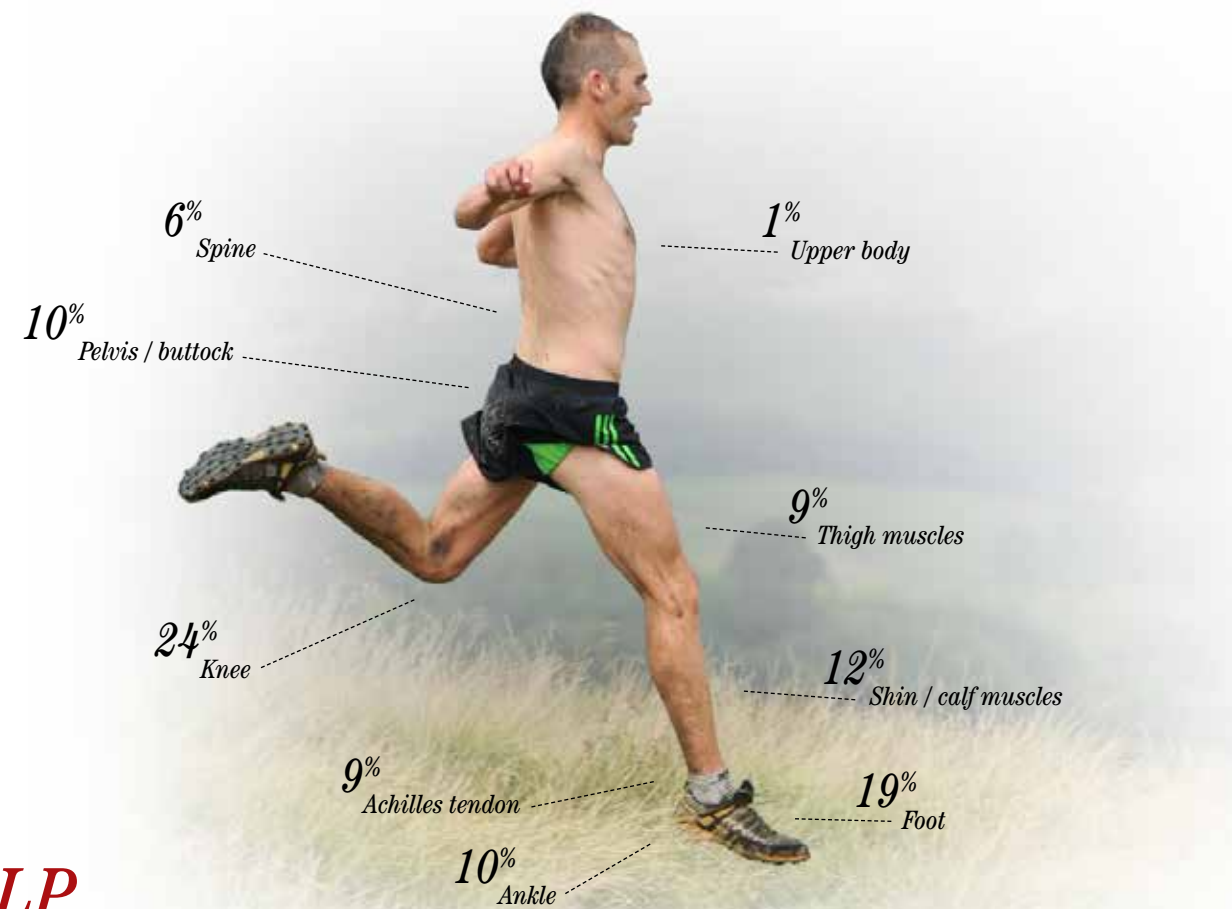
The race starts with a sprint to the first gate before an undulating run to the first major climb via open fields and woodland. Then the race truly begins as runners face a near vertical ascent of the Lawley. After reaching the Lawley summit, it is a fast descent before making your way to the next major climb of Caer Caradoc. The descent from Caradoc is one of the best in the region and finishes with a steep section and option to hop a fence. After climbing over the Gaerstone hills, it is a series of undulations until a speedy finish back at Cardington. The Cracker is a sure way to get your racing thrills in December and in the 9 miles, takes in some of the best running in the region.

Also, in 1988, a unique event to Shropshire fell running was initiated: the Little Stretton to Stiperstones Time Trial. The TT was devised by Charlie Leventon who organised it for 25 years before Phil Clarke took it on. As the name suggests, it is a time trial across Long Mynd from Little Stretton to Stiperstones and the route is determined by the individual. Tim Davies holds the record of 56:52 with a phenomenal run in 2005. However, this event is truly inclusive and has a range of categories including overall male, female, pairs, mixed pairs, and age categories.

More than 30 years later, Shropshire fell running has a wide variety of winter and summer races. There is a Winter Series which hosts seven classic Shropshire races spanning Shropshire and the Welsh borders. The series starts with the Breidden Hills Race (11km, 690m) on the Welsh border; this race has some of the most enthralling descents in the area including an interesting rocky section. The course record stands at 50.38 by Michael James in 2006. Thereafter, it's the Wrekin Wrecker, the Cardington Cracker, Titterstone Clee Race, Long Mynd Valleys Race, Carding Mill Canter and the Wrekin Fell Race. The Summer Series contains 8 classic short races that are held on summer evenings. The Summer Series is perhaps the ideal way to get started in fell running for those with children that would like to give it a go. They are also classic races in their own right. These series are supported by a range of clubs in the region including Mercia, TAC and Shrewsbury AC along with various individuals who make Shropshire fell running what it is.

Besides racing, Long Mynd even has its own round, initiated by Mercia Fell Runners. The Gill Harris Long Mynd Tops Challenge was created by Nick Kingston, one of the clubs founders, who thought it fitting to devise a new fell running/walking challenge on the Long Mynd in tribute to Mercian Gill Harris who loved the Long Mynd. It is designed to take in the 22 principal named tops in the National Trust open access area on the Mynd and starts and finishes in the centre square of Church Stretton. The 'tops' are to be visited in any order and there are numerous, interesting route choices. Nick's rough estimate is about 32km/20 miles and 1615m/5300' of climb. But the actual totals depend on how you change the route to add on more distance with less climbing, whether you go anti-clockwise and get the big climbs out the way first, and so on. The current records stand at 2:52 by Pete Vale and 4:24 by Helen Stokes.

In conclusion, I would encourage any fell runner to visit Shropshire and take on one of the many brilliant races on offer. And if any speedy runners fancy a challenge, there are several long-standing race records that need challenging. Long Mynd and The Wrekin are the main hubs for fell running but there are also the Stiperstones, Breidden Hills, Clee Hills and many other gems. Of course, the Shropshire fell running community would welcome you and you would experience the camaraderie of the local fell runners as well as fierce competition. Shropshire has a friendly community and some of the best running in the country. Shropshire fell running is on the up!



HELP YOURSELF!

A SELF-HELP GUIDE TO THE MOST COMMON FELL RUNNING INJURIES

PART 1

2020 has presented many of us with a new way of living, working, and exercising – and unfortunately, change due to whatever reason, alters the demands on the musculoskeletal system which can lead to injury. More road than fell running, more mileage, or a faster pace would all be obvious reasons, but sitting at a kitchen table whilst working from home, missing your regular gym sessions during your usual work lunchbreak, or just the lack of motivation due to the disappearance of races has affected everyone’s ‘normal’ routine.

The surge in new injuries along with the lack of face-to-face appointments resulted in many turning to the internet for advice. Unfortunately, this was usually more specific to road running than off-road running, and was often misleading, incorrect, or potentially dangerous. Consequently, I spent a lot of time at the end of a telephone line listening to frustrated, anxious fell runners who were unsure what to do about their injury. Some that suddenly had lots of time on their hands and could not run, or key workers who desperately needed to be able to run to clear their head. As a result, I decided to write a short guide about the twelve most common fellrunning injuries and what to do – or not do - to help yourself.

Photo above: The frequency of injured areas experienced by fell runners over a 6 month period (shown as a percentage), runner Lloyd Taggart ©Denise Park; Photo right: Pendle Fell Race ©Denise Park

Many ‘injuries’ have a gradual onset rather than a specific trauma such as a fall. If there has been an obvious trauma, it is often sensible to wait for 48 hours until the acute symptoms have subsided so the area can be assessed properly. Pain and swelling can make it difficult to assess soft tissue damage immediately after injury, so avoid a long wait in an accident and emergency department unless you feel it is essential. A sprained ankle can be excruciatingly painful immediately after the injury, but within 48 hours the acute symptoms settle, and it is possible to walk again. If bone or joint damage is suspected, do not delay in seeking medical advice. Fractures (broken bones) and dislocations often require further investigations such as an x-ray or scan to decide on the most appropriate course of action.

THE MOST COMMON FELL RUNNING INJURIES

In 2010, I carried out some research looking at various aspects of injuries encountered by fell and mountain runners. I documented the frequency, sites, possible causes, and types of treatments received over a period of six months, and specifically looked at injuries experienced by 156 fell runners. The percentage of injured areas experienced by these fell runners is highlighted in fig 1 and this, along with my own experience, has influenced the injuries included in this guide. However, there are many other possibilities, so this is not a replacement for seeking medical advice. If things do not resolve quickly with self-help, it is important to be assessed appropriately, preferably by someone who understands the sport and is knowledgeable about fellrunning injuries.

1. LOW BACK PAIN

Whilst up to 80% of the population can expect to experience back pain during their life, only 6% of the fell runners in the study reported that this was the reason they were unable to run.

Back pain can come on very suddenly, sometimes whilst carrying out an activity such as bending down putting shoes or socks on, or it can have a gradual onset – aggravated by certain positions such as sitting. The pain can be felt in the centre or to one or both sides of the back and may be referred to the buttocks or down one or both legs. Nerve involvement may cause the sensation of tingling or pins and needles, and there may also be a feeling of numbness or weakness of the muscles. As the nerves leave the spine they go to different areas of the body, so nerve symptoms often indicate the site of the problem. The muscles of the low back and buttocks often go into spasm, and it is common to experience sudden acute bouts of muscular spasm.

If the pain is severe, it is advisable to rest until the acute stage subsides - often for the first couple of days. It is not usually necessary to attend an emergency department at the hospital even though the pain can be very severe. A consultation with a GP may be sensible to exclude any other underlying cause of the symptoms, but also to access suitable medication to help with pain relief.

It is essential to seek urgent medical attention if you experience any of the following symptoms:

- The loss of control of your bladder or bowel
- Urine retention
- Numbness in the ‘saddle’ area between your legs (this is the area that would be in contact with the saddle if you were sat on a horse)
- Significant weakness of the muscles in your legs – such as the inability to walk on your toes or your heels.

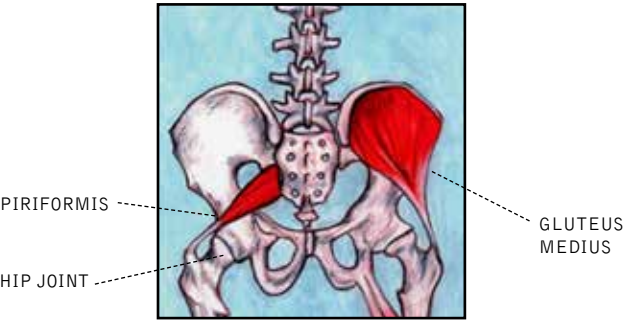
Avoid activities that aggravate or increase any symptoms, and if, for example, sitting, driving, or standing after sitting for a period of time increases back or leg symptoms, it would be sensible to spend



more time standing or lying until it becomes more comfortable to sit. Certain exercises, especially core stability exercises, can also increase symptoms, so only resume these once they do not have any adverse effect. Warmth, in the form of a heat pack or hot water bottle, can also help to ease any muscle spasm.

Once the acute pain has subsided, movement is important to assist in the recovery, so resume light activities as soon as it is comfortable to do so. It is safe to return to running whilst there is still some back discomfort, but begin by going for a walk and jogging a few steps preferably on soft ground to check that it does not increase any symptoms – either during the run or afterwards. Running can help to mobilise the spine and encourage normal movement again, so, as long as there is no adverse reaction, continue to walk and jog on alternate days and do not be frightened to gradually increase your levels of activity. Be aware of your posture whilst climbing uphill, as a flexed position could also exacerbate symptoms.

Most causes of acute back pain are mechanical, which means the various components of the back are not moving together quite as they should. There are several reasons why this might happen, so it is difficult to recommend specific self-treatment as this would depend on the underlying cause. However, if the acute pain is not easing after 7-10 days, or if the symptoms seem to be getting worse or radiating further down your leg, it may be necessary to seek medical advice or treatment. Also, if your movement remains restricted or painful when you bend forwards, sideways or backwards it would suggest an underlying problem which may require physiotherapy intervention to help restore more normal movement.



Posterior aspect of the pelvis showing the position of piriformis and gluteus medius ©Anna Anderson

2. PAIN IN THE BUTTOCK

A common cause of pain in the buttock is a condition referred to as ‘piriformis syndrome’, although medical opinion is that this is often secondary to a problem elsewhere - such as the low back. Consequently, treatment targeted at the piriformis muscle alone will often be ineffective or only offer short-term relief.

Piriformis is a muscle which lies underneath gluteus maximus in the buttock and helps to rotate the leg outwards.

Spasm or tightness of the piriformis muscle can compress the sciatic nerve as it passes through or under the muscle causing pain, tingling or numbness in the buttock or in the leg as far as the foot.

The pain is often aggravated by:

- running - on the flat, at increased speeds, over longer distances, or up / down hills,
- sitting or driving for long periods,
- going up or down stairs,
- stretching the piriformis muscle.

The muscle can be painful on palpation – but it is important to check the sensitivity of the other buttock as it is often a tender area.

Complete rest is not usually necessary unless the primary cause of the piriformis pain requires you to rest, but you should avoid any of the activities which increase the pain, or you could delay the recovery.

Possible self-treatments:

- Sit on the floor and place a tennis ball under the affected buttock. Roll across the ball until you find a tender spot and hold this position for 20-30 seconds. You can also cross the leg on the affected side across the opposite leg and rest it on the opposite thigh whilst doing this to help locate the most painful area. This can be done daily or on alternate days, but do not be too aggressive or it can cause further irritation to the tissues.
- After releasing the muscle with the tennis ball, stretch out the piriformis and gluteal muscles. This needs to be done for at least 5 minutes in total per week, and research suggests it is better to stretch for 1 minute on 5 separate occasions rather than just once for 5 minutes. The most popular stretches are:

i. Lie on the floor with both knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Cross the affected leg over the opposite bent leg. Gently pull the lower knee up towards the shoulder on the same side until you can feel a gentle stretch.

ii. Start on all fours. Bend the knee of the affected side forwards and take the foot across the front of the body and place the outer side of the foot on the floor so it is under the opposite side of the body and the knee is pointing outwards. Take the non-affected leg straight backwards but keep the pelvis straight. Lean forwards onto your forearms and take the hips towards the floor. Feel a deep stretch in the buttock.

- You need to be able to hold your leg in a good position whilst running, so if the muscles in the buttock aren’t strong enough to maintain a good position your thigh will often rotate inwards, putting you at risk of this injury or a recurrence of the problem. Single knee dips, bridging with a resistance band around the knees, the clam and monster walks, will all help to strengthen the buttock muscles to avoid this injury.

- Check your footwear. If your running shoes are worn or have lost their support, it may also cause more strain through the piriformis muscle and can cause the symptoms to recur despite treatment

3. PAIN ON THE OUTSIDE OF THE HIP

In fell runners, pain experienced on the outside of the hip is usually due to damage of the soft tissues located in that area – mainly tensor fascia lata and gluteus medius (see diagram) – but it is often (wrongly) assumed to be due to wear and tear of the hip joint.

In road running, the gluteal muscles may be damaged because they are not strong enough to maintain good pelvic and knee alignment during the repetitive running style. However, in off-road running, the tissues are more commonly damaged by the postural challenges of running over rough, undulating terrain rather than a repetitive running style. Contouring around a hill side or running down a mountain when fatigued at the end of a run or race can make it difficult to maintain a good pelvic position, which puts the tissues on the outer aspect of the pelvis at greater risk of injury. I have seen many runners who have been advised to strengthen their glutes to resolve these symptoms, but when the tissues have been damaged, they often require treatment to mobilise any scar tissue which is present before the muscle can be strengthened.

Pain on the outside of the hip used to be referred to as the ‘catwalk injury’ as fashion models damaged the tissues when they ‘dropped’ their pelvis sideways as they walked down the catwalk. Damage can also be caused by activities such as carrying a child on one hip or when carrying heavy items on the top of one shoulder and shifting the pelvis sideways. Do not always assume this is a running injury even though the pain may be worse whilst running. The aggravating factor could be something you are doing during your daily routine.

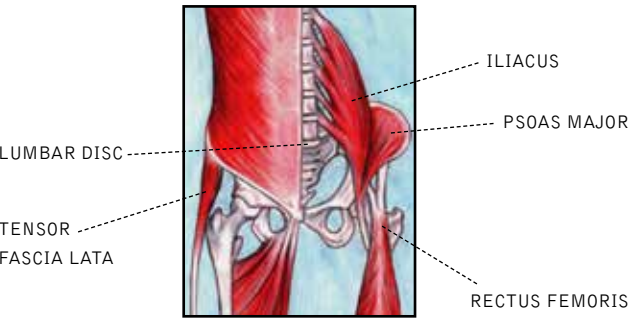
As fell running isn’t a repetitive style of running, orthotics, which are often used to help correct alignment for road runners with this injury, may not be appropriate. If your injury has been caused by, such as, contouring around a hill side, it is unlikely that you need orthotics to correct your running style. However, if the pain is particularly severe, supportive footwear or insoles can be used as a short-term intervention to help reduce the stress to the damaged area.

Treatment is often necessary to mobilise the damaged tissues, but

it is not an easy area to self-massage. I developed this injury some years ago, and I was unable to treat myself. It is possible to use a tennis ball to self-massage, but it can be an extremely sensitive area and it is difficult to apply the massage in the right direction.

Once any scar tissue has been mobilised, it is important to maintain and/ or improve the strength of these structures. Fell runners often question how they can possibly have weak muscles when they run up and down hills regularly, but whilst the muscles may not be weak when compared to the general population, they may not be strong enough to cope with the increased demands and terrain of fellrunning.

You can assess the strength of the tissues by performing single knee dips in front of a mirror. Place your hands on your hips, then stand on one leg and bend the knee until it just covers the toes of that foot. Check if your hands on your pelvis stay level and if the kneecap continues to face forwards as you lower. Return to standing then repeat this for a total ten times to see if you continue to control the alignment. If you are unable to maintain the alignment, it might be beneficial to do some strengthening exercises to help avoid a recurrence of the problem. Start by doing single leg dips with just a slight drop until the control improves and then gradually increase the amount of knee bend. Increase the repetitions until you can carry out 50 ‘controlled’ dips. This can then be progressed to hopping and hopping on and off a step – all whilst checking knee and pelvis alignment. As with piriformis syndrome, bridging with a resistance band around the knees, the clam and monster walks, will also help to strengthen these muscles.



Anterior aspect of the pelvis showing the position of tensor fascia lata © Anna Anderson

4. PAIN AT THE FRONT OF THE HIP OR GROIN

The groin is regarded as the area between the lower abdomen and the front of the thigh, but a ‘groin strain’ often refers to damage to the adductor muscles which squeeze your legs together and are located on the inner aspect of the thigh.

Pain located at the front of the groin can sometimes be referred from the hip joint, but it can also be caused by damage to the

muscles which are referred to as the hip flexors. These muscles consist of psoas, iliacus, and rectus femoris (which is also one of the quadriceps muscles in the front of the thigh). Fell running puts extreme demands on these muscles as they must work hard in a shortened position to lift your leg on a climb and then lengthen to allow you to stride out on a flatter section or a descent.

If it is painful to lift your foot up onto a step, it is likely that the hip flexors are the cause of your symptoms, but if pain at the front of the groin is aggravated by rolling the thigh inwards, it is possible that the pain may be referred from the hip joint. The hip flexors can be gently stretched out by taking the affected leg backwards to extend the hip, and then also leaning backwards to extend the low back. Psoas crosses the front of the hip and also inserts into the lumbar spine, so both the hip and low back need to be extended to stretch the structures effectively, but do not be aggressive and do not do this to excess as the tissues need to repair and you could keep irritating them. You should also shorten your stride until the symptoms ease.

If the pain remains it would be advisable to seek medical advice. The front of the groin is a sensitive area and is also the site of some very important structures such as the femoral nerve, artery and vein, so if some scar tissue needs addressing, it should be done by someone with appropriate experience rather than trying to self-massage.

Spending long periods sat at a desk also puts the muscles in a shorter position, so care must be taken when taking a break from a desk to exercise. Start with a walk or a warm-up routine to allow

the tissues time to adapt to an upright position.

Hill reps will help to strengthen the hip flexors, but take care combining hard uphill training with extreme descending until the tissues have become used to coping with these changes in posture.

Avoid Surgery Unless Absolutely Essential

When I carried out my research 10 years ago, fell and mountain runners reported that 93% of their injuries resolved with either physiotherapy treatment, self-treatment, or no treatment at all. Only 5% required surgery, and this was often due to fractures which required internal fixation.

The pandemic has meant that many consultations are now taking place over the telephone or via a video-link rather than the usual face-to-face appointment. The diagnosis is then often made on the basis on a scan or x-ray report rather than a physical examination. Given research has shown that up to 60% of soft tissue injuries are not visible on a scan image, injuries can be missed or mis-diagnosed. Also, scan reports often throw up false positives which are things which appear abnormal but are not the cause of the current symptoms.

In the book *'The Lore of Running'*, Professor Tim Noakes suggests – “the diagnosis of most running injuries is made with the hands, so the advice of any caregiver who does not feel the injured site before making a diagnosis must be made with caution”. Whilst this may be difficult in the current circumstances, do not rush into any form of surgical intervention unless it is absolutely essential.

this could indicate more serious nerve damage. He also had a phone consultation with an NHS physio who said in normal circumstances he would be referred for an MRI scan, but this was now not possible for at least a further 12 weeks. She also suggested his symptoms were too severe to begin any exercises and it was not possible to attend for any treatment. It was at this point I received a call. My physiotherapy practice was closed, but I was still at the end of a phone.

Mr M's pain, pins and needles, numbness and weakness in his leg suggested there was nerve impingement in his spine which was becoming increasingly more serious. From the information given over the phone, I suspected Mr M had a prolapsed disc in his lower back, but because of the impact nature of the injury, there was a possibility there might have also been some bone damage. I suggested we tried to get an MRI scan of his lower back as a matter of urgency and advised him to avoid sitting as much as possible to minimise the loading through the base of his spine. His GP became involved once again, and a few days later an MRI scan ruled out any bone damage but confirmed a moderate L3/4 disc prolapse with compression of the L4 nerve. The scan report also recommended an urgent referral to a neurosurgeon.

The neurosurgeon carried out a video assessment when he confirmed he would normally operate as a matter of urgency, but the current situation meant he did not want to risk Mr M being admitted to hospital. He decided to delay the spinal surgery and instead gave me authorisation to treat Mr M in

order to avoid hospitalisation – which was permitted under the pandemic guidelines.

Following the first treatment, the symptoms began to alter, and Mr M felt he could move around more easily. He continued to improve and four weeks after commencing treatment he was able to lift his foot off the floor and walk comfortably without causing any increase in back discomfort, his only remaining symptom. The Neurosurgeon requested I continued to monitor his progress, but over the following two weeks he resumed normal day to day activities with no return of any symptoms, so was discharged.

The onset of this condition was probably when Mr M was aware of back pain whilst bathing his daughter. The sudden impact of his bike wheel going down the hole then probably caused the disc to prolapse. A spinal disc is like a jam donut, with the pastry being the outer casing and the jam being the inner nucleus of the disc. In simple terms, the outer casing split and the 'jam' was forced out against the nerve. Because the symptoms were progressing, the disc material was putting more pressure on the nerve which could have potentially caused permanent damage, which is why the opinion of the neurosurgeon was recommended.

Luckily, Covid-19 avoided Mr M having spinal surgery, but if you experience anything similar to this case history, it is crucial that you seek urgent medical advice.

MR M'S BACK PAIN

A few weeks earlier Mr M had experienced some back pain whilst bathing his 2-year-old daughter, so he contacted his GP who advised him to take painkillers. The pain totally resolved over the following week, so he put it out of his mind and resumed all normal activities.

A few weeks later, he was out on his bike when the front wheel went down a hole. As he was pulled forwards, he felt acute pain in his low back. He managed to get home, but the pain became more debilitating and he was unable to stand or walk without excruciating pain. The following day, he could feel pain down the front of both legs plus his right foot was 'tingling'.

He contacted his GP again who recommended further painkillers hoping that the symptoms would ease as previous. Despite medication, over the next few days the pain became more severe and he was unable to stand or walk more than a few steps. He was still aware of the pins and needles sensation in his foot, but his right leg was also beginning to feel numb and he was struggling to lift his right foot off the floor. On the advice of his GP, he attended his local A&E department but was unable to be assessed appropriately due to the Covid-19 pandemic. He was advised to contact his GP for further medication but return to the department if he began to experience any bladder or bowel symptoms as

We will continue to look at more of the most common fellrunning injuries in my next article.

CLINIC UPDATE

I am delighted to announce that Sarah Tunstall, international fell and mountain runner and Chartered Physiotherapist, will be joining the clinical team until 2021. The combination of myself, Sarah, Russel Wrigley (Chartered Physiotherapist specialising in rehabilitation), and Victoria Wilkinson (Sports and Remedial Masseuse), now offers an amazing team of therapists specialised in the diagnosis and treatment of fell and mountain running injuries.

Denise is a Musculoskeletal Chartered Physiotherapist based in Clitheroe, Lancashire and is the FRA Accredited Physio.

She started working with fellrunners in 1989, becoming physio to the England Mountain Running Team in 2004. Receiving recognition from the WMRA (World Mountain Running Association) in 2008 for her work with elite international runners, she is world renowned for her knowledge of fell and mountain running injuries

MARTIN STONE'S

LONG DISTANCE ROUND UP

OCTOBER 2020

WORDS MARTIN STONE



It has been a most extraordinary Summer of long distance records. Once free from lockdown and with no fell races left on the calendar, the mountain running community has indulged in an unprecedented frenzy of amazing challenges. The result is a staggering number of new records and some new challenges. I'll need to be brief as there are more than 35 challenges that I'm aware of.

NO MORE FKT – PLEASE!

Call me an Old Fart but I really dislike the acronym FKT with a vengeance. What happened to the good old mountain running record? I accept that FKT is quite a descriptive way of describing something you're not 100% sure is correct or true but if an achievement is clearly a record, then let's call it a record – not yet another term that we've adopted from the States. We have our own heritage, history, way of doing things and describing them. Brits have been chasing records in the mountains for more than 150 years. FKT's have only been around for maybe 20 years. End of rant!

CLARIFICATION OF GUIDELINES FOR LONG DISTANCE MOUNTAIN RECORDS

To be clear, record attempts by individuals should be without physical support provided by pacers while the contender is moving, unless the contender intends to retire. Physical support to climb Broad Stand on the Bob Graham has traditionally been provided and this is the only exception!

Timing needs to be to the second from now on as we head into the realm of marginal gains. The support team should record the Start and Finish time of day to the second using a device such as a mobile phone with a clock that automatically synchronises during the attempt. The time recorded should NOT rely on the contender starting and stopping a stop watch as this is often poorly managed.

Modern Android and Apple phones do NOT come with a Clock App that displays seconds. Please bear this in mind before the attempt and unless you have other options, download the lightdotnet.digitalclock app from the Google Play Store or My Digital Clock app from Apple App Store.

FRA LONG DISTANCE AWARD NOMINATIONS 2019/20

In any normal year three or four achievements would be considered by the panel. This year is cruel because 11 worthy contenders have been shortlisted and we are really grateful to 10 of them for providing great articles that you can read elsewhere in the magazine. I will list the multi-day achievements first and then the 24 hours challenges.

DONNIE CAMPBELL – SELF-PROPELLED 282 MUNROS RECORD

Started on 1st August at 06:00, finished 2nd September 05:02. Time 31 days 23hrs 2mins 48secs reducing Steve Pyke's 2010 record of 39 days 9hrs. Completed in 81% of Spyke's time and 23% faster. Amazing final 2-day gallop to the finish.

JOHN KELLY - PENNINE WAY RECORD

An American in Bristol, but to us an honorary Brit! Started on 13th July at 10:00 from Edale and 2 days 16hrs 46mins later arrived at Kirk Yetholm, breaking Mike Hartley's 31-year-old record by 34 minutes. An amazing struggle with really serious stomach issues.

JOHN KELLY – GRAND ROUND (BIG 3 AS A CONTINUOUS DUATHLON)

Only 31 days after his PW, on August 17th two different worlds of amazing sport came together. Paddy Buckley Round 22hrs 7mins, 167 miles by bike from Capel Curig to Keswick 12hrs 44mins, Bob Graham 23hrs 40mins, 231 miles by bike from Keswick to Fort William 19hrs 2mins, Ramsay Round 34hrs 43mins. Transition time 18hrs 27mins. Total time 130hrs 43mins for this epic! The furthest John had ever cycled before this was 160 miles. He was pummelled by Storm Ellen for the 2nd half of his Ramsay Round. Completely epic and inspirational. But wait until you hear the amazing plans John has for this Winter and 2021.

DAMIAN HALL - PENNINE WAY RECORD

It's the old adage of two buses coming along at once – in this case within a week and after a pause of 31 years! By contrast to John's intense battle with his stomach, Damian appeared to float serenely south from Kirk Yetholm to Edale (opposite way to John and same way as Mike Hartley) in a time of 2days 13hrs 35 mins. This reduced his friend, John's time by more than 3 hours. This leaves John with unfinished business for 2021. The main protagonists have now decided that heading south gets the Cheviots and Cross Fell ticked off early and leaves easier terrain later for tired legs.

SABRINA VERJEE – LADIES' PENNINE WAY RECORD

Started Saturday 12th September at 06:00 and finished 3 days 2hrs 28mins later. Strong headwinds for the first 150 miles, some rain, then hot and beautiful to the finish. Moral of the story is definitely head south but choose a period of calm or an unusual period with winds coming from the north.

Only 2 months earlier Sabrina completed the 214 Wainwrights in 6 days 17hrs 51mins. A severe knee injury from about half way made it almost impossible to descend the steepest fells. She battled on but the physical assistance required from her pacers on some descents meant that she couldn't claim the completion as a ladies' record. Sabs is planning to try again next May and is praying for a journey free of injury. #TheCurseOfTheWainwrights.



Above: Sabrina Verjee on her 214 Wainwright round before a crippling knee injury ©Steve Ashworth, Main image: Donnie Campbell on his 282 Munro round ©Steve Ashworth.

HOWARD DRACUP - LAKELAND 2,500 (STEVE PARR ROUND) RECORD

Started on Thursday 17th September and completed the round with 117 miles and 36,000ft ascent in 42hrs 36mins. He broke Steve Parr's 36-year-old record by 19 minutes. Not bad for a plan put together and executed within a week.

Kirsty Hewitson became the first lady to complete the route on 29/31st August in a time of 52hrs 37mins. Paul Wilson completed the round on 24/25th July in 47hrs 35mins. Joe Faulkner completed a variation of the route which he named the Parr61 in mid-October in 67.5 hours.

FINLAY WILD – RAMSAY ROUND RECORD, SOLO UNSUPPORTED

On 31st August, Finlay reduced Es Tresidder’s 2019 record of 16hrs 12mins to an astonishing 14hrs 42mins. Running anti-clockwise, he carried everything apart from water and his immense talent made this beautiful and pure approach to setting records possible. From now on it will be marginal gains only for this round!

Finlay has stayed close to home this year he set the following remarkable local solo unsupported records which cemented his preparation for Ramsay Round – Classic Ring of Steall 27th June 1hr 57, Lochaber Traverse 30th June 3hrs 32, Mamores Round 8th July 4hrs 49, Mullardoch Round 6th July 7hrs 40, Tranter’s Round 15th July 9hrs 5secs, Round of Glencoe 13th October 6hrs 35. Mind blowing stuff!

MATTHEW ROBERTS – PADDY BUCKLEY RECORD

On 29th July Math completed the second quickest round in 17hrs 37mins and missed Damian Hall’s 2019 record by 6 minutes. Almost exactly a month later on 30th August, Math reduced Damian’s record by 53 minutes to 16hrs 38mins. Karl Gray, also of CVFR, completed the 2nd fastest round in 17hrs 28mins on 20th September supported by Math and many of the same team that supported Math just 3 weeks earlier.

ALEXANDER (SASHA) CHEPELIN - SCOTTISH MUNROS 24 HOUR RECORD

On 1st August, Sasha and Ali Masson set off hoping to extend Jim Mann’s Record of 30 Munros which he completed in July 2017 in 22hrs 5mins. With two hours in hand, Jim had clearly left scope for improvement. One extraordinary detail of Sasha and Ali’s attempt was that almost every member of the team was age 23 or under and had a close association with Edinburgh University and Carnethy Hill Runners. If ever there was a case of the youngsters teaching adults how to set records! Ali unfortunately had to retire near the end with an injury but Sasha powered his way to a new

record of 32 Munros, 95 miles and 26,000ft ascent in 23hrs 10mins. The two new additions to the record were Ben Avon and Beinn a’Bhuird. Read all about it at <https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/Forum/viewtopic.php?t=98872>

KIM COLLISON – LAKE DISTRICT 24 HOUR FELL RECORD

On 11th July Kim added Fleetwith Pike, a 78th peak to Mark Hartell’s 1997 tally of 77 peaks. His time was 23hrs 45mins and another longstanding 23-year-old record bit the dust. In recent years Adam Perry had made numerous attempts and come within minutes of beating Mark’s record - but life is cruel!

Joss Naylor once held The Pennine Way, the Lake District 24 Hour Fell Record and the 214 Wainwrights record!

CAROL MORGAN – LAKE DISTRICT 24 HOUR LADIES’ FELL RECORD

On 31st August Carol completed 65 peaks, adding Grisedale Pike to Nicky Spinks’ 2011 tally of 64 peaks. She arrived back at Braithwaite in 23hrs 57mins with the finest of margins – less than 3 minutes to spare. Nail biting stuff.

BETH PASCALL – LADIES’ BOB GRAHAM RECORD

Although well known for her trail running successes, few were aware that Beth Pascall could move so swiftly across the rough fells. Her extraordinary 14hrs 34mins BG, some 50 minutes faster than Jasmin Paris in 2016, left us all with a sense of awe. Only her coach, Martin Cox, was convinced that she would achieve such a time – the 5th fastest ever. She wrote “A few weeks before the attempt I ran all the legs at sub-Jasmin pace on my own and I didn’t always have someone to drop me off/ pick me up. I did 1 & 2 on one day, 4 & 5 the next (starting and finishing at Honister), had one easy day, then did leg 3 (and back) the next. Martin Cox knows exactly how to give us confidence, that’s for sure. I thought this preparation would be the obvious thing to do.”

END OF AWARD NOMINATIONS FOR 2019/20

STOP PRESS

The FRA Long Distance Award for 2019/20 has been awarded jointly to Donnie Campbell and John Kelly. The two runners received an equal number of votes from the 28 members of the Long Distance Panel. It has been an extraordinary year of long distance mountain running and in any normal year, each of the nominees could have been expected to receive the award.

GEORGE FOSTER – 2nd FASTEST BOB GRAHAM EVER

It is no coincidence that George and Beth both hail from the Martin Cox Racing Stables. His time of 13hrs 44mins on 11th October made him the first Brit to run the BG faster than Billy Bland, some 38 years earlier. Like Beth, he had also done some suitable preparation two weeks earlier. On the Friday he ran Legs 1 & 2 with Jacob Adkin in 5 hours and on Saturday he ran legs 3, 4, 5 from Dunmail to Keswick on his own in 8.5 hours. Then he jogged a few miles home to Thornthwaite. What a way to give yourself the confidence to run a BG on a 14-hour schedule. He reduced Billy’s time by 10 minutes.

JAMES FORREST – 214 WAINWRIGHTS SOLO SELF-SUPPORTED

James set off on 24th August and completed a self-supported continuous hike in a time of 14 days & 11 hours. Hiking alone, with no support crew or pre-arranged help, James carried all his kit and camping equipment in a large rucksack. He occasionally resupplied with food and gas that he had previously stashed in secret locations along the route. James battled all manner of brutal weather conditions. He wild camped on remote fells, and also slept overnight in a cave, barn and church. The previous self-supported record was 25 days.

MEL STEVENTON – 214 WAINWRIGHTS LADIES’ RECORD

Mel set off on 10th September but she sustained a shin injury within a few days. Sound advice, treatment and realistic days made it possible for her to manage the injury. She completed her journey in 13 days 12hrs, having been paced by record holders Steve Birkinshaw and Paul Tierney, also Sabrina Verjee only a few days after completing her Pennine Way record.

TIM RIPPER - LAKELAND CLASSICS (TIM RIPPER) ROUND

Tim devised a round from Wasdale to Wasdale which included the Wasdale, Ennerdale, Buttermere, Borrowdale, Three Shires, Long Duddon & Langdale fell races. He set off from Brackenclose on 25th September and completed the 107 miles with 52,000ft ascent 54hrs 47mins later. The weather throughout was clear and settled.

KARL GRAY & KEN TAYLOR – JOSS NAYLOR TRAVERSE RECORDS

On 18th August and in heavy rain, wind and mist, Karl Gray reduced the previous record by 48 minutes to record a time of 9 hours 32 mins. In true fell running style, he was also paced by the previous record holder Andrew ‘Scoffer’ Schofield.

At the age of 73, Ken Taylor completed the traverse on Sunday 23rd August in 14hrs 21mins, also in awful weather.

HELEN BROWN & DAMIAN HALL – SOUTH WALES TRAVERSE RECORDS

Helen set the ladies’ record for this 75 mile/17,000ft route on 26th September in 18hrs 48mins.

Damian had clearly recovered well from his July Pennine Way and on October 15th he spent the day chasing Dan Doherty’s 2017 record. It was a beautiful, cool & breezy day and clear on almost every top. After much grafting and a nail biting last few hours in darkness, Damian hurtled down off the hills to Llanthony Priory, arriving with the smallest margin of 5 minutes inside the record. His time was 14hrs 13mins. Shorter daylight hours in October certainly made the challenge harder.

GEORGIA TINDLEY – ABRAHAM’S TEA ROUND LADIES’ RECORD

On 11th October Georgia sped around the Tea Round in an incredible 6hrs 7mins. The route is 30 miles and 12,000 ft of ascent. This was Georgia’s first attempt at the route but now she has her eyes on a sub 6-hour time.

JOSIE GREENHALGH – 26 LAKES, MERES AND WATERS LADIES’ RECORD

Started on 29th August and completed the 100 miles and 20,000ft ascent in 33hrs 39mins.



Above: Josie Greenhalgh (centre) on her Lakes, Meres and Waters ladies record ©Stephen Wilson www.grandddayoutphotography.co.uk; Previous page: John Kelly on his Grand Round ©Steve Ashworth

JACK SCOTT – SOUTHERN UPLAND WAY RECORD

Mike Hartley established a record of 55 hours 55 mins for this 214-mile route across Scotland in 1988. The record has stood for 32 years until 11th October 2020 when Jack Scott reduced the time by 13 minutes to 55hrs 42mins. The route is coast to coast from Portpatrick in Galloway to Cocksburnpath on the east coast near Berwick-Upon-Tweed and it has about 27,000ft ascent.

KRISTIAN MORGAN – SOUTH WEST COAST PATH RECORD

Ultra-runner and running coach Kristian Morgan from London set the record for completing the South West Coast Path, Britain's longest National Trail which is 630 miles and 115,000ft ascent. He set off on 13th September and completed it in 10 days 12hrs 6mins, shaving more than 3hrs off the record held by Damian Hall, which was set in 2016. Kristian ran day and night with the help of a support crew. Before this challenge, Kristian had completed 130 marathons, ultras and 100-mile races. He now has plans to try for the record on the 2190-mile Appalachian Trail in the USA.

JAMES STEWART – JOHN MUIR WAY RECORD

On 5th July James ran the 134-mile route from Helensburgh on the west coast, through Edinburgh, and finishing at Dunbar on the east coast at more than 6mph, completing the route in 21hrs 53mins. This reduced the record by 7 hours.

TOM HOLLINS – DALES MOUNTAINS 30

Set off on 11th July and completed the first circuit of 30 peaks in the Yorkshire Dales National Park - 130 miles and 30,000ft ascent in 41hrs 18mins.

STEVEN SHIELDS & AOIFE MUNDOW - DENIS RANKIN ROUND RECORDS

The Denis Rankin Round was established in 2014 and is a circuit of all 39 tops in the Mourne Mountains over 400m, covering 90km and 6500m in ascent. In 2020 Steven set the record of 13hrs 37mins and Aoife the ladies' record of 19hrs 12mins.

JO MEEK – NIGEL JENKINS DARTMOOR ROUND RECORD

The route is approx 80 miles with 13,000 ft of ascent and was first completed about 21 years ago by Nigel Jenkins in 18 hours. On 15th August Jo completed it in 14hrs 39mins, not just the Ladies Record but she reduced the overall record by 92 minutes.

MIKE JONES - PEAK DISTRICT BOUNDARY WALK RECORD

Mike began the 300km challenge at Ringinglow on 5th June running clockwise and completed it 58hrs 41mins later.

WILL BIRKETT – CLASSIC ROCK RECORD (SOLO, NO ROPE)

The round combines 34 miles of running between 15 multipitch Classic Rock routes, involving 70 pitches up to VS and 4300m of ascent. Since April 2019, over four and a half hours have been shaved off Chris Fisher's time of 15 hours 25 minutes due to numerous attempts by Will Birkett, Calum Coldwell-Storry and Tom Randall.

In August, less than three weeks after Tom Randall reduced the time to 12hrs 2mins, Will Birkett of Ambleside reduced it by 12 minutes, setting a new unsupported record of 11hrs 50mins. But he suffered through lack of food and water - he knew he could do better. Tom returned on Friday 18th September and beat Will's record with a time of 11hrs 10mins. But he was rudely awoken next morning at 4.30am by a message from Will saying that he was going to try and break Tom's new record that day. In perfect conditions, Will clocked a staggering 10hrs 41mins and Tom's record was gone in less than 24 hours. Will's journey started at Walna Scar car park and finished by climbing the Shepherd's Crag classic Little Chamonix, where his dad was waiting to see him finish. A few minutes later Tom Randall arrived to congratulate Will and give him a lift back to his van at Walna Scar.



Kelli Roberts nearing the top of King's Chimney ©Pete Rigby

KELLI ROBERTS - SKYE RIDGE LADIES RECORD

In mid-August, Kelli set the ladies' record for the Cuillin Ridge Traverse with a time of 5hrs 56mins, despite soaring temperatures and the risk of dehydration. Speed attempts are measured from Gars-bheinn to Sgurr nan Gilleann and aspirant Cuillin Ridge record baggers need to visit all the summits and climb the main pitches on the Traverse.

FRA LONG DISTANCE AWARD – NOMINATIONS PLEASE

I (Martin Stone) keep a register of Long-Distance Individual Fell Records and rely on those who set new records to keep me informed. If you complete a long distance mountain challenge that you think would be of interest, please send a schedule and brief details of any record-breaking run to martin.stone@sportident.co.uk so that others can be inspired to repeat or improve on your achievement.

The Award is presented annually and is not restricted to FRA members, although the recipient must be resident in the UK. It is for one or more long distance mountain achievements within a year and the majority of the journey/s should be on foot. Performances in races are not considered. The award year ends on 30th September and in the first part of October, I canvass a panel of about 25 long distance 'enthusiasts' and previous award winners. They review the list of outstanding performances and a suitable recipient of the award is chosen. The winner is usually presented with the award in November at the FRA Annual Dinner.

If we are to consider solo running achievements, they need to be independently verifiable and a good way to do this is to record your track on a GPS watch or carry a tracker that you can obtain from www.opentracking.co.uk. As soon as possible after a record-breaking solo run, please email the track to me and I will add it to the archive.

WWW.GOFAR.ORG.UK

Tony Wimbush has an excellent website that documents long distance routes and records. If you have completed a new route or have something newsworthy about the long distance scene, please help Tony to keep the website up-to-date by also sending an email to info@gofar.org.uk

Joss Naylor Lakeland Challenge

WORDS IAN CHARTERS

The easing of restrictions which came into effect in England on 4th July was both welcome and encouraging. The situation in Cumbria, as elsewhere, remained fragile and with this in mind Joss considered the 4th of July to be too early to start accepting attempts. Three weeks later, on 21st July, Joss was happy to have the Crossing reinstated with a couple of additional requirements and with a reminder that social distancing guidelines were to be adhered to.

The additional requirements restricted pacers, with one pacer per leg being preferred and not more than two are permitted. The tradition of previous completers meeting contenders to provide encouragement on their way to Greendale Bridge remained suspended and Joss did not intend, routinely, to be at Greendale Bridge to congratulate completers.

At the time of writing I have received details of 11 successful Crossings since July and although I know of others, I don't yet have their details. My congratulations to Andy Robinson (M65), Emma & Charlie Pascall (W65 & M70 respectively and who ran together), Tim Laney (M60), Stu Stoddart (M50), Jonathan

Whitaker (M55), Helen Price (W50), Ken Taylor (M70), Rebekah Beadle (W55), Bob Halstead (M60) and Darren Fishwick (M50). Ken Taylor's Crossing on 24 August is worthy of special mention because it was competed in 14:22, almost 4 hours quicker than the previous fastest M70 time of 18:15 achieved by Rainer Burchett on 8 August 2009.

Regrettably we are unable to hold the Presentation Dinner this year, but plans are in place to hold the 2021 Presentation Dinner at The Bridge Inn in October. Details will be confirmed nearer the time.

Ian Charters is a member of Bowland Fell Runners with an active interest in many things outdoors.

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(Please enclose an SAE)

Helen Price (W50) descending Red Gully (Kirk Fell) her way to a successful completion of her Joss Naylor Lakeland Challenge, with her husband Martyn Price leading the way and support runner Dave Harrison ©Simon Franklin

DARREN FISHWICK

JOSS NAYLOR

LAKELAND CHALLENGE



WORDS DARREN FISHWICK

PICTURES JIM TYSON

I've often heard the good folk of Yorkshire referring to Wadsworth Trog as 'The Beast'. At 19 miles and 3650ft of predominantly undulating moorland it's certainly a challenging early season endeavour; especially when taking into account the ungainly stretches of energy sapping bogs and tussocks that are frequently experienced throughout the route. Unquestionably, it's fair to say 'The Beast' is a nickname that's well and truly justified.

The Joss Naylor Lakeland Challenge traverses 30 summits whilst covering a distance of 48 miles and climbing 17,000 feet. The Joss is often regarded as a Bob Graham for the older generation, as all contenders must be at least 50 years old. Upon completion of the challenge: a schedule sheet signed by a supporter from each leg, a receipt from a charity donation and the age category of the contender are a few of the requirements needed before an attempt is formally validated. Once all the boxes are ticked the new member will receive an engraved tankard at the annual Presentation Dinner - what a fantastic incentive. I'll drink to that... cheers!

Whenever I'd spoken to family and friends outside the running community about my intentions of attempting the Joss, I wasn't surprised by the general feedback. Basically, the majority said, "you must be bloody mad, have you nowt else better to do at your age". I suppose that unless you're a fell runner, it's a concept that's hard to comprehend and those who question why we do these things wouldn't understand. I guess, "people will try and put us down, just because we get around. I'm not trying to cause a big sensation; I'm just talking about my generation".

There was a time I had the same age-related misconceptions...

Many years ago, I worked with a bloke called Clifford. Through my naive adolescent eyes, I looked upon him as being a doddering old bugger. I thought he was ancient, he was even older than my parents, he must've been at least 50. In my defence, Clifford was as equally judgemental towards myself. Through his bifocal spectacles, he looked upon me as being nothing but a nuisance. For he was the master and I was the apprentice. From day one our working relationship was tarnished, based solely on first impressions. Clifford conducted himself with negativity whenever in my presence, he couldn't help but take offence at my unkempt mane of long dark hair - he considered it a health and safety risk within the workplace.

I was told that unless I had it cut to a reasonable length, I'd be sarcastically known as 'Sweetheart'. Undeterred by verbal bribery and in homage to heavy metal, my mane remained, albeit tied back into a ponytail - only adding fuel to Clifford's fire.

He was true to his word and when teaching me the art of carpentry would never miss an opportunity to say, "watch and learn Sweetheart, watch and learn". I'd retaliate by shortening his name to Cliff, as he found this presumptuous and irritating. One particular day I was instructed to get cakes for the lads from the works canteen. I duly obliged and on my return I placed the sweet baked goods at the end of my workbench. My colleagues were all thankful, except Clifford, who demanded I hand delivered his cake - I point blank refused. He bellowed out, "Sweetheart bring me my cake". I remained firm and stuck to my guns, to the increasing annoyance of Clifford. Eventually he reluctantly made a move towards my bench, where upon his arrival I smashed his cake to smithereens with my mallet. To say he wasn't happy is an understatement, I thought he was going to have an aneurysm. In an act of role reversal I simply said, "calm down Sweetheart, you'll get your knickers in a twist". Clifford exploded with rage and chased me into the machine shop, where he promptly 'kicked the s*** out of me' - back in the 80's this was considered reasonable behaviour. To give Clifford some credit, I didn't expect someone of his age to move so fast. Moral to the story: age is but a number, it's attitude and determination that really counts.

On the morning of 28th December 2019, I initially thought I'd awoken to the sight of my wife gazing adoringly in my direction. My illusion was shattered the moment Alison said, "when are you gonna use the nose and ear trimmer I bought you for Christmas?". And a good morning to you, I replied. She then congratulated me on my 50th birthday and asked how does it feel to be officially old? I shrugged and asked how does it feel to be in bed with an old man? Touché...was her swift reply. When later surveying the unwanted hair growth protruding from my nostrils, we discussed various factors synonymous with the ageing process. Sagging skin is a particular concern, but I'm sure that when the time arrives we'll soon get to grips with low hanging testicles and swinging breasticles. Unsurprisingly, we both came to the same conclusion - it's s*** getting old. However, at least I can now attempt a Joss Naylor Lakeland Challenge.

The night before my attempt I had an early one, I didn't even stay up to watch Gardeners' World - apparently Monty Don reaped the harvest of his vegetable patch. Usually Friday night is a favourite time of day because Monday feels so far away. I more often than not sleep really well in anticipation for the weekend. Unfortunately, I didn't sleep particularly well, I was nervously excited about my imminent attempt at the Joss. Unlike Monty's vegetables, I wasn't rejuvenated, especially when the alarm sounded at the ungodly hour of 2 am. In my sleepy state I'd not accounted for the hazards involved when carrying breakfast in both hands whilst turning on a wall mounted light switch with my chin. A wayward strand from my beard had become entangled within the switch, causing me to jump back startled. Potential disaster involving a bowl of porridge and a large steaming hot mug of coffee was miraculously averted by sheer luck over skill - thankfully bare flesh was spared from the scolding spillage. After informing Alison of the near miss she seemed more concerned about the potential damage towards the living room carpet.

We finally arrived at Pooley Bridge two and a half hours after leaving home. It feels like I've obtained a repetitive strain injury after waving a frustrated clenched fist at the abundance of traffic diversions. Pooley Bridge resembled a building site due to the construction work surrounding the much - anticipated new bridge. I said to Alison, "how long does it take to build a bloody bridge?".

Seemingly, not as long as it's taking me to redecorate our conservatory. Thirty minutes before my 6 am scheduled start and the village car park started filling up. Keswick's Craig Smith and supporters were in attendance, they left at 5:45am for Craig's successful sub 12hrs attempt...well done pal, you absolutely smashed it. Ambleside's Gary Thorpe and supporters were also present. Along with my supporters the car park became a hive of activity whilst everyone made last minute preparations. My positive demeanour is a mask for the nervousness hidden deep within as recent recce runs drew attention to the fast pace required for a sub 12hrs completion.

LEG 1 - Pooley Bridge to Kirkstone Pass 16 miles 3000ft

SUPPORTERS - Mark Irving, Tim Ripper & Mae the dog.

Head torches were removed before the start, but I leave my jacket on, I hope I still feel the benefit once out of the village and onto the fells. We're joined by Gary and his supporters. It's a relentlessly

fast pace and every split on my 11hrs 57mins schedule are being comfortably met. Gary's navigator Billy Idol (sorry I mean Dan Duxbury, it's an easy mistake to make) says he's never been involved in a Joss Naylor Lakeland Challenge Race before. It certainly felt that way as Gary and me ticked off the 12 summits along the route. Tim's navigation was faultless, Mae the dog made it look effortless and my mate Mark was priceless.

TIME TAKEN ON LEG - 2hrs 38mins.

LEG 2 - Kirkstone Pass to Dunmail Raise 8 miles 3200ft

SUPPORTERS - Guy Illingworth & Harvey Lord.

Alison served me tomato soup then promptly said, "stop chatting and get it down, you've not time to be faffing about it's not your Bob Graham". My wife's instructions were still ringing in my ears as I noticed how quick the pace remained whilst climbing Red Screes. Harvey leads us on a great line off the summit, Guy and me talked about our shared interest in the veteran English rock band UFO.

When running down towards Grisedale Tarn, Harvey regaled us with the legendary tale of Dunmail - the King of Cumberland. His crown resides in the murky depths of the Tarn and whoever retrieves it will be crowned the new King. I didn't have time for a mythical treasure hunt, but Guy and Harvey had already made me feel like royalty.

TIME TAKEN ON LEG - 1hr 52mins.

LEG 3 - Dunmail Raise to Sty Head 11 miles 4900ft

SUPPORTERS - Carl Bell & James Harris.

Alison served me beans, delicately sprinkled with grated cheese - fine dining par excellence! Recently whilst on a recce with Carl, he started running up Steel Fell. I enquired what he was doing, he said "I'm just tapping away, I find it easier than walking". I reeled him in and explained that at my level we don't 'tap away' up steep hills, we walk...he laughed and 'tapped away' at my walking pace.

During this leg I started to struggle with fatigue, especially over the boggy ground from Steel Fell to Rossett Pike. Both Carl and James had noticed and kept me going by discretely increasing the pace whenever needed. However, I envisaged the safety net gained on the early legs was fraying fast. I tried to remain positive but I'm left thinking, "this positive thinking malarkey is s***" ...which kinda defeated the object. Thankfully once on the rougher ground

between Bowfell and Great End I started feeling more at home. It's during this leg I noticed Gary and his supporters started pulling away. Gary eventually completed his Joss a few minutes before me - well done pal.

TIME TAKEN ON LEG - 3hrs 32mins.

LEG 4 - Sty Head to Greendale Bridge 13 miles 5000ft

SUPPORTERS - Carl Bell & James Harris.

No stopping, I go straight into the climb up Great Gable. Carl and James have saved me a logistical nightmare by continuing onto the next leg. Carl continues to 'tap away' up the climbs whilst leading the way. James continues by my side offering food and drink. Great to see Craig Stansfield whilst we descended Gable, unfortunately I've not time for a chat but Craig understands. We came down the gully coming off Kirk Fell where I grazed my hand slightly. My next bag of Hula Hoops metaphorically rubs salt into my wound and it stings like billy-o. Whilst making our way to Pillar I looked at my watch and thought, "blimey Karl Gray would be finished by now". (Karl broke the record a few weeks ago - approximately 9hrs 30mins) A highlight of this leg was going down the scree coming off Haycock, even though I ended up carrying half the hillside inside my shoes....it literally gave me a much needed spring in my step. On the final climb up Middle Fell,

I asked Carl if supporting me had brought back memories of the time he helped pace Kilian Jornet on his record-breaking Bob Graham? Apparently I was miles faster.

James nodded his head in agreement and we all laughed. That's what your supporters are there for, to keep up your spirits. They certainly did, in abundance!

TIME TAKEN ON LEG - 3hrs 40mins.

OVERALL TIME - 11hrs 42mins...beltin!

At the finish my wife greeted me with a heartfelt hug. Alison whispered into my ear, "your dad would be proud". It was only 3 weeks to the day that my dad passed away following a recent illness. During this difficult time I found solace whilst on training runs but felt like I'd done nowhere near enough running in the hills. Completing the Joss, especially under the circumstances feels extra special. Many thanks to each and every one of my amazing supporters for making it happen - especially Alison for always being incredible.

Finally, thanks to the great man himself Joss Naylor for turning up. He'd even prepared a gift at the finish - influenced by a photograph I'd posted a few weeks ago. Referring to the photograph, I'd heard that cold water immersion can aid muscle recovery following exercise. I had a brainwave whereby I customised one of our household recycling bins and turned it into a cold-water treatment facility. I added Fairy Original as it's the gold standard of washing-up liquids and unsurprisingly it coped admirably with bin residue. I then added rubber ducks for company after my wife refused to join me...in no uncertain terms. Apparently Joss loved the photograph and filled his own bin for me to submerge my tired legs at the finish. My leg one supporter Tim Ripper's daughter supplied the rubber duck. Thanks to Charmian for showing Joss my photograph, I doubt he participates in Facebook. I don't participate in hero worship, but for Joss...I make an exception!

So, there you go, a somewhat unorthodox view on the Joss Naylor Lakeland Challenge. I've not tried to cause a big sensation, I've just been talking about my generation, for this is my generation, baby!

Who's next?



WORDS GARY THORPE

GARY THORPE

JOSS NAYLOR

LAKELAND CHALLENGE

For those who nosily read the end of books first, it took 11 hours and 34 minutes. My advice to anyone contemplating it, is don't put it off until you're nearly 57 and make sure you're prepared because it's not that easy.

Darren Fishwick (Chorley AC and chuckle merchant) had been recceing leg 2 seven days earlier and was preparing to go at the same time on the same day. I joined him on that recce to test myself out, as my knees had been sore for a while. It was a final fitness test. Dropping off Seat Sandal certainly stretches the knees and we'd run the leg well under schedule. My knees were okay so it was game on! My wife Becky had me on an anti-inflammation diet and by the big day I was miraculously fixed.

After that recce Darren was saying that whilst he'd missed his 100 races due to COVID, he really missed the chat, craic or banter. It's the important glue that holds fell running together. Without it, you wouldn't get that bond that drives the selfless support on the fell or by the roadside.

Arriving at Pooley Bridge, Darren was there sorting his finishing touches. At the last minute we chucked away the headtorches for the 6am start.

Leg 1 felt breezy and rushed. Twelve tops in 2:35ish and hardly any walking. It's all time-checking rat-a-tat-tat!! Darren and his posse were close by and kept their social distance. Matt kept me hydrated. There was no navigation required really, having covered leg 1 with Dan in support of vet 60 Roger Laycock on his recent 12:47 crossing. On that day, I ran in Dan's wife's trail shoes, as mine lay in a car at Grasmere. A mistake I did not repeat!

Ambleside AC's Neil McKenzie was head chef at Kirkstone car park. A comfortable chair, luxurious porridge, Coca Cola, and sweet coffee. Four minutes and we were off again.

Darren took a shorter stop and gulped down some soup. Presumably a Chorley breakfast, it's 8:40am.

On the climb to Red Screes Dan continued on leg 2 with Daz Moore waiting at the summit. Daz injects enthusiasm into you whether you like it or not. He should be sold as a vital accessory. Dan and his clever lines ensured that we arrived at Dunmail bang on time.

Twas busy at Dunmail, but a great atmosphere. Lou Osborne, Carl Bell and James Harris came and had a word whilst Paul 'Corny' Cornforth and stalwart Leigh Warburton were limbering up ready. Neil shovelled food down me.

Darren, arriving a few minutes after, employed a formula one pit stop again.

"What you had this time?" I enquired as we climbed Steel Fell. "Beans!" Replied Darren.

Glad I'm not behind him on this bit I thought.

The sloppy ground through to Rossett Pike was draining after all the fast-moving excitement earlier on. A twinge of cramp came and went. Corny and Leigh fed me well.

Road support Neil relieved by Helm's Steve Baker for taxi duty for the leg 2 lads, made it to the foot of Bowfell with his beloved coke.

Fell runners inspire fell runners! On Mike Robinson's recent Joss the heat was almost unbearable. Supporting on leg 4 I saw how he combatted the demons and after a quick lie down, Mike got up and slaughtered the rest of the leg. So how could I complain about a touch of cramp and fatigue?

Leigh, Neil and Corny delivered me to Sty Head safely and shot off to Seathwaite or Langdale.

Bill Williamson the leg 4 specialist shoved a banana down me with the talented Chris Richards looking to learn more about the western fells. My shivering son 17-year-old Alfie turned up in his shorts. "Wear something warm! I could be late" were my last words to him. It's been quite something for Alfie to volunteer for leg 4. He's been out running with us on Thursdays for three months and in the early weeks lagged way behind. Just lately he's started thrashing us soundly although he remains committed to his football team. It was worth doing the Joss just to be able to have him with me through those last eleven miles.

Great Gable, Kirk Fell and Pillar are leg 4's big obstacles. For me, when they are out of the way, you can relax a little. Bill weaved his way around the leg with his usual accuracy. On Seatallan, I dug out my stash of crisps and coke, but Alfie seemed keener than me.

From Middle Fell, Chris looked on in wonderment at the majestic and dramatic western fells. His enthusiasm reminded me of what initially drew me to these places all those years ago. I did my first fell race in the 1970s, as a junior, and it seems like a lifetime ago. I guess it almost is.

At 5:34pm we arrived at Greendale Bridge where Joss was ready to greet Darren and myself. A gentle touch of the elbows and a few words was followed by a few pictures with our families, friends and pacers.

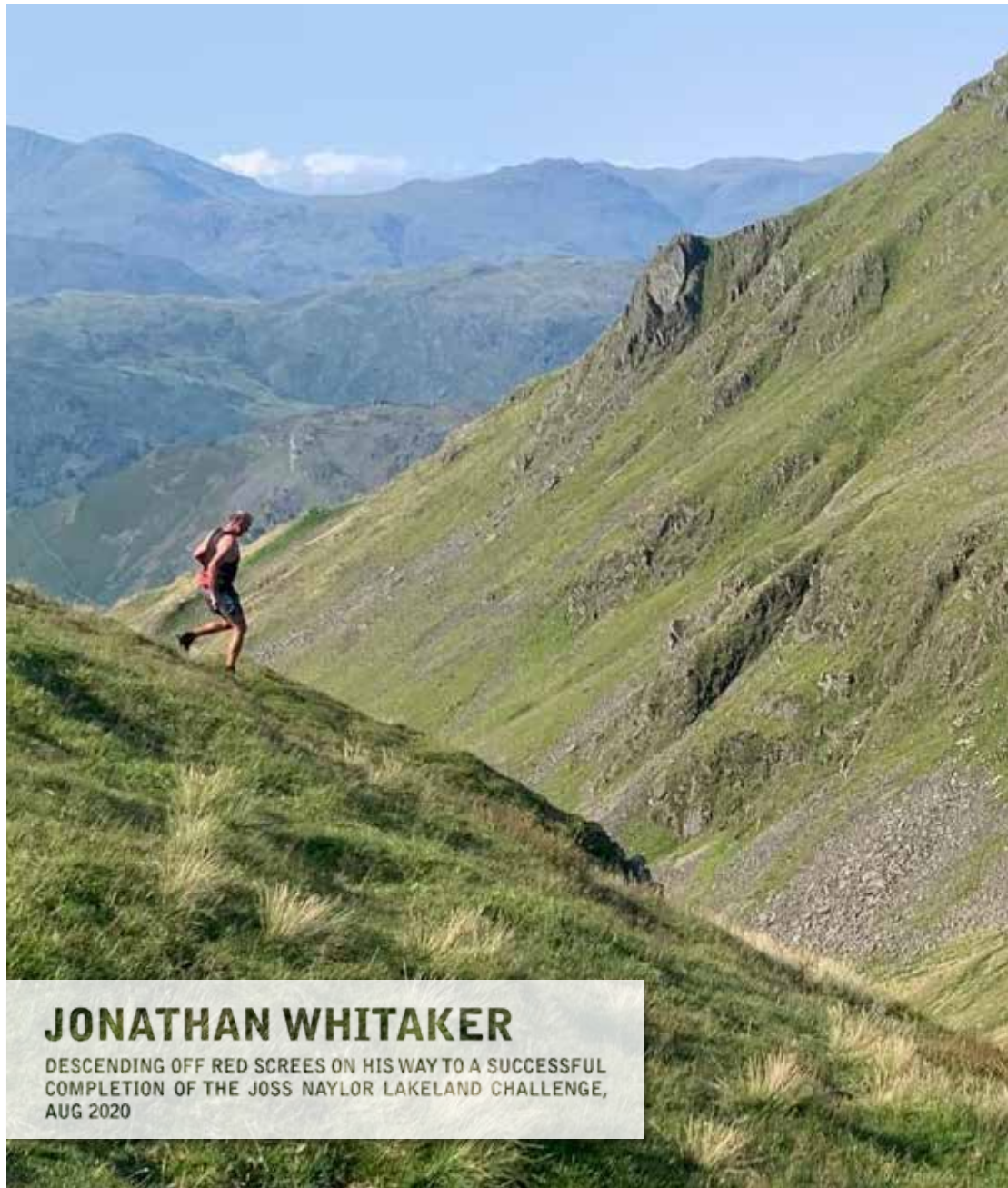
Just 8 minutes later Darren rolled in with pacers Carl Bell and James Harris. After I'd offered him my elbow, he heartily shook my hand off. I agreed with him that this challenge feels tougher than a BG but not just because we are older though. You cannot afford to slacken off much until maybe the final three tops.

But it's a grand day out. Though only possible if you are well supported. In my case, by Neil McKenzie (road support/leg 3), Matt Beresford, (Leg 1), Dan Duxbury (legs 1 & 2), Daz Moore (leg 2), Steve Baker (Red Screes, road support), Leigh Warburton, Paul Cornforth (leg 3), Bill Williamson, Chris Richards and Alfie Thorpe (leg 4). Becky Thorpe for reducing the inflammation via diet.

I've raised a few quid for the North West Air Ambulance by completing the challenge.



Previous page: Gary leaving Dunmail ©Paul Cornforth. Above, top to bottom: Descending Great End©Neil McKenzie; Gary and his son, Alfie on Middlefell ©Bill Williamson; Gary with his leg 4 pacers and Joss Naylor at the finish ©Rebecca Thorpe



HILARY HALLEN

8000TH MEMBER OF THE FRA

The call on my land line was unexpected. I deliberated whether to answer it or not, then on balance decided I ought to. The lady at the other end asked me if I'd just joined the Fellrunning Association. I gulped. How did she know that? Was she watching the house? Had my computer been hacked? She introduced herself as Charmian and explained that I was the 8000th member of the Fellrunning Association and I'd won a prize! As someone who never wins the office raffle (or any other raffle for that matter) I nearly fell through the floor. I had won a £100 voucher for some inov-8 fellrunning shoes.

Ironically 13 years ago a friend bought me a book called Feet in the Clouds and I had been excited and inspired by the tales of the Bob Graham Round, and characters such as Billy Bland, Helene Diamantides and Mark Hartell and ... Of course, it had come to nothing and the book had been returned to my bookshelf. But when I received my welcome pack and it contained a commemorative 50th anniversary magazine containing all those names and photographs I wondered why it all seemed so familiar. The yearbook also had an instantly recognisable front page - Chrome Hill and Parkhouse are two local peaks which we use as training walks for our longer distance treks. It was all meant to be.

I was asked to write a short piece about what made me click the button that prompted the call from Charmian. Well, I had been road running on and off for a number of years, but my hip had started to hurt a lot more as I trained for the Chester half marathon. I completed the Chester half as a virtual run and decided to switch to the hills instead, feeling that it may be a bit easier on my hip.

What are the best bits? Well apart from the gorgeous views and the feeling of peacefulness when you are up on high ground with skylarks above you, it has to be the shouts of encouragement I receive from people as I stumble past. I've had comments like 'I wish I could do that' and 'I take my hat off to you' which is all a huge boost. They all kindly overlook the sweaty, bird's nest hair, red face, and general appearance of someone moments away from a heart attack.

So, what did I buy with my lovely voucher? I eventually settled on the Roclite G 275 after Matt at Peter Bland Sports recommended them - they are lightweight and have a 8mm drop (not that I knew what that meant when I bought them) and are a good all-rounder. I live reasonably close to the Staffordshire Roaches so I thought I could test them out on rock, peat, and turf all at the same time.

Where did they go on their maiden voyage with me? Well, it seemed only fitting that they should return to their spiritual home - Cumbria - so we whizzed up to Buttermere at the end of September and I changed into them sitting by the side of Bleaberry Tarn then headed up Red Pike. My husband, Simon, kindly carried my rucksack and walking shoes for me, hardly grumbling at all. They were fantastic! Great grip and super lightweight.

A big thank you to The Fell Runners Association and inov-8 for their generosity.



Hilary, the very proud owner of a pair of new fell running shoes, at the top of Red Pike just after Simon had gratefully returned her rucksack to her ©Hilary Hallen

AN INTERVIEW WITH ED GAMBLE

FRA WELFARE OFFICER



Ed Gamble (Cheshire Hill Racers) battling it out with Matt Dunn (Holcombe) on the descent from Jubilee Tower ©Woodentops

FRA Welfare Officer, what does this mean?

Making sure all our members are content and as happy as possible within our races and their clubs and acting as a point of contact for any runner with a welfare-related concern.

How did you get into fell running?

I'd come from a team sport background. However, the onerous hours of a junior doctor had severely limited my opportunities. I'd always done a bit of road running to keep fit. Back in the 90s, medicine was very hierarchical. My boss's mountain marathon partner had failed to recover from a vasectomy. Following the ward round, the conversation moved to who would replace him and that I looked a young fit lad. So I was volunteered (ordered) and that weekend I competed in my first mountain marathon. I totally loved it, as did my boss and so my careers, both vocational and sporting, were sealed in the bogs of the Mourne Mountains.

What do you enjoy most about the sport?

Initially, I was drawn to the friendliness of everyone. It's like a welcoming family. I loved seeing the same faces at a lot of races. Everyone treats you as an equal. I remember Holmesie (Ian Holmes) and his wife befriending my sister and to this day he always asks after her. I also love the earthiness and simplicity of the sport, a total antithesis to my working life. It's so refreshing.

What does your role involve?

The welfare role is threefold. First, it's to sort out any disputes involving members, though luckily everyone is pretty friendly, sensible and non-confrontational. Secondly, I'm involved in developing FRA guidelines (especially for juniors) and often this is very interesting, having to collate information, coming up with a plan and then taking it back to the committee. Finally, I act on behalf of the accused in disciplinary matters, although to be fair most members are fairly contrite and take their medicine. Non FRA members on the other hand...

What are your best fell running achievements?

As a one off race, Arrochar 2012 was my greatest day on the hill but it had nothing to do with the result. I've some had limited success in the age cat championships, which I've really enjoyed. Rocking up each month of the summer to battle the same old adversaries is always great fun. However, even more satisfying for me have been the 24-hour challenges. I've done the big 3 but there are some fantastic other rounds. I did the South Wales Traverse last summer and it's hard, spectacular and uncrowded.

What's your favourite race? Can I have 1 for each country?

Jura, Borrowdale, Cwm Pennant and Mourne 7 in Ireland, where it all began. I also absolutely loved the Western Isles Challenge which

we completed twice as a team. We made some lifelong friends and I was lucky enough to go back to stay with Mark Blythe at his house on Harris this summer. The island has everything for the outdoor enthusiast but don't tell anyone.

So you like the long stuff?

Big rounds and long races are inherently more satisfying. You have a vision, make a plan, do the recceing, revise your plan, train and finally do the race.

You mentioned earlier you're a doctor, how's the current pandemic been?

From a purely professional point of view, Covid has been very rewarding, as I've been involved with running one of our acute Covid wards. There were a lot of sad moments and many distressed families but I've been very proud to be part of a great team. All the staff, from consultants to cleaners, have been very professional, working closely and tirelessly. The junior doctors especially have really been amazing. Matt says hi to Aunty Helen, by the way.

So with no races and a lot of hospital work, what have you been doing in your time off?

Initially, Sue, my girlfriend was shielding in Sedbergh. She's a very strong cyclist, so we combined food deliveries with riding the hills of the Dales. I'm still a runner at heart though, so I had an eye on the summits. I was drawn to a few challenges which I completed at the end of the summer. I loved Duncan Elliot's Dales Skyline, for great views over runnable tracks. I can only recommend Rick Ansell's brutal Yorkshire Dales 2000s North Circuit to the insane. No wonder there have been so few completions given the bog, the tussocks, the heather, more bog.

Who's your biggest inspiration in the fellrunning community and why?

I'm constantly amazed by Julie Carter (Keswick AC). She won't mind me saying, she's had so many setbacks over the years but she just carries on relentlessly against the tide. She has really made the absolute most of her talents, even becoming Vet 50 British

champion. Trough of Bowland legend, Chris Reade, epitomizes a fell runner. He's a very friendly chap, sensible and always willing to help. Chris literally carried me round my Bob and was huge on the Paddy. He's got a great sense of humour and is ever the optimist. Life is about connections and where they lead. A few years ago, we ended up having a fabulous trip biking round Burma.

What are your ambitions for the future?

Well, the one that has got away is the Scottish Islands Peaks Race. I finally got on a boat with club mate, Rob Downs, two years ago, only for our captain to hole it going into Oban harbour. Revenge was supposed to be this year. Third time lucky? We'll see.

What are your aspirations for your FRA role?

If we could get to a position where every fell running club had a welfare officer who'd had some training in the role, then I feel that could potentially see our members have a more enjoyable and less stressful experience in the hills, training ground and pub. The club ambassador roles, which have just been set up, are a good start.

Have you had any scary moments in the fells?

My three scariest moments all happened within 24 hours in the same race. The 'Across the traverse' is a multi-sport, multi-day Kiwi classic. On day two, we were caught in a blizzard at 8000ft. We built an ice cave to shelter. I shivered in a black bin bag all night. Having surprisingly woken up, the next morning we had to cross a large river in spate. I got swept away from our 'crab', only to be saved by my two big beefy Kiwi team mates. That afternoon, we kayaked the massive Lake Wanaka but we could have been at sea. The waves were hugely scary but somehow we survived.

Finally, on your desert island run, where would it be, with whom and what would be your luxury item?

It would be with all 14 Billies, Julie, Ready, the Blythe twins, my old Kiwi flatmate Sean Hudson (Keswick AC) and my girls. We'd run from where I used to live in South Island, New Zealand, over the headland to Taylor's Mistake, a beautiful and often deserted bay. We wouldn't need any kit and the Billies would insist on beer and nuts.

runfurther update

WORDS KAREN NASH

Where to start? It wasn't meant to be like this. The season was so full of promise, with a really successful Lancashire-based race that is new to the series - The Pendle Way in a Day. Many of us feared the Haworth Hobble would be cancelled, but Brett and his team were determined to go ahead. Another good day out and a race frequented by many fell runners.

Then it all went pear-shaped. For me this was immediate; our van was packed and a ferry booked for the very next day, ready to ski and then climb in Spain. In retrospect, we were lucky that we had not set off but it was a very glum Sunday unpacking the van. Before long, other races were forced to cancel and you have to feel for the race organisers, after all their effort. By early summer, we were debating how many races might still happen and how many we needed for the series to be viable. It was sad but understandable, as one after another they were forced to cancel. So our series was void - a real shame, especially for David Chetta who had planned on a Grand Slam of all 12 races.

My sympathies also go to our sponsors who, without races, have been having a tough time. We have been using social media to try

to remind people to continue to buy from them when they can and are hopeful that all will continue to be our sponsors in 2021. Many prizes can be carried over to next year but the edible ones with best before dates need to be used. Some went to the Northants Shires and Spires which managed to transfer its race date from May to August. More will go to the Spire Ultra, which hopes to now take place at the end of October.

I know our members have not been idle. I took on the Cockbain Accumulator, along with quite a few others, as well as the Covid Trig Challenge and then the Limestone Bay Round. Josie Greenhalgh ran the Lakes, Meres and Waters, setting a new women's record. Carmine De Grandis set a new record for the Norfolk Way. And, of course, Sabrina Verjee - last year's Runfurther Female Champ - has been busier than most, setting awesome times on some very long challenges. Whilst all this has been fun, let's hope we can get back to racing again in 2021. In the meantime we are trying to figure out how to have the AGM - possibly via Zoom.

We have decided to use the races that should have happened this year. Obviously, it is still quite unclear how things will pan out and a couple of races have yet to confirm dates. Some are hopeful, though dependent on agreement from landowners.



Sabrina Verjee, RunFurther 2019 Champion ©Karen Nash

2021 RACE CALENDAR

DATE	RACE	MILES	CATEGORY
Sat 6th February	Pendle Way in a Day	42	Medium
Sat 13th March	Haworth Hobble	32	Short
TBC early April	Calderdale Hike	37	Medium
TBC April	The Fellsman	61	Long
Sat 8th May	The Spire Ultra	34	Short
Sat 16th May	Shires and Spires	35	Short
Sat 26th June	Lakeland 5 Passes	32	Short
Sat 3rd July	Pennine 39	39	Medium
Fri/Sat 6/7th August	Brecon 50/100	50/100	Long
Sat 4th September	Bullock Smithy Hike	56	Long
Sat 4th October	3 Towers Ultra	43	Medium
Sat 9th October	Round Rotherham	50	Long

As always you can join us, find out more about the races, read race reports etc on our Facebook page and our website www.runfurther.com

NAVIGATION FOR FELL RUNNERS

PART 1

WORDS IAN WINTERBURN

It's seven years since I wrote the "Navigation for fell runners" piece. In that time, things have moved on. Membership has grown, and with many of our new members coming from road and cross-country running backgrounds, rules and categories have been tweaked and I've run hundreds of courses. Certain questions always come up, and, when the committee suggested republishing the article, I took the opportunity to bring it up to date.

So there you are, on the start line of that big AL Lakeland race your club mates told you was a must do. It's a real classic. The information in the FRA handbook said it was NS, ER (Navigation Skills required, Experience Required), but that's OK as, although your knowledge is a bit sketchy, you know where north is and can always follow someone. You've made it through kit check, shown your map and compass, waterproofs and emergency food.

On the start line, the clag is down to 300m and it's drizzling. OK, so you're not that hot with a map and compass, you decide to follow some locals. And we're off! You've tagged on to the back of a good group of five. Just after the second summit check point, three of the runners split and head off in different directions. That leaves you chasing the two remaining runners who are pushing quite hard. Then your laces come undone. Quick as a flash, they are retied. You look up to realize that you've lost sight of your companions.

At that point you get the map out...

To me, navigation is a real skill that makes my visits to the hills, whether racing or otherwise, much more interesting. It improves my mountain/fell experience and helps me explore the wilder places away from the usual paths. In a race, I always prefer a point to point rather than a marked course as it means the fast guys slow down a bit. It is even better if the clag is down. I like to think about

it as fell running chess, perfect for the thinking runner. To others, navigation is a dark art.

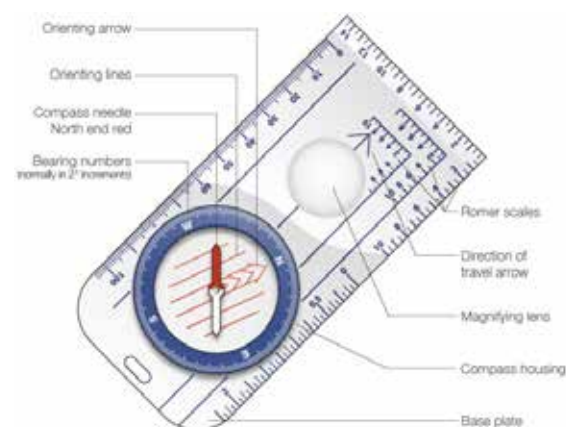
Let's be honest here, anyone can navigate. Everyone does it at some point. They follow the same principles and techniques. If you think about when you head out to drive to a place you've never been to, you check which road you will drive along, where the turn off is "second right past the Spotty Cafe; carry straight on past two sets of traffic lights". Well, navigating in the hills uses exactly the same principles, you just need to be observant and concentrate a little more, and get some practice.

Over the next two issues, I'll try and break down some of the key components of navigation and hopefully answer any of your questions along the way.

Let us start with the basics.

EQUIPMENT

To navigate successfully in all weathers and over all terrain, it is important you have both map and compass. In bad weather, it is vital to use both together.



The parts of a compass ©MTUK/VG 2012

Compasses come in all shapes and sizes but, to be honest, even the most basic does the job. As long as it has a needle pointing north and it has the ability to take a bearing, usually measured in degrees, it will work. It is advisable to pay a bit more and get one that is dampened so the needle settles quicker or one with roamers and magnifiers. Unless you are a practiced orienteer, then I would stay away from the likes of thumb compasses until you have developed your skill.

Maps can be more of a headache. We all have our favourites. Ordnance Survey and Harvey maps are the most popular, although I find people tend to gravitate to the map they started out with. Map Scale is the other issue. Larger scale maps have more detail but cover a smaller area and can appear cluttered. Smaller scale maps have less detail but cover greater area. These can also appear cleaner.

Map scales

OS 1:50,000 Landranger Maps
1cm = 50,000cm
1cm = 500m
1mm = 50m
2cm = 1km (Grid square)

Harvey 1:40,000 Maps
1cm = 40,000cm
1cm = 400m
1mm = 40m
2.5cm = 1km (Grid square)

OS 1:25,000 Explorer Maps
1cm = 25,000cm
1cm = 250m
1mm = 25m
4cm = 1km (Grid square)

Orienteering Map 1:10,000
1cm = 10,000cm
1cm = 100m
1mm = 10m
10cm = 1km

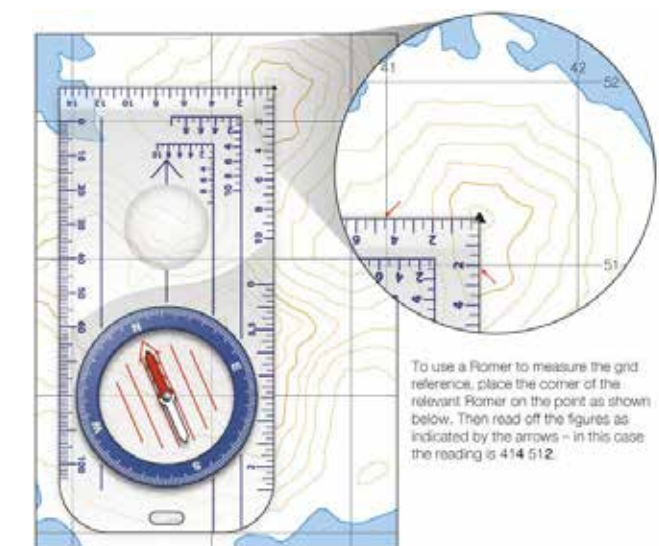
Small scale maps = smaller amount of detail (cover a large area eg: 1:50,000)
Large scale maps = larger amount of detail (cover a small area eg: 1:10,000)

Map scales ©MTUK/VG 2012

I'm happy with a smaller scale map in a big mountain area where valleys/crags/streams/hills are more obvious, but on moorland like the Peak District, where there are less obvious features, I'd prefer a 1:25,000.

GRID REFERENCES

All the maps we use have a grid system of squares called the National Grid. We can use this to identify any position on a map. Each of these squares is 1 kilometre by 1 kilometre. Using the numbers 00-99, found across the bottom and up the sides of the map to identify which square we are in gives an accurate location. By dividing the square by 10, we can get an even more accurate position of within 100m.



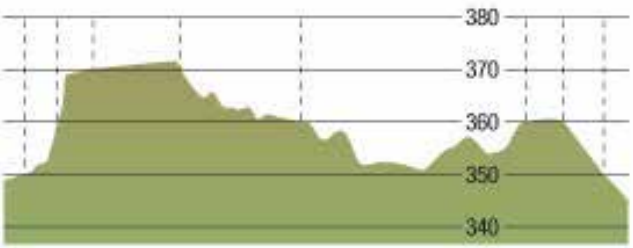
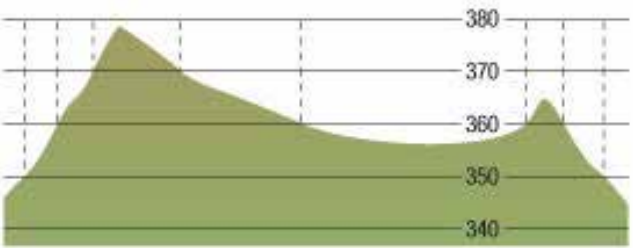
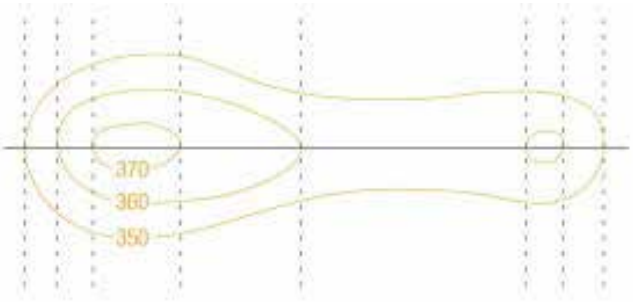
Using a Romer scale on a compass ©MTUK/VG 2012

Remember to always give the numbers across the bottom first, then the numbers going up the side. An easy way to remember this is 'to go along the corridor and up the stairs.'

The number we are after is where the gridlines converge in the SW corner of each square. For example, the top of Scafell Pike would be 215 072. It's important to note, however, that the 100Km grid is repeated around 50 times across the UK. This means the grid reference is also repeated 50 times. Each 100km square is therefore given its own letter grid. You can find this in the corner of the map or at the boundary of the 100km square. The grid reference for the top of Scafell Pike now becomes NY 215 072. Remembering to add these letters is vital when giving a grid reference to the emergency services. When printing your own race

map, don't forget to add these numbers and letters to the map. A race officer requires you to carry a suitable map so being able to give a grid reference is vital in case something goes wrong.

Some compasses come with a romer which will aid you in getting a more exact grid reference.



Contours and alternative profiles ©MTUK/VG 2012

CONTOURS

Contours are lines on a map that join points of equal height. They are usually 10m apart although they can be 5m, 15m or 20m on some maps so make sure you check. Index contours appear with a thicker line every 50m, and again, check your map as some race maps tend to have 15m contours and a 75m index.

Contour heights are the ONLY notation that may be written on a map upside down. The reason for this is that the higher ground is always above the written number. Using contours is an art and

much can be worked out quickly with a practiced eye.

If a rise doesn't cross a contour, then it isn't shown. Look at the diagram, the contours are the same for both examples but the actual land is slightly different. On some maps a significant rise is sometimes shown as a broken contour or a spot height. More on this later.

BASIC TECHNIQUES

SETTING THE MAP

This is the key to simple map reading. Always have the map orientated to the land around you that way the features to your left will appear on the left of your map and those on the right, on your right.



Setting a map using features ©MTUK/VG 2012

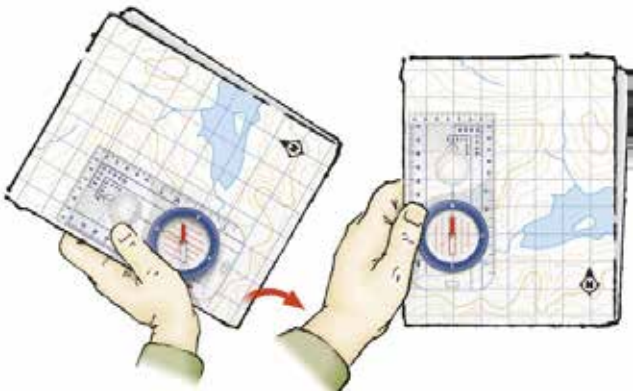
There are two ways to do this.

The first is by matching the features around you to the map. This means positioning the map so that all the features are lined up with your own location as the central point. What is in front of you on the ground will be in front of you on the map, what is to your left on the ground will also be to your left on the map and so on. The writing on the map may be upside down or sideways but that's OK: reading upside down is a small price to pay for the benefits of having the map set properly. You can now view the map as a three-dimensional model which you have lined up with the features on the ground.

In good visibility, you may be able to set the map by eye. If you've just set off from your car you will probably be able to set the map by using the road and another linear feature, such as a path. These

features will form a T-junction which can be used to set the map. A good exercise is to keep the map set and then move yourself physically around the map, so your body moves, not the map. Once on the hill, you will need to identify prominent features, such as hills, ridges, valleys, tracks or even a distant village, and turn the map so that the features on the ground line up with you at the centre.

If identifiable features are not visible, for example in hill fog, snow or during night navigation, you will need to use your compass.



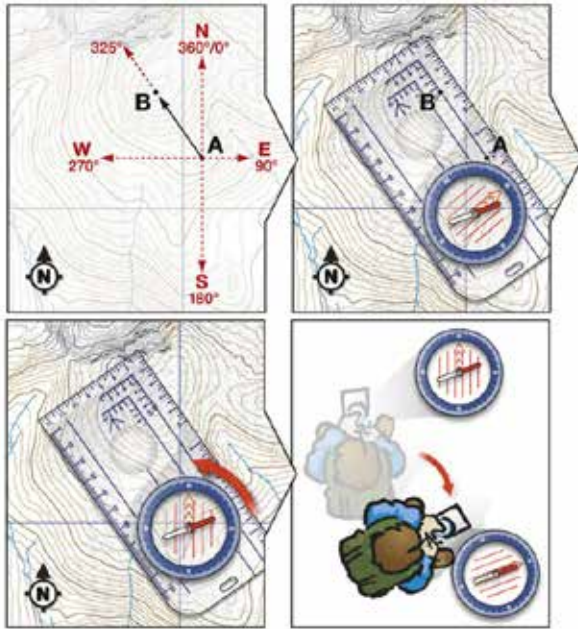
Setting a map using a compass ©MTUK/VG 2012

Use the magnetic needle to find north. Line up north on the map with north on the compass needle. There is no need to make any adjustments or bearings with your compass – you are just using the magnetic needle to find north. The side edges of the map will also be pointing north.

Keep the map set when you change direction. As you turn to face another direction you turn the map to keep it correctly set. If your body turns to the right, your hands must turn the map to the left. If this all sounds a bit abstract, think about how a satnav displays a route. The arrow (you) always points forward even when you go round a corner. The arrow remains unaltered but the map rotates around it.

TAKING A BEARING

This will show you which direction you need go to get to your destination.



Taking a bearing ©MTUK/VG 2012

First, align the edge or one of the directional lines on the compass along the direction of the leg A→B on the map. It's important that the direction of travel arrow on the compass base plate is pointing the way you want to go. Keeping the base still, rotate the bezel housing (that's the twisty round bit that surrounds the needle) until the lines on the base of the needle (the northing lines) match the grid lines running north to south on the map (conveniently also called northing lines). It's worth checking that the base plate hasn't slipped at this point.

Now, take the compass off the map and hold it level in front of you away from your body with the directional arrow on the base plate of the compass pointing away from you. Turn slowly until the red needle lines up with the red northing arrow in the bezel. An easy way to remember this is to 'put the red into the shed', the red arrow looks like a shed. The arrow on the base plate now shows the direction of travel. The reason we hold the compass away from our body is to distance it from possible magnetic influences, e.g. phone or other device in a pocket such as a magnet that holds your bladder tube to your shoulder strap. I'm often asked about Magnetic variation, this is the difference between Magnetic north and Grid north, in the UK it stands at less than 2 degrees. This is less than a mark on your compass so can be discounted at this level.

Earlier on in the article I mentioned how everyone navigates in the car. Well, using the same principle, it is possible to navigate

between two points on a map. It doesn't matter where you are, and even if you know exactly where you are going, you should always go through this exercise so eventually it will become second nature.

EVERY TIME WE NAVIGATE FROM A TO B WE NEED TO REMEMBER THE 5 D'S

DIRECTION

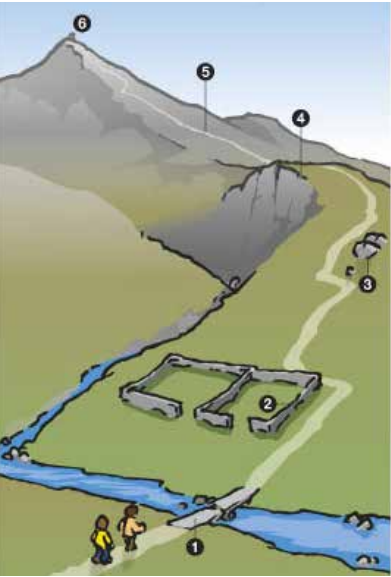
This could be simply west, south east or a more specific, such as 275°. It sounds obvious but so many people charge off without checking.

DISTANCE

How far are we going to travel? This could be for the whole leg or just between features. Is that 300m, 2km, 5km?

DURATION

How long should this leg take? This will help when we get close or can let us know sooner if we have got it wrong. There will be more on estimating time and distance in the next edition.



Handrails and tick features ©MTUK/VG 2012

DESCRIPTION

What are we going to see on route? Now, this is very important and often overlooked. The route we take tells a story. Read that story and you reduce the chance of getting lost. For example, along

the way you will expect to cross a stream, go passed a sheepfold on your left, go over a col, past a crag on your right etc. This is referred to as ticking features. If you know your route is progressively climbing, yet suddenly you are descending, alarm bells should ring.

DESTINATION

What are we heading for? It could be something big like a trig point, path junction or pub. Alternatively, and especially in a mountain marathon or orienteering events, it could be something smaller such as a sheepfold or stream junction.

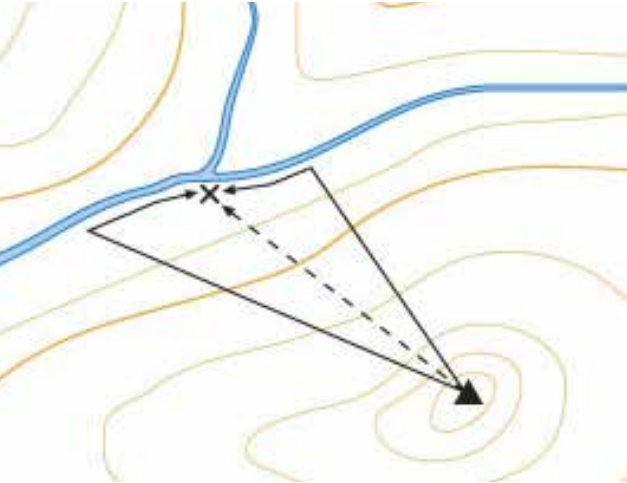
Look beyond your destination for a catching feature. If you miss your destination, this could help. It could be a sudden change in the angle of a slope, a farmhouse or stream.

We will now start building the basic skills to help whilst navigating.

BASIC TECHNIQUES

HAND RAILING

As the name suggests, a hand rail is a linear feature you can easily follow. This is the simplest way to navigate and one we use all the time. A path or road are the more obvious features but a river or stream, wall line, ridge or wood boundary will work equally well.



Aiming off ©MTUK/VG 2012

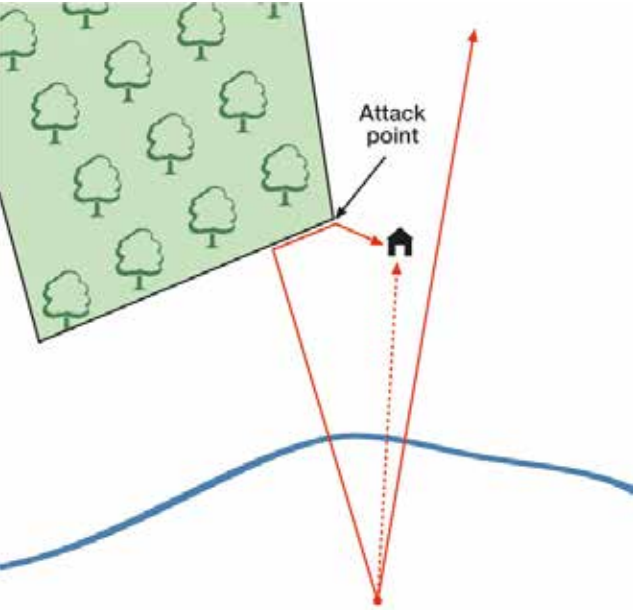
AIMING OFF

There are times when you may need to walk across an area of featureless terrain. Alternatively you may not be able to see any

features due to bad visibility. You take a bearing, say to a stream junction, and follow it. You arrive at the stream but there is no sight of the junction and we have no idea which direction the stream junction is. The answer is to aim off. We deliberately aim to miss the checkpoint so when we hit the stream, we now know which side the junction is. We then handrail the stream to the junction.

ATTACK POINTS

An attack point is simply an easily located feature near to the objective. Aiming for this makes route finding easier by locating a bigger obvious feature and shortening the distance travelled on a compass bearing.



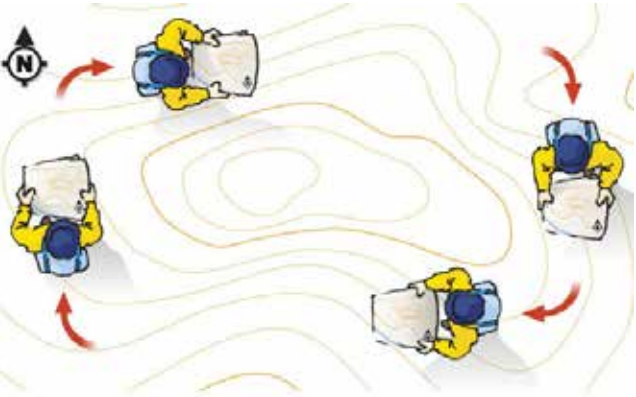
Using Attack points ©MTUK/VG 2012

Look at the diagram above. Let's assume it's thick of fog and, from our location 2km away, we need to find a sheep fold. Taking a bearing straight there in 20m visibility, we would do well to hit the sheepfold. The plantation is a much bigger target and easier to hit. We could therefore aim off. We can tick off the stream en route to gauge how far we've gone. Once we pick up the plantation, we can handrail the boundary to the corner. This is our attack point, a known feature where we can take a bearing to the sheep fold 50m away. This will be a lot more accurate.

I think you now have enough to get out and do some practice.

Only by practice will this become second nature. Find a safe area where you can practice with defined boundaries. It doesn't need to be huge. Find a friend to join you. The next time you go out on a club run, get the map out and follow your route even if you know it well. If you stop for a drink on a high point, have a good look round at the bigger picture and relate the ground to the map and vice versa.

A final thought. The number one mistake I encounter with beginners is having their head in the map to the detriment of observation. The check point is marked on the map, but you won't find it by looking only at the map. Open your eyes and look all around you!



Walking with the map set ©MTUK/VG 2012

In the next instalment, we will look at navigation in a greater depth. We will cover some more advanced techniques, tips, and advice. If you any specific questions, please get in contact and I'll do my best to respond promptly.

Ian Winterburn is an experienced outdoor instructor, professional Mountain Leader, Mountain Training Mountain and Hill skills tutor and a member of Woodhead Mountain Rescue Team. He runs his own navigation courses and has worked on the FRA Navigation course. He runs with Dark Peak Fell Runners.

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Website www.everythingoutdoors.co.uk
Facebook www.facebook.com/OutdoorNavigation*

Thank you to MTUK for their kind permission to use the graphics from their book 'Navigation in the Mountains'

ACHIEVING JOINT OUTCOMES: WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH NATURAL ENGLAND



If you have been a member of the Fell Runners Association (FRA) for some time and have received previous copies of the Fellrunner Magazine, you may remember reading articles from Nicky Spinks, the Access Officer, sharing information on how the FRA and Natural England have been working together.

This work has centred on how race organisers, land owners, partner organisations like National Park authorities and Natural England can work together more effectively to achieve joint outcomes for protected Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and enjoyment of nature.

On February 10th Natural England introduced a new Single Point of Contact (SPoC) for all protected sites work, including when race organisers want to seek consent via landowners for recreational activities like fell and trail races which pass through SSSI's. The new SPoC email address is protectedsites@naturalengland.org.uk. Customers are still encouraged to seek informal advice from their local advisers, but all formal consent requests must now be sent to the protected sites mailbox.

This change will ensure that all customers receive a consistent level of service, and it will help Natural England to monitor delivery of our statutory casework, helping us to improve our delivery and ensure a high level of customer service.

So what does that mean for you? If you are a race organiser and your race route starts, finishes or travels through a SSSI, there are a number of things that you need to consider. The first two questions to ask are:

1. Does your race only use designated Public Rights of Way (PRoW)? If the answer is yes, then consent from Natural England is not needed, providing participants are limited to the PRoW and no ancillary infrastructure needs to be sited within the SSSI (for example tents, parking areas, feed stations, dib points, etc.)
2. Does your race use paths and tracks that are not designated as PRoWs? If so, you will need consent from Natural England and we recommend looking into this process in plenty of time before your event.

Natural England can only legally give consent to landowners or land occupiers - not to a third party. Race organisers are classed as a third party, unless they own the land the event is being held upon. Before you contact Natural England to ask for consent it is important that you find out who the landowners are (for the land your event passes over) and work closely with them when planning your event. Due to data protection laws, Natural England cannot provide landowner details but you can obtain this information from a Land Registry search. Landowners have a detailed understanding of their land which could help you to plan your event, and they will also need to provide their written permission before Natural

England can consider granting consent. If a landowner refuses to give you permission for your event, legally, we cannot issue a consent and you will need to find an alternative route.

Bear in mind that it can take up to four months for us to provide a consent decision, so early engagement is key. We recommend that during your liaison work with the landowner you agree the following information and provide this within your consent request to Natural England:

- Dates including start and finish times, whether there is a staggered or a single start, when any infrastructure will be set up and taken down.
- The maximum number of participants allowed to enter.
- A clear map(s) showing the route or area of event if there is no defined route(s), out of bounds areas (if necessary for avoiding sensitive habitats), congregation areas (e.g. start and finish) and parking locations.
- The location of marshals/support staff and the numbers of such staff.
- The location of refreshment/hydration points/other temporary structures including toilets, gazebos etc.
- The location of car parking and any vehicular access routes (where vehicles are important for event preparation), including any access for the emergency services.
- The details of signage, including how it will be installed, what it will be attached to, and how it will be removed.
- How out-of-bounds areas will be enforced.
- Evidence of clear consideration of placement/proximity of way markers with regard to routing and footfall in sensitive areas.
- Contingency procedures for casualties and drop outs.
- Any Environmental Risk Assessment for the activities on the site.
- Procedures for removing any litter resulting from the event.
- The measures needed to manage spectators and their pets as appropriate.

Please also include any additional information that is relevant to your event but is not listed above. To help you structure your request, there is a Notice of Consent form on www.gov.uk that you can use to provide this information. This is not mandatory but your submission does need to be in writing (email or letter) and contain sufficient information for us to assess your event. You may wish to take advantage of our paid for Discretionary Advice Service for

any assistance required before submitting your notice. This may be useful if you are unsure how to write your consent or would like to use our prioritisation service. Details of this can be found under the Chargeable Services section of www.gov.uk.

Our vision is of thriving nature for people and planet. Our ambition is not just to improve nature, but to see it thriving everywhere, because a healthy natural environment is fundamental to everyone's health, wealth and happiness.

But we can't do this alone; you have a depth of knowledge and understanding of these special places. Please do share any data you gather and any pre/post event photographs you have with us.

From our personal experience, those of us entering fell races do so not only for the love of running in beautiful locations, but also because we want everyone to be able to experience the health and wellbeing benefits which nature offers for years to come. To facilitate our ambition for flourishing nature, we have to be mindful that many of our protected sites are very sensitive and we need to consider several factors when assessing if consent can issued. For example, the time of year of events will be important in areas where birds nest, so you may be asked if you can change the date of your event. Other issues which we need to consider are ongoing restoration projects across moorland areas, or events that travel through fragile wet flushes or blanket bogs. Consent may not always be granted in some of these sensitive areas. With new events appearing all the time, Natural England must also consider the in-combination effects that multiple events in the same areas might have on a site.

Once you are happy that you have gathered all the required information, please submit your consent request to protectedsites@naturalengland.org.uk. This will be logged and forwarded to the appropriate team. If there is not enough information contained within your request, we will contact you, confirming what is missing and ask to you to provide this within two weeks. Due to the statutory timeframe in which we need to respond to your request, if the information is not provided, we will have no option but to assess your notice based upon the information received. This may result in us having no alternative but to refuse your request, or issue consent with conditions. If your request is refused, you will then need to submit your consent again with the missing information included.



Above left to right: A younger Billy ©Billy Bland Collection; Billy racing Patterdale in 1967 ©Robert Armstrong; posed photograph for an article on the BGR record that was published in the Daily Express in 1982 ©Billy Bland Collection

ALL OR NOTHING AT ALL: THE LIFE OF BILLY BLAND

BY STEVE CHILTON

REVIEWED BY GRAHAM BREEZE

Ask any informed fell runner to name the three pillars of the fell running Pantheon, and Billy Bland will be one. The other two are confirmed in Kilian Jornet’s generous *Foreword* to Steve Chilton’s illuminating biography of Billy Bland.

I have been on start lines with Billy, I know the anecdotes and I once stood next to him, eyes wide open, as he forcefully offered his strong views to an equally opinionated Danny Hughes. So, I looked forward to reading about his life, beyond existing sources such as the profile in Bill Smith’s *Stud Marks On The Summits* and the chapter, “King Billy”, in Richard Askwith’s *Feet in the Clouds*.

Steve considers Billy to be “the greatest fell runner of all time” and biographies produced in association with their subject risk displaying hagiographic gratitude and being restricted to what the subject chooses to reveal; and here, several subjects have been circumscribed. Fortunately, sycophancy is avoided because

the pride Billy takes in being blunt and opinionated, when he isn’t being opinionatedly blunt, means that Steve can merely quote his subject at length and then add a wry aside as the literary equivalent to a raised eyebrow or add a simple factual correction. Billy may be Steve’s declared “hero” but, thankfully, he is not fawningly uncritical.

This is a long book (370 pages) – it covers much more than race results, which arguably are the least interesting sections – and is engrossing even from the *Preface* where Steve tells how he came to write it. The book has its *longueurs*: I felt the detail of the different Bland family histories was more for the record than with the reader’s interest in mind, and Steve’s dutifully thorough chronicle of Billy’s race results could usefully have been supplemented with an appendix of chronological key race results. Steve must have recognised the usefulness of a summary of at least Billy’s major victories, so I will blame a parsimonious publisher for this omission.

The book isn’t just about Billy, and there are contributions from and about other Bland family members, of whom his nephews Jonny and Gavin are just two. Billy suggests that Gavin was the “best fell runner I have ever come across” but “didn’t achieve what he should have done”, including breaking his own classic records, by not training harder. Ah training! – the consensus is that Billy’s racing success was not due to a gift of any extraordinary special ability, other than being born a genius downhill runner, but to miles and miles of training, albeit with, as Steve suggests, the risk of overtraining. But Billy believed that what won races was having the will to *prepare* to win, not just the will to win.

Many huge fell running names appear, just two being Jon Broxap and Scoffer, who both know Billy well and whom I knew as somewhat faster runners and as members of the FRA Committee. Scoffer is quoted as saying that while Billy would have liked to have been able to run uphill a little quicker, “he was just hard. He would run until he fell over”. Jon suggests that, while the best fell racer was Kenny Stuart, the best fell or mountain runner was Billy who, in mountain craft and particularly in bad weather, “was untouchable”.

But the most delightful constant presence is Ann Bland with her wry and often amusing observations about, if not outright contradictions of, Billy. Every point Ann makes is a delightful sparkling diamond such as when she suggests that Billy’s attempting the Three Peaks Race in 1976, when he finished in 91st position – but which he had somehow forgotten even entering – was because “he must have thought he was better than he was!” I believe this is known as an illusory superiority.

Billy’s three Bob Graham Rounds are recounted, including contributions from his record-time pacers, illustrating the camaraderie that existed between the top runners who supported his record attempt. There are also accounts of the support Billy has given to others with one delightful anecdote being provided by Tony Cresswell who introduced Clare Regan to her pacer at Dunmail with “...and this is Billy Bland”, after which he says Clare “suddenly got another mile an hour out of herself”. Fittingly the book concludes with Kilian Jornet’s record breaking round and the part Billy played in it.

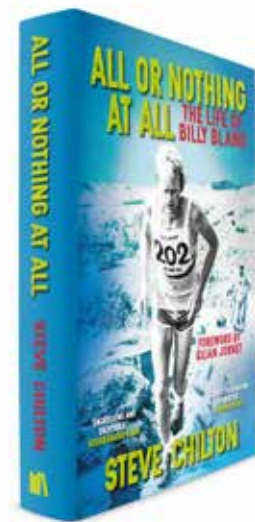
Steve invited Billy to assess his rivals, in addition to Bland family members, such as Harry Walker, Jack Maitland, and Kenny Stuart. So, naturally, he obliged for the delight of readers. Steve also asked Billy’s contemporaries for their views on him, which they also willingly provided.

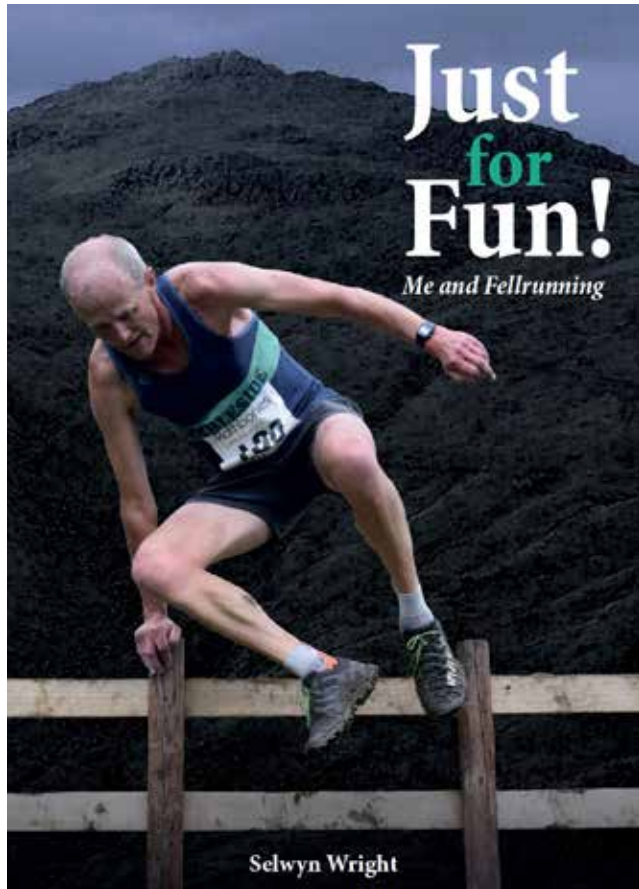
Although the heart of the biography is about fell running, including races outside the Lake District where Billy travelled less well and was not all-conquering, the book covers much broader ground and horse racing, hunting, hound trailing, golf, cycling – Billy rides 10,000 miles a year – and the future of land management in the Borrowdale valley all make an appearance. Billy was born in and has always lived in the valley and the community and the farming life are always present in the story along with Billy’s strident views.

Steve records his interviews and then tends to quote his subjects at length, which as an approach only works well if the interviewee has something worthwhile to say. Billy has firm opinions and expresses them clearly and forcefully and Steve’s capturing these statements (“of fact”, would be Billy’s view) allows his “voice” to come through so clearly it is as though he is alongside the reader. Here Steve’s approach has produced effervescent prose – one really wants to know what Billy will say next. You may not like it or agree with it, but it will be interesting and so one turns the page avidly to find out.

Most fell running books are ephemeral but Billy Bland, by allowing Steve Chilton to catalogue his triumphs and reveal something of his essence, has provided a worthy subject for an accomplished work. It is a fascinating book and also an important book that may over time become recognised as a classic book, not just about the life of a great, and possibly the greatest, fell runner, but that life as lived in the Borrowdale valley.

All Or Nothing At All also captures, in the best and broadest sense, the essence and the very spirit of fell running. Readers cannot ask for much more.





JUST FOR FUN: ME AND FELLRUNNING

BY SELWYN WRIGHT

REVIEWED BY EILEEN JONES

But in Selwyn Wright's fell-running world, there's just joy. If it hurts, he doesn't just grin and bear it, he makes a joke about it. Need a heart pacemaker fitted? Why do athletes go in for drug enhancement when this might improve performance, quips Selwyn. Dreaded beta-blockers just around the corner? Well, hey ho, I've just run 76,000 miles. Near-death experiences in Scotland or the Alps are recited like soothing bedtime stories.

Everything in Selwyn's remarkable life has been full of fun. Not necessarily DONE "just for fun"; there's often been a deep-seated sense of justice, fairness and morality behind decisions which proved to be life changing, life affirming, life enhancing. Whether it was taking on the might of the Athletics' world, taking on the chairmanship of the Bob Graham club committee, or taking on the responsibility of coaching the next generation of fell runners, Selwyn did it all with a smile, and with joy in his heart. "When Fred (Rogerson) places on you the weight of responsibility that he's been carrying for half a lifetime, you have to man up and get on with it."

Yes, Selwyn was banned by the AAA for standing up for a principle. And he took on the role of secretary of the Fell Runners Association. As everyone knows, the Chairman is just a figurehead who sits in her campervan all day brewing tea for motley assorted passers-by, and force-feeding hundreds of Bob Graham and other epic-round contenders with spoonfuls of mashed sweet potato, while it's the Secretary who does all the real work. Such as organising the annual dinner dance and awards presentation.

Joking apart, Selwyn makes every burdensome task sound like a privilege. Everyone who has ever met him will know that he operates with care, concern, affection and a smile (and so, to be fair, does our Madame Chairman). He's been long-time organiser of two of the most popular races on the calendar, Blisco and The Three Shires, alongside his team-mate and life-mate Elaine (whose own considerable achievements are rightly celebrated in these pages). But Mr Nice Guy is also Mr Tough Guy, the first ever to complete the Bob Graham Round in winter, inside or outside of the 24 allotted hours, and, with John Brockbank, the first actual completer of a winter round in 23 hours and six minutes. "It wasn't a good time to be on Broad Stand so we headed for the Foxes Tarn traverse, negotiating the tricky crossing of an icy waterfall with a drop of several hundred feet on one side." Perspective: his "summer" BG took 23 hours and 55 minutes.

His stories, related here without fanfare, are infused with enthusiasm, whether it's his love for the Bens of Jura race (and the Isle of Jura itself) and for fell relays, notably the Hodgson Brothers event. Somebody with a talent for algorithms might check to see how often the phrase "one of the very best days I've had on the fell" appears in this book.

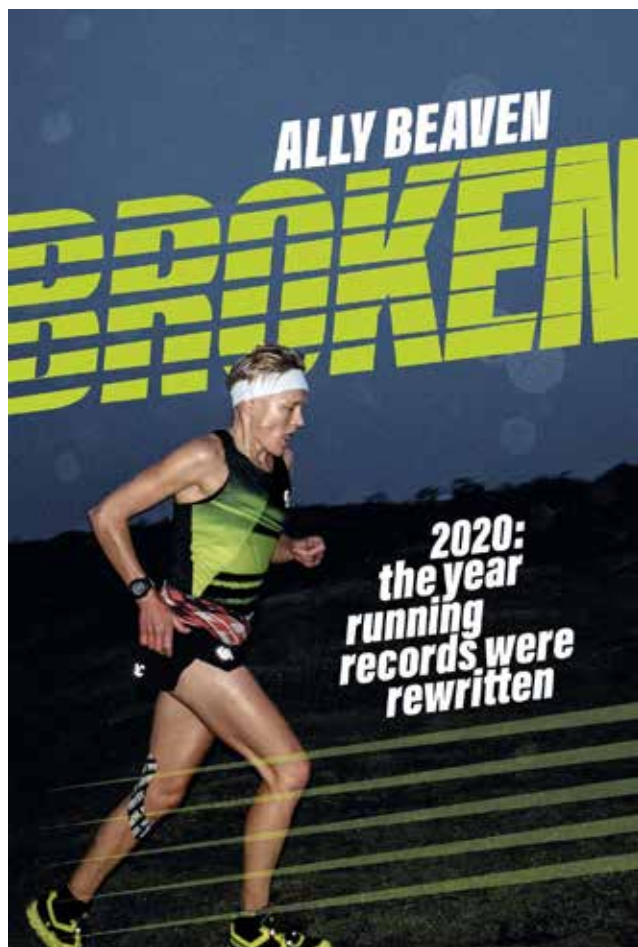
The pain's there, of course, because there's no gain without it in fell running, but Selwyn is matter-of-fact. It's not till near the end of the book that he provides a brief litany: "The fractured vertebra; the three broken legs with pins and plates still in; the several broken wrists and more cracked ribs than you could shake an X-ray at." Given that he's tried to race up a hill on crutches, and run a marathon a fortnight after getting out of hospital, Selwyn says: "I think it's going to be something quite serious that stops me." The diagnosis of coeliac disease (the inability to tolerate gluten) didn't stop him, nor did heart problems. "It (coeliac) is eminently

manageable but it does mean a reduction of my beer intake...but the good news is that wine and whisky don't contain gluten."

What did stop him was the dreaded COVID-19, which meant the cancellation (to all but elite athletes) of this year's London Marathon. A road race - shock, horror - but one which Selwyn ran in the first event, and had a place to run in the 40th anniversary race. He will, though, surely reach his target of 100,000 lifetime miles, even if it's being pushed in a wheelchair along the front at Craighouse on Jura, his favourite place in the whole wide world. They will be fighting to push him, those many friends Selwyn has made along the way, and would the algorithm expert please check how many times he writes about "friends" and "groups" and "the club" (Ambleside AC).

Just for Fun is a book full of love, for Elaine, and for his daughter Katie and son Jack, for his many friends, for the hills where he has run for more than 40 years. It's a book which reminds you why you want to go out there and up there, especially in the Lakes. But for all the love and all the joy, there's nothing sweetly sentimental about this story. It's a tale of enjoyment through achievement, and helps explain why running is a pushback at the heart-on-the-sleeve culture. "We're battering away at subduing our emotions all the while, keeping feelings in check and trying to run our bodies like a machine. The closer we get to motor perfection, the better we like it. Yet...there's always another deeper level of satisfaction and self-knowledge that we're aiming for, which may have nothing to do with winning or running fast."

So, philosopher, too. And we haven't even mentioned the poetry yet. But for that you have to read the whole book and absorb the poems in context.



BROKEN

BY ALLY BEAVEN

REVIEWED BY DAVE LITTLER

Alongside stories about Finlay, Sabrina and Beth, Ally brings to life the stories of records set in the Cairngorms, Dartmoor, and Land's End to John O'Groats alongside other long-distant feats.

And whilst it's the runner's names which get listed on the record board – there are people in the background who give up time to help. The drivers, mules and partners who sacrifice days, weeks and even months to live in camper vans and sit around to make sure the coffee is lukewarm and the socks are dry. Why do they do it? To be nice? Or to be around when someone is doing something extraordinary. Or perhaps it is just to give us something to draw on when we need to dig deep within ourselves.

Ally has written a book that is easy to read. He has a great way of telling a story and scratching beneath the surface to see what made 2020 such a record-breaking year. Perhaps it's all those tall tales told in the bar when he is not watching the little red dot. And the future? When racing starts in earnest again, will the records breakers return to racing each other? Beth Pascall and Finlay Wild discuss the conflict between racing and long-distance solo records. For Beth's competitive nature it's racing all the way. Finlay likes going solo, it's the purest way.

*Broken is available to pre-order from Vertebrate Publishing
www.v-publishing.co.uk/books/running/running-broken/*

Racing in all corners of the globe has been cancelled all summer with runners having to find new ways to get their fix. Pan Shancu apparently ran fifty kilometres around his kitchen table and started a new concept in balcony and garden marathons. Virtual races caught on with runners of all ages attempting new challenges and raising money for countless good causes. 2020 also gave an opportunity for runners to chase FKTs – or should that be records?

Ally Beaven spent the summer of 2020 following the little dots of live trackers and supporting runners as they chase records to satisfy their competitive urge, and then captured the stories of many record breakers in an entertaining book out in December from Vertebrate Publishing.

PEAK PERFORMANCE. INGLEBOROUGH'S SPORTING LEGACY

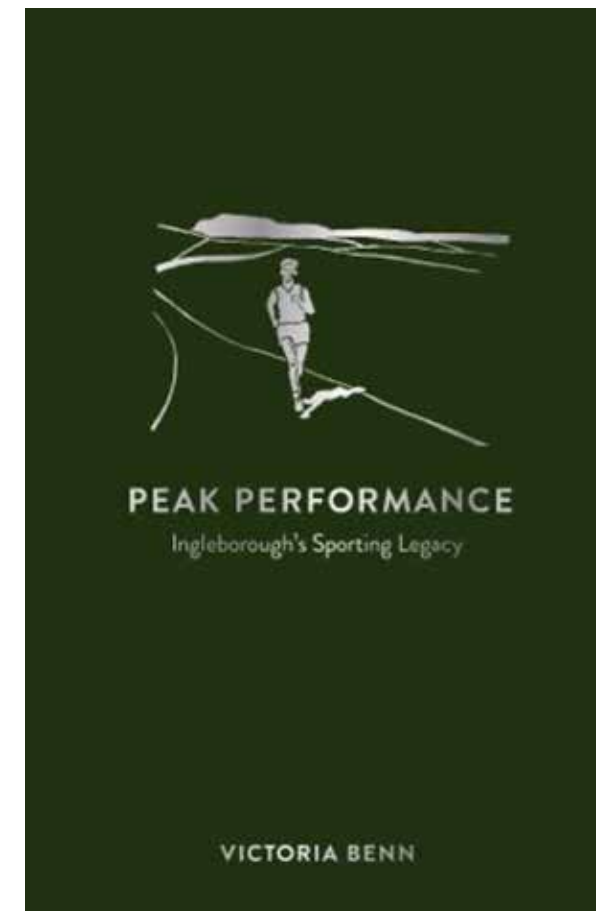
BY VICTORIA BENN

REVIEWED BY DAVE LITTLER

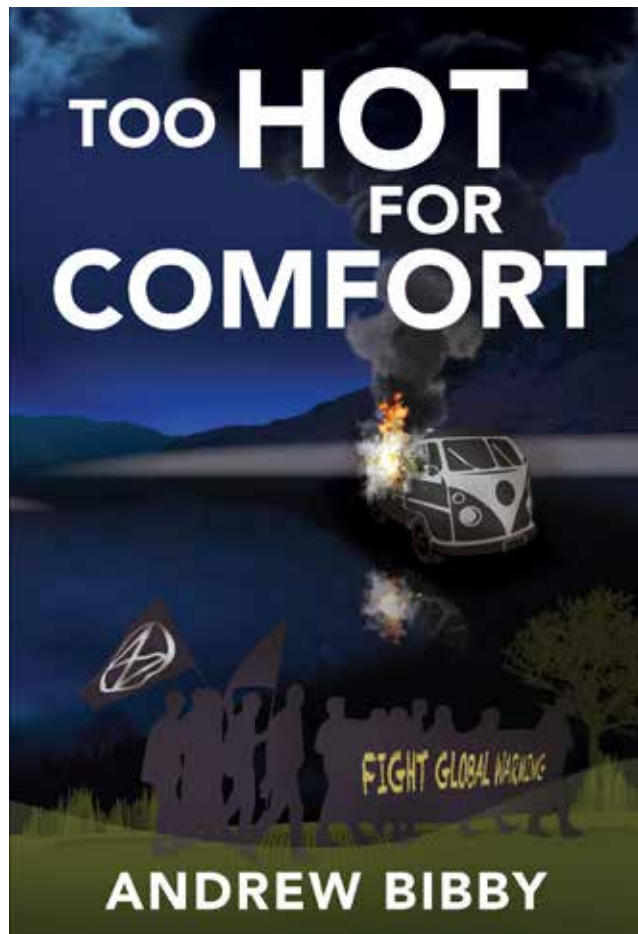
'No hill in Yorkshire is more climbed than Ingleborough...' states the Fellsman Hike Handbook 1967. It certainly is one of the most distinctive landmarks for miles around. The flat table-top surrounded by the steep drop certainly marks out Ingleborough as one of the most distinctive peaks in the Dales. The 'Fellsman' is just one of the sports chronicled in a delightful volume written by local writer Victoria Benn and published by Tickled Trout Press.

Although a slim volume, it covers 200 years of sporting achievement on or around Ingleborough. Ingleton and Clapham Sports are covered in chapters – with wrestling, horse racing and drunken brawls on the summit during the 1830s. The Ingleborough Mountain Race which started in 1934 is fully covered; along with The Three Peaks, 3 Peaks Cyclo-Cross and the original ultra – The Fellsman.

But the book is not just about the mountain and the sports played out on its slopes. The book is full of the stories of the men and women who competed and about the people who set up Ingleton and Clapham Sports and races. The book also details how important those events were to the communities they served, something we can perhaps reflect on in 2020. With plenty of great photographs, it's a book that makes for an easy and enjoyable read whilst waiting for racing to begin in earnest again. For details of how to pick up a copy contact Victoria at info@runthedaes.org.uk



Along with the book, look out for Run the Dales, a brand-new fell running photographic exhibition launching at The Folly, Settle in February 2021 sponsored by the YDNPA and Great Place: Lakes and Dales. Incorporating the award-winning photography of Stephen Garnett with first-hand stories and memorabilia collated by Peak Performance author, Victoria Benn. Register your details at www.runthedaes.org.uk to receive further updates.



TOO HOT FOR COMFORT

BY ANDREW BIBBY

REVIEWED BY GRAHAM BREEZE

mutuals and environmental issues for *The Guardian*, *The Observer*, *The Independent* and more. His knowledge of climate change issues is demonstrated here, as is his journalistic skill of communicating what he wishes to say simply and directly. The reader is swept along by the story, taking in the bleak future for local newspapers, fracking, social media trolling, domestic violence, a little sex, drug dealing and 'cuckooing', revenge porn, veganism for dogs, the effects of tourism and holiday homes on Lake District property prices, and references to wildlife - red squirrels, ospreys, otters, tree creepers. This is not Henry James.

Bibby's background as a journalist is reflected on every page - the novel is tightly plotted without any froth, lecturing or pomposity. Furthermore, it is up to date: *Extinction Rebellion* receives a name check in the opening pages. And since the story is set in the Lake District, fell runners will recognise many references: Wrynose Pass, Three Shires Inn, Fred Whitton, Skiddaw amongst them. Two of the main characters complete a Frog Graham and there is even a wedding in St Bega's Anglo-Saxon church by Bassenthwaite Lake.

A novel touching on climate change might not seem to be rivetingly enticing to all, but that is just part of the background upon which Bibby develops the rich personality of his characters, which even includes a Catalan irredentist, to keep the story moving along with pace.

A 'who did what and why?' with rich characterisation, a familiar location and a multi-stranded story that races along: *Too Hot For Comfort* is a lovely book. It is easy to read, it prompts one to think about the world in which we live and I recommend it.

Too Hot For Comfort is published by Gritstone Publishing Cooperative and is available from booksellers or directly from www.gritstonecoop.co.uk which offers savings on all the Cumbrian Fells trilogy.

Andrew Bibby is a Todmorden Harrier and a professional writer. *Too Hot For Comfort* is the third novel in a trilogy set in the Cumbrian Fells. Many of Bibby's books are about the countryside - *Back Roads Through Middle England* is about cycling the belt of limestone from the English Channel to the Humber - and the outdoor life underpins all of his novels. *The Bad Step* and *In The Cold Of The Night* were both set in Cumbria and were favourably reviewed, by myself, in the Summer 2014 and Winter 2016 issues of *The Fellrunner*.

The protagonist, Joan Arkle, is a vegan, a wildlife photographer and a climate change activist whose campervan is firebombed. The novel explores which of her many enemies - who include local farmers and drug dealers - were to blame. Another layer in the novel is who exactly the elusive Joan Arkle is - a question that involves the Cumbrian Police and Nick Potterton, the freelance journalist who appeared in Bibby's earlier novels.

Potential writers are advised to write about what they know, and Bibby does. As a journalist Bibby has written on co-operatives,

THE BOOK THAT FELL AND MOUNTAIN RUNNERS HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR -
A SELECTION OF SOME OF THE BREATHTAKING PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN BY THE LATE PETE HARTLEY

FELL AND MOUNTAIN RUNNING : THROUGH THE EYE OF A LENS

A tribute to Pete Hartley: fellrunner and photographer

By STEVE CHILTON AND DENISE PARK

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DUNCAN THOMPSON

1956 - 2020

Duncan Thompson, of Calder Valley Fell Runners (CVFR), passed away unexpectedly last autumn. He was proud to be a member of the club. Some may remember him as the organiser of the original Bolsworth Fell Race, with its challenging finish! Below, two founding members of CVFR, close friends of Duncan, share their memories of him.



Duncan racing Grisedale ©Bill Smith

THE BEST MAN, BY GARY WEBB

My first memory of Duncan Thompson was meeting him in the Cross Inn in Heptonstall in 1987. I cannot even remember why I was in the pub, but I remember spotting an obvious runner wearing a Red Rose T-shirt and he spotted me wearing a Chew Valley Skyline T-shirt. Being a proud Yorkshire man, I suggested that he join a real club from the right side and told him about our newly formed club, Calder Valley Fell Runners.

The rest, as they say, is history, and Duncan began to come down to training sessions on a Tuesday evening at Mytholmroyd Community Centre.

It was obvious from the beginning that Duncan had real class as a runner. He was not a good timekeeper however, and the journey over from Nelson often resulted in him chasing round the Calder Valley trying to find where the fell runners had gone! It was not unusual to miss Duncan completely until we were in the Shoulder of Mutton pub after training. To be fair, if he couldn't find us, he would train on his own before meeting us for a pint. He liked a pint!

Over the course of the next few years, Duncan became a part of everything that was good about CVFR. He was committed to improving his own running, as well as bringing on other members of the club, with his ideas and thoughts on training methods. He was also a prolific racer who often raced at least once a week throughout the year. In terms of natural ability, Duncan could probably have been even better if he had trained more wisely and raced a bit less; but just like drinking beer, Duncan liked a race!

Training sessions were fun but tough as we had a group of runners who would push each other. The camaraderie was superb, and we began to turn up to races with a good chance of winning the team prize. I distinctly remember the Great Shunner Fell Race where we were 1st, 2nd, and 4th. On the descent of this race Duncan came past me at a great rate of knots; I asked him what he was doing, and he said he was trying to get a lead on me before the last climb!

On one occasion, at the Old County Tops Fell Race, I was paired up with Duncan. We had been up to the Lake District to look at the route in detail over a period of time and soon realised that the hardest part, navigationally, would be off Scafell Pike down Little

Narrow Beck Cove to Cockley Beck. In mist this would be difficult. At Scafell Pike on race day we had a lead of over five minutes; at Cockley Beck we were behind by over five minutes! This impacted on me more than Duncan: I was ready to stop; my body didn't want to continue; my mind was playing tricks on me; in short, I was pissed off and ready to throw in the towel. Duncan never missed a beat. He never gave up on anything and simply set himself the new target of catching Paul Cleary and Steve Skelton who were now the leaders. I still don't know how he got me back on track, but by the time we were on the Coniston range of fells, we were chasing and motivated. Although we didn't catch them, we closed the gap and finished second overall.

In 1992, as a club, we attempted to beat the record for the long relay version of The Pennine Way. It was held by Clayton in a time of 41hrs 29mins. We had failed in 1988 so we were keen to have another bash. As it turned out, it was one of the best, most memorable events that we ever did as a club together, with everyone breaking their own course record as well as smashing the Clayton record with a time of 38hrs 9mins - in wet and windy conditions too. The record still stands today. Duncan was an integral part of the team: he, along with Andy Wimpenny, did the long section from Hardraw in the Yorkshire Dales to Middleton-in-Teesdale.



Duncan, Leg 3 at the Ian Hodgson Relay 1989 ©Dave Woodhead

As this section went into the night, they ran hard up Great Shunner Fell at the start of the leg to try and make the most of daylight conditions. They made a small error at Pasture End towards Deepdale Beck but got back on track and beat the current record with a time of 5hrs 16mins. In typical Duncan fashion, he, along with other members of the club, followed the rest of the attempt up to Scotland, supporting many other members of the team on the way. Duncan was at his best in a team event: he was a real team player.

Duncan was best man at my first wedding, and he was my training partner for a number of years after Jeff Winder moved over to Scarborough to be with his family. We travelled to many, many races together, training on Pendle Fell or in the Lake District or Boulsworth hill. He was a great bloke to be around, always upbeat, optimistic, competitive but generous with his time for anyone and everyone. Duncan was a one-off who suffered bad luck and a variety of serious health problems over the years. After he was told he could not run any more, he simply re-set his mind to becoming a better cyclist and set new challenges both on mountain and road bikes. He never gave up, just like the Chumbawamba song lyrics:

'He crawled through the mud, but he never gave up'

Duncan will be missed by all who knew him. Current CVFR members appreciate that the success of the club is very much down to people like Duncan who really helped to raise the standards. I cannot begin to contemplate how much Duncan is missed by his mother, daughters, grandchildren, brother, and wife Ruth, with whom he had such a close and loving bond. Everyone who spent time with Duncan soon realised how special he was.

I know how much he missed running and like to think that he is now back on the fells, probably with Keith Muntton a former friend and training partner, and Greg Houghton, fellow CVFR member. The spirit of Duncan will live on, especially whenever there is an event on Pendle Hill, which he knew like the back of his hand.

DUNCAN THOMPSON: TOUR OF PENDLE 1991, BY JEFF WINDER

I have many great memories of Duncan. I did the Old Counties Tops with Duncan twice and spent many a happy hour both racing and training with him. He was a quiet, unselfish, modest man. My fondest memory, and one which speak volumes of Duncan as a man dedicated to his sport, was the 1991 Tour of Pendle. It was held in good weather, was Duncan's local race and one he loved.

He had decided the previous year to try to win the race. In typical style, Duncan told no one of his intentions. Duncan had set himself a very difficult target which displays the strength of his will. He quietly got on with his training spending many an hour on Pendle sorting out the best line and building up his endurance, but never told anyone of his intentions. The day came and Duncan lined up with his game plan firmly rooted in his mind.

Off we went. To everyone’s surprise Duncan shot off like a scalded rabbit, quickly gaining 100 yards. Following Duncan were Scoffer (Andrew Schofield), Tim Laney, and me. “What is Duncan doing?” someone asked,

“Don’t worry, he’s going too fast and he will come back to us” said Scoffer.

We arrived at the stile at the foot of the first climb. Duncan was a few hundred yards up the hill on a line off to the right. In retrospect, this was an early display of the work he had put in and which was unknown to us at the time. “He’s going well” Tim said. Scoffer was

still convinced his pace was too quick. The race progressed and Duncan kept his lead, slowly extending it up to checkpoint 3. Where the Half Tour turned right, our check Point 4, our band of three chasers was surprised to see Duncan had extended his lead even further as we dropped down to the stream.

Scoffer shouted, “He’s not coming back, we’d better start chasing”, so the race was on, Scoffer chasing followed by Tim and me. Duncan had his head down and was displaying his dogged determination, pushing on hard. It was not until the last climb up Pendle that Duncan was caught. We all came back together: Scoffer caught Duncan near the top of the climb and Tim caught him on the run over the moor from the trig. I chased hard but never caught him. Scoffer won in a time of 2:21:00, Tim’s time was 2:22:55, Duncan had a time of 2:23:11 and I finished in 2:23:18. Duncan, while not happy that he didn’t win, was quietly pleased knowing he gave it his all and did his best on the day. Perhaps he could have won that day by adopting a steadier pace earlier on. We will never know. But he displayed his true character and belief in himself and just went

JON WILLIAMS

1945 - 2020

When I first met Jon, in 1974, he was already an accomplished cross-country runner, climber, skier and orienteer. A teacher by profession, he exuded inspiration. He was a founder member of Mandale Harriers and served as a committee member and later Chairman of Teesside and Cleveland Orienteering Club. In the days of pen and ink before OCAD, he developed his skills as a mapper.

Throughout the 1970s and 80s, Jon’s sporting career progressed. In orienteering, he was twice Northern Orienteering Champion and won a gold medal in the 1983 Continental Cup Relays in France. He was a frequent competitor in local fell, road, and track races, too

numerous to list but always highly placed. Bill Smith’s book ‘Stud marks on the summit’ has him winning the 1981 Roseberry Topping Race and 1974 Lyke Wake Race. On the roads, he completed half a dozen Great North Runs and three London Marathons, including a creditable sub-2½ hours.

During the time we both lived in Guisborough, Jon was my regular training partner. We would often share lifts to enter the classic Lakeland fell races: Ennerdale and the Mountain Trial. I was always trailing in his wake. In 1977, we paired up to compete as a team in the Karrimor in the Howgills in which we came 7th in the Elite.

Jon eventually retired from teaching but continued working with children by coaching orienteering in CLOK’s schools programme. His meticulousness and attention to detail found an opportunity in the form of repairing antique clocks.

However, my fondest memory of Jon was as a musician. Many nights have been spent listening to his songs and guitar playing in folk clubs and relaxing around campfires on a beach after spending the day windsurfing.

But in 2005, Jon suffered a life changing event soon after the start of an orienteering event on Flasby Fell near Skipton when he suffered a massive stroke. Fortunately, medical help was quickly on hand by a fellow competitor and the Yorkshire Air Ambulance ensured a prompt admission to hospital. However Jon was left paralysed in his left arm and leg, unable to walk and confined to a wheelchair.

Despite this, with typical resilience and determination I knew from long runs on the fells, Jon taught himself to swim with just one half of his body eventually swimming 64 lengths, a full mile, to raise money for the Great North Air Ambulance. He managed to remain an active club member, continuing to plan, control and help at events as well as serving on the CLOK’s mapping committee. Jon continued to work enthusiastically with junior orienteers, helping them to develop their skills and providing encouragement and confidence.

In 2012 Jon was selected to be an Olympic torchbearer as it passed through Teesside on its way to the London Games. It must have been Jon’s proudest moment.

The last few years have seen a deterioration of Jon’s condition exacerbated by a second stroke. He passed away in the early hours of 25th September 2020.

Jon will be lovingly missed by his wife, Shelley; his children: Andrew and Michael; four grandchildren; brother, Steve and sisters, Judy and Sue; as well as his many friends in the orienteering and athletics communities.

Jon thrived at what he loved, training and working hard, every day. He was a very good friend and was there when you most needed help.



Jon at Ingleby Incline Uphill Mile 1989 ©Unknown



Jon Williams carrying the Olympic torch through Teesside in June 2012 ©Michael Garratt



JUNIOR FELL RUNNER

128 AUTUMN 2020

ICE CREAM AND ELECTRONICS, HERE COMES 2021

As we started lockdown in our house with 400 cream eggs and 100 toilet rolls due to the cancellation of our Junior race, I felt very sorry for our sponsors Kong who were unable to eat their stock. I hope you have all coped with the different challenges Covid has thrown at you. If you have missed what the FRA would have done for you this year, perhaps now is a good time to consider what you could offer the FRA team of volunteers. Local clubs and the FRA only exist because of the input from unpaid willing folk, please volunteer if you can. So, without further ado rather than dwelling on the past, here is what's planned for 2021.

Many of our wonderful race organisers have worked hard behind the scenes this year to try to hold races for you and have kindly agreed to hold their events next year. A massive thank you goes to those prepared to embrace the brave new world of changes that 2021 will entail. We have a couple of new venues too, which show off the varied racing terrain that England offers. See later in this edition for more information.

We know that most racing will start at small, local, and low-key events, but the larger English Championships are a different proposition due to the number of children taking part and accompanying parents and spectators. In order to enable our return to racing, some things will be done differently.

In 2021 most of the Junior Fell Running Championships will involve some form of online registration, payment and parental consent, contact free timing with results produced electronically using timing chips or bar codes. The use of online and electronic timing systems mean we can hold mass starts if we are permitted, and if not, we have

the ability to manage wave or individual starts. With this flexibility I hope we will be able to hold races despite any future changes to restrictions. Wherever possible, please enter online. This makes it much easier for the race organiser with fewer entries on the day and all the problems of doing that in the bio-secure way it will entail. It may cost you more to enter on the day too.

You will need to check each race carefully as the entry system may be different for each event. All the information will be on the Juniors page of the FRA website (now with an easy to find tab on the main FRA webpage) so check for updates. As things change the new Covid page will be updated to help runners and organisers monitor requirements as the pandemic unfolds.

"How much?" I hear you ask. Yes, there is a cost, but because the FRA has agreed to help us out this year, your entry fee will only increase by £2.00 i.e. cost of an ice cream without a flake! Up to £1.00 of this is transaction fees imposed on us and the race organiser.

If you want to see how this will work, and get an early race in, we will be trialling one of these systems at the Hoppits Junior fell race in February. Up to date information and details can be found here <http://www.hoppits.co.uk/>

Obviously, the ongoing uncertainty makes it impossible at this stage to plan for any social gatherings, so we hope to hold a Junior "Do" in Autumn 2021 if we are permitted to gather socially. Again, any updates will appear on the FRA Juniors page with thanks to Graham Wright for his help with this.

I owe you all a big thank you for your patience. You have been stoic and heroic putting up with restrictions on your lives to save others. Well done.

HELENE WHITAKER,
FRA JUNIOR CO-ORDINATOR



Submissions to Junior section of Fellrunner

Please send all articles for consideration for submission to the Junior section of Fellrunner to the junior editor Natalie Hawkrigg, Junioreditorfellrunner@gmail.com

Photo on previous page: Junior Champs ©Frank Golden

2021

ENGLISH JUNIOR CHALLENGE AND CHAMPIONSHIP RACES

TRAWDEN JUNIOR RACES

Date: Saturday 27th, March 2021

Details: Wycoller Country Park, nr Trawden Lancashire

Starting from the picturesque village of Wycoller, the courses will take in the Pennine Bridleway onto the foothills of Boulsworth, the highest point of the South Pennines!

The courses are all very runnable, good, and solid underfoot with fast descent back into the finish line.

Website: www.trawdenac.co.uk

Contact: Jamie McIlvenny, races@trawdenac.co.uk

GUISBOROUGH WOODS JUNIOR CLASSIC

Date: Saturday 15th May 2021

Details: Guisborough Woods (North Yorkshire Moors), Guisborough, Cleveland

Junior Championship racing returns to the North Yorkshire Moors for the first time since the Cock Howe Classic at Chop Gate in 2017. Course details are to be confirmed finally for 2021, though a challenging championship variation on our festive favourite Guisborough Woods is being planned. Each of the courses will take in a challenging technical ascent and descent with fast running in between. The older category races will reach Guisborough Moor commanding spectacular views of local landmark Highcliffe Nab and a glance to the north east before commencing your descent, the North Sea.

And a final word to competitors, never underestimate the North Yorkshire Moors, see you in 2021.

Website: www.eskvalleyfellclub.org/

Contact: Clive Thornton, clivethorntons@gmail.com

WEST NAB

Date: Saturday 29th, May 2021

Details: All paths lead to Royd Edge, so every junior from U11 upwards tackles the steep climb up Royd Edge in full or in part! All courses are being re-designed to eliminate early congestion.

Website: www.holmfirthharriers.com/joomla-pages-iii/category-list/26-fell/1069-west-nab-race-page-2020

Contact: Phil Hobbs, fellhobbs@gmail.com

UP THE NAB

Date: Sunday 13th, June 2021

Details: Starts and finishes at Glossop Rugby Club, Charlesworth.

Runnable grassy slopes all the way up, with views of the rugby club on the descents. Be prepared for some grunting and fast sprints at the end.

Website: <https://buxtonac.org.uk/our-events/up-the-nab/>

Contact: Des Gibbons, desgibbons@live.co.uk

ILAM JUNIOR RACES

Date: Saturday 26th, June 2021

Details: A challenging fell race in the superb and scenic surroundings of the Southern Peak District National Park. A 2km course for under 9's & 11's with the key section being a short but steep climb over the shoulder of Bunster Hill. The 5km route for under 13's and 15's will incorporate the first part of the main fell race route which involves a steep climb to Bunster Hill summit followed by a longish descent all the way to the popular and well known Dovedale stepping stones before river and field paths bring you back to the finish in Ilam village.

Website: www.minimountainmarathon.co.uk/ilam-fell-race.html

Contact: Adrian Boyes, aaboyes@icloud.com

BRADWELL JUNIOR RACE

Date: Saturday 10th July 2021

Details: Tough and varied, the Bradwell Junior races feature in the Junior Championship for the first time in 2021. The courses have been designed to test the skills of our young runners whilst offering spectators a great opportunity to watch the action as it unfolds. A variety of terrain, from hard track to tussocky field (with the odd bog thrown-in) will keep the competitors on their toes. The very visible first climb and final descent will be the crucial sections for those hoping to do well.

Website: <https://tourofbradwell.co.uk/junior/>

Contact: Greg Rimmer, g.rimmer461@btinternet.com

WORDS DUNCAN RICHARDS
PHOTOS DUNCAN RICHARDS, ALEC DUFFIELD, NEIL WILKINSON AND WMRA/MARCO CULBERTI

JUNIOR INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN RUNNING

2020 decimated international competitive sport as national governing bodies were understandably reluctant to send teams to compete abroad, but tentative plans for 2021 are being discussed.

JUNIOR HOME INTERNATIONAL

The 2020 JHI was due to be held in Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland have agreed to host again in 2021. Once a date has been confirmed please monitor the FRA and England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland Athletics websites for information on trial races.



JHI, Llanberis 2019



Susa, Italy 2019

INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN RUNNING YOUTH CUP

The postponed Ambleside race will now take place on 24 July 2021. Eligible athletes are those born within the years 2004 & 2005. Please monitor your national athletics governing body websites for details of trial races for this event.

EUROPEAN AND WORLD MOUNTAIN RUNNING CHAMPIONSHIPS

U20 AND SENIOR

The European Mountain Running Championships (up and down) - 4 July 2020, Cinfaes, Portugal and the World Mountain Running Championships (uphill) - 13 November 2020, Lanzarote, were both cancelled this year.

Check with World Mountain Running Association for details of next year's events and British Athletics Mountain Running for details of trial races for the Great Britain teams.



Joe Dugdale at the World Mountain Running Championships, Patagonia, 2019

Smells LIKE TEAM SPIRIT

WORDS MATT DARLINGTON

In an age where the glitz and glamour of mainstream sports such as football and cricket tend to dominate children's interests and classroom chatter, it is rare for less popular pursuits such as cross country and fell running to get a look in.

However, this is certainly not the case at Menston Primary School near Ilkley in West Yorkshire, where a passion for running has inspired a large group of Year 6 pupils to come together as friends and as team-mates, underpinned by a tremendous team spirit.

It started in Foundation year where a small handful of children started out running Cross Country for Menston Primary in the Wharfedale Schools league. With each year, the interest grew as tales of their weekend exploits representing the school inspired more and more children to take part. Subsequently, for the past four years, there has consistently been up to 16 children representing this year group for Menston in both the boys' and girls' teams in every race, not without considerable success individually and particularly in the team placings.

As the Menston Primary Head Teacher, Iain Jones explains, "What sets this group of children apart is their wonderful team spirit. There are no individual superstars and they always cheer each other on (very loudly!), celebrating every race placing and showing great sportsmanship at every event. They have represented the school magnificently over the past seven years."

Running for school has been a catalyst for further success and representation with many of the group joining Ilkley Junior Harriers in 2017. For the past three years, this year group have been competing

together representing Ilkley Harriers in the PECO XC league, West Yorkshire XC league, BOFRA and FRA races, not to mention many of the summer gala events that occur across the region.

Not only have this group inspired each other, but also their younger siblings who have also been successfully representing both Menston and Ilkley Junior Harriers for some time now and again with considerable success. So, whilst the Year 6 group will be moving to High School in September, the future of Menston Primary cross-country running remains in good hands as the younger siblings take the baton (excuse the pun) passed to them by their older brothers and sisters.

More recently, the Covid-19 pandemic has severely impacted the running season and prevented the children from racing together. However, even this has not stopped them as they have created a Strava group to track each other's runs and they also take it turns to host a weekly quiz on Zoom in order to stay in touch and enjoy some safe social interaction.

So, whilst we are living in uncertain times, what is guaranteed is that nothing will stop this group sharing their passion for running and continuing to inspire each other and their siblings to greater success in the future. Long may it continue!



"Coming from a sporty family I got into running early at the Primary Schools XC with my friends. I love the feeling of adrenaline when I race so asked to join Ilkley Harriers with my school friends and now I love running fell races, my favourite being Kettlewell. It's great running races with friends, we cheer each other on and are always the noisiest group!"

- OLIVER HOLDER

Photo: Oliver on the left at the Ilkley Jack Bloor Run, May 2019, ©Emma Singleton



"I love running with friends because whenever we finish a race, they always give you a hug and say well done. I also like fell runs as the scenery and courses change all the time which makes it more interesting and it means we spend time with friends at the weekends as well as at school."

- GRACE DARLINGTON

Photo: Grace, pictured 5th from right, at the PECO XC Relays, March 2019 ©Matt Darlington



"I like running with my friends because they make me smile and they make me want to run further. They cheer me on and keep me going when I am doing a run and we have a great bond and team spirit...Running by yourself is time to think but running with your friends is a time to appreciate life."

- LILY SINGLETON

Photo: Lily, pictured 2nd from right, at the Ilkley Moor Relays, 2018, ©Matt Darlington



“

I love the team camaraderie and encouragement that we give each other when competing.

- HARRY LEIJSEN

”

Photo: Harry, far right, at the Bingley Harriers Schools XC event, June 2018 ©Dave Woodhead



“

It's a great way of keeping fit and when you run with your friends it is more fun than running on your own. It can sometimes be very muddy, but it makes it all worth it in the end.

- SOPHIE PARKIN

”

Photo: Sophie, bottom 2nd right, at the Withins Skyline Curly Wurly Rat Race, 2018 ©Dave Woodhead

“

I love that we cheer each other on and everyone is so supportive at the end of each run, especially in the races.

- ANNABEL RHODES

”

Photo: Annabel, top left, at Wharfedale Schools XC Ilkley Rugby Club, Sep 2018 ©Matt Darlington



In April 2020, Harry Beetham ran a half marathon in his backyard during lockdown to raise money for the NHS. Harry is a member of Keswick AC juniors, a member of Cockermouth Swimming Club and plays for Cockermouth Football club in the Under 9s section. His running helps with his pace and endurance when out on the football pitch. Here is an interview with him about what he achieved during lockdown.

WORDS HARRY BEETHAM

HARRY'S HALF

“ I raised £1702 for the Maryport Cottage Hospital League of Friends. ”

What inspired you to do your lockdown half marathon?

I was inspired by Geraint Thomas on Zwift riding from 7 am to 7pm each day for a whole week. I choose to do a half marathon because it is more realistic than a marathon and I could do it at home in lockdown.

It was 705 laps of my back garden. I did it over 2 days, and it took me over just 10 minutes to do 50 laps. For some sets I did 100 laps. For the last set I did 150 laps so I could get it done and over with faster. I counted my laps by throwing stones in a bucket each time I did a lap.

What was the best and worst thing about the challenge?

Nothing was hard about it. I reckon I could have done it by doing 2 x 6 miles.

The best thing was that I got to eat lots of Easter eggs during it.

I raised £1702 for the Maryport Cottage Hospital League of Friends. I don't know yet what they have used it for. I wanted it to go to the local NHS area.

What next for you and your running?

I have done some 5K runs recently and want to do some 10ks. I have joined Strava and I record my activity. I have also joined Zwift and my longest ride on Zwift is 30 miles and last week I rode 115 miles Monday to Sunday (on turbo and outside).

Mum Trudy has observed that generally lockdown was good for Harry's running because he was not as exhausted from all his swimming activity that he normally does. He has even started doing duathlons. He completed a 4.6 mile run for one of his lockdown PE lessons, followed by 13-mile bike ride with his Dad after work.



NAVIGATION NOVICE

ARE YOU NAV AT NAVVING?

STARTER TIPS FOR NAVIGATING IN RACES FOR JUNIOR FELL RUNNERS

For juniors transitioning to adult races, having previously been on flagged courses, an un-flagged adult course can be daunting proposition. The result can be that juniors might feel reluctant to enter the race, or lack of navigation skills can cost valuable race places.

Recently a junior talked about 'holding back' so he could follow the race leaders to ensure the correct way off the summit, and we have all observed juniors well in the lead, only to take a wrong turn possibly stealing them an overall win.

Whilst nothing replaces the ability to feel completely confident navigating out on the fell here are some simple things juniors can do to help them feel more confident in an un-flagged race if they are just transitioning.

1 RECCE THE ROUTE BEFOREHAND – if possible, a good recce of the route in good visibility will really help. Not only can you look for the best lines, but you can also observe the lie of the land. Observe where the turns are, memorize important landmarks, stiles, fences, track junctions. Study the map before you go and take one with you on your recce marking down significant

points and checkpoints. If you are short on time, recceing the end of the race rather than the start is more sensible, as you can follow at the start, but runners will be more spaced out by the middle/end.

2 CHOOSE YOUR RACE CAREFULLY. Graduate up from easier races where navigation skills may not be required, to ones where navigation skills are listed as essential. The FRA has a clear coding system for this in the fixtures information. **ER** = Experience Required; **NS** = Navigational Skills Required; **LK** = Local Knowledge an Advantage; **PM** = Course Partially Marked

3 LEARN THE BASICS OF USING A COMPASS. In your back-garden practice holding the compass until the needle point swings and settles on North. Then turn your body so you are facing North. Simply knowing where North is when out on the fell is the basics of navigation. Once you know which direction North is, you then know South, East and West.

4 TAKE A MAP AND A COMPASS ON A RUN. Practice finding North and turning your map so that the North on the map is pointing to the actual North direction. Match the map details with what you see in front of you.

5 LEARN TO TAKE A BEARING. Fell runners do very simple pre-race bearings and write them on the back of the hands. If there is only one bearing you might need you can even set your compass to the bearing before you start the race. If the mist comes down, you whip out your compass, find the bearing and head in that direction very quickly. This means you can leave the map in the bum bag. Learning to take a bearing is more complex. Ordnance Survey have a simple video with Steve Backshall on YouTube that is easy to follow.

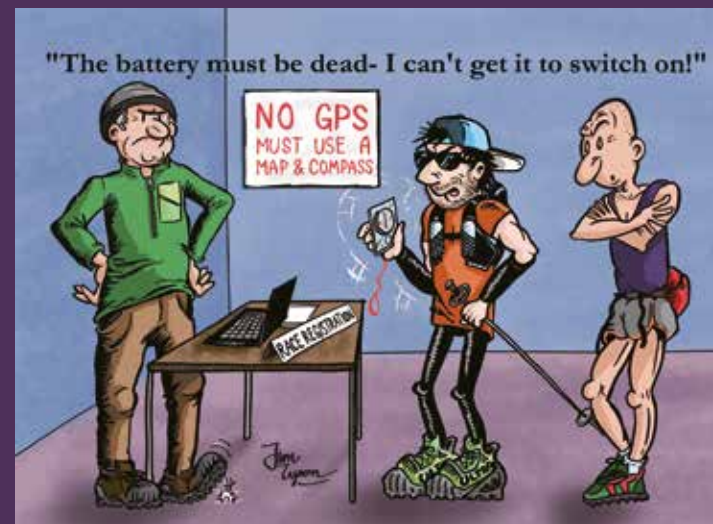
6 GO ON AN FRA NAVIGATION COURSE, in non-Covid times these run twice yearly usually March and September. The details are on the FRA website.

7 JOIN AN ORIENTEERING CLUB – have a go at orienteering and learn skills from expert navigators.

8 KNOW YOUR ESCAPE ROUTE DIRECTIONS. East, West, North, or South? If you get into trouble you at least know which rough direction is to safety.

9 ASK AN ADULT TO RUN WITH YOU. If there is an adult/parent you can trust that enjoys fell running, ask them to run the race too. If you become unsure, you have the reassurance that they won't be far behind you.

10 FINALLY, NEVER SKIMP ON CARRYING FULL FRA RECOMMENDED KIT. This could save your life. Hypothermia is serious, and you may need to put on your extra layers if ever you have to stop to navigate, if you are lost or you stop to help someone injured.



(Cartoon used with permission of Jim Tyson)

Navigation Training Days in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support

Do you want to learn how to switch a compass on(!) and other navigation skills?

Series of mountain navigation training days run by qualified Mountain Leader and experienced outdoor professional

Autumn 2020 – Spring 2021 dates
(subject to Covid restrictions)

- NE Lakes
- Each day 9am – 5pm
- 3 – 5 people per day
- £45 per person – all monies go to Macmillan

Contact: Facebook [facebook.com/Jonathan.Tombs.39](https://www.facebook.com/Jonathan.Tombs.39)
Email Jontombs@yahoo.co.uk
Mobile 07779 744776
to register interest for when dates circulated

HISTORIC RESULTS

INTERMEDIATE FELL RUNNING CHAMPIONS

1986 TO 2006

YEAR	UNDER 20 BOYS	
1986	Robin Bergstrand	Rochdale
1987	Gary Devine	Pudsey and Bramley
1988	John Taylor	Holmfirth
1989	John Taylor	Holmfirth
1990	Gerard Cudahy	Buxton
1991	Ben Evans	Ambleside
1992	Patrick Boyd	Blackburn
1993	Nathan Matthews	Horwich RMI
1994	Robert Hope	Horwich RMI
1995	Matthew Wigmore	Helsby
1996	Lee Gibson	CFR
1997	Lee Gibson	CFR
1998	Andrew Davies	Mercia
1999	Simon Bailey	Staffs Moorlands
2000	Simon Bailey	Staffs Moorlands
2001	FOOT AND MOUTH	
2002	George Crayson	CFR
2003	Robert Little	Mercia
2004	Ricky Lightfoot	CFR
2005	Ricky Lightfoot	CFR
2006	Jonny Mellor	Liverpool

YEAR	UNDER 20 GIRLS	
1994	Helen Berry	Holmfirth
1995	Lisa Lacon	Holmfirth
1996	Lisa Lacon	Holmfirth
1997	Lisa Lacon	Holmfirth
1998	Charlotte Sanderson	Skipton
1999	Sarah Dugdale	Skipton
2000	Kate Bailey	Staffs Moorlands
2001	FOOT AND MOUTH	
2002		
2003	Christine Boardman	Horwich RMI
2004	Lucy Griffiths	Holmfirth
2005	Rachel Thompson	Horwich RMI
2006	Samantha Morphet	CFR

MULTIPLE TROPHY WINNERS

NAME	U12 BOYS	U14 BOYS	U16 BOYS	U18 BOYS	NO OF WINS
Geoff Hall				1987/98	2
William Styan				1990/91/92	3
Chris Livesey	1992	1994	1995		3
Anthony Turner		1992	1994	1996	3
Stephen Savage					2
Simon Bailey				1997	2
Andrew Symonds			1997	1999	2
Lee Siemaszko			1997	2000	2
Simon Clifford	2000	2002			2
Christopher Doyle		1999/2000	2002	2004	4
Mark Buckingham			2000	2002	2
James Mountain	2002	2004			2
Joshua Moody		2005	2007		2
Alfie Thompson	2011	2013			2
Lewis Byram		2011	2013		2
James Hall			2011/2012	2013	3
Chris Richards		2012	2014		2
Joshua Boyle	2012	2013/2014	2015		4
Joshua Dickinson	2013	2015			2
Samuel Almond	2014	2016			2
Fraser Sproul	2015	2017			2
Sam Smith	2016	2018			2
Matthew Knowles			2018	2019	2

MULTIPLE TROPHY WINNERS CONT...

NAME	U12 GIRLS	U14 GIRLS	U16 GIRLS	U18 GIRLS	NO OF WINS
Helen Berry				1989/91/92	3
Victoria Wilkinson		1992	1993/1994	1995/1996	5
Gayle Adams		1993	1995		2
Emma Hopkinson		1995	1996		2
Lisa Lacon				1993/1994	2
Kate Bailey			1997	1998/1999	3
Laura Hughes		1998	1999		2
Karrie Hawitt	1998	2000	2002	2003	4
Kate Ingram		1999	2000	2002	3
Emma Stuart			2004	2005	2
Blue Haywood		2004/2005			2
Dionne Allen			2005	2006	2
Hannah Bethwaite	2006/2007	2008/2009			4
Hannah Bateson			2006	2008/2009	3
Laura Riches		2007	2008/2009		3
Shannon Johnson		2009	2010		2
Elizabeth Greenwood		2012	2013/2014	2015	4
Bryony Holt	2014	2015			2
Chloe Rylance		2016/2017	2018		3
Eve Whittaker	2017	2018/2019			3

JUNIOR FELL RUNNING WORD SEARCH

(SET BY QUIZRUNNER)

K	I	N	H	N	O	R	D	N	A	N	C	E	L	N
Z	N	D	A	G	N	I	D	A	E	H	J	F	O	T
A	O	I	N	F	S	T	S	V	Y	V	V	E	C	T
L	R	R	D	P	C	S	N	I	O	N	R	L	I	N
T	T	G	R	C	A	E	G	G	L	E	S	D	T	A
I	H	M	A	P	L	W	B	A	E	O	N	E	E	R
T	N	V	I	P	E	G	N	T	U	E	E	E	N	T
U	D	O	L	S	E	O	N	I	S	C	D	N	G	N
D	H	Y	I	A	I	E	S	O	U	N	C	G	A	E
E	Z	U	L	T	I	S	F	N	R	E	O	N	M	E
J	Y	O	A	R	A	E	E	P	V	R	N	I	P	R
F	S	C	O	P	G	I	A	P	E	E	T	R	F	C
T	O	L	M	N	B	A	R	S	Y	F	O	A	J	Q
L	G	O	T	C	E	P	S	A	T	E	U	E	D	W
D	C	M	S	O	U	T	H	A	V	R	R	B	F	G

The following words are all hidden in the square – horizontally, vertically, diagonally or reversed

ALTITUDE	HEADING	ORDNANCE	WEST
ASPECT	LOCATION	ORIENTEER	
BEARING	LOST	REENTRANT	
COMPASS	MAGNETIC	REFERENCE	
CONTOUR	MAP	SCALE	
EAST	NAVIGATION	SOUTH	
GRID	NEEDLE	SURVEY	
HANDRAIL	NORTH	VARIATION	



The
FELLRACER



Race Results

SPARKIE’S DARK ‘UN/ Lancashire
BS/8.1km/214m/ **14.02.20**

Who knew that so many fell runners were romantics? A change to the date of the race to Valentine’s Day saw a noticeable drop in numbers. Appropriately the 65 runners who did take part in the Luuurvve Edition loved it! We were very lucky to get a weather window between two storms and got a dry (if cold and blustery) night. Conditions underfoot were largely good but a couple of boggy stretches made me think that the course records would be safe. I was right - but only just.

Pre-race briefing ended with ‘Don’t get injured. Don’t get lost. Don’t be a d***.’ Then they were off into the night to discover ghostly marshals and a love themed moortop Disco. As always the proceeds from entry fees went to charity – Bolton Mountain Rescue Team and Prostate Cancer UK, so the majority of the prizes were provided by the fantastic members of Darwen Dashers. This year a new prize – First to the Top of B*stard Hill (you’ll know it if you’ve done the race).

At the finish line it seemed an amazingly short time before the headtorch of the leading runner came into view. Andrew Worster absolutely flew round in 32:31, a time only seconds behind the course record held by Adam Perry. Andrew was over three minutes ahead of the next finisher Dan Gilbert, joined shortly after by Mark Burley. Andrew also won the FTBH prize. Fionnuala Swan was first female. Gareth Davies took the hotly contested first Darwen Dasher spot with an impressive ninth overall placing.

Once everyone was back, safe and well it was time for the prize giving. Equal prizes for Male and Female runners, as it should be. Prizes for age categories and few surprised recipients of spot prizes.

The new landlord and landlady of the Royal did us proud and there was a much welcome return of the chip butties! Massive thanks to them, all our amazing marshals and helpers, members of Horwich RMI Harriers who also helped out, and all the good humoured runners who it was a pleasure to put a race on for.

This may have been the last ever edition of the race. We will see.

Simon Fox

OPEN

1. A. Worster	Tod	32.31
2. D. Gilbert M40 (1)	Horw	36.19
3. M. Burley	Macc	37.00
4. N. Wood M40 (2)	HelmH	37.35
5. M. Pritchard	Unatt	37.49
6. A. Lee	Tod	38.21
7. D. Dawson	Unatt	39.23
8. D. Garner M50 (1)	Tod	39.28
9. G. Davies	Darwen	39.53
10. R. Parrish	Tod	40.54
15. V. Belshaw M60 (1)	Denb	42.03
16. G. Chadderton M50 (2)	Horw	42.20
33. L. Petch M60 (2)	BoltU	51.57

LADIES

13. F. Swann F40 (1)	Trawd	41.46
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20. K. Hewitson F40 (2)	DkPk	43.54
28. V. Upton	HelmH	47.32
29. S. Sherrat F40 (3)	Bowl	48.37
30. K. Ashworth	Tod	50.03
37. S. Nutt	Unatt	52.50
38. D. Cooper F40 (4)	Bowl	52.51
40. C. Badge	Unatt5	54.49
42. J. Simcock F50 (1)	TeamJMC	56.39
43. M. Fuller F40 (5)	Tod	56.44
44. K. Thompson F60 (1)	Clay	57.30
55. J. Graham F50 (2)	Tod	64.13
56. E. Milnes F60 (2)	Tod	???

65 finishers

NEW CHEW/ Gtr Manchester
O/ **16.02.20**

The New Chew Orienteering Event is held every February on Saddleworth Moor and organised by Saddleworth Fell Running Club.

The event has never been cancelled due to bad weather and so Storm Dennis stood no chance. “We can’t have a winter orienteering event and then cancel because of bad weather” was our northern opinion. In preparation we had one club member primed to stand in a pair of wellies on the flooded road leading to the venue so drivers could see the depth and decide whether to drive through! Little did he know I had a bucket on standby in case he needed to bail the water over the stone walls to reduce the level. We’d thought of everything! Luckily he got a 7 00 a.m. call to say he wouldn’t be needed as the road markings were just about visible under the water. We didn’t worry

as much about how everyone was going to exit the venue if the rain continued, but luckily it didn’t, and the event went ahead when many thought it couldn’t.

It has been said that our controls/wooden sticks should be replaced with modern technology, but those sticks are of tribal significance to the club. Each piece of duct tape, electrical tape, string, layer of paint, letter upon re-lettering represents history to every club member involved in the event. Each stick has accompanied members of several generations on one if not more of their hardest journeys in life. Whiteouts, sleet, bog, gale force winds and torrential downpours. The simplicity is key to the bonding and means that the New Chew is an experience not just for the runners but for all those that put in so much hard work to put on the event year after year.

Thanks to all the amazing competitors who made the effort this year despite the weather warnings. The Saddleworth Running community look forward to being your host once again in the coming years.

Susan Hinde

LONG SCORE

1. C. Brearley M40 (1)	HolmeP	320 pts
2. R. Hunt M40 (2)	DkPk	310 pts
3. A. Pullan	Kirkstall	300 pts
6. S. Adams M50 (1)	DkPk	285 pts
7. P. Rowley M40 (3)	Penn	275 pts
8. P. Stobbs M50 (2)	Trawden	230 pts
9. N. Spinks F50 (1)	DkPk	225 pts
15. I. Charlesworth M50 (3)	Penistone	211 pts
17. R. Browne F50 (2)	Bowland	209 pts
23. E. Johstone F (1)	Penn	198 pts
25. R. Ansell M60 (1)	Tring	185 pts
28. L. Palmer F50 (3)	Gloss	180 pts
37. P. Rowland M60 (2)	Penn	125 pts
39. M. Edgerton F60 (1)	Penn	110 pts
40. A. Brentnall M70 (1)	Penn	110 pts
41. S. Wathall M60 (3)	BlCombe	110 pts
43. R. Ashby M70 (2)	Penn	100 pts

LADIES

9. N. Spinks F50 (1)	DkPk	225 pts
17. R. Browne F50 (2)	Bowland	209 pts
23. E. Johnstone	Penn	198 pts
28. L, Palmer F50 (3)	Gloss	180 pts
39. M. Edgerton F60 (1)	Penn	110 pts
46. C. Heaton F60 (2)	BlCombe	40 pts
44. K. Thompson F60 (1)	Clay	57.30
55. J. Graham F50 (2)	Tod	64.13

TEAM

1. P. Taylor/J. Greehalgh	Sadd/Los-	224 pts
2. G. Briggs/S. Richmond	Penn	210 pts
3. T. Marlow/A. Sunter	Lostock	205 pts

SHORT SCORE

1.P. Taylor M50 (1)	Unatt	125 pts
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2. J. Sheard M50 (2)	SDD	120 pts
3. R. Mather F	Unatt	100 pts
10. A. Haines M40 (1)	Radcl	74 pts
11. M. Patel M50 (2)	CaldV	70 pts
12. D. Hill M70 (1)	Unatt	20 pts

LADIES

3. R. Mather	Unatt	100 pts
4. K. McInnes	Chortlton	100 pts
5. S. Coe F40 (1)	DkPk	92 pts
9. S. Kiveal F60 (1)	DkPk	75 pts

TEAM

11. J. Travis/L. Thornton	Gloss/	120 pts
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HEARTBEAT HOBBLE/ North Yorkshire
BM/11k/260m/ **23.02.20**

129 runners turned up for the third year the race has been on, starting and finishing in Goathland Village where the popular TV series of Heartbeat was filmed.

This year’s route over the best of the North Yorkshire Moors was very muddy with all the recent rain and storms, but not as windy as the day before when we marked and checked it.

From the start Lee Kemp took an early lead and stayed there, with Christian Garvey in second and Jayson Cavill in third. In the female race Caroline Lambert led from start to finish, with Georgina Campbell taking second place and Shelli Gordon in third place. In the teams York Knavesmire’s men just beat Pickering by one point and Pickering women took first team.

A big thank you to all that helped on the day, especially the marshals standing out in the cold and wet.

David Parke

OPEN

1. L. Kemp	NYMAC	44.49
2. C. Garvey	YorkK	47.43
3. J. Cavill M40 (1)	Picker	48.40
4. W. Herman M40 (2)	Clay	49.05
5. D. Smith	Picker	49.09
6. G. Ellwood	YorkK	49.19
7. P. Allen	Picker	49.34
8. P. Walker	YorkK	50.03
9. P. Butler M50 (1)	Scarb	50.12
10. S. Leadly	LoftW	50.37
17. M. Machouki M50 (2)	Scarb	52.10
35. N. Ridesdale M60 (1)	EskV	57.15
56. P. Smith M60 (2)	Picker	62.49

LADIES

12. C. Lambert	RibbV	50.49
20. G. Campbell	Jarrow	53.29
39. S. Gordon F40 (1)	NYMAC	58.26
46. K. Gaughan	Picker	60.23
49. R. Harper	Picker	61.27
51. K. Struthers	NYMAC	61.58
54. R. Dent FU23 (1)	Scarb	62.32

58. B. May F50 (1)	Scarb	63.36
59. K. Cavell	Picker	63.46
63. E. Collins	Goodgym	65.42
66. O. O’Toole F40 (2)	YorkK	66.25
90. S. Williams F50 (2)	LeedsF	72.02
117. C. Robertson F60 (1)	Scarb	81.33
125. S. Brown F60 (2)	Picker	87.39

129 finishers

PIPE DREAM/ Conwy
AS/6.8km/518m/ **29.02.20**

No records fell at Dolgarrog, the 16th running of Pipe Dream, the wind and weeks of rain leaving it boggy and battered underfoot, but a successful event nonetheless. Luckily, Storm Jorge delayed his arrival until the afternoon, allowing for pretty good conditions, much better than we expected.

64 runners braved what was originally a rough forecast, cold and sunny until the arrival of the hail. The first half of the field managed to get home before it landed, the latter half (and the marshals) receiving its full encouragement to go faster!

Jo Henderson took the female race and first FV40 for the second year (some club needs to snap her up!). Great to see Jackie Lee racing again after her injury, taking second slot, followed by Becki Law.

Gareth Wyn Hughes never appeared troubled as he cruised to win the race overall with a comfortable 51 second margin over his clubmates. Likewise, for second placed Gavin Roberts, with Owain Williams a similar gap behind. The veterans’ podium was topped by MV40 Matt Fortes; MV50 Craig Jones; MV60 Steve P Jones and MV70 by John Morris.

For the women, FV50 was Ellie Salisbury; FV60 Rosemary Symms; and FV70 Maggie Oliver. Of note was the fact that both John Morris and the second MV70 Don Williams are both now over 75 and producing real competitive performances. Along with other MV70s, the North Wales Championships look like they’re going to be well fought over this year. Also, good to see a few locals taking part this year, something we very much welcome.

Big thanks to all the helpers and marshals on the hill and in the village, it couldn’t go ahead without you.

Craig Jones

OPEN

1. G. Hughes	Eryri	35.00
2. G. Roberts	Eryri	35.51
3. O. Williams	Eryri	37.00
4. M. Fortes M40 (1)	Eryri	38.43
5. J. Gomes M40 (2)	Wrex	39.02
6. S. Edwards	Unatt	39.20
7. C. Jones M50 (1)	Eryri	41.01
8. G. Williams M40 (3)	Eryri	41.39

9. P. Jones M40 (4)	Eryri	42.07
10. S. Jones M60 (1)	Eryri	42.27
27. R. Bourne M50 (2)	Myster	49.52
32. Frodsham M60 (2)	Helsby	51.58
53. J. Morris M70 (1)	Eryri	63.15
57. D. Williams M70 (2)	Eryri	63.15

LADIES

14. J. Henderson F40 (1)	Unatt	44.46
18. J. Lee F40 (2)	Eryri	45.59
20. B. Law	Eryri	47.00
31. H. Turner	Eryri	51.46
40. M. Farrell	GOG	54.50
45. E. Salisbury F50 (1)	Eryri	57.34
47. H. McPartland	CybiS	57.52
49. R. Symms F60	Chest	59.44
50. J. Williamson	Eryri	59.49
52. R. Arnold F50 (2)	Helsby	61.15
60. M. Oliver F70 (1)	Eryri	69.32
62. J. Keasley F60 (2)	Helsby	69.50

64 finishers

LOOPY LATRIGG/ Cumbria
AS/8km/460m/ **29.02.20**

Loopy Latrigg was the final race in the Kong Winter Series 2019/20 and it proved to be the most popular. We had 207 runners on the day and managed to avoid the worst weather of late with competitors only being caught in a freezing hailstorm for part of the race. The ground was saturated, so conditions were very slippery underfoot.

The men’s race came down to a final sprint between Dan Haworth and Brennan Townshend with Dan just edging ahead and taking the win. The women’s race was won comprehensively by Scout Adkin – with this win she took the series title overall, just one point ahead of Nicola Jackson. The men’s series win went to Billy Cartwright.

Lou Osborn

OPEN

1. D. Haworth	Mat	30.39
2. B. Townshend	Kesw	30.48
3. T. Adams	Ilk	31.17
4. G. Greenhow M40 (1)	Amble	31.34
5. B. Cartwright	Mat	32.16
6. J. Baxter	P&B	32.39
7. R. Regan M23 (1)	Eden	32.58
8. M. Atkinson	Kesw	33.25
9. S. Holding	CFR	34.35
10. S. Adkin	Amble	34.39
15. M. Reedy M40 (2)	Amble	34.58
C. Knowles M50 (1)	Ellenb	37.47
S. Angus M50 (2)	Kesw	38.08
F. Smith M60 (1)	Saltw	40.15
P. Pearson M60 (2)	NFRC	41.14
J. Downie M70 (1)	Kesw	54.43
D. Fell M70 (2)	CFR	54.43
53. J. Morris M70 (1)	Eryri	63.15
57. D. Williams M70 (2)	Eryri	63.15



LADIES

S. Adkin	Amble	34.39
N. Jackson	RibbV	35.51
S. Taylor F40 (1)	HelmH	36.36
C. Spurden	Kesw	37.56
E. Holt	Morp	38.37
S. Likeman	CFR	39.53
B. Hanson	Amble	40.30
J. Darigala F50 (1)	Pstone	40.36
L. Spencer	HelmH	41.00
J. Rice	HelmH	41.10
J. Darigala F50 (2)	Pstone	40.36
J. Lee F40 (2)	NFRC	46.03
L. Thompson F60 (1)	Kesw	46.36
C. Glover F60 (2)	Wharf	48.20

TERRY’S HIGH 5/ Cheshire

BS/8.2k/365m/ **29.02.20**

Everyone woke up to the dulcet sounds of torrential rain on Saturday morning. However, it soon eased and as everyone warmed up around Trentabank the weather did too. There was a buzz of nervous excitement at the start line - Nessit Hill looms large before you so it is just as well the heart is already beating at full pelt. Those who knew Terry were thinking and chatting about great runs we had had with him around the forest and elsewhere - remembering how he always took time to chat and laugh with everyone in his company, encouraging everyone and making every run fun. Those who didn’t know Terry were able to hear and feel his lovely legacy. Emma set everyone off up the ShutlingSlow Slog. I was amazed to hear people chatting on the way up Nessit - great effort. I liked seeing the other clubs that had also come - including Congleton and even Helm Hill - go on Carl!

It was great to have all the friendly Harriers

support on the way up, it is much needed and welcomed. There is the lovely downhill before you get to Terry’s bench which is such a delight after the hill. It was nice to High 5 Terry’s bench on the way past and thank all the supporters that were there. It was good to get a bit of a break and enjoy walking up the side of Shuts - we were all blown away in more ways than one but as always to see Simon Harding running back down having already been down and up Shuts from the other side go on Simon! Emma, Dave and the marshal team on top of shuts were brilliant, I have no idea how they managed to police the cross roads of people going up and down the different ways - the support was brilliant and much appreciated. The descent on the other side of Shuts was tricky - quite muddy and slippery and I kept trying to see what the person in front was doing with their foot work, but I couldn’t manage to copy it. It was great to see Barrie at the bottom encouraging everyone for the final ascent. I enjoyed getting to walk again and even got to have a chat with Dave, who was running brilliantly, about how he was a live ad of the benefit of tempo runs and the gain from their pain. Then came the fun descent - hitting it hard across the flagstones and down into the forest. I had great memories of Monday night Teggs Nose runs with Terry on the descent - he was brilliant on that particular descent, so fast and sure footed and I remember he would always shout to those behind him to mind the steps so I thought of him and tried my best! Then came the turn at the bottom where there is an awful sting in the tail - tried my best up that but found it so tough. However, I kept thinking come on, it’s only round the corner now! I was pleased to get to the top and enjoy descending again - lovely to see Lynne, Steve and the other marshals at the turn - however, again I thought oh no as I remembered the final slog up to Trentabank from Forest 5, I

always find that gunnel so difficult. It was really great to run into the finish line and hear all the lovely Harrier support for everyone - really lovely to see Emma and William there handing out the Terry’s High 5 beer bottles - a lovely picture of Terry flying down Shuts in his element, as we all remember him, loved the Passion for Running logo, Terry to a T!

It was great to head over to the lovely cake stall and avail of all the delights, a special treat was the Terry’s chocolate orange cake - thank you to Gill and all the cake bakers! Great to chat to everyone afterwards, everyone had found it so tough but loved every minute also - we are always chatting about how lucky we are to be able to run in such a gorgeous area. Everyone did brilliantly - a resounding PB for one and all and a great High 5 to Terry whose spirit carried us all round!

The plaques that had been specially made for the prizes were really beautiful - a great picture of Terry on the front coming down Shuts - we can all remember him on that route in his element - on the back it says ‘You never know how far you can go unless you try’ and by God we all tried our best at the race - thank you very much to Emma Beveridge, Emma Mason, William and all the marshals, bakers and organisers for a fantastic event and some great memories of running with Terry. Well done everyone!

Kathleen O’Donnell

OPEN

1. S. Harding	Macc	37.35
2. A. Perry	HelmH	38.22
3. H. Bolton M23 (1)	LUOC	38.37
4. J. Brunnock	Buxt	38.53
5. B. Hicks	Macc	39.47
6. N. Haried M23 (2)	LUOC	40.28
7. R. Clarke-Williams	Macc	41.03
8. W. Phythian M23 (3)	LUOC	41.28
9. M. Cliffe M40 (1)	SChesh	41.48
10. N. Curtis M40 (2)	Penn	42.28
15. A. Robert M50 (1)	Congle	46.49
21. N. Clarke M50 (2)	Macc	48.32
50. P. Barnes M60 (1)	Penn	61.26
53. M. Docherty M60 (2)	Unatt	62.15
59. C. Ardron M70 (1)	Macc	65.07

LADIES

24. K. O’Donnell F40 (1)	Macc	50.04
26. S. Wood F50 (1)	Macc	50.24
28. H. Bridger	Macc	50.55
39. S. Kirk F40 (2)	Macc	54.34
40. J. Mellor F50 (2)	Penn	56.40
41. A. Frost F50 (3)	Macc	56.51
48. A. Ireland F40 (3)	Macc	57.10
48. D. Masset F50 (4)	Macc	60.01
51. R. Al-Ausi F40 (4)	Macc	61.53
52. C. Aherne	Disley	62.09

73 finishers

CLOUD NINE/ Cheshire

BM/14.5km/381m/ **01.03.20**

1st March 2020 saw the 33rd outing of the Cloud 9 Fell race organised by the Congleton Harriers. Leading up to the race the main worry was the incessant rain. Little did we know at the time that ours was going to be one of the last races before the Covid-19 lock-down. As its name implies it is a nine mile run, 1250 feet ascent starting in the town on the Biddulph Valley Way (an old rail line now converted to track) before wending out across fields and onto the top of the Cloud, one of the prominent local landmarks. Off the top it is a short descent down through the trees on the NT managed estate before a short but tiring climb back up to another landmark, the Bridestones. From that point on the runners have the relief of knowing the run is all downhill to the finish.

On the day the weather was fine with bright sunshine albeit with a bit of a chill in the air. The prior rain did mean the course was saturated and exceedingly muddy and at one point the runners had to negotiate what had become a deep pond around one of the kissing gates with no option other than to wade through the middle.

The club, aided by other friends from the wider local running community, put a lot of effort into making this a friendly, well marshalled event with somewhere between 40-50 volunteers helping out. It certainly means the runners are given plenty of encouragement whilst they run and is one reason why so many keep returning year after year (the welcoming soup and charity cake stall back at Race HQ also help). This year, the club took the plunge on chip timing which made a big difference to getting results documented and prizes awarded. The race was won by Simon Bailey who opened a commanding lead within the first few miles and was almost three minutes ahead by the finish. It was a brother/sister combination with Kate Davies also dominating to finish almost two minutes ahead in the women’s’ race.

The volunteer bakers’ efforts helped raise £375 to be split between Congleton Food Bank, Astbury Mere Trust and East Cheshire Hospice. Another generous donation of £268 also goes to the National Trust to help with the maintenance of the Cloud in recognition of their access permission for the event.

Nick Budd

OPEN

1. S. Bailey	Mercia	0.57.44
2. L. Eccles	PennyL	1.01.06
3. J. Brunnock	Buxt	1.01.35
4. A. McCloskey	Unatt	1.02.20
5. J. Goodwin M40 (1)	Boalloy	1.02.22
6. B. Light	Bust	1.02.31
7. J. Waller	Ross	1.02.36
8. W. Renkel	Runfree	1.02.44

9. M. Statham M40 (2)	StaffsM	1.03.02
10. M. Basnett	StaffsM	1.03.27
28. D. Alexander M50 (1)L	SChesh	1.10.33
30. I. Fraser M50 (2)	EChesh	1.10.57
48. B. Foreman M60 (1)	Mat	1.15.44
76. G. Pettengell M60 (2)	MowCop	1.20.17
132. J. Norman M70 (1)	Unatt	1.51.57
247. T. Palenicek M70 (2)	Unatt	1.51.57

LADIES

33. K. Davies	Unatt	1.11.57
36. C. Brown	Unatt	1.13.47
50. J. Dickens F50 (1)	Trenth	1.16.11
58. A. Grace	SChesh	1.18.01
61. D. Searle F40 (1)	ValeR	1.18.27
69. C. Wood F40 (2)	Congle	1.19.21
83. J. Searle F50 (2)	DkPk	1.21.12
97. R. Lawrence F40 (3)	Macc	1.23.01
105. K. Mills F40 (4)	Knutsf	1.24.27
108. E. Lingford F50 (3)	Congle	1.24.44
189. D. Tottle F60 (1)	Unatt	1.38.12
209. J. Milton F60 (2)	Totley	1.41.53
250. S. Swinnerton F70 (1)	SChesh	1.52.32

268 finishers

MOORHOUSE’S STAN BRADSHAW
PENDLE ROUND/ Lancashire
BM/16.7km/590m/ **07.03.20**

A call in the Autumn from Clayton club mate, Kieran, went something like this: “they’re planning on doing some peat works on the hill, could clash with your race, I’ve passed your details to them ...” And so, it began! Another year of ‘where can we run’ on East Lancashire’s finest big hill? As it happens the route settled upon will be a talking point for some time to come! With some real route choice and tactics available to the 232 runners starting and finishing this year’s race in significantly better weather than was forecast.

Before the race, Barley Village Hall was full of “well which way are you heading?” afterward, over brews, soup and cake supplied by the Village Hall it was very much “so which way did you go?!” The win was taken eventually by Robin Howie, followed closely by two top local Clayton lads – Adie Cheetham and Andy Laycock, second and third, respectively.

The women’s race was dominated by Victoria Wilkinson who ended up tenth overall and first lady home, followed by local runner Molly Ralphson in second and Monica Padilla of in third. With generous sponsorship from Moorhouse’s giving each finisher a beer and more ales for the category winners AND Pete Bland and Scott Sports launching the Pendle Treble, we were able to award prizes of greater value and further down the field. Long may that continue!

Thanks as ever goes to the sponsors, the landowners, the residents, and Parish Council of Barley who accommodate us so well. Thank you

to the runners for your patience and attendance. I add this year the Ribble Rivers Trust - who left several excavators on the usual race route causing us to change the route this year, I am glad they did! Biggest thanks though are to the marshal team whose experience, skill, judgement, and flexibility in performing multiple roles on the day is truly great. We really can't race without them. See you on 6 March 2021.

Colin Woolford

OPEN		
1. R. Howie M23 (1)	Wharf	1.05.48
2. A. Cheetham M40 (1)	Clay	1.06.48
3. A. Laycock	Clay	1.07.06
4. D. Kay M40 (2)	CaldV	1.07.30
5. I. Holmes M50 (1)	Bing	1.07.54
6. M. Preedy U23 (2)	Ross	1.08.23
7. R. Hope M40 (3)	P&B	1.08.36
8. M. Perry	Unatt	1.08.49
9. S. Livesey M40 (4)	RibbV	1.08.53
12. A. Peace M50 (2)	Bing	1.12.45
69. C. Shuttleworth M60 (1)	Prest	1.25.26
76. B. Horrocks M60 (2)	Clay	1.26.38
121. K. Taylor M70 (1)	Ross	1.32.34
147. J. Maxfield M70 (2)	Newb	1.37.52
247. T. Palenicek M70 (2)	Unatt	1.51.57
LADIES		
10. V. Wilkinson F40 (1)	Bing	1.11.09
60. M. Ralphson F40 (2)	Barlick	1.23.17
78. M. Padilla	Wharf	1.26.41
81. K. Klunder	Chorl	1.26.53
90. K. MacFarlane	PennyL	1.28.20
94. M. Cook F40 (3)	Skelmer	1.28.37
97. F. Swann F40 (4)	Trawd	1.28.46
101. R. Patrick F50 (1)	Tod	1.29.20
102. B. Glaister F40 (5)	Skelmer	1.29.23
106. L. Parker F40 (6)	Acc	1.30.04
107. M. Blackhurst F50 (2)	Tod	1.30.12
178. J. Gardner F60 (1)	Macc	1.42.57
182. C. Glover F60 (2)	Wharf	1.43.52

232 finishers

PEAK RAID 3 SPRING SERIES ROUND 1/ Derbyshire M/**08.03.20**

On a day of sunshine and showers, mixed up with some very strong winds on the tops, the course visited the secluded Bretton Clough and the remote moorland around Abney. Competitors have three hours to select their own route and visit as many control points as possible within the three-hour limit. In first place with an outstanding run was Alistair Thornton, visiting all controls and achieving the maximum 500 points in 02:44:37. Not far behind was Mark Anderson, also with an impressive run, scoring 500 points in 02:58:16.

In the women's race Leah Williams scored 455

points in 03:07:52, with Sue Richmond in a very close second place with 450 points in 02:48:36. In any normal year, the Peak Raid 3 Mini Mountain Marathon would have been a series of four events. However, this has not been a normal year. The Covid 19 pandemic brought a necessary end to the series shortly after this first event.

A big thank you to all competitors, and a special note of thanks to the staff at The Adventure Hub for making us so welcome.

Paul Addison

MEN		
1. A. Thornton	LUOC	500pts
2. M. Anderson M40 (1)	Totley	500pts
3. M. Tonkins/M. James	PortV	480pts
4. M. Jones	Goodgym	480pts
5. A. Thorpe M50 (1)	CaldV	480pts
6. J. Moulding M40 (2)	DkPk	474pts
9. J. Price	Unatt	450pts
10. J. Lurati	AchRatt	450pts
12. D. Walton	Unatt	450pts
15. R. Dearden M50 (2)	NOC	450pts
LADIES		
7. L. Williams	LUOC	455pts
8. S. Richmond F40 (1)	Penn	450pts
27. M. Rogers/A. Thacker F40 (2)	Unatt	414pts
33. J. Grantham F40 (3)	Penn	380pts
52. J. Ellis/I. Jones F40 (4)	Unatt	360pts
55. L. Reynolds F40 (5)	SYorksO	350pts
59. D. Pelly F60 (1)	Amble	350pts
71. A. Haslam F50 (1)	Unatt	330pts
78. L. Palmer F50 (2)	Gloss	320pts
87. H. Winder F60 (2)	Macc	280pts

155 finishers

YR ARAN/ Gwynedd AM/ 16.1km/945m/ **14.03.20**

A difficult couple of days of viral uncertainty preceded this year's Ras yr Aran, the first leg of the UKA Mountain and Fell Running Championship. We decided to follow government guidance and continue but wondered how many might chose not to attend. The weather dawned in gloomy harmony but lightened as the wind freshened. Nonetheless, runners and marshals were condemned to poor visibility, driving rain and 40+ mph winds. It was very wet underfoot.

312 brave types started the full 10 mile (3000ft ascent) course and very rapid time was made to the first checkpoint; Rob Samuel led a pack of 12 runners through in <26 minutes - Ross Gollan second, Finlay Wild in the middle, and Eoin Lennon, a leisurely 16th. MV40 Simon Bailey was fastest on the second half of the climb topping out in 52:04 fourth behind Gollan (51:31) with Lennon getting into gear arriving in sixth place five seconds behind Wild. A surefooted descent saw Wild quickest by 1:19 back to Moel Ffenigl

giving him a 27 second lead over Gollan and they finished Wild 1:25:22, Gollan 1:26:16 and Lennon 1:26:43.

Despite the conditions Tom Wood took Karl Steinegger's 2009 MU23 record in 1:32:07 and Bailey captured Richard Robert's MV40 record finishing 10th overall in 1:30:12.

Hannah Horsburgh led the women's race throughout, reaching the top in 58:07 practically a minute ahead of FV40 Victoria Wilkinson and Nichola Jackson also under the hour, and this was the finish order with Horsburgh having a 3:28 lead over Wilkinson who was 26 seconds clear of Jackson.

Horsburgh took Kate Bailey's 2009 open course record by five minutes with a finish of 1:36:01. Eve Pannone who smashed the 2019 FU23 record (Lois Lee -St Davids) by finishing in 1:51:11. Wilkinson took the FV40 record from Melanie Price (Mercia 2015) by eight minutes in 1:39:29 As well as the Championships, this was the third of the Meirionnydd Winter Series races which was won by Richard Roberts (Eryri) in a total time of 3:26:39 and Alice Forster (Black Combe) in 4:02:10. The junior race winner was Oliver Bailey (Mercia), in 19:19. One to watch!

Nicholas Bradley

OPEN

1. F. Wild	Lochab	1.25.22
2. R. Gollan	Shettle	1.26.16
3. E. Lennon	Carneth	1.26.43
4. B. Cartwright	Mat	1.26.59
5. D. Howarth	Mat	1.27.23
6. M. Elkington	Amble	1.28.07
7. M. Lamb	Kesw	1.28.30
8. A. Chepelin	Carneth	1.29.17
9. B. Mounsey	CaldV	1.29.34
10. S. Bailey M40 (1)	Mercia	1.30.12
11. G. Greenhow M40 (2)	HelmH	1.31.24
26. K. Gray M50 (1)	CaldV	1.34.13
45. K. Richmond M50 (2)	Shettle	1.37.09
138. W. Proctor M60 (1)	HelmH	1.55.17
152. S. Jones M60 (2)	Eryri	1.57.27
291. R. Taylor M70 (1)	Penn	2.38.31

LADIES

37. H. Horsburgh	Kesw	1.36.01
58. V. Wilkinson F40 (1)	Bing	1.39.29
62. N. Jackson	Kesw	1.40.25
70. H. Russell	HelmH	1.41.44
85. S. Taylor F40 (2)	HelmH	1.45.16
92. C. Lambert	RibbV	1.46.03
93. K. Roberts	HelmH	1.46.10
102. M. Grant	Eyrii	1.48.15
112. J. Stephen	HBT	1.50.53
114. E. Pannone F23 (1)	Eden	1.51.11
182. D. Gowans F50 (1)	Acc	2.05.07
205. J. Jepson F50 (2)	DkPk	2.08.37
279. W. Dodds F60 (1)	Dallam	2.29.24

309 finishers



Victoria Wilkinson (Bingley Harriers & AC) at Yr Aran ©Grand Day Out Photography

2019-2020 MEIRIONNYDD WINTER SERIES

OPEN

1. R. Roberts M40 (1)	Eryri	3.26.39
2. M. Fortes M40 (2)	Eryri	3.29.20
3. J. Gomes	Wrex	3.41.53
4. P. Jones M40 (3)	Oswest	3.53.06
5. D. Hesleton M40 (4)	BroDys	3.57.21
6. G. Roberts	Meirion	4.02.03
1 & 7. A. Forster F (1)	BlCmb	4.02.10
7. R. Davies M40 (5)	Meirion	4.15.38
8. D. Evans M50 (1)	Meirion	4.39.25
9. A. Preston M40 (6)	Meirion	5.00.09
10. G. Rowlands M60 (1)	Meirion	5.14.40
11. P. Nicholls M60 (2)	Meirion	6.13.57

BROUGH LAW/ Northumberland AS/8km/400m/ **15.03.20**

Race day brought high winds to the fells of the Breamish Valley. A tremendous turnout of 120 runners took on the Brough law fell race covering five miles and 1300ft of ascent. Marking out the course was a task in itself trying to ensure secure taping at strategic points. The start is an immediate leg burning and lung busting climb, spreading out the field from the off. Registration was like a well oiled machine with the help of Mike, Jane, Mike and Gary. We had Mr Wilson and Kevin out on the hills to direct runners where previously some have gone astray.

It was a close contest between the first two runners on the long descent to the finish. Chris

Larkin came through for the win with some impressive downhill running, closely followed by last year's winner Callum Hanson, Sean Leckey was third.

In the women's race, Gemma Bradley from was first, Molly Pace was second with Lauren Davies-Beckett in third.

Category winners were: FV40 Helen Heaney, FV50 Katherine Davis, MV40 Roger Sillito, MV50 Gary Robson, MV60 Ken Maynard, MV70 James Tomlin.

Many thanks to Jane and Michael Briggs, Mike Steven, Gary Mason, Kevin Bray and Mr Wilson for permission to use the course. Also, thanks to Phil Green for sweeping. Over £600 was raised which will be split between Northumberland Mountain Rescue and the Northern English Springer Spaniel rescue charity. Hope to see you again next year.

J. Butters

OPEN

1. C. Larkin	NcastleU	37.23
2. C. Hanson	P&B	37.59
3. S. Leckey	Amble	41.37
4. A. Berry	DFR	42.15
5. J. Cherry	Jesmond	42.36
6. B. Clough	NSP	42.39
7. R. Hughes	NFR	43.15
8. R. Bennett	Morp	43.36
9. R. Sillito M40 (1)	NFR	44.47
10. G. Robson M50 (1)	NFR	44.54
12. P. Vincent M40 (2)	Tyned	45.14

16. L. Bennett M50 (2)	NFR	46.09
39. K. Maynard M60 (1)	Sunder	49.53
66. P. Bellingham M60 (2)	Morp	56.01
118. J. Tomlin M70 (1)	Unatt	85.08

LADIES

17. G. Bradley F40 (1)	Saltw	46.12
18. M. Pace	Jesmond	46.18
23. L. Davies-Beckett	NcastleU	46.47
28. K. Davis F50 (1)	NFR	47.26
32. R. Bennett	Morp	48.43
35. K. Robertson F50 (2)	NFR	49.19
46. L. Gray	DerwV	50.38
49. E. Oakshott	NcastleU	51.22
51. C. Bonn	Unatt	52.15
56. K. Carman	Unatt	53.47
58. H. Heaney F40 (2)	NSP	54.37

120 finishers

CARRAGHAN/ IOM AS/4km/300m/ **24.06.20**

After a break of almost four months, eager fell runners journeyed to West Baldwin for the resumption of the 2020 Callin-Wild league.

A huge entry of 158 competitors lined up for the short but sharp Carraghan event on a hot and perfectly calm Wednesday evening.

The entry was well over double that of previous years and included a good number of newcomers who perhaps saw this 4km race as an easy baptism to competitive action. But seasoned campaigners will readily tell you that the Carraghan race is far from tame, with a brutal 300-metre climb from the reservoir edge, coupled with a very steep

and technical descent that may have taken the uninitiated by surprise.

It was always going to be interesting to see which runners had used lockdown to sharpen their fitness and those who had maybe eased off a little. Joey Bond was definitely in the former category as he took his maiden victory with a solid win over current league champion, Orran Smith (vet-40). Neither of them was first to the top though, with Gwilym Jones - not seen since last year - making short work of the climb to reach the 500m summit with a good gap back to Smith and Bond.

The latter made great gains on the descent, including a spectacular hurdle over the stile to eke out a six-second win over eventual runner-up Smith, with Jones only a further seven seconds behind. The same six-second gap separated the top two in the women's race with Eleanor Miklos edging out Sian Coleman, who recorded what was probably her best performance on the fells to date. Northern AC's under-17 athlete Mia Dunwell resumed her season in fine style to take third female (and third junior) with a great performance to stay within 20 seconds of the leading duo.

It takes a brave athlete to tackle this arduous course, particularly those from the junior ranks, so it was an especially impressive performance from under-15 Lucas Stennett (Northern AC), whose goatlike ascent helped him win the junior race in an excellent ninth spot overall. Creg-ny-Baa short race winner and Northern AC stablemate Cian Howard (under-13) also had a fine run to finish in the runner-up spot ahead of Mia Dunwell, rounding off a clean sweep of the podium places for the Northern club.

There were also some stand-out performances among the newcomers, with Will Revill claiming a great eighth position in what was his first ever fell race. James Brown was another impressive debutant on the fells as he 'got on up' in style, taking 18th overall despite then tackling the tricky descent in a less than ideal pair of road shoes.

In the veteran categories there were wins for Chris Reynolds (11th overall) and Caroline Caren (71st) in the vet-40, while Paul Sheard (13th) and Jan Gledhill (74th) took the top spots in the veteran-50 class. Rob Webb had a strong run to take the vet-60 win along with relative newcomer Jane Rose who finished ahead of Rose Hooton, the latter registering her 23rd finish of the event. Thanks to race organiser Chris Kirk, marshals and timekeepers who did an excellent job in managing the record entry, and to DEFA, Manx Utilities, landowners for access. Ard Whallan Outdoor Pursuits Centre proved invaluable in allowing its facility to be used for registration and parking, while the Fell Runners' Association provided the club with the necessary permit and support in a tight timeframe. Finally, thanks to the rest of the committee and David Griffin for devising the new descent through the trees.

Nigel Maddocks

BRADDA/ Isle of Man
AL/25km/950m/ **26.07.20**

A record 91 runners competed in the first long fell race of the 2020 season. Starting above Bradda Glen, the 24-kilometre race route follows footpaths to South Barrule and back. The route has been described as 'runnable' but with 1250 metres of ascent, for many there is a lot of walking too. A runner's strengths and weaknesses are exposed in the long races. The descent into Fleshwick is rutted and difficult while the climb out it is 'Heartbreak Hill'. Our changeable weather plays a part; on race day Fleshwick was warm in the sunshine but the summit of Cronk ny Aarey Laa was shrouded in mist. All runners were faced with a strong headwind on the return leg while some had to trace through the rain too

In one of the fastest times for the course, Orran Smith (M40) took the victory in the men's race from Harry Weatherill and Tom Cringle. The 50 seconds between the two leaders at The Sloc was just 70 seconds at the round table but on the return leg Orran pulled away to finish over two minutes clear of Harry with Tom 10 minutes behind. Joe Bond (MSEN) was fourth. Tom Hughes and Chris Reynolds battled to finish second and third MV40 with Paul Sheard making another top ten finish as first MV50 with Geoff Rice four minutes behind him in second and Alan Sandford in third. Less than a minute separated Julian Corlett and Robb Webb both MV60s. In another strong race, Rob added the MV65 record to his MV60 record for the course.

Jane Rose (FV60) had a great race and in her first full season on the fells, she smashed the FV60 record by over an hour. The first woman home was Eleanor Miklos. After a great descent into Fleshwick, Eleanor led the women's race from the start. Sian Coleman, also in her first long race, finished in second. Many of the women had good races but one of the performances of the day was by Sinead Kaneen in her first ever fell race. Pacing the race well, she held onto third place ahead of Caroline Caren in fourth (first FV40). In a new FV55 record, Maggie Watkins was fifth woman home closely followed by Eleanor Gawne (fourth WSEN), Carol Brogan (second FV40) and Jan Gledhill (second FV50).

MFR would like to thank all the marshals and helpers who helped to set out the course and made sure that all competitors were safe They would also like to thank DEFA for access and to the IOM Search and Rescue Dogs Association for the loan of their radios.

Richie Stevenson

OPEN

1. O. Smith M40 (1)	MFR	2.04.59
2. H Weatherill	MFR	2.07.05

3. T. Cringle	MFR	2.18.35
4. J. Bond	MFR	2.19.02
5. N. Brogan	MFR	2.25.02
6. S. Looker	MFR	2.26.27
7. T. Hughes M40 (2)	MFR	2.27.08
8. C. Reynolds M40 (3)	MFR	2.30.25
9. M. Callister M40 (4)	MFR	2.33.55
10. P. Sheard M50 (1)	MFR	2.34.07
16. G. Rice M50 (2)	WAC	2.38.57
41. J. Corlett M60 (1)	MFR	3.08.58
43. R Webb M60 (2)	MFR	3.09.40

LADIES

21. E Miklos	MFR	2.47.01
30. S. Coleman	Unatt	2.57.38
39. S. Kaneen	ManxH	3.05.59
40. C. Caren FV40 (1)	MFR	3.06.59
42. M. Watkins FV50 (1)	MFR	3.09.40
44. E. Gawne	MFR	3.10.29
46. C. Brogan F40 (2)	MFR	3.15.00
47. J. Gledhill F50 (2)	MFR	3.17.30
64. J. Rose F60 (1)	MFR	3.31.30

90 finishers

LAXEY/ Isle of Man
AM/13km/650m/ **05.07.20**

The James Coulson Laxey Fell race was held on Tynwald Day. Thanks to the support of John Corlett and his family, this popular fixture in the MFR calendar started and finished at Glen Ruy farm. With an elevation of 650 metres in just 13 kilometres, this tough AM race was made even tougher by the wet conditions underfoot and the strong South Westerly wind. The runners, and indeed the marshals, were fortunate that the rain that was forecast did not materialise.

The first race of the morning was a shorter 5-kilometre race for juniors and novice runners. MFR are encouraging people of all ages to take up fell running and with each race, the popularity of these shorter races grows. On race day 21 runners took part in this new shorter race and it was pleasing to see that almost half the runners were female. Inadvertently, this race turned into two races. Lucas Stennett (U15B NAC) and Regan Corrin (U15B MH) took the honours in the junior boys' races. Mia Dunwell and Catherine Perry (both U15G NAC) led the junior girls home. The field included U13 runners. Of these, Nathan Hubbard performed well in the boys' race as did Florence Griffin and Lucy Ormsby in the girls' race. Jane Bradley took the victory in the senior, short course race.

Right from the start of the longer race, there was a battle between the leading men with seconds dividing the leaders on the climb up to John's Cairn. However, towards Checkpoint 3 at Slieau Lhost Harry Weatherill (MSEN) and Orran Smith (MV40) pulled away from the rest of the field. On such challenging and varied terrain, the gap between the two leaders widened and narrowed as

the two men fought for victory. In his first victory in the Manx Fell running league, Harry Weatherill took control of the race to be well clear of Orran at the last checkpoint and finished 90 seconds ahead of him. Incidentally, such is the quality of the runners in the men's field that there have been three different male winners in the last three races. Two minutes behind Orran, Tom Cringle had a great race to finish in third place ahead of Joe Bond in fourth and Gwilym Jones in fifth. Tom Hughes and Ian Goatman ran superb races to finish second and third in the MV40 category and ninth/tenth overall but they were beaten by Geoff Rice who claimed the MV50 victory in eighth position in a time of 1:21:07, over five minutes ahead of his nearest rivals, Alan Sandford in 15th place and Nigel Armstrong in 16th.

Robert Webb continued his winning for in the MV60 category. Finishing in an excellent time of 1:41:08, he came 52nd overall, exactly halfway down the record entry of 104 runners. Martin Cooper took second place in this category with Ian Callister coming in third just ahead of the FV60 winner, Jane Rose. In her first fell running series, Jane has dominated the FV60 category. This win was despite an injury she sustained just prior to the race while climbing out of a small window as the lock on the door had jammed. Her main rival, Rose Hooton, also sustained an injury at the very beginning of the race yet continued to finish bruised and battered as second FV60.

There were some close finishes in this event. None more so than in the race for the FV50 honours. At the line just three seconds separated Jan Gledhill and Maggie Watkins. They had swapped the lead several times throughout the race but from the final checkpoint, Jan just stayed far enough ahead to take her first win of the season. The two women finished seveth and eighth overall in the women's competition.

Despite a fall towards the end of the race, Eleanor Miklos (WSEN) was victorious in the women's race in a time of 1:31:12. Finishing in 22nd place overall, she was almost a minute ahead of Sally Walker (FV40) in second and Sian Coleman (WSEN) nine seconds behind in third. The battle between Sian and Sally was also close with Sally stronger on the climbs and Sian faster on the descents. Caroline Caren had an excellent race to finish fourth overall and second FV40 in a time of 1:39:03 with Eleanor Gawne very close behind her and the third WSEN finisher. Once again it was pleasing to see that 28 of the 104 finishers were women.

MFR would like to thank all the hard-working officials marshalling the course and at the start and finish. We would also like to thank all those who set the course and took the equipment back down again, DEFA for access and to the Search and Rescue Dogs Association for the loan of their

radios. Finally, we would like to thank everyone at Ballacowin and Glen Ruy farms for their help, support, and wonderful welcome they gave all the runners.

Richie Stevenson

OPEN

1. H. Weatherill	MFR	1.10.56
2. O. Smith M40 (1)	MFR	1.12.27
3. T. Cringle	MFR	1.14.32
4. J. Bond	MFR	1.15.12
5. G. Jones	Unatt	1.15.19
6. A. Morris	MFR	1.19.06
7. N. Brogan	MFR	1.20.33
8. G. Rice M50 (1)	WAC	1.21.07
9. T Hughes M40 (2)	MFR	1.22.03
10. I. Goatman M40 (3)	MFR	1.23.24
11. P. Sheard M50 (2)	MFR	1.25.00
15. A. Sandford M50 (3)	IOMVAC	1.26.18
52. R. Webb M60 (1)	MFR	1.41.08
66. M. Cubbon M60 (2)	MFR	1.48.30
77. I. Callister M60 (3)	ManxH	1.52.12

LADIES

22. E. Miklos	MFR	1.31.12
29. S Colman	Unatt	1.32.17
41. C. Caren F40 (1)	MFR	1.39.03
47. E. Gawne	MFR	1.39.49
56. N. Arthur	Unatt	1.43.13
57. J. Gledhill F50 (1)	MFR	1.44.47
78. J. Rose F60 (1)	MFR	1.53.32

104 finishers

JUNIORS

1. L. Stenett U15B (1)	NAC	29.43
2. C. Teare U15B (2)	NAC	32.34
3. A. Withington U17B (1)	MFR	33.38
4. J. Richmond U17B (2)	NAC	34.00
6. M. Dunwell U17G (1).	NAC	34.44
11. M. McMullan U15G (1)	NAC	36.02
14. L. Stenett U15G (2)	NAC	37.10

21 finishers

LOWTHER CASTLE FELL & TRAIL/
Cumbria
CL/21km/430m/ **09.08.20**

OPEN

1. C Holdsworth	CaldV	1.19.54
2. J. Douglas	Border	1.20.56
3. J. Cox	Eden	1.25.21
4. A. Russell	Kendal	1.25.41
5. J. Mason	Border	1.28.21
6. M. Parkin	Eden	1.30.17
7. J. French M40 (1)	Eden	1.30.47
8. S. Littler M40 (2)	Wesham	1.32.02
9. J. Arkle	RAF	1.32.24
10. G Walker	Teviot	1.33.21
12. G Jones M40 (3)	NFR	1.35.06
23. G. Haworth M50 (1)	Kesw	1.42.12
25. N. Hayhurst M60 (1)	Unatt	1.42.51
39. P. Dixon M50 (2)	Eden	1.49.43

41. G. Schofield M60 (2)	Horw	1.50.37
42. M. Allison M60 (3)	Eden	1.51.11
49. J. Tombs M50 (3)	Eden	1.53.25
176. F Birch M70 (1)	Teviot	2.29.40
205. F. Miller M70 (2)	Garstang	2.42.37
213. J. Booth M70 (3)	WfieldTri	2.50.00

LADIES

15. E. Pannone FU23 (1)	Eden	1.36.53
19. C. Lambert	RibbV	1.40.15
32. G. Campbell	Jarrow&H	1.47.56
44. L. King FU23 (2)	EdinbUni	1.52.31
45. S. Enhard F50 (2)	Eden	1.53.05
47. N. King F40 (1)	Eden	1.53.16
68. P. Wardley FU23 (3)	Reigate	1.58.22
69. N. Sutton F40 (2)	Freedom	1.58.28
71. H. Dyson	Derwent	1.58.35
72. K Bridge F50 (3)	Eden	2.58.46
79. L. Hembury F60 (1)	Tring	2.00.37
92. S. Haslam F60 (2)	Scarb	2.03.41
123. J. Bennett F60 (3)	JogTyne	2.11.48

234 finishers

SLIEAU RUY/ IOM
AS/9.5km/520m/ **21.08.20**

OPEN - FULL COURSE

1. H. Weatherill	MFR	1.10.56
2. O. Smith M40 (1)	MFR	1.12.27
3. T. Cringle	MFR	1.14.32
4. J. Bond	MFR	1.15.12
5. G. Jones	Unatt	1.15.19
6. A. Morris	MFR	1.19.06
7. N. Brogan	MFR	1.20.33
8. G. Rice M50 (1)	WAC	1.21.07
9. T Hughes M40 (2)	MFR	1.22.03
10. I. Goatman M40 (3)	MFR	1.23.24
11. P. Sheard M50 (2)	MFR	1.25.00
15. A. Sandford M50 (3)	IOMVAC	1.26.18
52. R. Webb M60 (1)	MFR	1.41.08
66. M. Cubbon M60 (2)	MFR	1.48.30
77. I. Callister M60 (3)	ManxH	1.52.12

LADIES

22. S. Coleman	Unatt	1.07.50
29. S. Kaneen	ManxH	1.09.39
36. E. Gawne	MFR	1.11.01
45. J. Gledhill F50 (1)	MFR	1.13.21
46. C. Caren F40 (1)	MFR	1.13.30
48. R. Craine F40 (2)	MFR	1.16.33
49. C. Brogan F40 (3)	MFR	1.16.36
52. M Watkins F50 (2)	MFR	1.17.39
61. J. Rose F60 (1)	MFR	1.20.01
66. N. Bowker F50 (3)	MFR	1.21.44

85 finishers

SHORT COURSE

1. L. Stennett	NAC	18.49
2. C. Howard	NAC	19.06
3. A. Withington	MFR	20.57

LADIES

1. M. Dunwell	NAC	21.03
2. C. Perry	NAC	21.03
3. 9. F. Griffin	ManxH	21.42

23 finishers

MOORHOUSE’S PENDLE/ Lancashire AS/7.3km/457m/ **28.08.20**

With a Spring of ‘virtual’ races, come the end of June 2020 there was a big appetite for racing to return to the fells. Around this time a great idea appeared online with the Mountain Fuel Virtual Fell Running Champs - three races over the Summer and choose your routes. It was the last bit that again felt a bit too ‘virtual’ for my liking. I received word from Andy Berry of Barlick Fell Runners and Mick Dobson from Trawden AC. They were looking to set designated courses locally to match up to the ‘Nationals’ to fulfil that bit of fell racing we’d all been looking for and were looking for a bit of technical support on the results compilation. Perfect timing for the ‘East Lancs Fell Champs’ I thought...

I’ve always been an admirer of Jim Godwin’s work with the FRA Junior Championships, his simple-yet-brilliant website FellJunior and his ‘Run the Moors’ Grand Prix - a local champs for North Manchester clubs of 12 races over 12 months. I’d always wanted to set up something similar locally. We have a great local fell racing scene, as shown with the Pendle & Burnley Grand Prix I’m involved with, which also caters for road and trail through the Summer.

I thought this would be a great opportunity to bring the virtual races (actual courses) under one banner and get the local clubs back into fell racing.

Andy & Mick put together a great set of three races on the local hills - Weets, Boulsworth and Pendle - often with the assistance of other local runners who’d offered to help get involved as our great fell running community often does.

Coming to a timely end mid-August with a beast of a route over Pendle, series winners were the usual local fell legends in Molly Ralphson and Dave Mirfield (both Barlick Fell Runners). The FRA had started licensing races and had a couple of pilot races in mind, so we expected racing to return to the calendar soon enough. But we thought we’d fill the gap in the calendar locally.

With the Covid guidance out (and changing every minute), we put together the basis of simple low-key races, low cost and donated all the monies to the local Mountain Rescue Team. Unfortunately, at the time, Pendle Borough Council were insisting on a limit of 30 people per event, despite procedures put in place. We dutifully complied along with a couple of other necessary precautions:

- Pre-Entry only - we had plenty of runners (over 110) that had taken part in the virtual (actual courses) races so this was

easily done by emailing them and inviting them to race.

- Payment - luckily we had a donation bucket in the club (with a sealed lid and slot) so pop your fiver in when you collect the number ... Then we leave it to decontaminate over a few days

- Number collection - with one-person hand sanitising and placing numbers onto a table outdoors, you’d think it’d be fool proof. We set up just outside Pendle Ski Club who had kindly let us use their car park. But it can get very windy at times, blowing the numbers all over the car park leading to a mad scramble to gather!
- No mass starts - we also had finishing times from the Champs series, which allowed us to allocate time slots and set runners off in waves of six. We ended up with a bit of a time trial start, with a few seconds between each runner to make the timing system simple!

For the first race, we put together a simple point-to-point from Nick o’ Pendle over 5 miles with a hefty 1565 ft. “Race 4” as it’d come to be known was a great success, a small pocket of 30 runners, lung-busting climbs, and some good running on a glorious sunny evening. As the first four or five finished, the sun started to descend, and it felt like the ‘virtual’ season had ended... Fell racing had returned!

It was a strong race in the Men’s field with Jon Cleaver of Rossendale Harriers putting in a solid performance of 49:49. But local rising star Alex Mason of Barlick Fell Runners had the stronger legs on the night, taking his first Senior race win at just 18 years old in 47:54.

In the Ladies, ever strong Lorraine Slater of Barlick Fell Runners finished first in just under 59mins.

The real joy of the race was seeing several runners who had taken to fell running during the champs to keep up fitness and activity. Racing with other runners on the fells was a pure joy to them and having new club runners such as 2nd lady Rachel Holt (Burnley AC) and 3rd lady Sophie Howard (Rossendale Harriers) made the efforts from Andy, Mick and others supporting along the way all the more worthwhile.

OPEN

1.A. Mason	Barlick	47.54
2. J. Cleaver M40 (1)	Ross	49.49
3. M. Whittaker M40 (2)	Unatt	51.17
4. C. Snell M40 (3)	Ross	51.45
5. A. Berry M40 (4)	Barlick	52.02
6. D. Bulmer	Wharfe	52.52
7. D. Pease M40 (5)	Barlick	53.57
8. M. Williams	Trawden	54.31

9. A. Smith M50 (1)	Barlick	54.56
10. D. Edmondson M50 (2)	Clay	55.12
12. P. Needham M50 (3)	Trawden	56.21
22. N. Harris M70 (1)	Ross	73.29

LADIES

15. L. Slater F50 (1)	Barlick	58.58
21. R. Holt	Burnley	68.12
23. S. Howard	Ross	76.21
25. N. Spencer F40 (1)	Clay	81.33

30 finishers

GLADSTONE 9/ Conwy **05.09.20**

OPEN

1. D. Lawson	Unatt	1.17.18
2. M. Fortes M40 (1)	Eryri	1.18.44
3. M. Corrales	Unatt	1.22.17
4. S. Edwards	Eryri	1.23.09
5. T. Booth	WChesh	1.23.39
6. O. Humphreys M50 (1)	Untt	1.25.39
7. A. Edwards M40 (2)	Eryri	1.26.16
8. P. Jones M40 M40 (3)	Eryri	1.26.23
9. C. Jones M50 (2)	Eryri	1.27.02
10. S. Jones M60 (1)	Eryri	1.27.58
14. S Roberts M50 (3)	Buckley	1.33.37
17. A Lewis M60 (2)	Eryri	1.35.08
21. D Huws M60 (3)	Eryri	1.38.43
49. E. Davies M70 (1)	Rhedwyr	2.09.32

LADIES

15. G. Moore	Eryri	1.34.30
20. M. Gillie F40 (1)	Eryri	1.38.03
27. T. Rodgers	Buckley	1.45.11
29. B. Law	Eryri	1.47.08
46. V. Darby F40 (2)	Unatt	2.05.17
52. E. Salisbury F50 (1)	Eryri	2.17.16
58. F. Ares F50 (2)	Eryri	2.43.37
59.M. Oliver F70 (1)	Eryri	2.57.11

59 finishers

SCRAPPY DHOO/ Isle of Man **05.09.20**

OPEN

1. A. Huxham	MFR	1.08.07
2. S. Collings F	MFR	1.22.04
3. A. Dunne F	MFR	1.33.49
4. A. Callister	Unatt	1.34.17
5. K. Quirk M40 (1)	Unatt	1.39.25
6. R. Hooton F60 (1)	MFR	1.40.35
7. S. Willmott M60 (1)	IOMVAC	1.40.39
8. A. Coole F40 (1)	Unatt	1.42.16
9. H. Jones M60 (2)	MFR	1.43.27
10. L.Morris F	NAC	1.43.43

SLOOBY DHOO/ Isle of Man AS/8km/750m/ **05.09.20**

The Slooby Dhoo race was the sixth and penultimate round of the Callin Wild Manx Fell Running League. Devised by Shaun Hubbard and set over a very challenging 10 kilometre course



Slooby Dhoo - Charlie Teare (NAC) followed by Nathan Hubbard (MFR) ©Nigel Maddocks

with 750 metres of ascent, it is described by Peat-Running Wild blog as the second-gnarliest fell race in Britain.

A record 90 competitors tried their luck in this year’s edition, originally scheduled for mid-March but postponed because of the coronavirus restrictions.

Orran Smith led the race from the start in Ballaugh until Slieau Curn only for Lloyd Taggart to overtake him on the ridiculously steep ascent to the summit of Slieau Freoghane. Gwilym Jones and Orran Smith chased hard, but the evergreen Taggart held them off for the win, Jones taking second place and Smith third. Neil Brogan fell heavily onto a boulder but sprung back like a Scottish ninja.

There were other battles going on at the rear but these were played out in slow motion. The effervescent Les Brown managed to make his way through a fair number at the back, using his downhill abilities. The ever-popular Svetlin Krastev acted selflessly as sweeper to ensure everyone got home safely.

There was a titanic battle in the women’s race, the top three running down Slieau Dhoo almost side-by-side, eventually separated by just 61 seconds. Honours went to Sian Coleman from Eleanor Miklos and Sinead Kaneen.

A total of 24 competitors took part in the Scrappy Dhoo Junior/Novice race; an exceptionally taxing 5 kilometre route.

Run for the first time in this particular event, the course was put together by Chris Kirk, who deserves special credit for successfully organising

the junior league for the past four years.

The 2020 series incorporated novices into the same races to give both the young and the not-so-young a taste of our beautiful fells.

The youths won the day with impressive runs, Sulby’s Cian Howard winning in the incredible time of 26.45, from Freddie Griffin and Harry Kneen. Veteran Peter Cooper made a welcome return here, while Tony Rowley acted as sweeper and multi-tasked by picking up all the flags; no mean feat on the descent.

The Manx Fell Runners wish to thank all the hard-working officials, landowners DEFA and tenants, plus Jim MacGregor of the IoM Search and Rescue Dogs Association for use of their phones. A big thanks also goes to Steve at Ballamoar campsite for providing extra parking and the use of facilities before and after the race. Gratitude also goes out to Rosy Craine for organising the weekend’s camping and to Morgan’s Pies for delivering the food.

Nigel Maddocks

OPEN

1.L. Taggart M50 (1)	MFR	0.57.50
2. G. Jones	MFR M	0.58.28
3. O. SmithM40 (1)	MFR	0.59.09
4. J. Bond	MFR	1.03.05
5. T. Cringle	MFR	1.04.35
6. S. Downward	MFR	1.06.32
7. N. Brogan	MFR	1.06.49
8. T. Hughes M40 (2)	MFR	1.07.21
9. S. Looker	MFR	1.07.39
10. Paul Sheard M50 (2)	MFR	1.10.29
11. G. Hatcher M40 (3)	MFR	1.11.56

14. A. Sandford M50 (3)	IOMVAC	1.13.00
36. J. Norrey M60 (1)	MFR	1.25.10
73. I Callister M60 (2)	ManxH	1.42.57
80. H. Jones M60 (3)	MFR	1.50.51

LADIES

18. S. Coleman	Unatt	1.17.51
20. E. Miklos	MFR	1.18.27
21. S. Kaneen	ManxH	1.18.52
46. M Watkins F50 (1)	MFR	1.26.56
48. j. Gledhill F50 (2)	MFR	1.28.07
50. C. Caren F40 (1)	MFR	1.28.48
56. R. Craine F40 (2)	MFR	1.30.48
67. J. Rose F60 (1)	MFR	1.36.26
75. S. Hinds F40 (3)	Unatt	1.44.11
77. N. Bowker F50 (3)	MFR	1.45.41

90 finishers

EAST LANCASHIRE FELL CHAMPIONSHIPS - UPHILL/ Lancashire AS/1.5m/1060ft/ **11.09.20**

A little over a week or so went by and along with it a strewn of cancelled fell races in the Calendar. Once again, we felt we could put together a local race. As put by Andy Berry, “in the style of the popular European style VKs, we’ve got a cracking uphill race on Pendle”.

With the same low-key setup - this time using a tucked away layby near the village of Downham and a roll of duct tape to secure items down - we again invited a small number of runners to take on the 1.5 mile, 1060 ft “Race 5”. Once the runners had taken a small access path, they were on open moors and could then choose their line up Big End of Pendle to the trig point finish line in the distance. Those that have tackled the Tour of Pendle will know the last climb up the hill can be a staggering hands-on-knees job, but with the legs of 12ish hilly miles, this would be the hill on fresh legs.

The sunshine of the previous Pendle race gave way to a drizzly and windy evening.

With a ‘time trial’ start of 10 seconds, Alex Mason as the winner of the previous race had the honours of leading the runners out, followed by Oli Heaton of Bowland Fell Runners and a few local fell running legends in Shaun Livesey, Paul ‘Crabby’ Crabtree and Andy Berry.

Oli managed to cut into the 10 second time difference a little and sit in to take the win in 15:02, a couple of seconds over Alex, leaving us wondering if the result would’ve been different in a conventional race with Oli’s heels to catch.

A small Ladies field was headed up by Rachel Holt, Burnley AC, finishing first at the trig in 21:05, soon followed by Sophie Howard of Rossendale Harriers.

Once the competitors made their way back down - or informally raced back - they took home a bottle of locally brewed beer, memories of another great

night racing on our fells and a promise of more races soon.

With thanks to Kerrie-Anne Bretherton, Louise Preston, Scarlett McIlvenny for support; Mick Dobson & Andy Berry for help setting up and Dave Belshaw for the photography.

Monies from the race will be donated to Rossendale & Pendle Mountain Rescue Team.

Jamie McIlvenny

OPEN

1. O. Heaton	Bowland	15.02
2. A. Mason	Barlick	15.04
3. S. Livesey M40 (1)	RibbV	16.24
4. P. Crabtree M50 (1)	Wharfe	16.31
5. A. Berry M40 (2)	Barlick	16.43
6. R. English	Ross	17.06
7. M. Whittaker M40(3)	Trawden	17.07
8. P. Coates M40 (4)	Clay	17.09
9. D. Howell M40 (5)	Clay	17.28
10. D. Bulmer	Wharfe	17.43
20. J. Carman M60 (1)	???	23.13
21. A. Heaton M60 (2)	Bowland	23.27

LADIES

18. R. Holt	Burnley	21.05
19. S. Howard	Ross	22.25
22. T. Walmsley	Trawden	26.02
23. J. Webber F50 (1)	Trawden	27.44

90 finishers

AXNFELL/ Isle of Man

AL/33km/1800m/ **19.09.20**

A glorious Saturday morning made for a fitting finale to the Callin Wild Manx Fell Running league with the infamous Axnfell Race, regarded by many to be the toughest on the local calendar. An early 8 00 a.m. start meant runners were able to witness the sun rise up above the Lakeland fells and reflect on how lucky we are on this island to be able to hold such events, much to the envy of our counterparts across the water.

The long course is a 33-kilometre brute of a route, encompassing 1800 metres of climb with little in the way of fast runnable sections and many boggy, tussocked or otherwise technical sections to test the runners to their limit. Many parts of the route will have been familiar to regular runners with climbs of Colden, Carraghan, Beinn y Phott, Snaefell, Clagh Ouyr and Slieau Lhean all featured.

Once again, we were also able to host a short race of approximately ten kilometres which covered the initial part of the long course up to Cronk y Vaare before traversing over to Mullagh Ouyr, down to the Bungalow before retracing steps from Cronk y Vaare to the finish.

As has been a feature of the racing this season, it was difficult to predict the winner in both the men’s and women’s categories. Orran Smith, Lloyd Taggart, Joey Bond and Gwilym Jones were

all in with a shout along with 2018 winner, Tom Cringle. Amongst the ladies’ ranks, Sian Coleman, Nikki Arthur, Rosy Craine and Caroline Caren all held legitimate hopes of victory in a race where anything can happen.

Orran Smith and Gwilym Jones set the early pace and the pair raced in close company for the first few miles, tracked by Lloyd Taggart, Tom Cringle and Joey Bond. Smith started to turn up the heat on his rivals in the latter half of the race to establish a five-minute lead over Jones with Taggart and Cringle a further seven minutes down. The experienced pair though managed to reel in Jones over the second half of the course to move into the podium positions. These placings remained unchanged by the finish with Orran eventually winning by a margin of ten minutes from Taggart (MV50) who edged ahead of Cringle on the final climb. Jones stuck to his task with credit to take fourth ahead of Neil Brogan and Joey Bond, the latter soldiering on after having picked up an ankle injury on the descent of Clagh Ouyr.

It was ultra-distance specialist Nikki Arthur who proved to one the beat in the ladies’ race, taking a win by a margin of nine minutes over fellow Axnfell debutant Caroline Caren (FV40) who had a stand out run to claim the runner up spot ahead of Sian Coleman who capped an excellent season in taking third.

Maggie Watkins knocked a whole hour off her time from 2018, an excellent run to finish leading FV50. In the FV60 categories there were wins for Jane Rose in her debut season and Ian Callister - Ian’s 11th completion of this race.

Throughout the field there were several runners who recorded some stand out performances, perhaps none more so than Chris Wade who knocked a staggering 1.47.00 off his 2018 time. Gary Kelly was another who put in an excellent effort to break the five-hour mark in taking 8th position.

In the short course, farmer Adam Huxham made light work of the ten-kilometre route and was first home in a shade under seventy minutes, just enough time for the dew to dry before heading back to bale the hay. First lady and second outright was Sarah Collings who continued her improvement throughout the season.

A race such as Axnfell takes a great deal of work to organise so big thanks to race organiser Steve Taggart and his team of marshals and helpers who all put in some big shifts out on the fells. Thanks to Maggie and the finish team, DEFA and landowners for access and finally Jim Reid and son Euan who did an excellent job in catering for the gathered runners and supporters.

Nigel Maddocks

OPEN

1. O. Smith M40 (1)	MFR	4.11.52
2. L. Taggart M50 (1)	MFR	4.21.34

3. T. Cringle	MFR	4.22.03
4. G. Jones	MFR	4.36.50
5. N. Brogan	MFR	4.47.26
5. J. Bond	MFR	4.47.26
7. M. Christian	MFR	4.51.55
8. G. Kelly M40 (2)	MFR	4.57.38
9. G. Hatcher M40 (3)	MFR	4.58.29
10. N. Arthur F (1)	Unatt	5.38.34
20. C. Kirk M50 (2)	MFR	5.59.43
20. P. Perkins M50 (2)	MFR	5.59.43
38. I. Callister M60 (1)	ManxH	6.55.03

LADIES

10. N. Arthur	Unatt	5.38.34
11. C. Caren F40 (1)	MFR	5.47.28
12. S.Coleman	MFR	5.47.36
18. R.Craine F40 (2)	MFR	5.55.10
24. M. Watkins F50 (1)	MFR	6.01.26
26. J. Gledhill F50 (2)	MFR	6.12.45
27. L. Dunwell F40 (3)	NAC	6.18.43
32. J. Rose F60 (1)	MFR	6.47.18

40 finishers

SHORT COURSE - MEN

1. A. Huxham	MFR	1.08.07
4. A. Callister	Unatt	1.34.17
5. K. Quirk M40 (1)	Unatt	1.39.25
7. S. Willmott M60 (1)	IOMVAC	1.40.39

SHORT COURSE - LADIES

2. S. Collings	MFR	1.22.04
3, A. Dunne	MFR	1.33.49
6. R. Hooton F60	MFR	1.40.35
8. A. Coole F40 (1)	Unatt	1.42.16

10 finishers

LANCASHIREMAN OFF-ROAD

MARATHON & RELAY/ Lancashire
43km/1310m/ **27.09.20**

The Lancashireman takes on a gnarly 27+ miles course around the town of Burnley, through the mill dotted outskirts, over the ancient Lancashire-Yorkshire trade route of Long Causeway and up over Thieveyley Pike late in the course.

Separated into three sections, it allows for several races over the course including a Solo and Paired event over the whole distance and a Team Relay over the three legs with options of either solo or paired leg runners.

Last year’s inaugural Lancashireman races were beset with some pretty grim weather, at one point the Trawden AC gazebo giving way to the relentless downpours.

Plans for a grander event this year proved difficult, so with limited numbers, and an outdoor-only event again, we hoped the rain wouldn’t be quite as bad as last year.

During the summer, the question of whether it would be cancelled loomed throughout. Early on I had taken the decision to plan loosely, leaving many of the decisions until the last minute, hoping we could go ahead or otherwise refund all the pre-

entered runners in full. With a month to go, we started the final preparations and fingers crossed the rug was not pulled from us in the week leading up to race day.

We were rewarded... The last Sunday in September turned out to have perfect conditions of superb sunshine and a cooling breeze throughout the course.

Many competitors decided to take on the YORM-LORM Double - we’re great fans of the Yorkshireman and Lancashireman was purposefully staged a fortnight after it for those hardy runners to take on the best of the North and decide for themselves which is the harder of the two Counties races.

Originally planned as a wave start, we altered this slightly on the day to allow competitors to set off when ready to avoid any congregation on the chilly start area - once they’d posed with the Lancashire rose flag obviously.

In the Men’s Solo race, last year’s race winner Dave Motley of Clayton-le-Moor Harriers faced some stiff competition from Jon Cleaver of Rossendale Harriers if he was to repeat his win from last year. Due to the ‘time trial’ style starts, Jon was first over the line in an excellent 4:04:43 but faced an agonising wait to see if Dave could beat his time, making for an interesting end for a long fell race. It was disappointment for Jon when a few moments later, Dave appeared on the finishing straight, led by Andrew Worster of Todmorden Harriers, who had started a full 24 minutes later than Jon. The final result saw Andrew well in first place at 3:44:10, with Dave taking second place in 4:04:22.

In the Ladies Solo race, Amy Freeman of Darwen Dashers took the win in 4:47:54 in a good distance-running field with Amanda Sterling and Lisa Stansfield of Clayton-le-Moor Harriers taking second and third place in 5:36:56 and 5:37:26 respectively.

In the Pairs, there was a local battle in the Men’s race with Trawden AC’s seasoned long-distance Haworth Brothers (Andrew & Matthew) taking a slim win in 5:26:33 from Andrew Webster & Chris Funnell of Clayton-le-Moor Harriers who came in 5:26:57. Despite a calamity when travelling to the event, Blackburn Harriers pair Victoria Mousley & Joanne Nelson made the start line just in time and enjoyed a comfortable Ladies Pair win in a fantastic 5:09:40. A decent turnout in Mixed Pairs entrants were led by local Clayton-le-Moor Harriers’ Michelle Abbott & Kirk Lusty in 5:57:09 with the success story of the day being Yorkshirewoman Rose George & honorary Yorkshireman Neil “Braveheart” Wallace travelling over the border to enjoy Lancashire for the second year running.

With a few more teams registered this year, the Relay races of The Lancashireman had a more

competitive element. A late entry from Rossendale Harriers made up of Philip, Andrew and Sean Greenwood won the Team of 3 race in 4:52:58. In the Team of 6 race, Accrington Road Runners support for The Lancashireman was fantastic, and fielded several teams for a grand day out including a solid fell racing team in Joe Curran & David Savage, Paul Gallagher & Christopher Halstead and Glen Goodwin & Hannah Jarvis, winning in 4:05:35.

With a variety of legs including tricky nav and a knobbly fell section late in the race, we hope next year’s Relay’s at the Lancashireman will be an even bigger fell racing event.

Hopefully, next year we’ll be able to return to a more usual race outing and I look forward to welcoming more fell runners to the wonderful hills of Lancashire.

Jamie McIlvenny

MARATHON SOLO MALE

1. A. Worster	Tod	3.44.10
2. D. Motley	Clay	4.04.22
3. J. Cleaver	Ross	4.04.43

MARATHON SOLO FEMALE

1. A. Freeman	DarwenD	4.47.54
2.A. Sterling	Unatt	5.36.56
3. L. Stansfield	Clay	5.37.26

MARATHON PAIRS FEMALE

1.V. Mousley/J. Nelson	Bburn	5.09.40
2. J. Royle/C. Kippax	Lancs	8.13.23

MARATHON PAIRS MIXED

11.M. Abbott/K. Lusty	Clay	5,57,09
2. N. Wallace/A. Gerorge	Unatt	6.07.12
3. D. Robson/D. Lord	Unatt	6.37.40

RELAY - TEAM OF 6

1. Team Hasley	Accring	4.05.35
2. Team Gowans	Accring	4.37.40
3. Team Greenwood	Ross	4.52.58

CHAPELFELL TOP/ Durham

AS/7km/400m/ **10.10.20**

Durham Fell Runners were delighted to host their postponed Chapelfell Top race. Normally a mid-week summer evening blast, this year it was held on a chilly October Saturday. However, this did nothing to dampen the spirits of our runners who were all delighted just to be out and racing.

The race was run in a time trial format with waves of six runners setting off every ten minutes. In order to minimize two-way traffic and gathering of runners, the start and finish were moved. This meant the route was 500 metres shorter with 25 metres less ascent.

With the exception of the first wave, everyone else could see runners up ahead to spur them on. At the finish runners expressed that it still felt like a race as you tried to catch the runners ahead. We were strict with our kit check due to the forecast which indicated a potential wind chill of six degrees

on the summit. A few runners arrived without mandatory kit and emergency food. Luckily our DFR marshals are generous and helped a few people out. Poor Andy C, I’m not sure there was much of his picnic left by the end!

The final wave, which set off at 11 50 a.m. was perhaps the most competitive with a tussle at the front between Andy Berry and John Butters. Andy Berry got the better of this particular ‘race within a race’. However, Kris Axon, who set off in an earlier wave, took the overall win by just two seconds in a time of 36:06.

In the ladies’ competition, Caroline Lambert won in a time of 44:40, 1.48 ahead of Jess Young. For a few of the competitors this was their first taste of fell running. They were still smiling at the finish and seemed to have enjoyed the experience! It was a great day for everyone involved. We were all just grateful and appreciative to be out on the fell doing what we love.

A huge thank you needs to be said to all the marshals who had to be out in position for longer than usual in order to accommodate our time trial format, especially our summit marshals, Rory and Dan, who braved the cold winds up at the top. Thanks also to the Chatterbox Café in St John’s Chapel for letting us camp outside the café and for offering cake and coffee to our runners. Our prize fund of £100 is to be donated to a local charity. After consulting local residents, it was decided this would be the David Nelson Memorial Fund which helps provide defibrillators for remote villages in Weardale.

We look forward to welcoming runners back to this great little race next year!
Fran Blackett

OPEN

1. K. Axon	Clarem	0.36.06
2. A. Berry	Kesw	0.36.08
3. J. Butters M40 (1)	NFR	0.36.29
4. R. Hughes	NFR	0.36.39
5. J. Morrell	Ilk	0.37.48
6. M. Wilson	Durham	0.38.44
7. C. Henderson	Crook	0.38.56
8. M. Hetherington	NFR	0.40.02
9. P. Hodgson M40 (2)	Durham	0.40.24
10. I. Pickett M40 (3)	TyneBr	0.40.37
23. M. Randall M50 (1)	Swale	0.45.28
30. P. Kelly M60 (1)	Durham	0.49.24
46. P. Feeley M50 (2)	DerwentV	0.51.24
37. N. Morris M50 (3)	LowF	0.51.36
38. B. Kivlehan M60 (2)	NFR	0.51.59
48. G. Bastow M60 (3)	Ripon	0.56.34

LADIES

18. C. Lambert	RibbV	0.44.40
24. J. Young	Swale	0.46.28
26. M. McCarthy	Durham	0.46.55
31. R. Vincent F40 (1)	Tynend	0.50.23
42. D. Tunstall F50 (1)	Durham	0.53.25



Wansfell Uphill Race - Jacob Adkin (Keswick AC) and Daniel Haworth (Matlock AC) ©James Kirby

43. D. Metcalfe F40 (2)	Hunwick	0.53.29
46. C. Glover F60 (1)	Wharfe	0.54.48
54. V. Cotton F40 (3)	Sundlnd	1.05.32

55 finishers

WANSFELL UPHILL ONLY 2020/
Cumbria
2.5k/400m/ **16.10.20**

The organisers of this year’s WMRA International Under 18 Mountain Running Cup were hugely disappointed when they had to postpone the event to 2021. But, in this year which has had a lot of disappointment and uncertainty when it comes to races, there was still something exciting to look forward to - the Wansfell uphill-only race. 2.5k with 400m of ascent.

This race was initially going to be part of a whole weekend of running events to mark the U18 Cup. While the rest had to be postponed, the organisers realised that the uphill-only event, as a short time trial, could still take place in a safe manner. And it could provide both a perfect test event, as well as a fundraising opportunity for next year.

The organisers put a huge number of measures in place to ensure the runners’ safety and limit the risk of COVID infection. From registration, where masks and social distancing were strictly enforced, to the use of a barcode system on numbers, which could be scanned without contact, to the holding area which ensured runners stayed apart and set off at their allocated times, which were all 30 seconds apart, they thought of everything. The

runners were supportive of their efforts.

The reward for all the hard work from the organisers was a fantastic night of racing, with some very fast times laid down ready to be contested next year, and an incredible sunset followed by a clear, starry night. The fastest time of the night was set by last year’s European Mountain Running Champion, Jacob Adkin, who reached the summit finish in 13.53. The fastest woman was Scout Adkin (yes, they’re related) in 15.50, and she was also 9th overall. Second placed woman was Jess Bailey in 17.54 and Nichola Jackson was third in 17.58. Chris Richards finished second in the men’s competition in 14.47, with Rob Jebb just behind him in 14.51. Many runners commented how great it was to be back racing and seeing friends they’d missed seeing this year. The sunset and starry night made some runners quite emotional about being back doing what they loved and there was a tremendous atmosphere, from the fastest runners right through to those just enjoying a Friday night socialising. Local club Ambleside AC provided marshals and lit up the fell with powerful lights, and to cap it all it was such a clear night that Mars and even the space station were spotted!

It was a hugely successful night. The organisers raised funds for next year’s event, runners were happy and most of all the processes put in place to keep runners safe worked well, which bodes well for similar competitions and for next year’s WMRA International U18 Mountain Running Cup.

Duncan Richards

OPEN

1. J. Adkin	MSen	13:53
2. C. Richards	MU23	14:47
3. R. Jebb	MV40	14:51
4. D. Haworth	MSen	14:52
5. B. Cartwright	MSen	15:20
6. M. Knowles	MU18	15:22
7. M. Mikkelsen-Barron	MSen	15:23
8. P. Rutter	MSen	15:48
9. S. Adkin	FSen	15:50
10. T. Day	MSen	15:57

LADIES

9. S. Adkin	FSen	15:50
32. J. Bailey	FU16	17:54
34. N. Jackson	FSen	17:58
36. A. Fan	FSen	18:04
40. C. Duck	FSen	18:11
43. E. Whitaker	FU16	18:15
45. S. Taylor	FV40	18:20
59. C. Rylance	FU18	19:49
64. A. Whitaker	FU18	20:08
68. F. Royle	FU20	20:15

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