

The **FELLRUNNER**



ISSUE 130 SUMMER

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We welcome all contributions for photos and illustrations, features, stories and interviews. The Fellrunner is a magazine for the fell-running community by the fell-running community and it is reliant on your talents, generosity and voluntary contributions.

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

If you are contributing photos or illustrations, we strongly recommend you send high resolution unedited images with full credits that are suitable for print publication. We reserve the right to edit articles and images prior to publication.

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We accept submissions all year round.

Background image:, Chris Owens (3rd) leading Jack Wright (winner), both Ambleside AC, at the Caw Fell race © Stephen Wilson www.granddayoutphotography.co.uk



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Runners competing in the Coniston Gullies fell race
© Stephen Wilson www.granddayoutphotography.co.uk

EDITOR’S LETTER

Racing on the fells is special. It is when many of us push ourselves that little bit further than we ever do in training. And whether you like the grandeur of a big championship race like Ennerdale or a midweek blast from Todmorden – it is great to be racing again. I don’t think I am alone in that sentiment judging by the scene in the scout camp after the Ennerdale Horseshoe race. It was a joy to see runners sat around on the grass after the serious business had finished discussing what went wrong, how they lost time and just catching up with old friends again.

Ennerdale was the first race in the 2021 Senior English Championships, closely followed by Blencathra and Alderman’s Ascent. Carlos Bedson, the FRA’s statistician, will be keeping a close eye on the results and updates are published on the Fellrunner website at: www.fellrunner.org.uk/championships.php



Daniel Haworth (2nd) and Billy Cartwright (1st) relax after Ennerdale
© David Littler

This is the first *Fellrunner* magazine I have edited when we have had racing taking place in such considerable numbers. And although the calendar is not completely full and races are still being added and cancelled, it is much healthier than it was last year. Andy McMurdo is doing a sterling job of trying to keep up with all the changes which are again outlined in this issue and Jamie McIlvenny is keeping an eye on the forever changing Covid landscape. As ever, check online for the latest information.

Recent *Fellrunner* issues have seen plenty of long-distance records documented as runners were forced to make changes to their schedules. John Kelly and Damian Hall have again written some fine words for us about their latest record-breaking runs. The video of Damian running into Robin Hood’s Bay at the end of his Coast-to-Coast run shows just how hard these challenges are and how hard we can push ourselves when tested. Special mention should go to Sabrina Verjee on her Wainwrights record, a lesson in perseverance, but as I type these words John Kelly is setting out on his own attempt at the Wainwrights.

Sometimes though, we can push ourselves too far and the result can be those annoying colds and little niggles that we put down to too much training. But is it training that is at fault? Ruth Keeley ponders this question in this issue. We also have articles about the Charnley Round and Adnan Khan, a runner from Pakistan who made a great impact during his short stay in the UK. I make no apologies for again covering First Aid. I would also encourage all runners to be aware of heat exhaustion and heatstroke as covered in the recent FRA leaflet, especially for those solo training runs in hot weather.



DAVE LITTLER, EDITOR OF THE FELLRUNNER

editor@fellrunner.org.uk

CHAIRMAN’S LETTER

By the time you read this, we hope that the delayed lifting of all restrictions due to Covid will have gone ahead and we will be able to return to some kind of normality. It has been my pleasure to attend the first two Senior English Championship races at Ennerdale and Blencathra, and Junior Championship races at West Nab and Up the Nab. We are very grateful to Colin Dulson, Dave Sargent, Phil Hobbs, Des Gibbons and Richard Patten for working so hard to give over 600 adults and children the opportunity to race against their peers and the happy, smiling faces said it all – thank you.

It must be stressed that it is not easy to put these races on under difficult circumstances. Dave Sargent worked hard to secure parking for Blencathra, Black Combe Runners have agreed to host a special one-off short race on Black Combe to replace the cancelled Arnison Crag Horseshoe and some determined negotiations have taken place with the National Trust in order to get permission to hold the final Junior Champs races at Ilam.

On a serious note, Helene Whitaker will be stepping down as Junior Co-ordinator at the 2021 AGM in October and, if a replacement cannot be found, there will be no Junior Championship in 2022. Helene has done a brilliant job of gathering a great team who have supported her in various roles such as Social Media, Fellrunner, Junior Do, T-shirts and Hoodies etc and so the main role of the Co-ordinator will be to liaise with ROs for the (hopefully) six Junior Championship races. If you think you can help then please contact Helene or me for further information.

The 50@50 race series has now re-started and over 1250 FRA members have taken part in at least one of the eighteen possible races so far. With another four possible races before the end of July, there is plenty of scope to increase your scores or to join in the fun. The FRA will be awarding special, commemorative merchandise to those who complete 15/25/30 races and there will be prizes in gender and age categories.



CHARMIAN HEATON, FRA CHAIRMAN

chair@fellrunner.org.uk

SECRETARY’S CORNER

After 15 mostly very frustrating months – albeit punctuated with some extraordinary long-distance achievements – it has been a pleasure, and a great relief, to see fell racing restarting across the country. Race Organisers (ROs) have faced many additional difficulties this year, not just in complying with COVID-secure protocols but also in considering the needs and demands of local communities and landowners. The FRA is extremely grateful to all ROs that have persevered, including those who unfortunately have ended up having to postpone their races for now. If you are lucky enough to be able to compete in a fell race this summer, please consider thanking the RO personally after the race for the huge amount of effort put in behind the scenes.

AGM AND 2022 FRA COMMITTEE

The Junior Championships for 2022 have been cancelled! Well, not quite yet, but we do urgently need someone to step forward to pick up the FRA Junior Co-ordinator’s reins from Helene Whitaker who will step down at October’s FRA AGM. Please see Charmian’s column for more on this, and elsewhere in the magazine for provisional details of the AGM (Page 15).

RESTART OF COMPETITION (OR “HOW DO I DO THIS AGAIN?”)

As competition recommences, UK Athletics have noticed an increase in the number of accidents being reported compared with pre-COVID levels. They have asked us to remind those organising fell-based activities (both competition and training) to consider what might have changed since the pandemic began and what knowledge might have been forgotten. Will club members and race participants, both newer and more experienced, still remember key safety information and protocols from 15+ months ago? Some recommendations for organisers can be found in a UK Athletics blog (dated 18th June 2021) available under News => News and Features on the UK Athletics website (uka.org.uk).

For ROs in particular: we encourage you to refamiliarise yourself with the FRA’s rules and guidance, especially the rule changes for 2021 (available under Documents => Rules and Principles on the FRA website). Remember that there are certain incidents which must be reported to the FRA after your race, including any hospitalisations, any significant safety incidents (or “near misses”) and any breaches of key FRA or race rules by runners.

And to all runners: please take the time to remind yourself of the FRA “Runners’ Rules”. Please also ensure you always read, and comply with, the specific details and race rules of the events

you enter to avoid needless disqualifications, disciplinary cases and (most seriously) safety risks.

PRE-ENTRY / ENTRY ON THE DAY

During COVID times, FRA races have operated under condition of “pre-entry only” – no entry on the day (EOD). This has been for two main reasons: first, to ensure that numbers are known and controlled in advance to avoid overcrowding and enable social distancing, and second, to reduce both queueing and fomite transmission (through e.g. handling of paper) by making the on-the-day registration process as quick and simple as possible. The FRA has supported ROs through this period by offsetting the additional costs of pre-entry – thank you for your FRA membership contributions which have helped to fund this initiative.

With further relaxation of social restrictions expected by the time this magazine goes to press, we hope to be able to reintroduce the option of EOD soon. Many ROs have embraced pre-entry for their races and have told us that they intend to retain it (in some cases with a limited number of EOD spaces as well), but for other races EOD is critical for the viability and/or ethos of the race and we hope that this will be possible again in the near future.

PRE-ENTRY PROTOCOL AND SERVICE PROVIDERS

With more races now operating under a pre-entry system for the first time, some recent incidents have highlighted the importance of ensuring that ROs have up-to-date information for all participants. This is especially important in cases where entry transfers are permitted. When this is the case, a clear deadline for transfers must be publicised and enforced to ensure that the RO’s start list is correct. It is also crucial that when an entry is legitimately transferred, the new entry owner is required to go through the same process as the person who originally signed up – in particular, to acknowledge the FRA rules and amend their personal details, especially emergency contact details.

There exist a wide variety of pre-entry service providers, including large and small companies, well-established and new, and those with and without associated electronic timing systems. Some service providers have a sound knowledge of fell running and tailor their products and services accordingly, whilst others, often the larger and more commercially minded companies, do not necessarily understand or cater for our unique requirements.

Historically, the FRA has not recommended or vetted service providers but some recent incidents at races, to which shortcomings in third-party processes have contributed, have led to us to conclude

that this is something we must now consider. The FRA Committee will discuss this topic in due course, but in the meantime it remains the RO’s responsibility to ensure that any pre-entry and timing services used enable the FRA Requirements for ROs to be met, and (most vitally) guarantee that the RO knows exactly who started the race and who has finished until all runners are safely and definitively accounted for.

If, as a runner or RO, you are aware of any issues or recommended usage practices specific to a particular entry or timing service provider, please let me know by email so our review can be as well-informed as possible.

REDUCED “ON-THE-DAY” ENTRY FORM

Prior to COVID, most FRA races required runners to complete a full “on-the-day” form, even if they had pre-entered. Feedback to the FRA suggests that many runners and ROs found this unnecessary and time-consuming, since the majority of information – for example, home address – would already have been captured during the pre-entry process.

We have therefore introduced a new, slimmed-down, on-the-day form, suitable for pre-entered competitors only. This new form is available on the FRA website (under Documents => Universal

Entry Forms) as a Word or PDF document and is already in use at FRA races. We ask all ROs to use this form and to require pre-entered competitors to complete it on the day of their race. Entrants may print and complete the form before travelling to the race if they wish. (Once EOD is re-introduced, all entrants on the day should use the pre-existing full entry form; this new form is only for pre-entered runners.)

Some ROs have noted that this new form for pre-entered runners contravenes the COVID principle of “least paperwork”. We acknowledge the marginally increased risk of transmission through an on-the-day form but in the FRA’s view this very small risk is negligible compared with the safety benefit of knowing with certainty the identities and key details of all competitors starting the race. The same applies to the desire of some ROs to go “paperless” – a worthy ambition but not one for which the skipping of key safety measures is justified. It is notable that at least one significant recent incident in an FRA race, with potentially serious safety implications, would have been avoided had this new form been available and in use. If, as an RO, you choose not to use this form, you must implement alternative systems which mean you are absolutely certain that the runners on your start line are exactly who you think they are and that their key details are up to date.

THE 2021 FRA ANNUAL DINNER AND PRIZE GIVING



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MORE DETAILS WILL BE PUBLISHED ON THE FRA WEBSITE.
BUT DO PLEASE BOOK THE DATE IN YOUR DIARY NOW AS NUMBERS WILL BE LIMITED.

FELL RACE CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

Last year the FRA established in writing some widely accepted, but hitherto unwritten, aspects of fell racing, in particular that fell running is a non-commercial sport over genuine fell terrain in which the principles of self-navigation and self-sufficiency are key. A primary driver for these changes was the ever-increasing need to separate fell running from other athletic disciplines such as trail running and ultra-running. This distinction is critical for ROs and the FRA, for example when negotiating permissions for races, but is also highly relevant when considering race participants and how to ensure they understand the nature of the events they enter. There are many fell races which require previous experience from entrants, but runners' citations can be challenging to review and verify even for the most conscientious RO.

The present ABC/SML categorisation is based purely on distance and ascent, taking no account of the area, terrain, remoteness, navigational difficulty or various other factors which mean that every fell race is unique. Additionally, esoteric annotations such as "LK" and "PM" are of questionable merit even if you happen to know what they stand for. The FRA Committee is in the process of considering how we might modify or complement the classification system to try to ensure that the specific character of each FRA race is conveyed adequately to entrants, with the aim of reducing the chances of unprepared runners encountering challenges they did not expect and potentially risking their safety and that of others.

DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

One aspect of FRA business which I did not miss at all during the long hiatus was that of disciplinary issues, of which a number have recently arisen and will be reported upon in due course. These are extremely time-consuming and usually entirely avoidable, but ROs are always encouraged to report those breaking our key rules and jeopardising safety or the integrity of the sport. Imposing disciplinary sanctions remains a last resort but the FRA will take strong action and impose penalties where necessary.

AND TALKING OF PENALTIES...

...in the aftermath of Euro "2020" and England's inevitable penalty shootout defeat, the media focus has largely been on supporting the players that missed, mawkishly reinforcing their hero status and (rightly) condemning those whose attacks on those players were personal. But not all criticism is personal, and as usual there has been barely a whisper about the fact that our last three penalties were, frankly, terrible. England's record in penalty shootouts is appalling and this is not bad luck: it is tedious and banal to hear so-called "experts" routinely describe penalty shootouts as "a lottery". Shootouts are a test of nerve and skill, preparation and psychology, and are vital to success in major tournaments: since 1990, 4/8 World Cup winners and 6/8 European Championship winners have needed at least one penalty shootout (sometimes more) en route to the title. Statistics show that penalties struck into the upper half of the goal are very rarely saved; low, telegraphed shots close to the goalkeeper are, funnily enough, not the best option, and if England don't recognise and accept their failings and take steps to address them properly then those years of hurt aren't going to end any time soon.

But at least Leicester City (after 137 years of trying) won the FA Cup – without shootouts!



NEIL TALBOTT, FRA GENERAL SECRETARY

secretary@fellrunner.org.uk



ADVANCE NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Fell Runners Association Limited ("the FRA") is provisionally scheduled for **Saturday 9th October 2021 at 4pm** at Chapel Stile Village Hall, Langdale, LA22 9JE, immediately following the Langdale Horseshoe Fell Race.

References in the notes below to "articles" refer to the FRA's Articles of Association ("the Articles") which can be found on the FRA website (under 'FRA' => 'Documents').

1. A full agenda for the meeting will be made available in due course and will follow the framework set out in article 16 of the Articles. A formal notice containing the agenda will be published on the FRA website as provided for in article 62. This will be made available no later than 17th September 2021 to comply with the requirement for 21 clear days' notice.
2. The accounts to be presented will cover the period 1st January to 31st December 2020.
3. Details of any resolutions to be put to the membership will be announced at least 21 clear days prior to the meeting and will be posted on the FRA website.
4. Election and voting will be as provided for by the Articles. Nominations for any Executive Committee position must be submitted to the FRA Secretary by 10th September 2021 at the very latest (preferably much sooner).
5. In accordance with article 16, an open discussion about fell running will follow the formal business.

All details above are subject to any ongoing social restrictions owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, which might necessitate changes to the usual AGM format. The FRA Committee will consider nearer the time whether the meeting can proceed as planned and if necessary will communicate alternative arrangements via the FRA website.

Subject to the relaxation of social restrictions, the FRA hopes to host a drop-in session with refreshments in Chapel Stile Village Hall in the hour before the AGM; anyone needing a post-race brew is warmly encouraged to stop by.

Neil Talbott
FRA General Secretary
secretary@fellrunner.org.uk

ACCESS REPORT

During Covid lockdown all the landowners put access permissions on hold and many Race Organisers had difficulty contacting and obtaining permissions. With the easing of lockdown and restrictions there have been a few races going ahead and the calendar is now filling up again.

I have had a response from the Forestry Commission (FC) about progressing an access agreement with the FRA. By the time you read this I will have sent emails to all RO's who were initially involved in my research a couple of years ago now to ask for their response to the FC proposal.

Hopefully, we can progress an agreement with the Forestry Commission in the future to help RO's using FC land to have a consistent and sustainable arrangement for their fell races.

NICKY SPINKS, FRA ACCESS OFFICER



Lindsay Buck (Cumberland Fell Runners) at the Coniston Gullies fell race
© Stephen Wilson www.granddayoutphotography.co.uk

ADNAN KHAN

A PROFILE

The highest mountain in Pakistan is K2 (8611 metres). It has never felt the caress of mudclaws under the dancing feet of a fell runner - but if this does ever happen it might just reflect the inspiration felt by Adnan Khan when he was running over somewhat lower British peaks assisting two dozen Bob Graham Round attempts and completing his own classic 24-hour rounds.

BACKGROUND

Adnan is from Islamabad, Pakistan and came to England in 2006, when he was 20, to qualify as an accountant. The two years he had spent studying accountancy in Pakistan were recognised by the University of Sunderland which accepted him onto the final year of its BA Hons. Degree in Accounting & Business.

Adnan had represented his school at hockey and football and had not taken any interest in running as a sport but whilst in Sunderland his interest as a spectator prompted him to join a Triathlon club. After one of its members suggested he join Sunderland Strollers, he started competing in 5K - 10K road races, and completed his first road marathon in 2012.

THE LAKELAND STORY

In 2012 Ashleigh Thorpe from Sunderland Strollers completed her Bob Graham Round (#1748). This introduced Adnan to the world of fell running and therefore the need to develop a sense of direction, to learn to navigate and to read the ground. And of course, to discover the ineluctable world of the FRA Forum where he placed over 400 posts and made friends with fell runners.

Having discovered this new sport Adnan went on to complete dozens of races including the Three Peaks Race, Borrowdale, Old County Tops; the Lowe Alpine and Saunders Mountain Marathons; The Fellsman, Lakeland 100 and Haworth Hobble. His other achievements include the Pennine Way, Wainwright Coast to Coast, Dales Way and all 214 Wainwright Fells...his list of accomplishments is long!

THE BOB GRAHAM ROUNDS STORY

He also found time between 2013-16 to assist in the successful BG rounds of Kevin Plummer (1846), Brian Stallwood (1847), Andy Innes (1848), Janson Heath (1859), Ian Mercer (1886), Ben Rowley (1891), Stuart Little (1903), Richard Wigley (1905), Bill Crowther (1910), Paul Nelson (1914), Andrew Berry (2003) and Kerstin Leslie (2031), plus the successful 2015 Sunderland Strollers Relay Round.



Previous page: Adnan, with Malika Parbat Peak in the background, Pakistan;
Background image: Rakaposhi Peak, 7788 metres, in Pakistan; Above: Adnan during a fell race in the Lake District, United Kingdom.

The record of his own classic 24-hour rounds is:

Bob Graham, August 2013 (1843)	22h 09m
Charlie Ramsay, May 2016 (88)	23h 24m
Paddy Buckley, July 2016 (144)	23h 35m

BRIAN STALLWOOD (STOLLY)

Adnan and Brian supported each other on their successful rounds which were completed very close together. Brian recalls helping Adnan on leg 4 “with him sporting a goofy hat (a cross between an old man’s sun hat and a trilby) while running which I later learned was his trademark good luck charm. He was also listening through earphones to a cringe-worthy American inspirational audio tape, full of awful US Marines drill sergeant over-the-top, ‘you can do this’, hype.”

“That said, it clearly worked for Adnan – he’d started leg 4 going up Yewbarrow in an almost zombie state and was really struggling, but he somehow managed to dig in and hack out the climbs to reach the top of Pillar. Then, almost with a snap of his fingers, he completely transformed and was ready to run, and run he jolly well did. I was ahead of him at one point, trotting and clambering down through boulders and rubble coming off Kirk Fell – a really steep technical part of the route – and Adnan literally raced past me, leaping from boulder to boulder like some sort of mountain gazelle, as if he was on the final descent of a BOFRA 3 mile country show fell race rather than 50 miles into his BG. And he powered on from there to finish really strongly.”

“As for my successful round: Adnan was such a welcome sight when I met him waiting on, I think, Mickledore. After doing well on legs 1 and 2 in really, really grim weather, leg 3 had been a

disaster for me. I had two support runners (Bill Crowther and Mike Bate) who’d volunteered for what turned out to be a nightmare shift, with us being in complete darkness until Bowfell with almost zero visibility, thick fog, driving rain and high winds. We had lost our bearings badly a couple of times and had been unable to cover ground at all speedily due to not being able to see where the heck we were going. So I’d managed to transform being 20 minutes up on my 23-hour schedule into a 1-hour deficit and had (mentally) only reached the half-way point.”

Anyway, with the dawn came much improved weather – and Adnan. He brought coffee, he was buzzing with enthusiasm and we managed to hold our time for the rest of the leg, powering reasonably well up Lord’s Rake and over Scafell. I still recall racing down the scree chute with Adnan towards the finish of the leg and feeling much more optimistic about things. I then managed to hold the line, with no room for error, all the way to the end with Adnan popping up again at the pedestrian bridge over the Derwent for the last mile run-in with a 23 hour 54 minutes, skin-of-my-teeth, finish.

All the people supporting me that day were absolutely brilliant, but I think Adnan was my game-changer.

IAN MERCER

I asked Adnan about any particularly memorable Rounds, and one he recalled was when he supported Ian Mercer and the generous letter Ian wrote to him after his successful round.

Ian told me: Adnan is just great. He helped me on three legs of my Bob Graham Round and he did not even know me. I had support planned but they let me down so I appealed for help on the FRA site. Adnan lived in Sunderland and travelled down after he finished work at 5pm. He helped me at 9pm on leg 2, had a sleep in his car at the end of the leg and then helped me on legs 4 and 5. My time was cut really fine at 23 hours and 58 mins but Adnan kept really calm and pushed me through. He said it was the fastest finish to a Bob Graham he had ever done! I would not have got round inside the time without him and we are now really good friends. Adnan also helped me on my Joss Naylor and I keep in touch on Facebook now he is back in Pakistan doing other races and challenges.

He is the nicest guy you could ever wish to meet.

Ian’s letter to Adnan after his BGR included:

I cannot tell you how grateful I am to you, you are not only the best athlete I have ever seen, how you get round those mountains with so much ease is incredible, but more than that you are the nicest person I have ever met, to come out, help and support me when you did not even know me beforehand and travel from afar was truly remarkable.

I would not have made it in the time without you, thank you so much, you are now installed into my heart and mind forever.

“...he has taken his love of running on the English fells back to Pakistan.”



Looking back from Gali, Pakistan, with Musa ka Musalla peak in the background



At the summit of Musa ka Musalla Summit, 4080 metres, Pakistan

THE PAKISTAN STORY

Similar accounts might apply to other BGR success stories but it is following Adnan's return home that the story becomes unique because he has taken his love of running on the English fells back to Pakistan.

He started to explore Northern Pakistan "ticking off" some of its bigger mountains (ie 4000+ metres) using the experience he had gained in the UK; and so not following the usual practice of relying on, and walking with, local guides on multi-day excursions.

The names of these peaks might be unfamiliar but his first excursion, driving from one peak to another and sleeping overnight, allowed him to climb Musa ka Musalla (4080 metres), Makra (3885 metres) and a ridge near Naran, eventually reaching a high point of 4500 metres before, as wintery showers arrived, he dropped down towards Lake Saif ul Malook, his car and a hotel.

Running at these altitudes is, of course, challenging but Adnan coped and:

In 2018 I wanted to go higher to see how well I could cope with the altitude above 4500 metres although I was aware that I became slower above 3500 metres. I also had more confidence to be out on the mountains on my own with the skills I had acquired from fell running in the UK. I had heard about a peak called Rush Peak standing at 5098 metres from which on a clear day one can see the mighty K2. So, my plan was again to do a couple of shorter peaks beforehand to get some level of acclimatisation.

I backpacked to the base camp of Rakaposhi Peak, collected my brother from Minapin village at 2100 metres and we then spent the night at the base camp at 3500 metres. We covered 6.6 miles.

There were still a few hours of daylight left when we got to the base camp, so I left my brother with our tent and started climbing before it got dark. I started to slow after 3800 metres and started to struggle above 4100 metres. I went up to where it started to become really icy and technical and so sat down to enjoy the views of Rakaposhi Peak (7788 metres) and to get my breath back. I turned back at 4400 metres and walked around 5.5 miles.

Next day we drove to the Pakistan/China border over one of the highest mountain passes at nearly 4700 metres. We spent some time there and then drove back to Hopar valley at 2800 metres so I could set off early for the Rush Peak. I was joined by a friend who wanted me to take him to the Rush Lake, one of the highest lakes in Pakistan at 4694 metres. Locals had told him that it would take at least 2-3 days to do the Rush Lake trip but my friend knew I was going for the Peak and back in one long day!

I was fine up to Rush Lake where I left him, although he struggled

with my pace from 3200 metres onwards. The last 400 metres on Rush Peak took me ages but I managed to get to the top at 5098 metres. Even though the views were limited I felt like I was in mountains heaven above the cloud line. The total distance covered for the day was 27 miles with an elevation gain of 3050 metres.

INITIATING CHALLENGES

Having completed all three classic 24-hour UK rounds I want to set up a similar challenge in Pakistan. My problem is to find the right area with high peaks but not so high that acclimatisation will be an issue. Maybe, in a couple of years I will get there! In the meantime, I have set up a 12-hour challenge on my local training ground in Islamabad in the Margalla Hills National Park.

There are officially 6 trails on the Margalla Hills and I worked out a route to connect them all, calling it the Ultra Trails of Margalla Hills (UTMH). The total distance is 30 miles with an elevation of 1800 metres and I ran it in October 2018 in a time of 6 hours 28 minutes. So far, we have had 17 completions: 15 by locals, 1 South African and 1 from Britain.

I also organised a series of races called the Margalla Hills Winter Trail series between December 2019 and February 2020. The format was based on FRA races: entries on the day, one pound to enter, no set route, a single checkpoint, and comprising short, medium and long races. The races were: Short: 3kms and 250 metres of elevation, Medium: 10k and 800 metres, Long: 21k and 1200 metres.

Less formally I recently took three friends out on a week-long expedition. We were all self-sufficient and summited Makra Peak (3885 metres) and Musa ka Musalla (4080 metres) and connected 5 valleys/villages. The monsoon weather made it a little tricky and we had to amend our plans of sumitting two other 4000 metres peaks but the area is where I am hoping to set up a 24 hour challenge in the future.

We covered 91 miles with nearly 9000 metres of elevation in 7 days, although because of heavy rain we did hardly anything in two of the days and spent one day just on easy running around 2800 - 3200 metres to get used to the altitude.

REFLECTIONS

The previous sections outline some of the challenges I have enjoyed in the mountains of my country. When I first started running on the hills in Pakistan there was hardly anyone else into it, only climbing and hiking were known here, and one would have to rely on local guides and porters.



At the summit of Makra Peak, 3885 metres, Pakistan

There are no detailed maps and if you want to go on bigger mountains you would have to use a local guide and they aren't used to hill running or moving fast on the mountains.

My UK fell running experience, especially by being out on the fells on my own, reading the ground and developing a sense of direction, has helped me enormously in climbing and descending high mountains alone and in one day.

I have set up a local hill running club, Margalla Hills Runners, to promote hill and long-distance running. I am also in the process of earning my Mountain Leader qualifications from the UK to assist with my new career and will be taking people out on the biggish mountains under the banner of AKventures (Adventures with Adnan Khan) and will continue to establish different challenges.

FINAL THOUGHT

I asked Adnan why there aren't more runners with a Pakistani background on the fells in the UK and his response was that basically in his community running is not considered to be a sport! He also felt that parents are inclined to be overprotective and unwilling to see their children out in a harsh mountain environment when they could be working hard at their studies.

However, in his view the people who live in the northern areas of Pakistan could be very successful hill runners if they could be introduced to the sport and supported by, say, running equipment brands.

AND WHEN HE RETURNS TO ENGLAND?

Adnan spent 14 years in England and plans to return with some unfinished Munro bagging business - after all, he has only climbed around sixty!



A NEW PENNINE WAY RECORD EPISODE III

SWEET TEAVENGE

A LONG BREWING PLAN

WORDS JOHN KELLY, **PICTURES** STEVE ASHWORTH/ LA SPORTIVA

It might seem that I returned to the Pennine Way just to attempt to reclaim the record. In all honesty, I knew I would likely return before I even finished my own run last year, some time just before breaking Mike Hartley's 31-year-old record and eight days before Damian Hall then broke mine. There are certain goals that take on extra meaning, where it's not just, 'Can I do it?', but 'How well can I do it?'. They become benchmarks, for me and for others who seek the same challenge in the future. After some major gut issues last year, I felt there was much more I could do.

But, of course, the record was added motivation. I had the usual competitive drive, but also admittedly a simmering frustration from endless jokes after anything I did about how Damian was going to

come do it better a week later. They were just harmless jokes, ones which I could have ignored, but instead I deliberately chose to let them grow into a little motivational chip on my shoulder. Damian is a great friend, person, and runner, but we're also competitors. Every comment was a little poke in my side, and I had a picture from last year above my computer monitor as a reminder to get out for my run on those dreary winter days.

This year I decided to go north to south as Damian and Mike had done, getting the Cheviots and Cross Fell out the way early. I also made a smarter schedule that would allow me to attack and pick up time in the middle portion of the run. I took steps to prevent a recurrence of my gut issues from last time, and my fitness was in a great spot.

DAY 1

Conditions were nearly perfect as we started out from Kirk Yetholm at 9am on the biggest climb of the route, all the way up to The Cheviot. Last year, the little out and back to the summit had seemed endless – at night in terrible weather at the end of the run. This time it was over before I knew it, and we made quick work of the entire Cheviots section. The only issue was a bog attempting to steal my shoe - sucking it off my foot, my gaiter trying in vain to pull it out before its connector broke and the shoe snapped back down into the muck. It would have been fascinating to watch in slow motion.

My plan had been to go out slower than Damian, and not overtake him until a little over 100 miles. But we had taken advantage of the good conditions and I was already ahead. I felt good about the pace, but still the doubts crept in. Places in my legs were already starting to hurt and feel a bit tight. Was this normal? I’ve done these things so many times yet that part always catches me off-guard. I have over 200 miles to go, surely everything should still feel great! Oh, right, I’ve already run 50 miles on tough terrain. Yeah, I guess things are just gonna hurt.

We made our way through the boggy forests north of Hadrian’s Wall, had a nice run along the wall, and made quick work of the quagmire known as Blenkinsopp Common. As night fell, I prepared to tackle Cross Fell – layering on extra kit and taking on some extra calories before the climb. I’ve still yet to be on Cross Fell in the day, or without clag, but these were the least bad conditions I’ve had up there. The wind wasn’t even bad. Coming down the other side into Dufton, I hit 100 miles almost right at 19 hours as the new day arrived.

DAY 2

In my plan, this section is where I would take the record. I saw an opportunity over this stretch to gain a significant amount of time where both Damian and I had slowed down last year. I was over an hour ahead of my 58-hour 14-minute plan, but I had no intention this year of being content with a buffer. There was also still plenty of time for disaster – bad weather, sleep issues, stomach problems - when at the edge for that long it doesn’t take very much at all to fall off.

So, I stuck to the plan. And the plan worked. Almost methodically, I began chipping away at the record time, about 10 minutes at each checkpoint as so many highlights of the route went by: High Cup Nick, Cauldron Snout, Tan Hill Inn, Great Shunner Fell, Pen-y-ghent. I started the day at Dufton about an hour ahead, and by the time I reached Malham Tarn that night, I was 4 hours up with about 80 miles to go.

Weather so far had been not-awful. Underfoot conditions weren’t great, with plenty of muddy and boggy sections, and there were stretches of heavy rain and hail, but most of the bad weather fell into the category of what I would call ‘extremely annoying and uncomfortable but not limiting’. This weather affects what most people likely will do, but not what they can do. Importantly, there had not been the strong southerly headwind I had feared.

But at that point I also hadn’t slept. Damian had already gotten a nap or two by then. Like a race car driver deciding to get new tires early, those naps can pay dividends over that critical second night when sleep deprivation really starts to be a major factor.

DAY 3

It wasn’t long after leaving Malham Tarn, where I had joked about an afternoon finish (sub 56 hours), that the sleep monsters began to attack. I felt myself drifting as we made our way through the precarious rocky terrain of Malham Cove, then began to stumble and stagger through the fields that largely make up the section between the Yorkshire Dales and the Peak District.

By the time we reached Gargrave, I had decided to give in to a nap. I got some food down and requested 20 minutes. After 10, I woke up with throbbing legs and a shivering torso. Instead of getting a move on, I spent another 20-30 minutes trying to warm up. I largely regret this decision, but who knows. If I hadn’t had that time to reset a bit, then maybe I would have crashed and burned shortly after.

The stop did undoubtedly refresh me. My pace picked up and I was more energetic and alert. But the question is always whether it’s enough of a pick-up to make up for the time stopped, in this case needing a minute-per-mile faster for 45 miles to break even. Just before dawn, I stopped for one more nap, a much more efficient 10 minutes in Cowling, just past the 200 mile mark at 43 hours.

The remainder of the run was constant highs and lows – often swinging back and forth by the minute. There were stretches where I felt like I was flying, followed shortly by me wondering what I was doing and questioning the life choices that had led me to do it.

Heavy storms rolled in, and I knew I was in trouble when people started handing me my full waterproofs and good Gore-Tex layers. But few things keep you awake better than hail in your face. My stomach began to shut down. On the move I was relying nearly completely on my 8-month-old daughter’s baby food squeeze pouches. At support points, I was stopping just a bit to get in rice pudding and pot noodle.

The final stretch over Black Hill, Bleaklow and Kinder Scout was a bit of a daze. My mind had just enough bandwidth to fixate on and follow Marcus Scotney’s bright yellow shoes. I had slipped into that state where I wasn’t entirely sure if it was real or a dream, just that I was still controlling my actions.

I followed those shiny shoes past Kinder Downfall, over Kinder Scout, down Jacob’s Ladder, and through the fields leading down to The Old Nags Head pub in Edale. I turned the last corner, went through the last gate, and released my final reserves of adrenaline to cruise down to the finish where my family was waiting. I didn’t specifically plan the timing this way, but for the entire run I had the motivation of knowing that if I ran fast enough, I’d finish at a reasonable hour and they would be there. 58 hours, 4 minutes, 53 seconds, for a finish just past 7pm – even the pub’s kitchen was still open!



Previous page: John climbing Pen-y-Ghent; Top photo: John with support runners descending Black Hill/ Holme Moss; Bottom photo: John’s wife Jessi at the finish
© Steve Ashworth/ La Sportiva

A COLLECTIVE RECORD

Any record like this is a collective achievement, built on the efforts and imagination of the past, competition and support of the present, and the desire to leave a mark for the future. I would not have had the courage to go for sub-60 hours without Damian’s incredible run. I hope my record also drives someone to do what they otherwise wouldn’t have thought possible and that at some point in the future the time is lowered again.

“There is still time that can come off it now, and in the future further improvements to the trail and to gear will leave people with advantages over us similar to what we have over earlier efforts.”

Then, of course, nothing like this would be possible without incredible support: My wife Jessi is an absolute rock, supporting me and four kids during these adventures; my coach David Roche (also Damian’s coach) has gotten my fitness to a place I didn’t know existed for me; and my returning crew chief Nicki Lygo has selflessly given so much to my and other Pennine Way efforts, and helped me work out some of my gut issues. Jen Scotney and Sharon Dyson were also flawless road support, and I had a small army of amazing support runners, most of them returning from last year: Andy Blackett, Ben Cliff, Bill Johnson, Danny Bent, Darren Moore, David Beales, Ed Hyland, Elaine Bisson, Graham Thomas, James Elson, James Ritchie, Jamie Rutherford, Jasmin Paris, Jim Graham, John Parkin, Julian Jamison, Marcus Scotney, Mark Rochester, Martin Wilson, Mathew Beresford, Mel Steventon, Rob Pope, Sam Booth, Suzy Whatmough, Tim Wiggins, Tom Middleton, and a number of others who unexpectedly contributed valuable support along the way.

A full-page background image showing two runners on a narrow, rocky trail that runs along a steep cliff overlooking the ocean. The runner in the foreground is wearing a bright yellow shirt and black shorts, while the runner behind him is in a dark shirt and shorts. The cliff face is rugged and covered in patches of green moss and small plants. The ocean is visible in the background, with waves breaking against the shore.

COASTING INTO TROUBLE

WORDS DAMIAN HALL

**DAMIAN HALL GOT INTO A SPOT OF BOTHER WHEN HE ATTEMPTED TO BREAK
MIKE HARTLEY'S 30-YEAR-OLD COAST TO COAST RECORD**

Let me tell you a story about a time I drank too much, behaved like a drunken fool (or rather, a drunken child, according to Andy Berry), but hadn't actually consumed any alcohol.

It's all Matt Neale's fault. Not the drunken bit. But rather the idea to go record-bothering on Wainwright's Coast to Coast. After my Pennine Way run last year, I was looking for something similar and he pointed out the 185-mile trans-England trail had a long-standing Mike Hartley record. Mike Hartley records have become quite the thing. Lockdown hasn't been kind to his record collection.

In 1990 Hartley ran it in 39 hours, 36 minutes and 52 seconds, beating his friend Mike Cudahy's record by seven hours. Mike maintained 5mph through the Lake District and barely slowed from there. It's approximately 0.6mph faster than his record-breaking Pennine Way run the previous year. "Mike set the bar so high that I don't think anyone had a serious attempt at it since then," said FRA long-distance-records custodian Martin Stone. Gulp. I didn't mind the distance. But I was wary of that speed.

Conceived by the flamboyantly whiskered guidebook author Alfred Wainwright, Coast to Coast is a popular hiking route. The approximate 185-mile traverse with upwards of 20,000ft ascent



starts at St Bees, Cumbria, bounces through the Lake District, the Yorkshire Dales, the flat Vale of York, the North York Moors and down the coast to Robin Hood's Bay.

Like the Pennine Way, I'd hiked Wainwright's Coast to Coast way before I had any idea people could run such things. The excellent Northern Traverse (NT) race follows the same route but with minor tweaks and the C2C route has changed slightly down the years, but NT race director and Open Tracking-owner James Thurlow was a huge help in tracing the record route accurately.

I wanted to use the run to draw attention to our climate and ecological emergency; by picking up litter, fuelling without animal products, largely without creating plastic waste, by using local pacers whenever possible, by offsetting unavoidable emissions from travel. It would have been much better, of course, if I could have done the run without all this help and car journeys. But you don't break Mike Hartley records that way. It's an uncomfortable paradox.

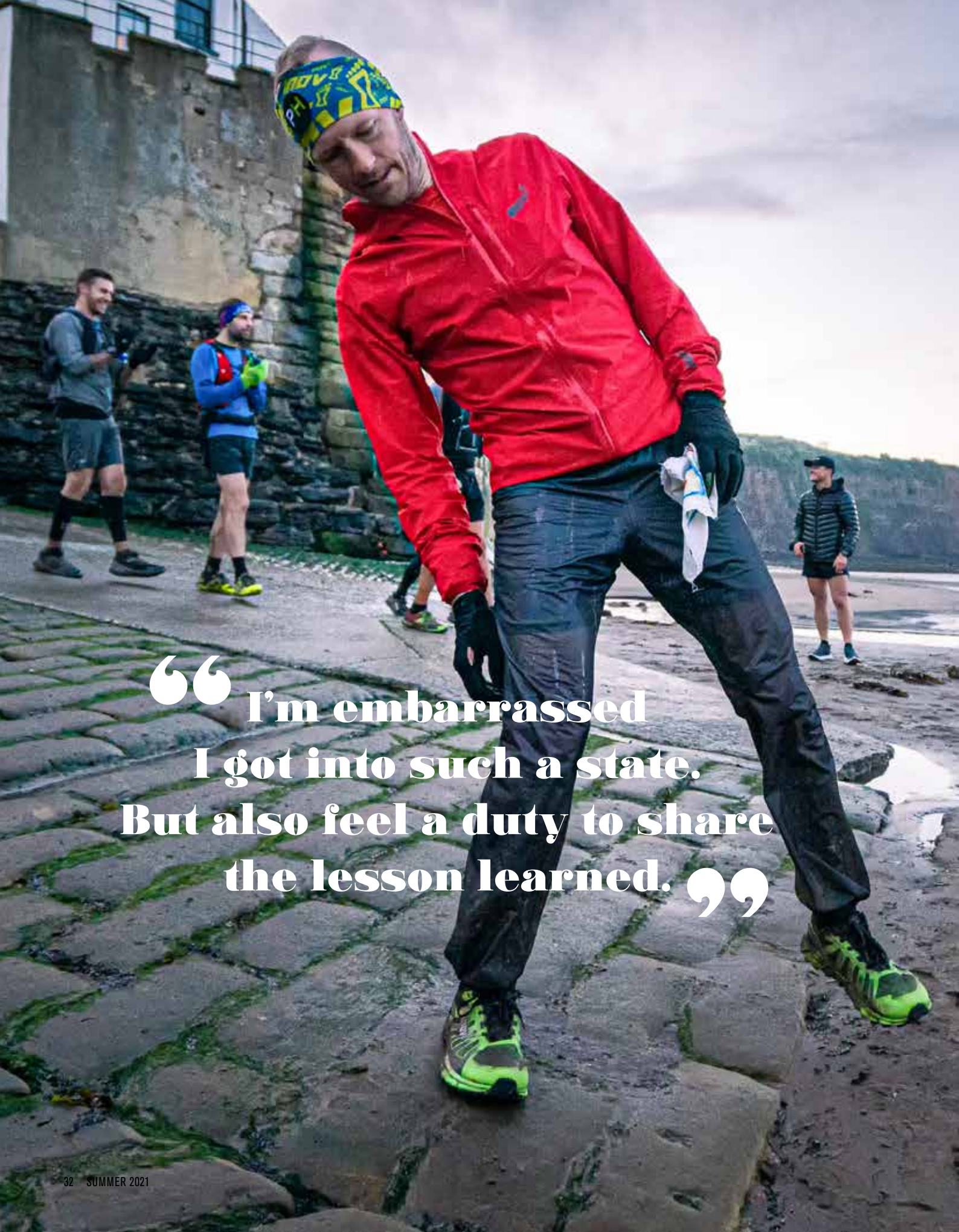
A road crew of Nicki Lygo, Tim Laney, Mark Townsend and a team of support runners came together quickly, many of whom had somehow not been put off by helping me on the Pennine Way. The forecast was mixed, not bad enough to call it off. Those early miles with Sam Tyrer and Rory Harris were smooth and easy. I needed to build a buffer on Mike's record, in case of any mishaps later. But I also needed to get through the Lakes without doing myself a mischief.

Old pals Kim Collison and Paul Tierney joined me at Honister and we yabbered away in hail, brief showers, but mostly sunshine as we skipped across the fells. Chris Tyrer and Steve Birkinshaw swapped in at Patterdale, starting with the long slog up to Kidsty Pike, the highest point on the route. A few soggy fields and we were in Shap, 60 miles and 11 hours in, and the end of the start. I was somehow two hours ahead of Hartley's time. But I felt wearier than hoped and my hips were stiff. Had I overcooked it?

Mike Hartley and Martin Stone turned out to see me in Shap, which gave me a huge lift. With my new support runners Mark Kerry, Paul Nelson and Jack Eyre, an easier pace allowed three slices of vegan pizza, generously donated by my amazing pacers, to slide down my gullet.

Shap to Kirkby Stephen was the wettest section so far. My saintly crew provided fresh chips, soup and tea, and I changed into a dry pair of inov-8s, which were sensational again, as they had been on the Pennine Way. In the gloaming, Matt Neale, Andrew Higgins and Mark Clarkson dragged me up to the Nine Standards. The terrain was minging; slippery, sloppy moorland. My tummy felt full or possibly bloated.





“I’m embarrassed
I got into such a state.
But also feel a duty to share
the lesson learned.”

Arrival at Keld, at around midnight, signalled halfway. I knocked back some delicious rice pudding and fatefully asked for no more electrolytes in my drinks, which I thought might help my tummy settle. It was only a temporary measure. But I forget to ask for them again.

Two strangers were out ringing cowbells at Reeth, long after midnight. I was slowing a little, but we were still around two hours up on schedule. We maintained the gap to the cobbled streets of Richmond at 3.30am. Jason Millward and Paul Booth joined me for a long flat spell through fields at first, then roads, often in drizzle. They were great company, perking me up with dad jokes.

It was raining in the village of Danby Wiske at 6.05am, 140 miles and 24 hours in, still two hours and change ahead of the record. Really, everything was going top banana. Yet I was feeling just a little bit... strange.

“In the North York Moors, it was p***ing it down,” remembers Tim. “It was cold, horrible. I was really worried about you.” I don’t remember anything about the Lord Stones crew point. Jayson Cavill and Andy Berry took over support runner duties. We seemed to go up steep hills in the rain a lot. I remember clambering over some rocks. There was a crew stop at the Lion Inn, apparently. I seemed cold, I’m told. But it was a fight to make me put on a mid-layer.

I started rudely questioning Andy and Jayson. “Are you sure we’re going the right way?” Everything looked the same. Fog and bog. Bending into the rain and wind, Andy and Jayson heroically forming a protective shield against the weather for their ungrateful burden.

At Glaisdale (3.30pm, 36 hours and 170 miles in, around 1hr 30mins ahead of record) I half-remember trying to remove my merino midlayer without taking off my stormshell. I fell over on the moor so pathetically people thought I’d done it on purpose. Andy told my support crew I was finished, but rather more colourfully.

Nikki Carr Walls, Sam Dunwell and (later) Joe Leadley, Danny Walls and Neil Webster joined me. “Where are these people taking me?” I asked my crew. I was frequently losing my balance. A supportive hand in the small of my back saved me several times. The amazing Nicki Lygo, a doctor, was starting to twig what was going on, the potentially fatal state I was in, and asked my pacers not to let me drink any more.

What was once a two and a half hour advantage over Hartley’s record, had reduced to just 20 minutes. Mark said “You really need

to get on and do this” - almost sinister at the time, but absolutely needed. Tim and Matt Green from Summit Fever Media both joined me, the latter endlessly nagging me to get a shift on. I hated the idea people might feel disappointed in me. But couldn’t seem to do anything about it. I felt so weak.

I don’t know when I started “running like a question mark”, as Nicki put it. While we can’t be sure without blood tests at the time, I was very probably acting like a drunken child because my brain was swelling and I was in a state of hyponatraemia (over-hydration/low sodium). Which may sound like a good thing for a bear of little brain like me. But it isn’t.

It was a glorious evening as I staggered with a comical lean down the steep cobbles to the Robin Hood’s Bay beach. Kind locals clapped and cheered. I mumbled something indecipherable as I held my children’s flag and gave a goofy grin. Chocolate pudding was smeared on my face. I didn’t know or ask what my time was. (It was 39 hours, 18 minutes, and 40 seconds – just 18 minutes ahead of Hartley’s time). I wasn’t yet aware I had nearly cocked up in a much more serious way.

It feels both reassuring and alarming that despite having done 50-plus ultra-distance races and challenges, I’ve had no knowing experience of hyponatraemia before. I’m embarrassed I got into such a state. But also feel a duty to share the lesson learned.

We think I consumed 400ml liquid/hour maximum, including food, which doesn’t sound like loads. But it was cool, well below 10°C, so maybe I wasn’t sweating out liquid as much as normal. Cutting out my electrolytes may have been significant. But probably not as significant as the fact I drank just a little bit more than perhaps I needed to, for 39 hours. I usually drink to thirst. But this time I thought I could hydrate just a little bit better and was aiming for 500ml/hour. Which probably wasn’t right for me in those conditions.

I was kindly handed a pint at the end. In retrospect perhaps it’s telling that I didn’t really want to drink it. I’d been behaving like a drunken fool for several hours already.

Damian’s book, *In It For The Long Run*, is out now via Vertebrate Publishing, www.v-publishing.co.uk. Read the book review later in *The Fellrunner*



THE BOB GRAHAM CLUB

CELEBRATING ITS FIRST 50 YEARS

WORDS SELWYN WRIGHT



I know it's a lot longer than that since Bob Graham completed his 42-peak Round of hills in the Lakes – 1932 to be exact, or a mere 89 years. But it's 50 years since Fred Rogerson organised a dinner to celebrate the first hardy souls who had repeated Bob's Round and floated the idea of forming a Club to promote further attempts. From that point on in 1971, Fred became the doyen of the Round, and did more than anyone else to make it into the best known and most often attempted ultra-distance test of fellrunning ability that exists today, and indeed is likely to exist ever.

As a young person, Fred had health issues which meant he was never able to run seriously, but he so looked up to the people who could, people such as Alan Heaton, the first person to repeat the 'Bob', and the first record holder, that the Club became a

crucial part of the rest of his life. The word 'inspiration' is hugely overused these days, but Fred Rogerson was the epitome of the real meaning of the word; he spent 40 years persuading, supporting, and instilling confidence in runners to 'have a go' at the Round. He passed on information about it, he put people in touch with like-minded folk, and he turned up to help on times without number.

Things are different now, but back in the seventies and eighties the Bob Graham was, for English fellrunners at least, the only challenge that existed beyond fell racing. For runners who wanted to do a bit more, it was quite simply the Holy Grail! Forty years ago, there was no such thing as trail racing and the number of folk who wanted to run further than, say, the Ennerdale Race, was tiny. The Bob Graham became the objective for those runners, and it was practically the sole objective for most of us.

Opposite page: Bob Graham Round, map designed by Andy Ford © David Rumsey Map Collection, David Rumsey Map Center, Stanford Libraries © Otter Maps www.ottermaps.co.uk

Whenever I've been faced with a difficult task... I've said to myself quietly: "This is not impossible, you've done the Bob Graham."

My own experience was typical – at first I simply didn't believe I was capable of doing something that only my superheroes, the Joss Nailors, the Alan Heatons and the Billy Blands could do. When I finally completed the Round – by the skin of my teeth at the third attempt, and with a fine margin of five minutes out of my 24 Hours – it gave a huge boost to my confidence and self-worth that's never really gone away in the 40 some years since. Whenever I've been faced with a difficult task, either at work or in life generally, I've said to myself quietly: "This is not impossible, you've done the Bob Graham," and that knowledge has helped me to get on with it.

Over the years, of course, I've told this story in several settings, including in speeches at the Bob Graham Dinner, and people have said, "Yes, it's just like that for me too." The BG is the hardest thing I've ever done and for most of the people who achieve it, it'll be a pinnacle of their sporting lives. And essentially, I've got Fred Rogerson to thank for that sense of fulfilment and wellbeing. Because if he hadn't set up a Club, and if he hadn't prodded and mithered away at runners to 'have a go' then I would never have heard of it, and I'd certainly be much the lesser person. So that's why I'm personally celebrating 50 years of the BG Club. Every

one of the 2,300+ members will have their own personal reasons to celebrate, because every 24 hours of effort holds its memories, and each successful Round involves overcoming difficulties that can seem overwhelming.

The Club itself will be celebrating with the publication of a new '42 Peaks' book, by Peter McDonald, which will be out later in the Summer. Over the years, the existing booklet has been revised a couple of times to include new records and exploits, but with its narrative largely intact from day one. Although Peter has followed the ethos and style of previous editions, he has written what is in many ways a wholly 'new' book. A book which I believe every fellrunner will want on the shelf – and a book which in the traditions of the Club will be non-profit making and will contribute to the charities that support Fred Rogerson's vision of opening the fells up for people with disabilities – The Calvert Trust, Bendrigg Lodge and the Kepplewray Trust.

There are achievements which go way beyond the completion of the Round itself, and an attempt to describe and document those extensions in the context of ultra-distance fellrunning in the Lake District is part of what Peter's book is all about. Of course, the last year or two has brought record after record, initially with Kilian setting a new time for the 42, over an hour faster than Billy's record, which itself was so fabulous that it had stood for 36 years. But then we saw new 24-Hour Fell Records for Kim Collison and Carol Morgan, with Beth Pascall's fastest women's 42 and Nicky Spinks' new double, and quicker winter Rounds along the way. There are now at least seven records or 'fastest knowns' associated with the Bob Graham, all of which have fallen over the last few years. I'm sure that's partly because there are so many more people running further and further competitively, in events like the Spine, the Dragon's Back and trail races generally. The quality is improving all the time – and all things considered, the Bob Graham Club has played a very full part in all of that. But apart from doffing the cap to those folk who have pushed the boundaries, this article isn't the place to document all of that – it's all in Peter's book, along with some new photos which you'll love.

The challenge for the Club over the coming years is to sustain and support the traditions of the last 50 years without becoming stuck fast in a morass of the past. Morgan Williams in his time as Secretary did excellent work to develop an ethos and framework for the way that we runners should behave towards our environment, local communities, and our colleagues and friends. And I'd like to

think that the Bob Graham Club will continue to be at the forefront of running activity in wild places for many years to come. Whilst there is clearly a space for commercial organisations on the fells, we have taken steps recently to stop people from paying for guides to take them round the 42 peaks to gain entry to the Club. This did not fit with our ethos, which is about helping each other and learning by experience.

This decision has been popularly received and is now widely accepted. I have watched the communication across several media pages and groups and loved the requests for and offers of help to recce and do the Round. Without exception, every request has been answered by members and people hoping to become members. This is exactly what Morgan was driving at and it's exactly what Fred Rogerson was trying to achieve 50 years ago. I knew Fred well and he would be loving all this!

All of which brings me towards a conclusion. Fred Rogerson was Chair of the Club for the first 28 years. Fred was very wise to recognise the right time to pass things on to younger folk. Many of you will have noticed the brilliant work done recently by Bob Wightman on the statistics and historical records of the Club, which is now much more accessible for all. And Paul Wilson has through social media and his presence on the fells made the Bob Graham available to a younger generation. Their passion is obvious and shines out in the same way that Fred's did all those years ago. I've now done 22 years as Chair and I have told the Committee that I'm going to follow Fred's example. I think it's time for someone younger to have a go as Chair. So, after this year's Presentation Dinner in October, I will step down and hand over to a new Chair a club which is thriving and will go on for another 50 years!

I'm really very happy to announce that after the Presentation Dinner, Paul Wilson will take over as Chair of the Bob Graham Club and Angela Wilson will step into Paul's shoes as our Secretary. I'd like to thank them, Martin Hudson, Bob Wightman, Wendy Dodds and John Brockbank for all their hard work and support over many years. And I'll end by inviting any members who'd like to give something back by joining the Committee to get in touch. You'll be very welcome.

**New club chairman:
Paul Wilson**

**New club secretary:
Angela Wilson**



WRITING A NEW 42 PEAKS



To the outside world, the sport of fell running is perhaps not best known for its literature. But most runners will be able to name at least one book which has played a pivotal part in their fell running story.

For me, like many others, it was Feet in the Clouds. I remember reading it on the floor of a packed Pendolino train, travelling from Penrith to London after just – and I do mean just – managing to complete the Bob Graham Round over three days. When I boarded the train, I knew nothing of fell running as I collapse into the vestibule. At the end of the journey, I was sure I had found ‘my sport’, despite the fact my crumpled legs would not allow me to alight the train, let alone run up a hill.

For many others, 42 Peaks will have been that book. In 1982, Roger Smith brought together one of the first full narratives on the origins and development of the Bob Graham and the Lake District 24-Hour Fell Record. Much of the material was sourced from Fred Rogerson, founding Chairman of the Club and formative chronicler of 24-hour rounds. Publication was in the same year that Bob Graham’s memorial cairn was unveiled near Ashness Bridge in Borrowdale.

Forty years on and the stories in the unassuming, dark green booklet continue to educate, inspire and amaze. While the book was updated on two occasions, first by Paddy Buckley and then by Brian Covell, the passage of time inevitably means there are a multitude of other stories that have come since – each of which deserve to be told. This is what has led to the new edition of 42 Peaks.

Around the end of 2020, the Bob Graham Club were kind enough to entrust me to hold the pen on this weighty task. The Club’s constitution states that its object is to preserve the spirit and traditions of the Bob Graham Round. But there was nothing backward looking in their brief: the clear steer was one of modernisation.

With that in mind, we have sought to preserve the spirit of the original but produce a wholly new book. There have now been well over two thousand Bob Graham completions, each deeply memorable for all involved. It is clearly impossible to tell the story of them all. Instead, the book tells the story of those stories, seeking to convey the unique essence of the Bob Graham community.

While still a short book, it is undeniably longer. Colour photos have been added, some of which have not been published before. The book fills in some gaps in the history of long Lakeland rounds before Bob Graham but, more importantly, tells the story of everything that has happened since the original book was first published. 2020 – the year of the FKT – provided an apt end point, although this year’s dot watching has prompted some last-minute insertions.

Over the past few months, I have had the pleasure to exchange messages with nearly every record holder described in the book. Without exception, each has generously provided information and images on their exploits. Particular thanks go to Carol Morgan, the Club’s Co-President, who penned the foreword, and Roger, Paddy and Brian for the inspiration of their original words. Just like the round itself, the book could never have been completed without the support of others. Thank you to all.

The book is now being prepared for printing. With a fair wind, we hope it will be available in the familiar range of shops shortly – and of course at this year’s Club dinner.

Peter McDonald

(For any further information about the project, please contact peterwmcdonald@gmail.com)

AN EXTRACT FROM THE NEW 42 PEAKS BOOK

SHORT DAYS IN LAKELAND

To the outside world, the sport of fell running is perhaps not best known for its literature. But most runners will be able to name at least one book which has played a pivotal part in their fell running story.

‘The snow was so deep that it had filled in the crevices between large rocks... About halfway down, I felt myself slipping on the icy snow. I dug my heels in and fell over on my face. The weight of my boots swung me round and I went sliding down feet first... I clawed at everything to keep myself from gathering speed and going over the other side of Gable... I tore my finger ends, but fortunately I was able to keep myself from getting away.’

So reported Bob Graham, after a lucky escape in March 1937. He, like many others, knew winter offered a whole new way to experience the fells, albeit not without risk. Some 45 years later, in 1982, Club President Joss Naylor used his speech at the reunion dinner to advise the assembled membership against winter rounds – the oppressive long night, snow and ice could leave an unprepared contender in a perilous state. These were well-intentioned and probably wise words, but the allure of 42 snow-capped tops was too great for some to ignore.

The first winter attempt had actually taken place three years earlier, by Pete Simpson in 1979. He set out on the winter solstice on a joint attempt with Martin Stone. Going anti-clockwise, Scafell proved the deciding juncture: Martin had to retire and Pete was forced to make a slow descent by Foxes Tarn as Broad Stand glistened in beautiful yet deadly verglas. The lost time could not be made back, but Pete persevered to the end with a 26-hour completion.

Five years later, Selwyn Wright (future Club Chairman) revived the winter round. To enhance the experience, he chose to be supported only at road crossings. He was fully cognisant of the difficulties of solo mountaineering in the conditions – indeed, overcoming them was the very purpose of the challenge. Similar to Pete, all went well until leg three, when a blizzard on Scafell forced a tactical retirement. In winter, the mark of a successful round is one which ends at the right time, on the terms of the contender.

In 1985, Selwyn made a second attempt – again, like Pete, it was completed in longer than 24 hours. But it was third time lucky for him in 1986, this time with John Brockbank as a co-contender and a team of pacers. Success came on a day of perfect conditions, authentically winter but not prohibitive to running. That very same season, Steve Parr repeated the feat with even less daylight, just one day before the winter solstice. Despite falling an hour behind schedule by Bowfell, he made back the time, all the more impressive for the fact that he covered four of the five legs without any support on the fells. Steve’s 1986 success followed two attempts the previous winter, the second one ending with only one fell to go.

Two weeks after that, Martin Stone dispensed with both pacers and roadside support, completing the round in 19 minutes under the 24 hours. Some of Joss’s words may have rung true during sketchy moments ascending Fairfield, Bowfell and Scafell. For the latter, Lord’s Rake was filled with snow and Martin only made it up by fashioning fingerholds out of holes left by a previous ascender’s ice axe. Quite apart from the considerable physical achievement, it was an extraordinary feat of mental endurance. The challenge was an attack on all the senses, which can be conveyed in no better terms than Martin’s own recollection:

For 24 hours, every step is premeditated, the torch kept low as you check for glazed rock and pools of water ice. Each foot placement is with care as you skate across streams which have frozen and spread over large areas of hillside. The 27,000 feet of jarring descent is unyielding, even frozen earth feels like rock to a tired body. The occasional slip on dodgy ground serves to concentrate the mind after a lapse into the long-distance runner’s dream world. Cold air numbs your face and mouth, it also chills the stomach. Freezing water destroys the sense of taste and food loses its attraction. Your feet soon feel numb, no longer providing you with the spring and agility you need.

‘Is it really worth it?’ he asks. Emphatically, yes. Standing atop the final summit, ‘you pause awhile to look around you at 41 snowy peaks lit by a rising moon. You’d be a strange person not to be moved by the beauty and grandeur.’

The company of hills

THE GERRY CHARNLEY ROUND



**‘ENJOY YOURSELF BUT PLEASE
LEAVE AS LITTLE EVIDENCE
OF YOUR PRESENCE
AS POSSIBLE.’**

Quote from the original Gerry Charnley map,
printed by Harvey in 1985

Nearly all fell runners will have heard of the Bob Graham, but probably not so many of the Gerry Charnley Round.

Gerry Charnley is little remembered, but was a prolific fell runner, orienteer and climber who founded the Karrimor International Mountain Marathon (KIMM), now the OMM. In his early 50s he tragically died on Helvellyn, and his namesake Round was established in his memory by his friends.

A 38-mile, clover-leaf route centred on the Charnley Cairn close to Esk Hause in the central Lakeland fells, the Charnley Round consists of 26 checkpoints: not peaks but map features and places of interest, three of the checkpoints being youth hostels – Eskdale, Borrowdale and Langdale. The Round can be started anywhere but is normally started from one of the hostels, and has been designed to be run or walked in one long day or for loops and linear routes to be completed as the runner chooses. The ethos of the Round is on self-sufficiency and leaving no trace – the runner is encouraged to

Previous page: The checkpoints one must visit in the Gerry Charnley Round, map designed by Andy Ford © Crown copyright 2021 Ordnance Survey.
Media licence 053/21 © Otter Maps www.ottermaps.co.uk; Above: Illustration of Helvellyn from Steel Fell by Heather Dawe

plan their own route to visit all the checkpoints, then to navigate that route, creating their own line from multiple route choices.

“For me, fell running has always had a strong element of self-sufficiency... the ability to take care of yourself in the hills is one of its fundamental parts.”

That’s not to say I never followed anyone in fell races – I was just selective about who I picked.

When I first tried to use a map and compass in anger I was 19, on the side of the Dumfries and Galloway hills in strong wind and rain, at the beginning of my first KIMM in 1996. I had no idea how to do it at all, the contours of the map were all mysterious swirls I couldn’t decipher, and I had never taken a compass bearing. Thankfully my race partner had a little more experience than me, and together we made our way around the course to the finish. At the time those two days were the toughest I’d ever had in the mountains, a definite form of type II fun I wanted to experience more.

Despite my inexperience of the fells, even back then I wanted to finish the Elite category of the KIMM. My friend Al Powell and his brother Ifor used to try and win it (they eventually won the OMM in 2006). I watched them and wanted to be like them, to be able to run faster over tough ground, with a map in my hand, navigating as I ran.

Through the years I did more KIMMs & OMMs, LAMMs, Mountain Trials, Saunders, and High Peak Marathons. To begin with I was a poor navigator. Through trial and error, many failures, lots of running in the Lakes, Scottish and Welsh hills in bad weather, I learned. While I still have lots more to learn, I improved sufficiently to get around and finish the Elite OMM.

At the time I was so focused on finishing such events I never really thought about what else I had gained from this learning. When you can read a map and navigate safely in the hills you can be bolder in your route choices. Self-sufficiency in the fells affords freedoms that are not otherwise there.

The Charnley Round’s ethos of leaving no trace is today as relevant as ever. Perhaps even more so, in light of the increased numbers of people today heading to the fells to experience their magic.

The concept of leaving no trace does not always fit so well within our consumerist society. Combine this with the demise of outdoor education and a lack of investment in the countryside code and this ethos and spirit becomes even more important to encourage and instil. Whilst I never met Gerry Charnley (I was only eight when he died) I think he would have more than understood this.

When Bob Graham first pioneered his round he would have had to high-step across the heather as he sought to pick a sage line off Great Calva and hold his line on the rough ground up the back of Blencathra. He would have found his way up and off the back of Yewbarrow carefully and thoughtfully, across rocky, steep and unclear fellsides. The ground between High Raise, Sergeant Man and Calf Crag would have been thought-provoking from a route choice perspective.

Today there is a firm trod – a path even - around all of the Bob Graham Round. There is also a digital line the runner can follow, so they can get beeped at by the little artificial brain on their wrist if they go off course.

It is brilliant that more people are engaging with the challenges, beauty and sense of achievement that the Bob Graham brings, and I am not against change and technological advances (in my day-job I lead data and AI initiatives for large companies). But I do worry about the things that we seem to be losing alongside such changes.

There is a spirit in fell running that goes beyond any long-distance challenge or line on the ground. Running free, choosing your own line over tough ground, the bravado in the pub with your mates afterwards, each claiming to have run the ‘best’ and hardest route.

It was through a conversation on Twitter (of all places) that I came to properly meet Geoff Cox. Through the years I had seen him at the races, and knew him enough to nod a ‘hello’ if I ever saw him on the fells. The conversation was about whether guidebooks for challenges like the Bob Graham were such a good thing. Geoff and I are both of the view that it’s a shame to miss out on the background experience that is part of the build up to the Bob Graham. ‘Recceing’ the route, learning its detail, the tricks you can pull along the way in terms of little choices that gain seconds or even a minute along the way are all part of the complete experience.

Running with a friend who knows a route well can be like spending time with a human guidebook. When I did the Bob Graham I had Steve Birkinshaw for company through the Scafells and Langdales.

Opposite page: The Charnley Crag Cairn © Victoria Rose (Tory) Miller

The only things I had to worry about were putting one foot in front of the other, eating the food and drinking from the bottles he passed me along the way.

With tough challenges like the Bob Graham, there is a lot of sense in making everything other than getting around as easy as possible for the person making the attempt. But is anything lost along the way? I recently had a conversation with a friend who had self-supported themselves around the BG, carrying their kit in their rucksack, no GPS or tracking device, going unrecorded in the Bob Graham Club annals, despite completing the full route in under 24 hours. That is the way they had chosen to do it, not the easiest but maybe the ‘purest’ in some ways?

This latter style is closer to the one in which people often choose to run or walk the Gerry Charnley. It was designed so it could all be done in one go, over a few days by linking and staying in the youth hostels or camping on the fell. Whether walking or running, the checkpoints are not summits but features of the land, often a little distance away from the well-worn paths of the central fells.

During that conversation on Twitter with Geoff, what followed on from the debates about guidebooks for the Bob Graham was a discussion about the Gerry Charnley Round. After that our thoughts

and conversations shifted to what the sense of freedom on the fells does for our state of minds.

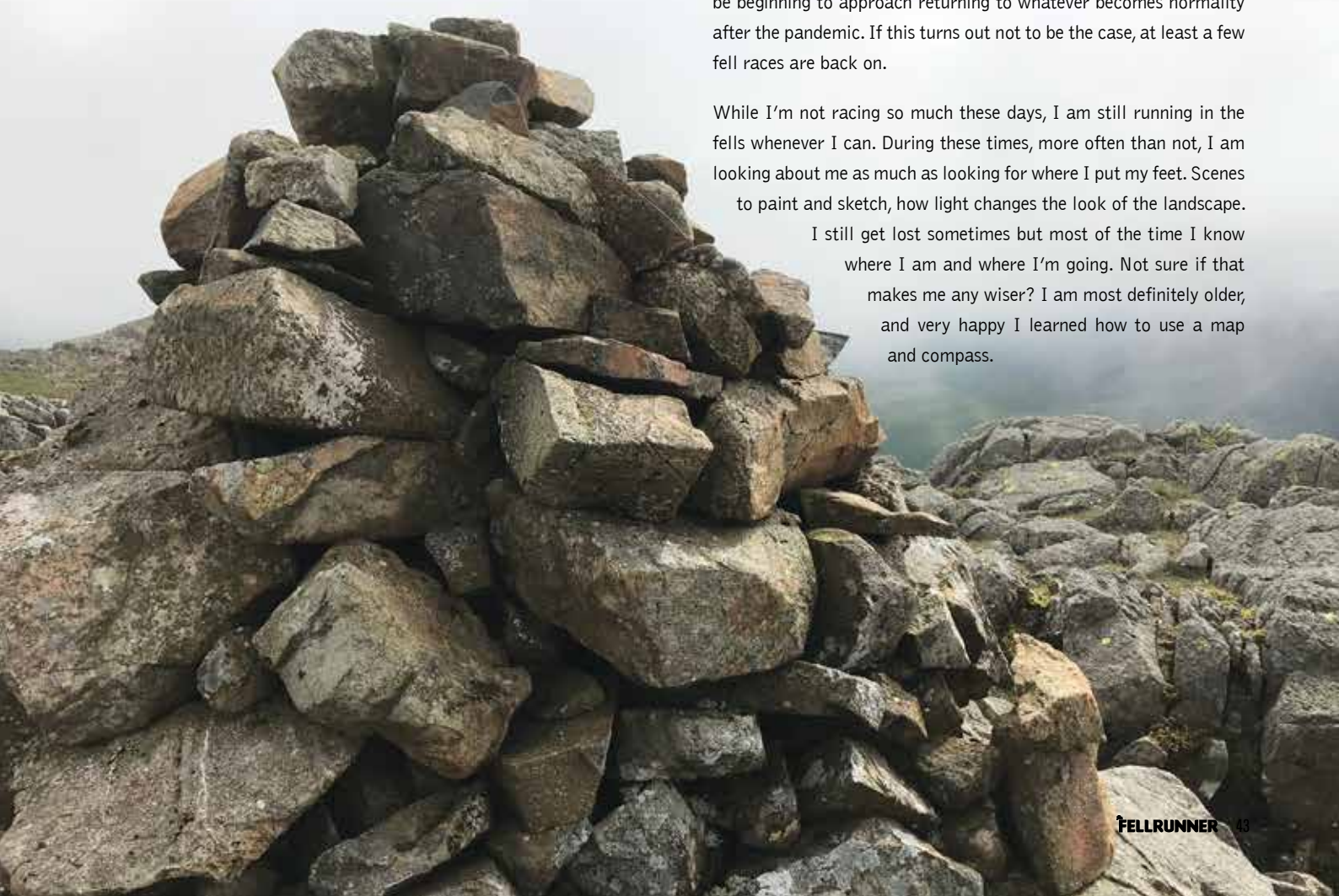
Both Geoff and I find this freedom inspired our writing, poetry and painting. We decided to explore this some more, to collaborate together on some writing and art by which we could express our love for running on the Lake District fells. Geoff had already written a long poem about the Gerry Charnley Round. I had painted and sketched some of the scenes along with a map of central Lakeland, and wanted to write alongside this art. This collaboration developed into our book *Traceless*. Subtitled *Exploring the Spirit of Fell-running*, through making it Geoff and I explored the reasons why we each love fell running, and used this learning to inspire us further.

Traceless was substantively written and painted through the first pandemic lockdown in the spring of 2020. I had planned to explore the Gerry Charnley more during this time. Instead I found myself at home, dreaming of the fells rather than running over them. The writing and painting I did for *Traceless* during this time took me to the fells in my mind; good therapy for those strange days. Geoff and I shared and developed our work together over Zoom and the book came together.

I’m writing these words in May 2021 and it feels like we could be beginning to approach returning to whatever becomes normality after the pandemic. If this turns out not to be the case, at least a few fell races are back on.

While I’m not racing so much these days, I am still running in the fells whenever I can. During these times, more often than not, I am looking about me as much as looking for where I put my feet. Scenes to paint and sketch, how light changes the look of the landscape.

I still get lost sometimes but most of the time I know where I am and where I’m going. Not sure if that makes me any wiser? I am most definitely older, and very happy I learned how to use a map and compass.



Traceless days

WORDS GEOFF COX

I will give myself
to the grey mists and
they will deliver me
to the silent places,
where all my being is folded
into a lonely raven's croak.
My passing?
Only the sound of shoes on stone.

Long days alone,
and long days shared
with others.
Days when we have watched
the summer crowds
return to valley, car and pub,
yet we have stayed,
intent on further hills
now washed in golden
evening light
and the silence
of trails abandoned
to those who do not
plan their route
to close when the day
begins to fade.

For we are runners in
the wild places.
Our steps weave the seam
where fells meet sky.
Our senses tuned to
the outline of distant hills.

We weave a passage
through untracked hills
We seek to leave no trace,
yet these journeys
mark us with
deep-etched memories
of friends and fellow travellers.

Rain, winters,
first light on dark hills,
the satisfaction of
a map close-followed
to open, lonely summits
or the secure folds
of tarn and valley.

We have learned the lessons
that these hills can teach
of humility, lasting pain,
loss and self-doubt.

We have gone beyond
the need to value our days
in terms of conquest.

For each of us
will remember our traceless days
with a deep and subtle pride.
Yet this pride is but a small thing,
when measured against
the freedom of the wild
and the company of hills.

WORDS & PICTURE LIZ KILLEAN

THE BILLY BLAND CHALLENGE

Anticlockwise - Wasdale to Dunmail Raise

Sometimes, when doing mundane things, I find myself daydreaming of the hills.

Here are some 'sponge-cake memories' of The Billy Bland Challenge

Beating the butter and sugar, my legs are working hard, moving away from Wasdale and straight up to Scafell, over rough ground and scree.

Things come together in the bowl, pale and fluffy, as we reach the top. Crack the first of 4 eggs and we're heading for Scafell Pike, sweeping round by Foxes Tarn, scrambling along the rocky stream, whisking in the second egg, before the climb past Broad Stand and onto Scafell Pike.

Weave our way through summiteers and picnickers then onto Broad Crag. Careful here; adding third egg and don't want things to curdle. Pick our way over tricky terrain and back again; whisk the third egg in with a sprinkle of flour. Better safe than sorry.

Almost in the passing, pop onto Ill Crag, then enjoy a cushioned run to Great End. Grab a glimpse of that view and whisk in egg number 4, before loping down to Esk Pike and onto Bowfell.

Tricky here, eggshell in the mix needs flicked out, tread carefully till clear of the summit then head for Rossett Pike. Add the lemon zest and contemplate a cool dip in Angle Tarn.

Pit stop at Rossett Pike; onto Pike of Stickle and Harrison Stickle then wave 'The Langdale Pikes' farewell while heading for Thunacar Knott.

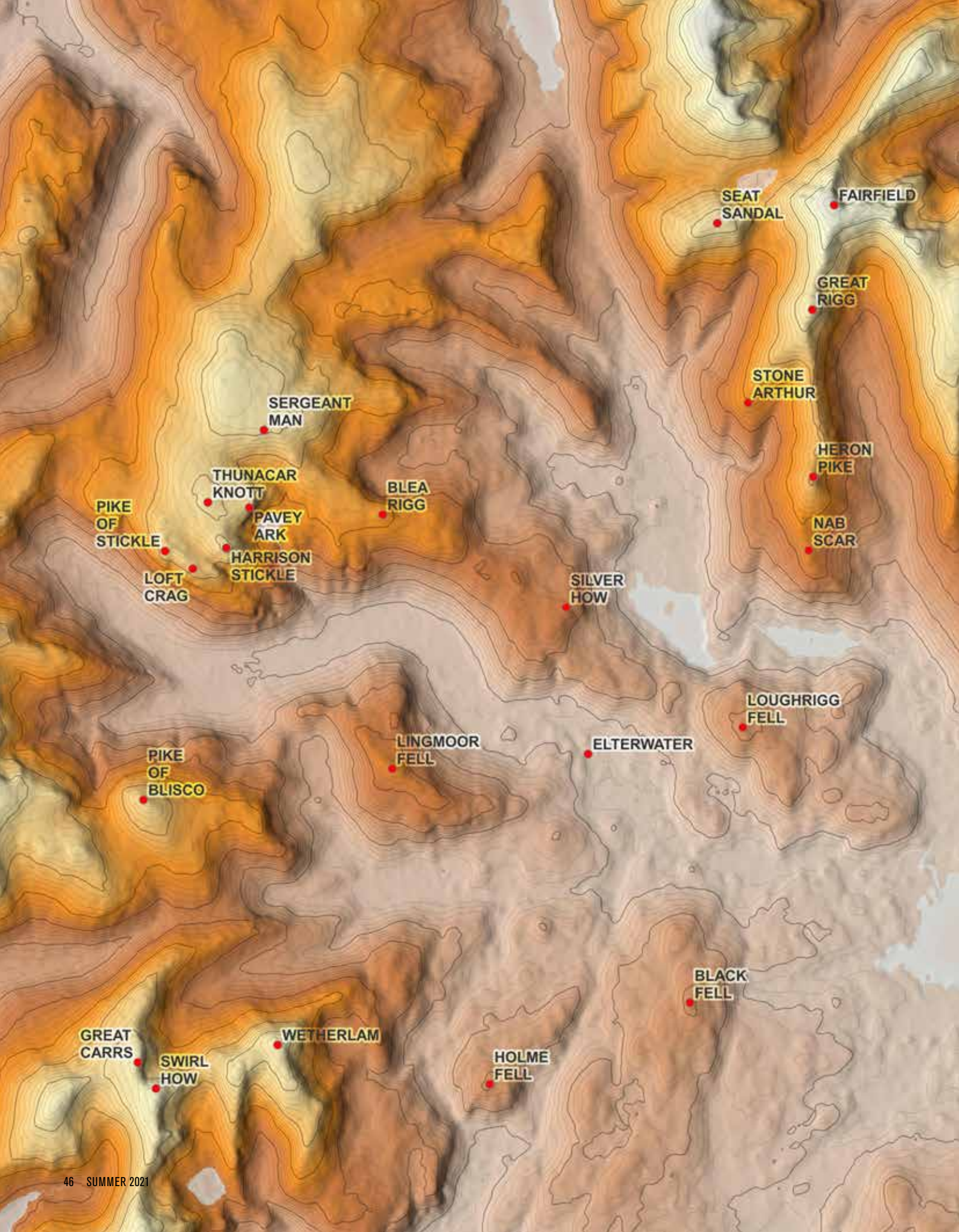
Say 'Hello' to Sergeant Man before taking the slight climb to High Raise and the pleasant run from there to Calf Crag. Remember to look out for the crossing point on Mere Beck and to add the dash of vanilla.

Rolling on from Calf Crag to the top of Steel Fell, add a splash of milk, before flowing down towards the changeover point at Dunmail Raise, though the staccato shaking of the flour through the sieve is more like the descent, especially on tired legs. A bit here, a bit there, steady, stop, start... but gets there in the end.

Mix together, while leaping around at the changeover; pass the baton and wave the next lot off.

Place cake in the oven.

Smile.



WORDS ADRIAN THOMAS,
ELTERWATER YOUTH HOSTEL

TWENTY THREE *before* TEA



What started out as one of those ideas in the pub after a few pints has morphed into a new challenge for runners in the Lakes. We were back in Elterwater after too long away from the fells, sitting in the Britannia with a pint of Bluebird, and talking about Paul Tierney's record-breaking run around the Wainwrights (which the Hostel had supported). It seemed such an incredible feat, somehow both out of reach for mere mortals, and something to be emulated – what an adventure!

Poring over a map of Paul's route thinking about the best routes between peaks, an idea began to emerge. How many could we do? Certainly not all 200-plus Wainwrights, but there were 23 that seemed within reach of the Elterwater, whatever "within reach" meant.

There were other peaks, even bigger peaks, further away, but something about these 23 seemed enticing – all within an entirely arbitrary rectangle on the map, they showcased some of our favourites, and linking them up presented exactly the antidote to our awe for Paul's superhuman effort. A challenge to be sure, but one that at least felt possible.

Would it be possible though, to link them all together, run over all of them and get back to the hostel in a day? 23 before tea?

So, a few weeks later, ill-trained and not sure of the best route, we tried it. Unfortunately, we were defeated by the sheer amount of ascent and descent, a gammy ankle, and frankly the fact that we weren't fit enough. To link all those 23 required doing valley-floor to top-of-Wainwright at least four times. Still, we pressed on, ankle

Opposite page: The 23 summits on Little Dave's *23 before Tea* round, map designed by Andy Ford © Crown copyright 2021 Ordnance Survey. Media licence 053/21 © Otter Maps www.ottermaps.co.uk; Images above: James 'Pup' Harris and Little Dave at the start, and Little Dave on the fells

and all, managing 14 peaks and getting back to the Hostel just within the 12-hour mark; 14 peaks and home for tea felt like a pretty good achievement, all told.

By the power of social media, the attempt had acquired a name “23 before Tea”, and a couple of other (better) runners were making noises about giving it a go. Up stepped ‘Little’ Dave Cumins who’d heard about it from a friend of ours, Eileen. Little Dave says: “I kept in touch with Eileen mainly because she owed me a pint of Old Peculier that had been promised but not produced at the Swinside Inn as I ran past on a BG support. Somehow, I seemed to blag that I know a lot about the Lakes and have a good knowledge of the mountains, and I got talked into having another look at the map.”

The name had a nice ring to it, but since there were, as yet, no clear rules, Little Dave made some slight alterations to the route that we’d tried at first:

“ I didn’t realise at first that the 23 was open to discussion, so now I came up with a list of 23 that are all in the Elterwater catchment, it’s got some classic fell race lines, and follows Tierney’s route for a lot of it. I think following Paul’s route is important, for it all started as a celebration of what Paul achieved.”

In true fell running tradition Little Dave was “cagey” and kept details quiet, but we knew the route had 23 Wainwrights, centered around Elterwater, and was just short of 40 miles with about 15,000ft elevation. A date was set to test the route in April 2020, but then along came lockdown, and it wasn’t until September that Little Dave, with James ‘Pup’ Harris, was able to try it out.

This was meant to be Little Dave’s 50th birthday celebration with lots of friends, but the “rule of six” meant that only a handful of supporters could be involved: Rachel Platt, Sandra Williams, Simon Franklin, Carol Morgan and Victoria Miller.

Little Dave says: “I was happy with about 85% of the route and I was working on the other 15%. Conversations with Paul Tierney regarding some of his routing and a couple of recces meant I learnt exactly what routes not to take thanks to forestry work and bracken. I sent the route to a couple of trusted friends for their perusal and comment. It was becoming a reality, but could I do it in 12 hours?”

Little Dave and James set off from the hostel at 6am on Tuesday September 15, a day of almost perfect, maybe just too warm, weather. Says Little Dave: “Pup Harris and I have a long history of fell running together. For years we were inseparable on the fells, many folk thought that I was his uncle. We have completed many challenges and races together, spent hours on the fells and probably as many hours in Pup’s kitchen drinking and talking about fells and running. Pup is also the most enthusiastic, motivated and smiling person I have ever met. He is the best morale booster and an essential item of kit for a fell adventure.”

Rachel and Sandra drove round to the support points to provide supplies; Simon joined the runners on the fells for one leg; and Victoria ran the last section with them over Loughrigg, and Eileen turned up at the end with the pint of Old Peculier – at last.

They were back in time for a rather late cup of tea, taking 14 hours 50 minutes. Little Dave commented: “I’m not the fastest of runners, and I didn’t have the distance, or the climbing, in my legs after a six-month lay-off from the mountains (he lives near Brighton). I think it would be possible to create two shorter runs in the future, sort of two slices of the cake, for those wanting a shorter day out, but I was a bit obsessed with the whole original 23 before tea concept. I reckon decent Lakes runners could do it in eight hours.”

So, there’s the challenge – *runners who want to have a go, and claim a cup of tea and a piece of flapjack at the end, should log in at the waterproof notebook by our front door, and clock their time on return. Don’t forget to tag @ElterwaterHostel and #elterwater23beforetea.*

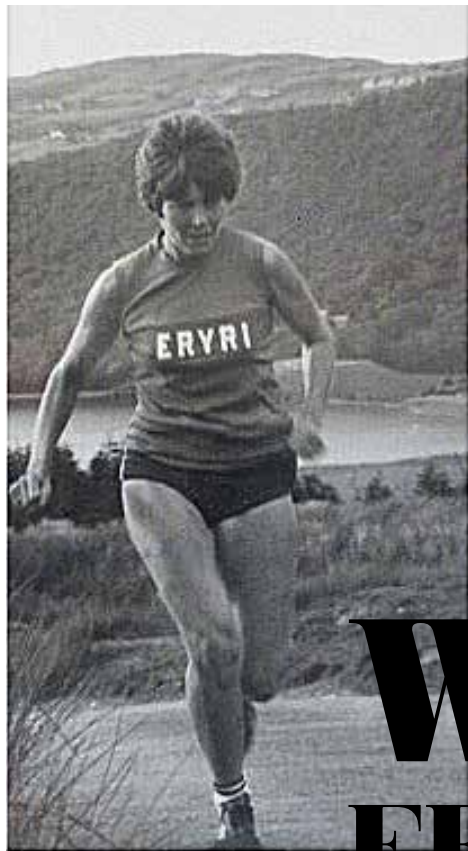
If you email a copy of your Garmin / Strava details, we’ll add you to a hall of fame which we’ll add on to our website. The first to break Little Dave’s time of 14hrs 50mins will earn a 2-night stay for two at the Hostel, and we’ll throw in a couple of beers too – you’ll deserve them!

Why not stay with us for your attempt? We’ve got the closest showers to the finish line.

www.elterwaterhostel.co.uk



Opposite page top to bottom: James ‘Pup’ Harris and Little Dave descending Seat Sandal; Little Dave on the descent to Rydal ©Little Dave



WOMEN, FELL RUNNING & THE WELSH 1000M PEAKS RACE

Snowdonia is home to some of the country's most stunning and challenging mountainous landscapes. For 50 years, the Welsh 1000m Peaks Race has carved a line from the sea at Aber to the summit of Yr Wyddfa/ Snowdon, climbing 2800m over its 32km.

After being postponed in 2020, this year's race is to take place on 17 July. This year, the race will have an added significance, with race organiser Harvey Lloyd hanging up his boots after 37 years of organising the event. This article is an extended version of one in the booklet 'O'r môr i gopa'r Wyddfa: 50 o flynyddoedd o Ras

Copaon 1000m Cymru/ From Sea to Snowdon's Summit: 50 years of the Welsh 1000m Peaks Race', which celebrates the 50 years of the race and Harvey Lloyd's contribution published on <http://www.welsh1000m.org>

In most races now, women run the same distances as men. In the early days of fell running, there was a wide disparity between the value of prizes for men and women, such as – memorably – in the late 1980s, a knitted jumper for the first female, compared with a mountain bike for the first male. Another instance was six bottles

of whisky for the first female and 36 bottles of whisky for the first male. Both received decanters. The 2nd woman was awarded nothing until the female winner gave her one of her prize bottles.

Against this backdrop, and in response to demand after the first Welsh 1000m Peaks event, in 1971 the short course was created for 'lady mountaineers' and 'junior mountaineers' as Class C starting in the Ogwen Valley. This course was about 40% of the distance of the long course, at that time for men only, and 50% of the climb. In 1972, the short course Class D was created specifically for Women Mountaineers, Junior Mountaineers retaining Class C. Over the next few decades, several pioneering women would help shape the event and make history over these iconic ridges.

Joan Glass was living in Llanberis in 1973. She wasn't a runner but was used to walking with a rucksack. She was attracted to the race and was amazed when she won the second and third events in 1973 and 1974. Joan entered 10 races (1973-1983, only missing '82). From 1973 -1977, running the Lady Mountaineer Course, she recorded three wins and one 2nd. In the first Ladies' Fell Race from Ogwen in 1978, Joan was 1st, winning again in 1979; 2nd in 1980; 5th in 1981; and 4th in 1983. Her PB in 1979 was 1:56:43. A hip replacement in 1984 interrupted the flow.

Joan is a female fell running pioneer. In the Snowdon Race, which first took place in 1976, Joan came 1st in 1977, 1978 and 1979. This record hat-trick stood for more than 25 years. Further afield, her first entry to the Ben Nevis Race was returned as it was a 'men only' race. A reluctant committee agreed to her entry in 1975 but required her to start one minute behind the field. Her endeavours were recognised by the Guinness Book of Records twice: firstly, in 1977 for her performance in the 1975 race when she was the only lady; having missed the 1976 race due to injury, the second appearance, in the 1979 edition, was for her ladies' record of 2:07:00 in the 1977 race. Joan and a few other women entered annually from 1977 until they were officially accepted in 1980. Joan now reflects, "Records are made to be broken! And mine didn't last long but it's always good to have a go."

In 1980 the first London marathon for women was held and proved that women could complete a full marathon. At the time, there wasn't even a women's marathon in the Olympics. Two hundred women from 15 countries took to the half-closed streets of London. This success led to the inclusion of a women's marathon in the 1984 Olympics.

Joan recounts, "I entered that. I nearly died. I went down to London, to the pasta party the night before with a lot of lean looking runners, and I thought, 'What am I doing here?' It was brilliant." Her time was 3:20.

John Disley and Chris Brasher were there, watching. Next year, in their first London Marathon, women entered on the same terms as men. Joan's time was 3:15.

Gorphwysfa Club women took part in the Welsh 1000m Peaks' long mountaineers' Class B for many years.

Anne Davis, early in 1977, enquired about entry to the long course from Aber (Class B) and "was surprised by the dismissive refusal to contemplate a woman doing this". However, she entered using her initials. At the start, with her hood up in the rain, she looked much like the others. Her disguise was blown by a squaddie marshal on Carnedd Llewellyn saying to her back view, "Ere, that's a woman innit?" Anne had no trouble with the navigation and finished on Snowdon in 43rd place in 7:50:36. Following a report to the organisers of this achievement, the B Class was opened to women in 1978.

Inspired by Anne, her sister Nicola competed in the B class in 1978, with three other Gorphwysfa Club members: Kate Williams, Gilliane Sills and Helen Middleton. Nicola was 31st in 7:05:40. Christine Middleton, who completed the Class B course eight times between 1981 and 1992, remembers, "It was a lot of fun and gave a real sense of achievement."

Only in 1988, 11 years after Anne's trailblazing achievement, were women competitors in the 1000m race acknowledged in the results and awarded prizes at the presentation. In the next 11 years, Gorphwysfa Club women were winners six times, first LV40 four times and first LV50 twice.

Eryri Harriers women have taken part in many of the fell classes since the 1970's.

In 1988, the long fell course from Aber was officially opened to women as Class F. Class A was still men only. It wasn't until 1991 that the long fell race became Class A for men and women, and so it remains 30 years later. Thus, it took three years for women to be fully recognised in Class A.

Stel Farrar in 1989 was 1st woman and 7th overall in 5:03:12. She summed up her feelings for the race, "I love this race. To be honest, it is a brilliant race from the bus journey to the start to chatting on the way down from Snowdon." Menna Angharad set an LV40 record with her 1998 result: 1st woman and 5th overall in 4:35:47.

Eryri held the short fell class records for LV40 in 2003, LV50 and LV60 in 2010. In 2011, with the new course, there was a hat-trick of records with Libby Peter LV40, Maggie Oliver LV60 and Ellie Salisbury LV50. Ellie added, "I think it is brilliant and I want it to survive as a grass-roots race. It is really, really held in high regard".

Angela Mudge – Scottish, British and International Champion entered the race in 1999, when it was a British Championship race. She won the Class A event in a time of 4:02:39, a record which stood until the course changed in 2011, when Glyder Fawr was included. This was one of a series of high-profile wins for her, including the Scottish Hill Running Championships in 1997, 1998 and 2006 and the British Fell Running Championships five times in total: 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2008. Angela has great memories and thinks the 1000m Peaks is a wonderful event.

However, the recce of the route, with notable fell runner Mark Rigby, was even more memorable than the race itself. Angela had arranged the accommodation for the night before the run. The next day, they ran the whole course. While in Llanberis, it emerged that Mark had not booked a lift back to their car in Aber as agreed. An unexpected run almost all the way back made it an especially long day!

Andrea Rowlands (Roberts) joined Eryri Harriers in 2006 and then ran the long fell Class A 11 times in 13 years, from 2007 to 2019. She says, “I always liked the long ones from the start. I plod in my own time.”

Her outstanding results include first woman nine times, with 4:38:34 being her fastest time. She reflects, “It genuinely is my favourite race, along with our club race, the Peris. I really like the finish on Snowdon... The organisation of everything is really good.” In 2019, she was 1st FV40 and 2nd to Tessa Strain, Hunters Bog Trotters, who was 1st in 4:33:28, a new course record.

Maggie Oliver started running at 50. In the short fell class, she won FV50 in 2002 and, since 2010, the FV60 and FV70 records. In Class A, she achieved the FV50 record in 2006 and the FV60 record in 2008. Maggie sums up, “It is something to look forward to every year. The organisers and marshals are wonderful – so encouraging.”

Thanks to pioneers like Joan Glass and Anne Davis, the Welsh 1000m Peaks Race is now well-established as an iconic event in which women regularly excel. As Andrea Rowlands comments 48 years on, “I am just competitive with myself. If you’ve done your best and you enjoyed it, that’s what it is about.”

The final word goes to Harvey Lloyd as he looks back on 50 years of the race: “In the early days of the 1000m race, women were learning about the sport and muscled into fell running. Now there is no way this is the case as they are leading the sport. For example, in ultra-races with Jasmin Paris in 2019 being the first female to win the Montane Spine Race outright, decimating the record by twelve hours, and on 16 June 2021 Sabrina Verjee becoming the fastest athlete, male or female, to complete the 214 Wainwright peaks in the Lake District, beating the previous record by a blistering six hours. This is wonderful to behold.”



Top photo: Ellie Salisbury climbing Gribin Ridge; Below photo: Andrea Rowlands, racing in 2007

Welsh 1000m Peaks Race: <http://www.welsh1000m.org>

With many thanks to all the women fell runners who shared their stories with me and to others who contributed to this article.

THE NORTH WALES COAST

ADVENTURES CLOSE TO HOME

As a runner and climber who regards an Alpine fix every summer as a human right, ‘staycations’ don’t come naturally. My favoured destination for a blast of the exotic without leaving this island is generally the North-West Highlands of Scotland. But in the darkest post-Covid days, of course, even that became impossible for those of us in England and Wales.

Instead, lockdown forced us all to look at the familiar with fresh eyes, so – in common with every fell runner in Britain – it soon became a matter of rediscovering old paths and rejoicing in the micro-changes that mark the changing of the seasons in our local hills. For me, those local hills are the wonderful mountains of North Wales, so it could have been considerably worse.

This summer, I suspect a lot of fell runners will find themselves heading for staycation family holidays in the North Wales coastal resorts of Conwy, Llandudno, and Colwyn Bay. The good news is that just a few miles inland from the creature comforts those towns offer, you find yourself in the heart of the Carneddau and some of the best mountain running in Britain. In fact, you don't even need to drive for your fix: the Great Orme and Conwy Mountain offer as much uphill fun as you might require before refuelling on ice cream and fish and chips.

From the West Shore in Llandudno, try the steep zigzags up towards Maes y Facrell. From here, numerous paths lead to the trig at the top of the Orme, a 'Marilyn' with wonderful views over northern Snowdonia. From the trig, a loop round the top of the Orme via Ffynnon Rufeinig ('Roman Well', although presumably not actually Roman) will take you back to the west side of the Orme. There are few (if any) places in Britain that offer such wonderfully wild locations right next to branches of Starbucks, KFC and the like. Indeed, for the adventurous, certain parts of the Orme – often those below the Marine Drive – feel as if they are miles from anywhere, with razorbills, guillemots and seals taking the place of people. There are some big drops, serious limestone cliffs and very narrow paths though, so take care if venturing downwards without prior knowledge.

From the West Shore, there are uninterrupted views across the mouth of the Conwy Estuary towards Conwy Mountain (Mynydd y Dref in Welsh), Tal y Fan, and up to higher peaks like Foel Fras. From the centre of the lovely walled town of Conwy, it takes a matter of minutes to get up onto the delightful paths that lead to the summit of Conwy Mountain, a fabulous viewpoint poised above the blue (or grey) waters of the Irish Sea. For additional punishment, you could try the route of the still fairly young Conwy Mountain Race, maximising the climbing on this little hill by plunging repeatedly down to sea level – or near enough.

Many visiting fell runners to the area will already have raced in those coastal hills. Races in the area include Penmaenmawr, arguably the oldest fell race in Wales and one that many English runners will have done. A little less well-known is the Tal y Fan race associated with the Rowen Show (Rowen is one of the prettiest villages in Wales, just a few miles inland from Conwy) and the Gladstone 9 from Dwygyfylchi, which starts virtually on the coast, a minute or two from the A55 Expressway. All of these races use the ancient tracks that characterise the northern Carneddau to negotiate a variety of routes over and/or round the 2000ft peak of Tal y Fan, which is a very obvious objective when seen on the approach to Conwy Castle (look above the castle and you'll see it). From the top of the Sychnant Pass, there are dozens of options, but heading directly south on any of the broad tracks will quickly whisk runners into some magical terrain.

This is a special landscape, and was recognised as such by our prehistoric ancestors, who peppered the hills with stone circles, standing stones and burial chambers. Incorporating some of these into a mountain run will provide a memorable blend of culture and landscape. Try aiming for Bwlch y Ddaefaen, pass of the two stones, for example: here you will find the eponymous obelisks, which seem warm to the touch. More obscure is the Neolithic burial chamber of Maen y Bardd, the Poet's Stone, its impressive bulk resting on four standing stones.

From here, you could easily take on the route of the unheralded classic Foel Fras race, which leaves Abergwyngregyn (an excellent starting point with plenty of free parking if you slip into the spaces directly south of the A55) and takes the horribly steep tarmac above the Afon Anafon to gain the long, long track that climbs gradually up to the summit of Drum. From here, the world is your oyster, but to stick to the race route you must follow the fence and wall to the top of Foel Fras (the most northerly 3000ft hill in Wales) before looping round via Garnedd Uchaf (Carnedd Gwenllian) to the small hill of Moel Wnion (which hosts a well-known fell race in its own right, albeit one that has changed its route numerous times over the years).

There's plenty of longer stuff to go at too. It's perfectly possible to get up to lonely hills like Drum and Foel Fras from the coast, and for runners a 25k loop up to the range's highpoint at Carnedd Llewellyn is entirely feasible. If you do this, it is best to take the route of the famous Welsh 1000m Peaks Race route (one of the classic Welsh 'longs', which heads north to south over the Carneddau on its journey from the coast to the summit of Snowdon) into Cwm yr Afon Goch then double round via the lovely summit of Yr Elen then the ancient tracks above Bethesda that curve gently north-eastwards back to your starting point at Abergwyngregyn. This is a notoriously tricky area in the clag, however, so make sure your navigation is up to scratch.

If you are staying on the coast, you might try to arrange to be dropped off in Capel Curig. This allows for one of my favourite runs – up to Carnedd Llewellyn via Bwlch Eryl Farchog, a famous crossing point between Ogwen and the Conwy Valley. From the 1064m summit of Llewellyn, anything is possible, but the obvious route is north across the high spine of the Carneddau, crossing Foel Grach, Foel Fras and Drum before dropping down to Conwy, perhaps via the summit of Tal y Fan if you're feeling frisky.

Still more ambitious is the 'sea to sea' from Porthmadog back to Conwy. This adds the Moelwyns to the Carneddau route described in the previous paragraph, and is around 67km with almost 4000m of climbing over 25 peaks. I conceived this route as a far easier alternative to the Paddy Buckley, and finally ran it in the summer of 2019 with Peter Agnew. It has several advantages (apart from



the obvious fact that it's a lot easier): first, it is linear and so hard to drop out; second, you can buy provisions half way in Capel Curig; third, it is nicely logical and aesthetically pleasing; fourth, it finishes at the jetty in Conwy, so you can immediately retire to The Albion, one of the best pubs in North Wales and a must for any self-respecting fell runner to refuel in.

Finally, if you do find yourself in Llandudno or Conwy this summer, make sure you take a trip down the Conwy valley itself. One of Wales's most beautiful areas, within minutes of the coastal resorts you can be heading up onto the eastern side of the Carneddau. This is hugely varied, ranging from the very popular Llyn Crafnant above Trefriw to wonderfully wild Llyn Eigiau. There's a bothy up here too, but as it is the only proper bothy in Snowdonia I won't say exactly where it is (find out for yourself) as it can be a little crowded.

You can avoid all the crowds and parking problems by taking on the route of the Trefriw Mill race, which leaves the village to head up to Creigiau Gleision, which has fabulous views over the rest of the range but also a tendency to boggiess. Then curve round the ridge to the little summit of Crimpiau, and head back via Llyn Geirionydd. If I can indulge in a little self-promotion, my short book 'Fell Running in Wales' might help further and should be available in most of the area's bookshops.

The North Wales coastal resorts of Llandudno, Conwy and Colwyn Bay have a lot going for them as runners' bases. There's

an unsurprising pattern to much North Wales tourism, in the sense that traditional coastal holidaymakers stay in the myriad accommodation options available in those towns, occasionally venturing inland to honeypots like Snowdon or Llechwedd – while more adventurous types head straight to Snowdonia.

But there is a compromise option, which is well worth considering for keen fell runners with families. Take advantage of the cheaper and more plentiful accommodation by the seaside and then head that little, tiny distance inland each day to indulge yourselves in the various corners of the Carneddau outlined above. For many years, when my children were younger and agreeable to coming on holiday with us, I feel I perfected this model, as we visited Scotland every Whit. It was a satisfying but exhausting routine. Up at the crack of dawn, run across as many Munros or Corbetts as possible, and get back to the holiday cottage just as the kids are beginning to get bored after breakfast. Then comes the standard family day out, before the evening entertainment.

Eventually, as all those of a certain age will know, the offspring rebel and refuse to come any more. But it's good while it lasts.

Towards the end of my attempts to perfect this model, we were staying on the Ardnamurchan peninsula, one of the most remote corners of the Western Highlands. My children were old enough by then to demand a long lie-in, so I headed off to Beinn Resipol for my early morning run. Half a mile in front were two tiny figures. Normally, in these circumstances, runners expect to catch anybody we see in front on the hills. But could I do it? They just stayed the same distance away until I met them on the summit. Two men in shorts and fell shoes, my own age, on a fabulous Scottish hill at an ungodly hour in the morning, who themselves had pioneered exactly the same model to ensure harmonious family holidays.

The problem I always found with the system was that I had a tendency to fall asleep, glass in hand, by around 9.30pm – thus incurring the wrath of other family members.

For all the fell runners holidaying on the North Wales coast this year, however, that will not be an issue because entertainment options and good independent pubs abound. The Albion in Conwy is undoubtedly the best of the bunch, and has already been mentioned, but you could also try the Cottage Loaf in Llandudno and the Erskine Arms in Conwy. They tend to lack some of the atmosphere associated with the classic Snowdonian pubs inland which many fell runners will know, like the Bryn Tyrch, the Pen y Gwryd or the Vaynol – but take a beer flight and sit in front of the fire in the Albion after a run over the high peaks of the Carneddau, and your staycation will be complete.

WORDS RICHARD BEST

DARTMOOR FELL RUNNING

AN INTRODUCTION TO FELL RUNNING IN DARTMOOR AND THE 10 RACES MAKING UP THE DARTMOOR FELL RACE SERIES.



It may be a bit of a surprise to those '...up North' that there is a really active fell and trail community in the southwest and on Dartmoor in particular. 'But it's only Dartmoor – they do not have proper hills.' Well, true, it does not boast some of the fine ridges and escarpments of the Lakes or Snowdonia. But it does have some really fine and challenging running, with 52 tors over 500m and a select few above 600m. It has some great routes and challenging terrain. The crossing from High Willhays (Dartmoor's highest point) to Kitty Tor drops 1000ft and rises 1000ft from the West Okement river in

just one mile. It is also one of the remotest places in England, so you can run 'far from the madding crowd'.

So, here are some things you may not know about Dartmoor. At 368 square miles it is roughly the size of London, the vast majority being open moorland; two large blocks of land to the north and south are split by two B roads roughly across the middle - so some great intact space. It has great access all year round (just check live firing on the north moor – but most weekends are fine) and permits wild camping. It is almost entirely a granite magma with

Above: Adam Holland at the Burrator race © Plymouth Sports Gazette



Jo Meek on her way to winning the Great Links Tor Flyer © James Armstrong

hill top rock formations known as tors with plenty of peat bogs, grass tussocks and heather fed by a prodigious rain supply (but not as much as Seathwaite!). It is home to an extensive array of Neolithic monuments and mining heritage - in fact it has the world's longest stone row at Stallmoor of 3.4km. It also has the UK's largest slug at 20cm and, of course, not to mention free roaming ponies! Being very close to Exmoor, Bodmin Moor and the Quantocks it also offers many possibilities for fell runners.

The fell running scene on Dartmoor, like most areas, is a combination of a few very active clubs (principally Tavistock AC / Run Venture Runners and Okehampton Running Club); some well-run local commercial event organisers like Wild Running and Puretrail; plus some great independent races at village events. Some of the best are '2 hills race' from Chagford village - short and steep with great fair atmosphere and the 'Sticklepath Horseshoe' which is a really great moorland horseshoe in the truest sense - taking in Belstone, Oke Tor, Steeperton and Cosdon Beacon – hopefully back on the race calendar in 2022.

Dartmoor also boasts some serious 'rounds'; the Dartmoor 600s start and finish at Lydford and cover the 4 highest points in your own order: Cut Hill; Hangingstone Hill; Yes Tor and High Willhays - distances vary from 25k to 33k depending on navigation skills and ambition with terrain - with the current record set by John Yells (local runner) at 2hr 25 mins. There is also a Dartmoor 500s setting off from the Warren House Inn near Moretonhampstead - a tough endeavour at 102 km and 3400m of climb covering the 52 tors over 500m. The record, held by Jamie Stevenson of 15 hrs 56 min, is a few years old now. The round which grabbed most media attention this year is the challenging Nigel Jenkins Dartmoor Round

covering the perimeter of Dartmoor via the best tors at approx. 126 km and 4000m of climb – worth looking up as the record changed hands 4 times this year – twice on the same day! Big mention to Jo Meek's ladies' record at 14hrs 39min and Patrick Devine-Wright for a stunning 12hrs 40mins on 6 Sept 2020.

SO HOW DID THE SERIES COME ABOUT?

A couple of the races on Dartmoor have a long standing history such as Haytor Heller, now in its 35th year, and the Burrator Horseshoe, now in its 23rd year. The growing success of introducing juniors at Tavistock AC / Run Venture events in 2018 and 2019 prompted the discussion of 'can we give them something to aim for?'

During lockdown a few of us plotted to bring together the 10 best races that would possibly run this summer. It was a delight to host and steer the group - Colin Kirk Potter (Run Venture and a huge supporter of all things Fell and Trail running locally); Andy Houghton (Tavy Runners); Hugh Robinson (Okehampton RC); Eleanor Taylor (Teignbridge Trotters); James Armstrong (Tavistock AC) and Ceri Rees (Wild Running) all with brilliant input. A few simple principles were agreed to create a collective series which encourages participation in this terrific sport. The courses must be great - it is what people come for. Races still the responsibility of each club and race director in all respects. Encourage a low cost approach to make accessible. Encourage some consistency with young age group races and simple series scoring with best 7/10 to count.

SO HERE IT IS, 10 GREAT RACES IN THEIR OWN RIGHT:

1 MARILYN'S MELDON MADNESS

Named after a club stalwart by Okehampton RC, the Marilyn's Meldon Madness starts from the Meldon reservoir on June 12th. It is pretty much straight up to Yes Tor then across to High Willhays (the two tallest summits on Dartmoor), a fast but lumpy descent to Black Tor, then quick onto even faster trod/track to finish. 5 miles and 360m of climb - great atmosphere and cake!

2 SUMMER SOLSTICE

Summer Solstice on June 23rd is an evening race by Andy Houghton, RO, and is one of three races starting from Merrivale. There is a shock of an uphill start from the quarry to Staple Tors, then a nice ridge run to Roos Tor and beyond. Next, the ascent to White Tor, then a super-fast descent down grassy/mossy moguls makes this really fun – before reality hits that all that needs to be gained again to get back to Staple and a short descent to finish. Lovely welcoming pub green at the Dartmoor Inn (watch, there are about 7 Dartmoor Inns) having done 5.5 miles and 327m of climb.

BURRATOR HORSESHOE

Race number 3, the Burrator Horseshoe, is now in its 23rd year. I have been race organiser for this for the last 3 years but a huge thanks to Nigel Jenkins for steering it for the first 20! A hugely popular race normally with the big 'Meavy Oak' village fair (unfortunately not this year). The route takes a nice route to the Burrator Dam then through woods to ascend Sheepstor itself – a nice grassy descent on gentle undulating ground – which always seems more tiring than it should before a short ascent to Gutter Tor and a ridge run across Ringmoor, a short drop down into a traditional dip through the ford and finish on the village green. 6 miles and 306m of climb make this very runnable – course record still held by Mark Croasdale.

COSDON BEACON

Race 4, the Cosdon Beacon race, by Okehampton RC starts from Belstone. A real classic with a steep drop then rise right at the start, it requires some nifty route selection with little to follow apart from sheep trods after the first 1k. Once at the top it's straight back – very runnable but very lumpy. Course record Tim Lenton in 28min 53sec – 3.5 miles and 300m ascent! This year with junior races. There is always a great atmosphere at the finish with a clear view all the way to the summit.

HAYTOR HELLER

Race 5, on July 17th, is the 35th Haytor Heller by Teignbridge Trotters RC. It is the route with the most height gain in the series. A very popular event which starts at foot of Haytor, so straight up along the ridge then drop into the valley behind; a nice track ascent after crossing the stream to Hound Tor. A nice steady descent crossing the stream further down takes on the long haul back to Haytor and a short drop to a very fast finish. Great post race atmosphere. 6 miles and 450m climb.

THE NEOLITH

Race 6 on July 28th is my next RO duty; the Neolith – another evening race out of the delightful Merrivale valley – by Tavistock AC and Run Venture Runners. These evening races are proving a useful format, with juniors completed by 6:30pm and the senior race starting at 6:45pm. The route takes in one of the finest pairs of stone rows on Dartmoor before climbing to Great Mis Tor with epic views (weather permitting). A very runnable fast drop into the Walkham valley before a short rise to run the ridge back to Roos Tor and a very fast run down to the finish line next to Dartmoor Inn. 5 miles and 360m of climb.

YARTOR

Race 7 is only two days later, on the 30th July in the early evening

but this should not be missed. Ceri Rees of Wild Running has resurrected an old route out of Dartmeet. It will take a steep rise up to Sharpe Tor, then follow a winding track across to the top of Yar Tor before a very steep descent back into Dartmeet. One of the shortest routes but still with 235m of climb.

TAVY TRIO OF TORS

Race 8 is the 'Tavy Trio of Tors' on Aug 25th – another evening event from Merrivale – this year with a new route after access discussion with the landowner. The route runs south to Kings Tor (for those with an interest in surroundings – stone from here built the 1825 London Bridge that was eventually sold and rebuilt in the USA) and then a nice short ridge across the back of Swell Tor to the long ascent of North Hessary (unmissable due to the TV mast), a short drop to Hollow Tor then fast running all the way back with one or two spots of bog on the way. Total 5 miles and 270m of climb.

SOURTON

Race 9 is the shortest race of the series and also the steepest. 'Sourton' race on Sep 8th by Okehampton RC is a very steep run from Bearslake Inn straight up the back of Sourton Tor – approx. 2.5 miles and 235m of climb. The top gives you epic views across west and north Devon – well, if you had time to stop – then a nice curving descent that is best handled by those who run with 'brains off brakes off'.

GREAT LINKS TOR FLYER

Race 10 – the 'Great Links Tor Flyer' on Sep 22nd is a suitable end to the series, again another evening event which is also supported by Dartmoor Rescue Group and the Fox and Hounds pub in Bridestowe who lend us half the camping field for the event. Just 5 miles and 375m of climb. It takes an easy inclined track before rising rapidly to Gt Links Tor which commands views westwards. There is a fast flowing descent across heather and some rocks before reaching Brat Tor and a very steep descent to the river and return back to the finish and a small river crossing. There are always smiles at the end of this race!

Well, I hope that has given you a flavour of what is on offer in this Dartmoor series. It is great to see the broader running community working together to build a series which may inspire people to travel to other races even maybe '...up north'.

You may get to some of these events and share the friendliness of our racing community – or you may want to just experience Dartmoor for the great opportunity to navigate changeable terrain; it is certainly a place where you can get away from the crowd. Dartmoor is just brilliant – of course I am biased.

All Out on the Lough Shannagh Horseshoe.

A CLASSIC SHORT (SHORT-LESS) COURSE.



A cold wind swept up from the Spelga reservoir, unseasonably cold for mid-May 2011, and heavy with moisture threatening to spit rain at any moment. Not the best of warm-up conditions as I prepared for the Lough Shannagh Horseshoe, part of the Hill and Dale race series. This series runs from spring through to early summer on Thursday evenings in Northern Ireland’s Mourne Mountains. Eleven races in all, and the Lough Shannagh Horseshoe, for me, is number one. It provides a challenging variety of elements for a short hill running course, allowing me to mesh my competitive instincts with the rugged beauty of the hills.

The cutting wind was nullifying my warm-up efforts, and the green grassy track leading up was trampled brown from numerous other warm-up feet. Mucky puddles threatened to have my feet soaked before the racing had even started.

I jogged back to my van and smugly stripped off my windproof jacket and tracksters in the sheltered interior. After a few more stretches, I headed over to the starting line to join the 200-odd runners, shuffling and huddling like penguins in a Frozen Planet programme. Fortunately, the starting official was not too long-winded in his pre-race instructions – and then suddenly we were off, battling for positions on the track heading up into the brooding hills.

The track was not wide enough for everybody, but I was happy to dodge on and off into the heather, until I found a comfortable speed and position in the upward flow of bodies. The climb levelled off briefly as the track petered out in a swirl of mucky, rocky puddles. I recalled that it was here, in 1989 in my early fell running days, when running the course in the opposite clockwise direction, that I had overtaken the fell running legend Denis Rankin for the first time ever. He was annoyed to be beaten, probably because I was racing in a pair of hiking boots. I wasn’t going to fork out for proper studded hill running shoes until I had decided if fell running was indeed the sport for me. Finances were tight back then.

A boggy, reedy section was next, capable of sucking shoes off and sucking strength from straining muscles. My preferred way through was to keep to the right, to pick up a small stream, but you had to be precise to find the firm running ground. Most runners opted for the left-hand route which was better ground but a bit longer. This time I was successful and was soon on the climb proper to the summit of Carn Mountain, with most of the runners way over to my left.

It was not always like that, though, and on one infamous misty evening in 2007, the lead runners curved over from the left across my traditional route, causing us all subconsciously to veer right. The climb seemed longer than usual, but fortunately the Mourne Wall appeared out of the mist...a ‘handrail’ to the summit. Like lemmings, the whole race, bar a few, followed the wall, and it just kept climbing, and climbing, and climbing. I knew something was wrong, we all did, but nobody could figure it out so we just kept going until we reached the trig point at the top. Big problem, though: Carn Mountain doesn’t have a trig point...but Slieve Muck does...over 100 people racing on the wrong mountain!

Bedlam followed as runners shot off in all directions trying to get back on course. Many a top runner failed to complete the course that evening, but my club mate Paddy Mallon, a sensible mountaineer type, twigged on early and went on to win the race, and Pauline O’ Hara, always near the back of the field, was first lady, having navigated precisely around the course and totally unaware all the other girls had gone AWOL. A double victory for BARF (Belfast Association of Rock Climbers and Fell Runners) because I had misled everybody else, so they said, “Ah yes that’s it, I didn’t get lost, it was a cunning team plan!”

No such problem this evening, though, as I approached the summit and climbed the stile over the Mourne Wall. The wind was blowing hard, chilling my vitals – but not smoke-clad, as it had been on a previous year when a heath fire was burning half the hillside to a blackened stubble. The course now led steeply downhill over rough heather, stones and holes, ground I liked as I could pick up a few places from the more tentative runners. Care had to be exercised, and the memory of the crack of Adrian Philpot’s ankle and his scream still echoed down the years in the back of my mind.

The next section I always enjoy, for the descent levels out onto the shores of Lough Shannagh; a gem of a place hidden from all but those prepared to use leg power to access its secrets. It even has white sandy beaches, and the race crosses those on its southern end before heading into an area of peat hags on the eastern side. Legs could be quickly fatigued on such ground but there are trails through it which enabled me to pick up a few more places, before arriving at the small dam at the lake’s outlet.

In the past we used to run over the dam, but nowadays it’s a leap or a plunge to get past the outlet stream before the climb of conical



Above left: Jim racing ‘short-less’ © Mal McCann; Right: A drawing by Jim’s daughter, Caroline Brown © Jim Brown

Doan Mountain begins. This focal point of the Mourne range is always interesting: initially through long heather and mucky patches of damp ground, steepening rapidly until a vague trail is picked up. The trail becomes more distinct as height is gained but remains unremittingly steep right up to the rocky summit. When the race is in the opposite direction this is great hunting ground for the expert descenders.

On this particular evening, the wind was blowing hard from behind giving a psychological push, and as I approached the final steep slot leading to the summit, it was wolf whistling wildly. The lady marshal gave me a strange look as I staggered past, a confused and perturbed look but I thought nothing of it as I prepared for the short rocky slide off the summit to pick up the trail down the west shoulder.

This is nice, fast ground, gritty underfoot, with flat bulging granite slabs protruding at regular intervals which can be skipped over at speed. There is a little false top which the track initially heads towards, and many a time I have seen runners lose time on it, but the trick is to drop right to pick up the main path. I always enjoy galloping down this section and generally feel pretty good at this stage.

The trail peters out as the ridge levels off into another area of peat hags, but the gritty granite sand can still be followed for a bit,



keeping the speed up as you wind through the eroded mounds of peat. Inevitably it deteriorates into full blown bog, and for a short section you just have to battle through it until the climb of Slieve Loughshannagh commences. In foggy weather, navigation mistakes can be made here. Indeed, the lead runners once added in an extra peak, Meel Beg, by veering too far to the right, and once we had to do a sweep search for a lady who became so confused that she managed a complete circuit of Doan...twice!

Navigation was straightforward this time, but that brief joy of feeling good was now banished by the rough heathery climb, much like the ground of the earlier Carn Mountain descent. It’s not a long climb, it just feels that way at this stage of the race, but the top and the marshals soon appear and are passed. Once again, I was aware of strangeness about the marshal’s demeanour, probably just the hunched, wrapped-up way they were standing. It’s a run for home from here, fast beside the Mourne Wall on slick well-walked grass until you can cross to the other side, then sweep down into another area of peat hags before the final short climb to the minor summit of Ott Mountain. One final charge downhill over lumpy ground gets you to the finish line.

This small innocuous area should present no problem in the race to the finish, but I managed it so badly in the nineties that the Hill and Dale organisers actually produced a special award called ‘The Lost in the Hills Trophy’ specially to highlight/mock my efforts.

My first spectacular failure was in 1994. I came tearing down off Slieve Loughshannagh in the lead, in my element, with a comfortable buffer over second place, into the peat hags, cutting my way rapidly through the swirling mist to reach the climb to Ott Mountain. Pushing hard up the gentle incline I expected to see the final marshal at any second, but the seconds just kept passing and it wasn't until the famous wall loomed out of the mist that the terrible truth dawned. I was back on the slopes of Carn Mountain and had just blown my chances of not just winning the race, but of winning the series itself, as I could not now eliminate a previous poor result.

Exactly a year later found me again racing down off Slieve Loughshannagh, again in misty conditions, again in the lead and determined not to make the same mistake twice. "Don't mess it up this time", shouted a spectating Brian Ervine. And that was that: He had put the scud on me, for I raced through the peat hags, emerging determined to keep to the right, but I went too far right and, by the time I realised, I was heading down the Ott valley, all was lost. Once again humiliation and that dubious trophy, but at least I had enough good results to actually end up as Hills and Dales champion for that season.

To top it all off, I turned up the following year having forgotten my map and compass (you would not be allowed to enter the event now) and was racing in the reverse clockwise direction in pea soup conditions. I had no problems and finished second while many of the laughing pub experts arrived at the finish line much later, humourless, and one of their number ended up with that dubious trophy.

However, here I was on a May evening many years later, in the middle of the field, running steadily and without any problems except the fatigue of age as I struggled up the final short climb to Ott's summit, then raced down over the heather and ruts, edging past a last couple of runners before breasting the finish line.

The cold wind was as strong as ever, so after catching my breath and having a few words with those I had raced against, I cut a rapid bee line back to the car park and the shelter of the van. It was great to be inside rather than huddling at the back of a car, and I quickly pulled on a top and grabbed my tracksters and attempted to pull them on. They were a bit tangled, no doubt due to the hurried manner in which they had been removed, and it was difficult to get them on with cold hands. I struggled for a few seconds before looking down to see what the problem was. The tracksters were tangled but there was something else tangled up in the fabric, something blue – in fact, a pair of shorts. I looked at them for a long moment, trying to figure

out why they were there, and then suddenly I knew! A quick look down confirmed my suspicions, I was sitting in my underpants. In fact, I had just managed to run a complete race in my undies!

Long moments passed as the implications of the situation sank in and I wondered what I should do. I could bluff it out and pretend nothing had happened; but I remembered the many looks from the marshals, the camera man taking photos, and all those runners who had been close behind at various stages, no doubt subconsciously wondering about my strange, flimsy, tight fitting shorts. With a sigh I stood up and tossed the tights to one side and made my way to the finish line. This story was too good to cover up.

"Guess what?" I said to Marty, the race organiser. "I have to confess to not carrying all the requisite kit during this evening's race."

"Oh", he said, obviously confused and amazed that anybody would voluntarily confess to such a crime after the event. "What did you forget?"

I pointed down...he looked...then looked back with an astonished expression. "Cover yourself up man! What are you doing? You can't go about like that."

"I can", I replied. "And I have just run your race travelling extra light."

The laughing started, I tried to explain, more people came over, the story spread, faces turned in my direction and fingers pointed.

Later in the pub the whole story swelled and when they announced the results, there was much humour that my veteran status was bringing on dementia, being "caught short", Superman Y fronts, "check his kit", and such like.

Lough Shannagh Horseshoe is a challenging short course race which encapsulates much of what mountain racing is all about, and my experience of the varied weather conditions over many years necessitates that it should be respected. So always come properly prepared and never follow a bloke wearing a purple vest and very little else into the mist... he might lead you astray!

COULD YOUR OVERTRAINING BE REDEFINED AS OVERLIVING?

WORDS RUTH KEELEY



The idea of overtraining has been on my mind for months, ever since I picked up a foot niggle in early 2020 after upping my mileage during marathon training. My foot still isn't totally right now, well over a year later. I was careful with my plan, did some easy base miles in the run up to it kicking in, and tried not to do too much too soon. Yet I still ended up hurt.

It was an incredibly stressful time. The bite of the first lockdown was just starting to kick in. Running was my main release from the stress of it all and it felt like the only thing we were allowed to do for a while. I tried everything I could think of to remedy the problem, dropping my mileage, reducing the number of hills in my runs, avoiding uneven ground, visiting both a private and NHS physio, as well as a podiatrist. After some good advice and useful treatment, it eventually settled down enough to allow me to get my miles and hills back up to where they were before, despite the marathon having been postponed anyway. However, there is still a niggle that just won't go away and after feeling like I had exhausted the local professional options, it made me consider everything else in my life that might play a contributing role in both getting injured and getting over an injury.

I was incredibly lucky to get to interview George Foster just after his remarkable Bob Graham round in October 2020 for my blog (a link to which is at the end of the article). George, who was working as a teacher at the time, told me how only a matter of months before this unbelievable achievement he had been recovering from stress fractures in his feet which resulted in part through something called Relative Energy Deficit Syndrome (REDS). This is a complex condition brought on through undereating – not consuming the amount of energy required relative to the amount of energy being spent. After conversations with his coach and a dietician, George and the team worked out that REDS was a contributing factor and George successfully managed to bring everything back into balance and complete a fantastic time on his BG.

I came back to this conversation whilst I was pondering my own injury. Could something like this be at play with me? When everything is working properly and I was a few years younger, I was guilty of taking my body for granted, expecting it to perform no matter what I did or thinking too much about the fuel I put into it. I'd never done much strength or conditioning, didn't cross-train, raced incessantly over the summer in all the local fell races, whilst

all the time working full time and dealing with everything else in day-to-day life. Rest days did exist, but are they ever truly given up to rest in non-professional athletes? Or are they just time off work and leisure activities to work through the 'To Do' list?

During the same period, I started chatting to Clare Kent via Instagram. Apart from being an experienced runner and sportswoman, Clare also works for the NHS as a mental health and eating disorders dietitian. I have never suffered with an eating disorder, but the complex interrelation of all aspects of our lives and how this can impact upon training and performance wasn't really something I had considered with much conviction until Clare pointed it out to me. Clare has seen first-hand the impact of lockdown on people's relationship with food, mental health, and exercise. As we come out of lockdown and some aspect of normality is restored, our lives are likely to become busier again, whether it is heading back to the office, attending meetings in person, ferrying kids around their various activities or just the general resumption of out and about socialising. How many of us factor these simple day-to-day activities as stressors that might impact our ability to train effectively?



Ruth gazes across the Espresso Round route © Cathy Ayton

Clare has provided some great insight for people struggling with their training post-lockdown. Clare's words are in italics below, with the occasional interruption from me.

How many times have you stopped to think about your training or your fitness plan in relation to the other competing demands in your life? If you're like us, the chances are you don't, until something starts to feel 'off', and you go looking in search of 'why?'. Most people, most of the time, consider each of their life domains to be in neat little boxes. If I don't do too much overtime, work won't get in the way of family time; if family time still allows space for activity, it won't get in the way of training... right? But what happens when your training starts to feel heavier, harder, more laborious, and when your breathing is dysregulated? When the fatigue is tangible, and the pace is slower, yet you've been training at your usual effort, intensity and number of sessions?

Training intensity is often blamed for the dreaded overtraining fatigue. The too much, too soon. Too much volume, too long in duration or effort, too little recovery and too low fuel can all contribute. However, this isn't always the cause, and the same feelings of overtraining can arise without any notable increase in training intensity. So, why? The answer, and it has never been more pertinent to the times we find ourselves in now, is to do with a concept about 'capacity'. We only have a certain total capacity for everything that we fill our lives with.

Any coach worth their salt will ask you to consider what is realistic for you and your lifestyle when designing a plan; even most decent training books/guides should mention it. Be honest. Be realistic. What are the true demands on your time that will impact your ability to train?

Exercise has long been hailed as a stress reducer and, scientifically speaking, that is well grounded in evidence. However, that only really applies to very low intensities. At exertion, exercise is another stressor. That's no bad thing. The physiology of progressive performance requires a stressor to be placed for the adaptations in strength and performance to be gained – it's the science of how to progress beyond a plateau. But that doesn't stop it from being a stressor. So, add to that, a hard day at work, or rushing around after your children, or mental health stress (from financial uncertainty to strained

relationships and isolation) which can have the same biological impact as a hard training session – and it starts to make sense. We wouldn't expect ourselves to do two hard training sessions in one day and expect not to see an impact.

Towards the end of last year, I experienced exactly this. I was stressed with my day job and having taken on too many extra tasks in my spare time. My relationship was very strained. Good nutrition took a bit of a back seat and not much thought or time was dedicated to planning decent meals at sensible times. It goes without saying that I was feeling low and, add to that the dark and cold months of winter, life just felt hard. Yet I was still trying to train the same as I always had, whilst berating myself for struggling with both motivation and performance.

The concept of 'overtraining' isn't quantifiable. The 'how much is too much' for one person really depends on the total capacity we each have for the total stress load we experience at any one time. Put simply, overtraining can at times be better understood as over-living. At the most basic human level, your body will retreat to survive – downgrading your performance level (or threshold) from the additional threat (or stress) that it perceives when it is feeling overloaded in other areas. Total system fatigue to the point that it stops functioning properly can lead to injuries (including respiratory) which don't improve, irritability, fatigue, loss of motivation and enjoyment, sleep dysregulation, dramatic weight or appetite changes and personality changes. What happens in one area of your life does affect another.

It's so obvious when it's put like this, yet we often find it hard to see when we are struggling with a run or workout and are disappointed with the results. Nicky Spinks told me in an interview we did in 2019 that she finds she can train well and more consistently over winter because life on the farm is a bit quieter; the cattle are inside and easier to manage. In summer, the cattle are out to pasture and need to be checked daily wherever they are grazing, there is hay and silage to be made and working life is generally busier. For Nicky, her training naturally takes more of a back seat to accommodate this change.

So, if this is resonating with you too and you feel that your capacity is reaching its limit – dial it back, despite what your plan might say or what your head wants you to be able to achieve. Make a conscious agreement with yourself to rein in the stressors you can control whilst acknowledging that it doesn't mean a permanent change. At these times prioritise sleep, active recovery, and nutrition. This is merely a temporary shift allowing total fatigue to recover from your other demands. Doing so then regains some capacity, which you can then use in your training efforts.

I whole heartedly agree with Clare. There's a reason that someone like Beth Pascall (current holder of the female Bob Graham record) decided to take a 7-month sabbatical from her work as a hospital paediatrician. Focusing on training and competing at such a high level whilst working day and night shifts in the high-pressured atmosphere of a hospital (and during Covid) are unlikely to be compatible. In Beth's own words on her blog, although not burnt out she found she was getting sick more frequently and wondered what could happen to her sporting performance if she removed the work element from the mix for a while. With the BG record now under her belt and a 1st place finish at the recent Canyons 100k in the US, the gamble seems to be paying off.

When I see people saying they are tired, injured or have lost their mojo and ask how to get it back my response is invariably 'take a break'. If it's not fun any more, something is wrong. Pause, collect your thoughts, rest, try something new for a while, do whatever works for you.

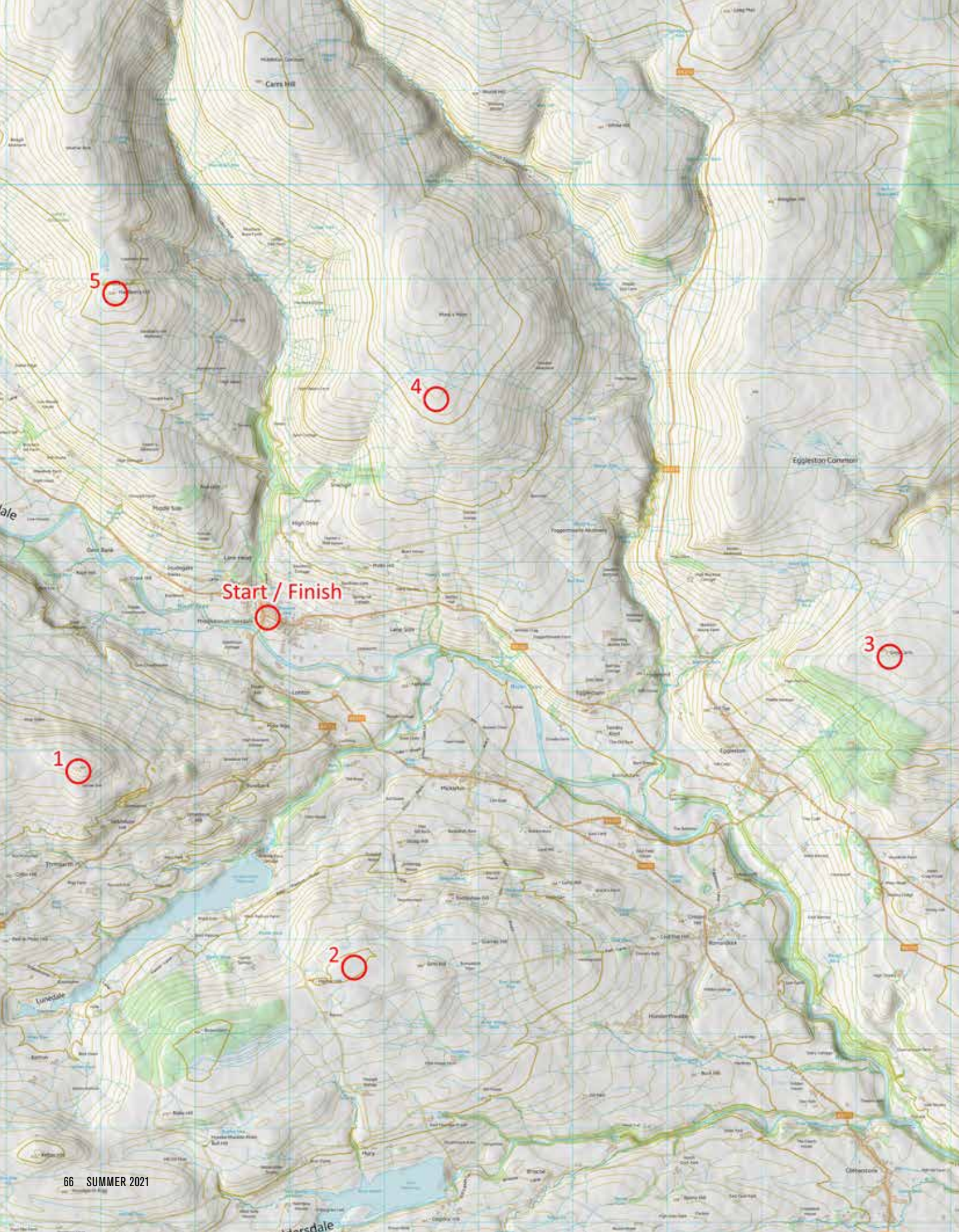
If nothing else, it stops the perpetual cycle of pushing, feeling frustrated and then pushing harder to the same frustrating effect. After all, you can't be fit if you're exhausted.

Thank you to Clare for such a great insight into what is a complex subject.

If you are worried you might be suffering with any of the issues raised in this article, please seek expert medical advice in the first instance.

Follow Ruth at @fellrunlikeagirl on Instagram or her Wordpress blog - <https://fellrunlikeagirl.wordpress.com>

The Beth Pascall blog she refers to can be found here: <https://www.bethpascall.com/blog-posts/2021/5/25/pressing-pause>



WORDS & PICTURES STUART FERGUSON

MIDDLETON-IN-TEESDALE 5 TRIGS

This short, very runnable round that starts and finishes in Middleton-in-Teesdale has a remote, wild feel and showcases the North Pennines, an AONB and UNESCO Global Geopark. The North Pennines are home to a number of established FRA licensed races, namely: High Cup Nick, Cronkley, Chapel Fell Top, Saltwell Harriers, Cross Fell and Hexhamshire Hobble. (Middleton-in-Teesdale is a popular overnight stop on the Pennine Way.)

I devised this anticlockwise circuit of Harter Fell, Romaldkirk Moor, Grey Carrs, Raven Hills and Hardberry Hill triangulation pillars. On a warm and clear 'Covid' day in April I completed, solo and unsupported, the route of 25 miles with 3,250 feet of ascent in 4 hours and 50 minutes. Competent navigation (map and compass) skills are required, utilising OS map OL31. The terrain ranges from good tracks and trods to poor rocky paths and pathless tussocky moorland. I carried water for the duration of the route, as owing to local mining and farming activity I was not sure I could trust the water sources.

The run leaves Middleton-in-Teesdale's ample car park, heading south along the B6276 to join the Pennine Way and follow the path to Harter Fell. Small diversion 1 - Kirkcarrion, a copse of pine trees covering a Bronze Age round barrow, reputed to be the burial place of Prince Caryn. From Harter Fell the route continues on reasonable paths with a few route options past Grassholme Reservoir and up to Romaldkirk Moor. It is worth researching trig point access on bagging sites such as Trigpointing UK: this 'intel' can save you valuable time and energy. Leaving Romaldkirk Moor

trig point you are faced with many options of footpaths through the pretty villages of Romaldkirk and Eggleston; when at Nemour Hill take a bearing to Grey Carrs. Then contour east to Blackton Beck and onto Eggleston Burn to pick up the footpath north-east to Belmont and over the minor road, taking another bearing up to Raven Hills. (Keep an eye open for some rare Alpine plants found in this area such as Lady's Mantle.) Traverse around the south of Monk's Moor to join the minor road for a short while under Pikestone Brow. As the road turns south and begins to climb, take a bearing through the disused mines to the summit of Harter Fell. Small diversion 2 - Coldberry Gutter, thought to be a hush but more recent study suggests it is a geological fault incised by a glacial breach. (Keep an eye open for black grouse here.) There is a cracking downhill run following an old Land Rover track by a wall leading to Club Gill. The last section of the run back to Middleton-in-Teesdale follows paths alongside Hudeshope Beck.

The route is mostly on CRoW (Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000) open access land, but please check any local or seasonal restrictions. No MOD land is accessed on this route.

In normal times, après run may have been a visit to the excellent chippy or one of the cafés or pubs in this market town, but not today. I open a can of pop and I have some sarnies left, so on with my 20-minute drive home, 6 Music on the radio and a huge grin on my face. I didn't pass a soul all day on the hills, a fine day's adventure, fell running at its best.

For other challenges I have completed in this area, take a look at Tony Wimbush's excellent 'Go Far' website.

Previous page: Map of the Middleton-in-Teesdale 5 Trigs route visiting the Harter Fell, Romaldkirk Moor, Grey Carrs, Raven Hills and Hardberry Hill triangulation pillars ©Crown copyright 2021 Ordnance Survey. Media licence 053/21 © Otter Maps www.ottermaps.co.uk

GAVIN BLAND

IN PROFILE (PART 2)

It all really came together for Gavin Bland in 1999. Setting records that still stand at the Carnethy and the Edale Skyline races, he finally achieved his ambition of being crowned as the best fell runner in Britain. But he revealed that he was not happy with the way he had won it, having desperately wanted to win the vital last counter to seal the title in style.

Gavin Bland explains his dissatisfaction with winning the British Championship title in 1999: "I have never been so disappointed as I was the day I ran Borrowdale, as I was only third in the race. I had to beat Ian Holmes and then I wouldn't have to go to the last race in Wales. I said to him, 'I am not right.' We were killing each other up the top of Langstrath. He was puffing as well and so we all regrouped. Going into Honister there were five of us. I was still thinking I am going to win as I have been the best runner all season. Then Simon Booth ran away and left us up Dale Head to take the win. I had beaten Holmsey by then, so I knew I had the Championship won. I had thought I was going to win Borrowdale again. I was a seriously disappointed British Champion."

Unfortunately, he never reached those heights again. In 2000 the trial race was held at Keswick for the World Mountain races later that year in Bergen, Germany. Gavin Bland finished 19th that day, just two places ahead of Joe Ritson (who was 1st V40). Having won the British and English fell running titles the previous year and been to some of the earlier World Mountain races, he might have been expected to feature in a race won by Dave Lewis. Joe Ritson recalls that, "When running well, Gavin could certainly do the business across the full range of fell and mountain races. In that race I remember seeing him walking up the steeper part of Jenkin Hill, while I was feeling good by then, and for a time I thought I might have an outside chance of catching him. I did pass a couple of other runners - who then dropped out!"

Joe Ritson adds that Gavin also had some good results in road races in Cumbria, indicating he had good basic speed as well as being a brilliant climber and descender in fell races. "Coming up to 50 and with all those skills and years of experience racing, maybe Gavin could target the over 50s categories at some of the international mountain races. Surely, he could still do the business on the national and international scene," Joe concludes.

The foot-and-mouth outbreak in 2001 was a really difficult time for Gavin on the farm. They lost all their young stock, which were away for the winter, and lost all their tups. The enforced break from running the fells that foot-and-mouth caused that year also signalled the end of a period of good running for Gavin. "But I never really stopped running until I was over 40. I made a big effort at 40, going for the Vet Champs. For me, I have to go running every day. It is psychological. Sometimes it is too hard, but as long as I have been, it is good."

Gavin began featuring less prominently in races but had occasional returns to good form, including winning a counter in the English Championships series at Langdale in 2003. Gavin remembers that win vividly: "I was not very fit and it was a misty day. I said to Scoffer I was going to win, and he said, 'no chance'. We popped out of the mist and there it was. I was against Jebby and he can't run downhill!" In 2004 Gavin raced sparingly but had a good win at the Mountain Trial, which was based locally to him at Thirlmere.

In 2005 Gavin raced a few times, with only a couple of wins. Despite some up and down form, Gavin reckoned that he had won a race every year since he started running: "I don't know when that sequence ended, but it possibly lasted for 15 years." A check of the stats shows that he seems to have won a race every year from 1991 to 2005 (excepting 2001, foot-and-mouth year), an impressive run indeed.

The 2006 season was a virtual washout owing to a foot injury. Gavin had to have a toe operation that year because of it, but not without doing the Borrowdale race a day or two before the operation. "I had a top joint in the big toe that was suffering from wear and tear. I went private and they said they will clean it out and it should give you four or five years more of running. If I was to start running seriously again, they would have to do the other big toe." That Borrowdale race was an example of Gavin seriously under-performing, probably because of the injury. He came 87th in 4:10:53.

Gavin rarely competed in 2007-11, and then tried to come back as a Vet in 2012 but got injured again that year. He tried again in 2013 and did really well for a while, coming in the top ten at Black Combe and winning at the Silent Valley (Northern Ireland) Championship race. "I was the fittest man in the country for about six weeks. I never missed a day's training all winter, and there was loads of snow that year. I lost a lot of weight. Silent Valley was a pig of a day, a man's race. I hadn't had a drink for two years and had a load of Guinness afterwards. Then I had a bursitis and couldn't run downhill. I went to the next Champs race in the Borders (at Yetholm) and I couldn't run."

Gavin Bland just lost interest in being competitive from then on. Gavin admitted that he had run the 2018 Borrowdale fell race when very unfit. He finished 228th out of 239 finishers, in a time of 5:46:10. He got a huge cheer as he came in as the prizes were being given out. "I thought halfway round I should have finished by now!" he laughs.



Above: Billy and Gavin Bland waiting for Kilian Jornet on his BGR, 2018 © Mark Wilson; Opposite page: Gathering on Helvellyn © Landkeepers

Looking back on the records that he set, and still holds, Gavin reckons the hardest to beat would be Carnethy: “It was the first race of the season. There was an orienteer from Norway there called Bernt Bjørnsgaard. He set off like a rocket. I raced for 44 minutes before I caught him and then beat him off the last top. I had to really race. That was a good record.”

When I asked him what his favourite races were, he gave three answers and his reasoning in each case: “Borrowdale (because it’s local and I have to win it), Ben Nevis (because it is the race to win) and Butter Crags (because it is a classic).”

Back in 2005, Brian Martin did some statistical analysis of the Lakeland Classic races, as part of his drive to spotlight the Lakeland Classics Trophy. At this time Billy Bland held the record for three of the six races (Duddon, Wasdale and Borrowdale), Andy Styan held the Langdale record, Kenny Stuart the Ennerdale, and Gavin Bland the Three Shires. Of these, only the Duddon has since been beaten - by Ian Holmes, back in 2007. Gavin Bland had got within 70 seconds of both the Duddon and Langdale times, whilst Simon Booth was even nearer to the Ennerdale and Borrowdale times. In this era of fast times across the board, Gavin was second fastest at Duddon, third fastest at Borrowdale, fourth at Langdale, and fifth at Ennerdale. However, he was only 15th fastest at Wasdale, admitting that he had never run well there. These are just some statistics that to me show what a consistently excellent runner Gavin was at his peak.

Recently I asked Gavin to analyse why it might have been that he couldn’t beat Billy Bland’s times for any of the Lakes Classics, except the Three Shires: “Because I very rarely had to really push it. If I had been in a race with Billy Bland and we had both been in our prime I would have run faster than I ran against others. Does that make sense? In my time we were all fairly evenly matched and it was rare that anyone thought they were going run the legs off everyone. Because if you did you would get beaten, wouldn’t you? I

would rather mooch round and win, than race round and finish fifth because I’d misjudged it.”

When he was running well, he admits that he won loads of races by five yards or so. “I am a carthorse but at the end of a fell race I was the fastest of the carthorses. Do you know what I mean? Ian Holmes was a better runner than me but over the last field I would beat him. But I am not a sprinter - and would get beat by the bigger guys in a sprint as a pro. If I wasn’t going to win or do myself justice, I would never screw myself into the ground to finish eighth or something. I would run in and that would be fine. One or two races you come second, and you think, ‘What could I have done differently?’”.

He also says he was too slow to do a decent marathon. “All the top 20 or so people I could beat in a fell race, nearly all of them would beat me in a road race. I used to do the Derwentwater 10 and the Dalston 10k. I could run 32 minutes for 10k on the road. I sometimes did them just to get fit. Some years more than others.”

Gavin readily admits to having been a lazy trainer, and even a lazy racer, liking to do just enough. When profiled in 1993 he admitted that he did no speed work in his training: “I sharpen up by racing regularly. My work on the farm keeps me fairly fit all year round so I don’t need to train as hard as someone with a non-physical job. I train on the road in winter, but my legs can’t take a lot of miles due to getting sore shins, so I run on the fells as much as possible to.’ He adds that he knew he could never race well at lambing time, saying that sheep-shearing and running don’t mix: “From the middle of April till the end of May I was on my feet too much. Long days and my body couldn’t cope with it. I could go to a race and run but unlikely to be winning.”

In his periods of top form, he would sometimes recce race routes. “Billy once had us go halfway round the Peris Horseshoe course the day before, because not knowing it was not good enough for him. Most folk would say you don’t want to be doing that the day before a long race. But we were all used to strong walking and that is how we would do it.”

One time we were talking, Gavin’s father David joined us for a while. He commented on the family genetic influence that Gavin inherited: “It is still all down to your grandfather, Joe Bland. His heart rate was never above 40, often mid-thirties and he was the father of Billy, Stuart and me.” Gavin follows this by saying that he could run races and have lads running beside him who would be “puffing their guts out. I couldn’t do that. Ian Holmes is an example. If you are running with Holmesy and he was gonna beat yer you could tell by how hard he was working. If I was gonna beat him I would cruise away. I wouldn’t beat him because of the effort.”

I have asked several people to analyse Gavin (and Billy) Bland. Most recently I had a discussion with Shaun Livesey who recalled the first time he came across Gavin. “It was one year at the Langdale Fell race on a fairly tricky decent between Pavey Ark and Esk Hause. Gavin passed me with ease looking almost casual as he strode away. I remember thinking ‘he’s good’ [surely an understatement]. Having since come across Gavin many times I would say, like his uncle Billy, he is a quality runner, straight talking, one of those people you respect for their intrinsic values. Both were natural descenders, great characters, and very much fell runners.”

But was Gavin as good as Billy Bland? Broaching this with Gavin himself, he replies quietly to me “On rough stuff I would say yes as I was as good as Billy. I was just the same on that stuff.” At this point in our chat his son Alex pops in. “He doesn’t believe I was a good runner!” laughs Gavin.

His friend Scoffer argues that there can’t have been anybody like Gavin - who was unbeatable one week, then the following week back running with me, then the week after unbeatable again! As evidence he cites the time “a few years ago at Ennerdale when he was beaten by Wendy Dodds and a week later he came 4th at Duddon!! How can he do that!?”

Scoffer then tells a tale against Gavin, which still makes him laugh. “Once we went down to do the Rossendale relay and the night before we were given ‘accommodation’ in the First Rossendale Scout hut.

Having had an Indian and a few beers as pre-race preparation, we went back to the Scout hut for bed which was by now a balmy -40 degrees!!! Gavin rolls out his sleeping bag and his blow-up mattress which he proceeded to blow up with a foot pump. He then declared that no matter how cold it was he always slept naked so stripped and got into his sleeping bag. He lasted about a minute and a half before he put all his clothes back on, and shortly afterwards there was a loud hissing noise. Gavin’s much envied blow-up mattress had sprung a leak and was now a plastic bag - much to the amusement of us all!”

Gavin’s own conclusion is that he did make the most of what he had, but that it was all in fits and starts: “When I was at my peak I was as good as anyone. But I sometimes would go into a trough and finish 20th in a race and think, ‘well that is alright’. When I wasn’t fit, I still enjoyed going to races. That was slightly different to Billy. If he wasn’t fit, he wouldn’t go. Looking back, I shouldn’t have played any rugby when I was 19 and 20, and if I could do it all again you would do it completely differently.”

As I got ready to leave, I thanked him for spending so much of his valuable time with me on our two interviews. Gavin replied, “It was nice to sit down, I enjoyed it.”

Then, as I walked across the farmyard to my car, he yelled after me, “I might go on a massive diet and make a big comeback!”



a natural history lesson

When they are not in the throes of racing,
simply busy with their daily foraging,
it's safe to observe them close-up
when it's possible to notice
a trance-like look they have about them
as they run themselves over the fells
like fingers running over bobbles of braille,
quick and light and exquisitely sensitive
reading the flow and meaning and story
of everything which is being touched.

There's something enigmatic about it –
experts seem to disagree about this
species which occupies a specialist niche.
Some say it's a throwback, a soon to die
out evolutionary dead-end.
Others believe this unusual beast
should be nurtured and protected,
that humans may learn from its special abilities,
which might in the end prove difficult because
fellrunners soon die when kept in captivity.
They can only survive in the wild.

A fellrunner is a gentle animal,
mostly it's elusive, shy of crowds,
sometimes seen on or near summits
in the side-light soon after dawn,
or entangled in the lower slopes at dusk
pausing to drink from a stream,
scanning the horizon – and oddly
they often go out after dark.

A fellrunner is a gentle animal
approachable in its native habitat,
all across the northern uplands
you can hear their occasional chatter,
see the studded imprints of their swift passage,
but at weekends and on summer evenings,
driven by ancient instincts, they gather
together to perform the intricate rituals
of their impressive racing behaviour.
These are the times to be wary, the times
when this normally placid creature
can turn fierce.

WORDS JULIE CARTER

© Steve Ashworth/ La Sportiva



HELP YOURSELF!

Ennerdale Horseshoe '21 © Stephen Wilson www.granddayoutphotography.co.uk

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

PART 3

WORDS DENISE PARK

The previous two parts to this guide are included in the Summer 2020 and Spring 2021 editions of The Fellrunner. The injuries in this article are not unique to fell running unlike some of the injuries already covered, so there will be further information and advice available online and in sport's injury textbooks. However, if you are searching the internet for advice, please do so with caution. The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy recently surveyed some of the most watched YouTube videos in relation to back pain and found that:

1. 43% contained a myth
2. 60% contained false or misleading information
3. 32% had an unrealistic video demonstration
4. 42% contained unhelpful language that was fear evoking or contradictory
5. 45% did not state their qualifications for providing advice.

Also, remember that this self-help guide is not a replacement for seeking appropriate medical advice, as there are many other reasons for pain apart from those described here.

8. MUSCLE PAIN IN THE THIGH OR CALF

The muscles at the front of the thigh are mainly the quadriceps, at the back of the thigh are the hamstrings, and the calf mainly consists of the gastrocnemius and soleus muscles. There are other muscles in these areas, but these are the muscles which are most frequently injured when fell running.

Muscle injuries account for 25% of all the injuries experienced by fell and mountain runners. Research has suggested that up to 90% of the population experience some type of muscular pain or ache at any given time – but muscle pain does not mean there is a muscle tear. The cause of muscular pain is still not fully understood, although research is helping us to understand more about what is happening and this is hopefully going to change the more traditional ways of treating muscle injuries.

PRESENTATION OF A MUSCLE TEAR

An acute muscle tear occurs when there is a sudden, severe pain in the muscle belly which stops you in your tracks. It is often difficult to continue running or walking, and the area may bruise. It is usually caused by a traumatic injury with a clear recollection of the moment it happened. It often feels like 'something went' or



A muscle tear in the calf with extensive bruising

'popped'. It is unlikely that you will waken in the morning with a muscle tear with no history of an injury.

POSSIBLE CAUSES

- High intensity exercise.
- Unaccustomed exercise or activity.
- A stretch which is either beyond normal or occurs quickly.
- Inadequate warm-up. A warm-up should prepare the tissues for exercise by increasing the blood flow and activating the nerves so they are ready to engage the muscles. It should not include excessive stretching of the muscles as this has been shown to increase the risk of injury. During a warm-up, the muscles should be taken through the range of movement required for the particular activity – which is clearly different for a gymnast to a fell runner – so the warm-up should be specific to your sport.
- A sudden unexpected change in muscle activity – such as a stumble, a change in direction, or a change of pace.
- Fatigue resulting in a deterioration or alteration in running style.

MYOFASCIAL PAIN

Following a soft tissue injury there is always a degree of inflammation – which is essential for the repair process to take place. The inflammatory process can be caused by a specific injury, such as a muscle tear, but it may also be triggered by a repetitive action which causes further irritation every time the action is repeated.

Each muscle fibre is surrounded by fascia which is like the skin surrounding a sausage. Without this membrane the sausage doesn't

exist, and without the surrounding fascia, the muscle fibre is unable to contract and create the forces necessary to produce movement.

Single muscle fibres are bundled together and are surrounded by fascia to create a fasciculus. Several bundles of these fasciculi are then surrounded by yet more fascia to create a muscle belly. It is thought that there are over 3 million muscle fibres in the calf alone. When we look at meat, we can see these membranes embedded in and around the muscles.

The fascia supports the tissues, but also allows for normal movement to take place. If the fascia becomes inflamed, the inflammatory process results in fibrous tissue (also known as scar tissue or adhesions) to form between these fascial layers. With activity, the body mobilises this tissue and movement resumes, but if this doesn't happen, it can result in pain and a restriction of movement. Because the fascia is continuous throughout the body, adhesions in one area can have a secondary effect in other areas so it may feel like the pain is moving around the muscle. This is different to a muscle tear where the pain is very specific to the area of damage.

POSSIBLE SELF TREATMENT

1. If there is an acute muscle tear, it is important to minimise bleeding of the muscle tissues. This is when it is important to follow the RICE (Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation) protocol. The area should not be exercised or loaded for the first 48-72 hours depending on the severity. An ice pack or towel soaked in cold water should be applied to the area to help constrict the blood vessels and reduce blood flow. The cold should be applied repeatedly for short bouts or the blood vessels will dilate (open up) again which will cause more bleeding. Compression – even if it is just a knee length sock or a compression garment, can help to minimise the swelling, and the affected area should be raised above heart level if possible, to help prevent the blood from pooling in the area.

There are some research studies to suggest that cold should not be used following an acute injury as it could result in the formation of additional scar tissue (Tiidus 2015, Carter 2015), but as the evidence remains inconclusive, cold treatment is still the safer option until more information becomes available. It is also suggested that anti-inflammatory medication (NSAID's such as ibuprofen) should not be taken for the first few days following injury as the inflammation is essential to trigger the healing process. If this process is halted or slowed down in the initial stages, it may delay healing or result in a weaker repair. Painkillers such as paracetamol can be taken to help reduce the pain as they will not affect the healing process.

2. Once the initial acuteness has subsided after 48-72 hours, it is important to begin mobilising the tissues to encourage normal

movement during the repair process. If you were to cut the skin over the back of your wrist and then immobilise the area for a couple of weeks, you would be unable to bend and flex your wrist because the scar would heal without any flexibility. In reality, you would gradually use your wrist and hand more and more until you had regained full movement without re-opening the wound. The same principle applies to the muscle tissue. Gradually increase the load through the tissues and slowly increase the movement, but only as the tissues allow or you are in danger of causing further damage resulting in additional scar tissue formation and a delayed recovery. Excessive stretching can delay recovery by re-damaging the healing tissues, so everything must be introduced gradually and guided by pain.

3. Any weakness of the muscle or restriction in normal movement which develops due to injury may later result in a recurrence of the injury. As a result, it is important to try and continue with some other form of exercise which will continue to exercise the muscles but without subjecting them to excessive loads. This could be on a cross-trainer, aqua jogging, or cycling. It is important to be able to walk pain free, before gradually introducing a few steps jogging whilst out for a walk, rather than putting on your running gear and setting off for a 20 minute run. A muscle cannot repair in 10 days as it actually takes between 1-2 years for the whole repair and remodelling process to complete, but it may be possible to begin running with caution as soon as 10 days post-injury as this can help to facilitate the healing process.

4. Physiotherapists have a number of treatments available which can help to accelerate the repair process. This is particularly useful if you have a scheduled event looming, need to resume training as soon as possible, or if your tissue repair process seems to have slowed down or stalled which is preventing you from progressing forwards. Manual therapy has been shown to release chemicals which minimise the formation of scar tissue, decrease swelling and improve blood flow, and appropriate exercises load the tissues correctly to help you recover quicker. Several of the electrical machines used by physiotherapists are also helpful in accelerating tissue repair.

5. If the muscle pain is being caused by fascial adhesions rather than a muscle tear, the treatment is similar but different. Because the inflammation has been caused by repetitive irritation rather than trauma, there isn't usually any bleeding of torn tissues. Consequently, the RICE protocol may not be necessary. As there is still an inflammatory process taking place which will result in the formation of scar tissue, it is essential to try to resume normal movement as soon as possible. Self-massage can help to mobilise these adhesions, and exercises to gradually stretch and load the muscle can be done much sooner than when there is a tear as it isn't necessary to wait for the muscle fibres to repair. As a result,

there is usually a much faster return to sport with a myofascial injury and I have had clients compete at international level just 10 days after the initial problem.

INVESTIGATIONS

There needs to be a significant injury for muscle damage to be visible on an MRI scan. A study showed that only 60% of the scans of professional footballers who were unable to play due to a hamstring injury were visible on imaging, which was also dependent on the skill of the person interpreting the scan images. Despite causing significant pain, it is not recommended to seek further investigations unless there seems to be an underlying reason for the injury.

9. PAIN AT THE BACK OF THE ANKLE – THE ACHILLES TENDON

Moving down the body, the Achilles tendon is the strongest, thickest tendon in the body which attaches the calf muscles to the heel bone. Over the last few years, there has been considerable debate about the nature of Achilles tendon injuries. When 'itis' is added to a word in the medical world it usually means that the affected area is inflamed – inflammation of the tonsils being tonsillitis, and inflammation of the appendix being appendicitis, and tendon-itis suggests that the tendon is inflamed. It was decided that the condition which occurs in the Achilles tendon was due to degeneration of the tendon rather than an inflammatory process, so the terminology was changed from Achilles tendonitis to Achilles tendinopathy. I have debated this subject at numerous sports injury conferences as I felt that it was impossible for an active fell runner who suddenly developed Achilles pain to have a degenerative tendon due to lack of use. As the treatment of the problem is determined by the nature of the injury, I continued to fight my corner. The evidence has now confirmed that an inflammatory process does take place in the early stages – with the tendon changing structure and becoming more degenerative if the condition is allowed to become chronic and long-standing.

(Partial rupture and full rupture of the Achilles tendon can occur, but as they are not 'common' fell running injuries, so aren't included in this guide.)

PRESENTATION OF ACHILLES TENDINOPATHY

- There may be a memorable moment when you suddenly became aware of pain in the Achilles tendon, but it is often a gradual deterioration.

- Pain and/or stiffness in the Achilles tendon and/or calf when getting out of bed in the morning. The severity of the injury can often be judged by the length of time it takes for this discomfort to ease once walking around.

- Swelling or thickening of the tendon.

- Pain is usually at the insertion of the tendon to the heel bone, or in the middle portion of the tendon.

- Pain which may ease off whilst running but can then be worse afterwards.

- Tenderness on squeezing the tendon.

- Pain on stretching the tendon, such as dropping the heel down when stood on the edge of a step.



Swelling visible on an Achilles tendinopathy

POSSIBLE SELF-TREATMENTS

1. As with the muscle injuries described above, if there has been a traumatic injury to the Achilles tendon causing a sudden onset of pain, it would be sensible to begin with the RICE protocol.

2. If it is painful to put the heel on the floor, a slight heel raise can be placed inside of your shoe to take the stretch off the tendon until it is more comfortable to walk. This should be removed as soon as possible to avoid the tendon healing in a shortened position.

3. Avoid any activities which aggravate the symptoms – these may be activities other than running such as gardening.

4. Try to remember if the condition started after wearing a particular pair of running shoes – the heel tab could be rubbing against your tendon, they may have changed your running style, or they could have lower or higher heel height. This is a common injury around the time when the clock's change. The darker evenings mean people start running more on the road in shoes with a raised heel, then in Spring, switch back to flatter fell shoes, altering the stretch through the tendon.

5. Check your existing footwear. Look at the soles of the shoes and

stand them on a hard surface to make sure the heel tabs are still vertical. Excessive wear may mean they are no longer supporting you or they may be rolling you inwards or outwards whilst running, which would irritate the tendon.

6. Go to a running shoe shop to check if your running footwear is right for your foot type or consider seeing a podiatrist for a biomechanical assessment. Orthotics aren't usually necessary for fell running given the terrain is uneven and it isn't a repetitive style of running, but if you do some road miles or run on harder surfaces, your biomechanics are more important and may contribute to the onset of Achilles problems.

7. Avoid running on a camber or contouring around the side of a hill which can alter the angle of the Achilles.

8. Decrease intensity, frequency, and duration of running, but unless it is too painful, try not to rest completely. Tendon repair is stimulated by tendon loading, so complete rest can be detrimental. Relative rest – not complete rest. Modify your training schedule and introduce other activities to reduce the running intensity – swimming, cycling, upper body strength training, core stability exercises.

9. Regular cold / ice treatment seems to be beneficial, but once the condition is more chronic or long standing, warmth (e.g., a hot water bottle or heat pad) prior to exercise followed by cold afterwards seems to be more beneficial.

10. Self-massage the tendon to help mobilise any scar tissue which has formed. This is carried out at 90° to the direction of the tendon but should not be aggressive to cause further irritation.

11. Eccentric stretching exercises if the injury is in the mid-portion of the tendon. If the problem appears to be where the tendon attaches to the heel bone, these exercises may be ineffective or at worse aggravate the problem.

Extensive research into eccentric stretching exercises to help resolve Achilles problems has been carried out by Professor Hakan Alfredson. Some studies have suggested that concentric exercises (heel raises) are as effective, but it is thought that the lengthening whilst under load is initially more effective at reducing pain and improving function.

The stretches should be done 90 times per day in total, 7 days a week for 12 weeks to achieve the optimum results and you need to do 3 sets of 10 stretches (30 in total) three times per day, or 3 sets of 15 stretches (45 in total) twice a day.

- Stand with the front part of your feet on a step, and the heels over the edge of the step.

- Raise onto your toes.



Eccentric calf exercises - starting position (left) and finish position (right)

- Take your weight on the toes of your injured leg and lift the 'good' leg off the step.

- Slowly lower the heel of the injured side towards the ground as far as is comfortably possible – if it becomes painful, only lower to the point where it is too painful to continue. It is acceptable to feel some discomfort, but not pain. If it is too painful to do this exercise on the injured leg, you can begin by just standing on your toes without any movement, then progress to remaining on both feet and lowering both heels at the same time until you improve sufficiently to be able to do it on one leg.

- Once you have reached the lowest point possible, take your bodyweight back onto the good leg to push back up to the starting position and repeat. Do not push back up on the injured leg, as you are only doing eccentric stretches at this stage, not active calf raises.

- Do some of the stretches with a straight leg and some with

a slightly bent knee to involve both the gastrocnemius and soleus muscles in the calf.

- It is important to load the tendon as much as possible to encourage repair and strengthening of the tendon, so as the exercise becomes easier and more comfortable, use weights or a backpack and gradually increase the weight inside.

- If necessary, you can also add raising onto the toes (a concentric contraction) to the eccentric exercise - go up onto your toes, lower down, then raise back up on the injured leg.

Individuals who embark on early self-management or who seek early advice from a physiotherapist have the best outcomes to this injury, possibly by avoiding degeneration of the tendon. Manual physiotherapy treatment combined with the eccentric stretches seemed to produce better results in Alfredson's studies, but as many of his cases were chronic long-standing issues, it was assumed that they already had scar tissue present which needed more specific mobilisation to achieve better mobility of the tendon.

Denise (who is a friend) and asked her what I should do as I needed to get back being active during what seemed very long days. Denise told me to keep my foot moving, stretching my ankle up and down and build up to walking and then, if I comfortable enough, to gradually try running a few steps whilst out for a walk over the next week.

I obeyed and while it was still sore, within a week I was able to run again. As I am a seasoned runner, I didn't ask for any more advice as I felt I had recovered.

I felt a 'ping' in my calf doing something innocuous – walking down my stairs at home. I had been training for the 2020 Manchester Marathon which was cancelled due to the Covid circumstances, and it was now two days before what would have been marathon day. I was horrified, having completed over 18 marathons and hardly ever having been injured in over 30 years of running.

We were in lockdown, but for my mental health, I needed to run. I obviously couldn't see anyone face to face, so I rang

I started upping the speed as I got stronger and, about a month later, around mid-May, I went to the track to do some proper speed training. On my second 800m, ping, it went again, but this time I could barely put my foot down. I didn't know what to do, and the advice on the internet varied so much – most of it recommending complete rest for at least 6 weeks.

Denise told me to use a foam roller, but not too deep, in a direction going across my calf muscle - not up and down. As I was able, she encouraged me to walk and gradually introduce jogging again to strengthen the fibres in my calf and make sure they healed in the correct way. Once I had passed the acute stage, she also suggested I applied heat via a heat pad.

It took longer the second time, I couldn't run on it for around a week, although I kept as active as I could. It was still sore and ached, but I was gradually able to run on it, albeit slowly. Unfortunately, I also had an event looming that I really didn't want to miss - I had committed to doing the Virtual Lakeland Challenge – 105 miles in a week in mid-July. I really wanted to do the event, but I didn't want to cause more damage.

Luckily, the rules re lockdown changed and Denise could start to see people for face-to-face appointments again. Two days before the challenge started, Denise was good enough to see me for some hands-on treatment (all PPE and Covid-19 secure). She slowly worked through my calf for what seemed forever, and told me if I maintained a slower pace, I should be able to do the 100 miles. That gave me such confidence.

I was still uncomfy when I tried running the following day, but I was now 24 hours away from starting the challenge. I was wary, but I went out on the Monday morning and, while

it wasn't perfect, it was just a steady ache, with no sharp pain at all! I was running around 10-minute mile pace which was comfortable.

I did around 15 miles of running and walking that first day and felt so much happier. The following day I did another 20 miles of running and walking, and whilst I could still feel it, it wasn't painful, and it certainly wasn't getting worse. Denise had also told me to immerse my calf in a bucket of cold water after each day's running, but I actually had cold baths to both my legs!

By day three, I went out running and I was pretty much pain-free which was a huge relief and surprise. I could forget about my calf and concentrate on completing the challenge – which of course I did. I think I ran 90 miles of it and walked 15 which wasn't bad going for someone who wasn't sure they would be able to do anything one week earlier!

I returned for a second treatment after the event and my calf felt a lot better. Denise told me that I had to build up slowly to speed work again, which I did, and I haven't had any further problems. I know that the second incident was probably caused by the speed training, but when that happened, I never thought that I would recover in time to be able to do the 105 mile Lakeland Challenge. I have since completed several more events - including the 2021 Windermere Marathon a couple of weeks ago.

The most important lesson I learned from this was to seek proper advice and not to take notice of the internet - which could have had me resting for 6 weeks! With the right guidance, you can recover and get back running much faster than you are led to believe.

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

She started working with fell runners 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.

NOTE: This article aims to help you make an informed decision and be aware of potential treatments that may be available. It is not intended to be a substitute for consulting a medical professional or seeking appropriate medical advice. Whilst information is correct at the time of publication, it must be remembered that medical practice may change in the light of new research and that self-diagnosis may not be accurate.

MARTIN STONE'S LONG DISTANCE ROUND UP

SUMMER 2021

WORDS MARTIN STONE

Long distance heavyweights, John Kelly, Damian Hall, Sabrina Verjee and Kim Collison kicked off the 2021 Summer Season in style.

JOHN KELLY – PENNINE WAY RECORD

John set off at 09:00 Saturday 15th May from Kirk Yetholm, heading south for 260 miles, and arrived at Edale 2 days 10 hrs 4 mins later. This extraordinary tour de force reduced Damian Hall's time set only 9 months earlier by more than 3 hours. You can read John's article elsewhere in the magazine but a little bit of context may be helpful.

Mike Hartley's performance 30 years earlier set the bar very high because he knocked 4½ hours off Mike Cudahy's record. In the 30 years that followed no-one made a serious attempt to break Mike's record. The Spine Race took place for the first time in 2012 and over recent years ultra-runners have focused in on the event and honed their skills. The top runners will always have had one eye on Mike's remarkable time, given they complete this winter race in 3½ days, and I think this made it inevitable that the new crop of runners would get round to attempting to break Mike's record sooner or later. It is no coincidence that two very successful Winter Spinners, John Kelly and Damian Hall, should make attempts at the record.

I had seen John in action on his 2020 Pennine Way (PW) record where he took 40 minutes off Mike's record but it was clear that his stomach problems cost him some time. Even though I also supported him for most of the way on his Grand Round, I have to admit that I didn't realise how good John actually was! The thing I hadn't clocked was his ability to cover ground at such a fast and relentless pace for so long with minimal sleep. How wonderful it is when the most one expects is a marginal gain, but what happens on the day is a 5% improvement on Damian's mark. When John was 2 hours ahead of the record, he could so easily have rested on his laurels, but he wanted to set a mark that would be very difficult for

the next man or woman to break, so he buried himself on the final 60 miles to make up yet another hour. Within a year and three PW records later, John had re-taken the record from Damian and had completed the journey in 13% less time than Mike Hartley.

The friendly rivalry between John and Damian has captured the interest of the mountain and ultra-running community here in the UK like nothing before and we have seen the running equivalent of a heavyweight boxing match play out over the past 12 months. Back in the day there were similar intense rivalries, but with no social media these things never became public. Social media allows the wider public to appreciate things that were only privy to a few folk in bygone days. I would say that back in the day, folk were far more secretive about their plans but the latest crop of runners appear to have a confidence, boldness and dare I say brashness that we never had. But it is all great fun and it is lovely to see the way that Damian and John have gone out of their way to show their appreciation for what the other has achieved, even when it impacts on themselves. I love John's analogy that when he loses a precious record it is like seeing an ex-girlfriend going out with his mate. And Damian is also very honest about the mixed feelings he has when a record gets taken by a friend. I love their generosity but also their honesty. It is very endearing. The wider public has never seen anything quite like this in the UK.

The other thing that makes this recent rivalry quite unique is that both John and Damian have been supported by the same key support crew and a number of the same pacers. This means that although John or Damian will receive 100% loyalty, focus and support in the lead-up and during the attempt, it is ephemeral. Within a week the focus changes to the next aspirant.... It also means that almost every intimate detail of the highs and lows of the run are available for the next contender to analyse in detail. It's just like Formula 1 racing where there are two drivers in each team and all the data is shared so that each person can get the very best out of their car.



DAMIAN HALL – COAST TO COAST RECORD

About 30 years ago, Mike Hartley held records for the Pennine Way, Coast to Coast and Southern Upland Way. After the excesses of summer 2020, the only record remaining was the Coast to Coast. Damian set off to break this record on

Tuesday 25th May at 06:00. For much of the journey it was cold, wet and very bleak for late May. For the first 100 miles, all was going to plan and Damian built up a buffer of nearly 2 hours ahead of Mike’s record. He encountered very tough conditions underfoot on the dark section from Kirkby Stephen to Keld.

The drama that unfolded in the latter stages of the run could have had the most serious consequences. Damian completed the 190 mile route in 1 day 15 hrs 18 mins, breaking Mike’s record by about 15 minutes. It was obviously a great run to beat a very fine Mike Hartley record but whatever happened to that 2-hour cushion? You can read Damian’s illuminating and very honest article elsewhere in the magazine. It is a salutary lesson!

RORY HARRIS/KEVIN HOULT started a Coast to Coast run on Thursday 1st April at 09:00 and enjoyed really decent weather for the time of year to complete the journey in the very creditable time of 2 days 3 hours 27mins.



Top photo: Damian finishing his record-breaking Wainwrights Coast to Coast run while suffering the affects of hyponatraemia, read more on page 28; Background image: Damian earlier in the run, with support runner Kim Collison © Steve Ashworth/ Endurance Creative

DAMIAN HALL – SOUTH WALES TRAVERSE RECORD

I forgot to mention in the Spring magazine that on October 16th 2020 Damian set a new record for the South Wales Traverse, completing the 72-mile (116km) route from west to east in 14 hrs 13 mins 18 secs. The route crosses all but one of the summits over 2000ft in South Wales and has 18,000ft (5,500m) ascent. The previous July, Damian had improved on John’s Pennine Way record and this was the perfect way to end a very successful season. This was a very lightweight, low key attempt in decent autumnal weather. He had minimal road support and few pacers, which is typical of how earlier records have been set for this challenge. The previous record of 14 hrs 18 mins was set by Dan Doherty in April 2017 as a solo and self-supported run. Dan only collected food and extra water at one location on the route. It gets dark quite early by October and Damian seemed to have left himself an impossible task as he tackled the final section in darkness. Torches were spotted high above the finish at Llanthony Priory and after a hair-raising descent off Black Mountain, Dan’s record was broken by a mere 5 minutes. It was another great run by Damian but hats off to Dan Doherty for setting such a strong record as a solo run.

SABRINA VERJEE – 214 WAINWRIGHTS RECORD (4th TIME LUCKY!)

On Thursday 17th June at 06:52, Sabrina jogged into New Dungeon Ghyll (where she lives) and completed her fourth attempt at the Wainwrights in a record time of 5 days 23 hours 49 min. Sabrina reduced Paul Tierney’s record by more than 6 hours and also achieved her most ambitious target of breaking the 6-day barrier. We hope to include an article in the Autumn magazine but in the meantime, here is some background and context.

Sabrina made her first attempt at the Wainwrights in June 2020 but owing to a misunderstanding about the Lockdown rules she decided it was best to abort the attempt after about 30 hours. She set off again a few weeks later on 6th July 2020 and completed her round in 6 days 16 hours. She was unfortunate to injure her knee by halfway and needed physical assistance from her pacers to descend steep fellsides. For this reason the round could not be considered alongside other continuous Wainwright Rounds. For



anyone apart from Sabrina Verjee, this would have been enough and in the history of 214 Wainwrights attempts, no-one had so far made multiple attempts. Without exception, those who went before her had completed their attempt in a battered physical state. After abusing her bad knee for a further three days she was fortunate that her knee injury recovered well. Sabrina is clearly addicted to “very long runs with her friends” and over the coming months she set the women’s record for the Pennine Way in September and the Coast to Coast in a named storm on Boxing Day!

Sat on a bench outside the Moot Hall at the end of her controversial attempt in July 2020, we were all gobsmacked to hear Sabrina say “I’m going to have to do this again”. From that moment on, it was no secret that there was unfinished business that needed addressing in summer 2021. Training and preparations went well and she decided on an early date for her third attempt of Friday 30th April. It was a period of extremely cold and unsettled weather, even for early May. COVID-19 restrictions had recently been relaxed but to maintain a low profile in the centre of Keswick, she decided to not start/finish at the Moot Hall but instead from her home at Great Langdale which coincidentally was on her route. Her fitness was not in question as she stormed across the first half of the route. Very bad weather came in at about the halfway point and there were weather warnings of snow, blizzards and very strong winds that she would encounter on the north-western fells. By the time she reached Newlands Hause, the support vehicles were being battered by the wind and barometers dropped with storm warnings pinging on the pacers’ watches. Sabrina was now suffering badly from asthma, brought on by breathing in cold air. We set off up Robinson from the Hause with a sense of impending doom. Sabrina was gasping for air and Jacob Tonkin, who was now soaked through and freezing after pacing the previous section, needed to get the hell off the hills between Robinson and Hindscarth. This left Steve Birkinshaw, Mingma Sherpa and me to take care of Sabrina in the worst of winter weather (in early May!). We made it through to the foot of Catbells by teatime on Monday 3rd May but the writing was on the wall as the very bad weather was forecast to continue for another 24 hours. Sabrina battled on bravely until 4am on Armboth Fell when it was definitely time to stop. It had been a completely heroic attempt and it was unimaginable that she could continue in these conditions.

After three attempts at the Wainwrights within a year, I believe that 99.99% of the top long distance runners would have walked away from the challenge feeling that enough was enough. Quite apart from remembering all the pain, suffering and recovery, one would expect to be mentally scarred by these three experiences. Having settled her asthma and realising that she wasn’t badly broken,

Sabrina quietly set about her recovery and return to full fitness. We all thought that she would reset, focus in on another ‘easier’ challenge and maybe come back to the Wainwrights in a future year. But Sabrina is wired up quite differently to other human beings and she has no memory of pain, only remembering the good times spent with friends. Once she realised that she had made a miracle recovery, she focused in on a fourth attempt. This time a good weather window was to be a prerequisite and when it arrived again in early June, the support and pacing machine was scrambled again at very short notice. This needed to be the final attempt, not least for the sanity of Ben Turner, her long suffering and eternally patient husband who had supported/paced her throughout her protracted Wainwrights journey!

It was less than 6 weeks since she had been a wheezing, shivering wreck in the middle of the night on Armboth Fell. Could this turn out to be the greatest reset of all time? Sabrina set off on Friday



Above and background photos: Sabrina on her record-breaking Wainwrights round with support runners: Robin Bush - top and background; Rachel Platt above © Steve Ashworth/ La Sportiva

11th June at 07:00 and experienced mostly excellent weather for six days, which she richly deserved. She was moving faster on this fourth attempt than any of the previous ones and all the experience gained at the School of Hard Knocks was now helping her to optimise her performance. By the end of day 5 it became clear that barring a disaster she would break Paul Tierney’s record of 6 days 6 hours. We have talked about how important it is to not rest on one’s laurels and find oneself in the doldrums once a record seems assured. With one day left, Ben reminded the team via the WhatsApp group that sub-6 days was the target. For the final 24 hours, Sabrina upped her game (even further), hoping to keep to an untested schedule that we all knew was super challenging. As the number of remaining stages reduced, sub-6 became an obsession that focused the minds of every single pacer and supporter. Dot watchers were also becoming aware that sub-6 was within Sabrina’s grasp and the excitement online was palpable. When most would have been content to coast to the finish, Sabrina was upping the ante and trying to nail each peak at the sub-6 day pace. When the team set off from Tilberthwaite on the final section to Great Langdale, sub-6 was still uncertain. However, Sabrina was spurred on by the realisation that only a few hours remained and she finally pulled clear of the schedule to complete the round with 11 minutes to spare.

So, it was to be 4th time lucky for Sabrina. But in reality, there was very little luck involved at all. It was all about her unbelievable powers of recovery from earlier attempts, her ability to reset, her mental and physical resilience, her determination and experience gained through adversity. And last but not least it was the patience and belief of her fantastic team of friends, Ben her husband and her loyal supporters/pacers who had been with her on four attempts and helped her to get across the line in sub-6 days.



Sabrina, in the arms of her husband Ben Turner, moments after finishing her record-breaking Wainwright’s round © Steve Ashworth/ La Sportiva

TOM HOLLINS – 214 WAINWRIGHTS

Tom set off on Sunday 16th May at 09:40 from the Moot Hall and battled through the unusually horrible May weather to complete his Wainwrights journey in 6 days 21 hrs 33 mins. It was a really hardcore performance which included overnight sections in cold wintry storms that terminated some other attempts on Lakeland records.

CHRISTOPHER GASKIN – 214 WAINWRIGHTS SOLO UNSUPPORTED

This was a solo unsupported attempt without any external assistance and Christopher carried everything needed for the challenge with no support points - food, cooking and camping equipment, spare clothing, mapping, safety and first aid equipment etc. At the start Christopher’s pack weighed around 20kg. Through Project 214 Christopher was supporting those that served and continue to serve. He was raising funds for <https://walkingwiththewounded.org.uk>, a charity that supports injured service personnel and their families with Mental Health support, employment support and empowerment.

He set off on Tuesday 11th May at 08:38 and endured his fair share of the awful May weather. He was carrying 14 days’ food but far exceeded his expectations by completing the Wainwrights in the excellent time of 11 days 10 hrs 58 mins.

MINGMA TSHERING SHERPA – WAINWRIGHTS IN WINTER

Mingma lives in Keswick and is a member of Keswick AC. Over a period of 14 days from the 4th January he completed all the

Wainwrights. This wasn’t a continuous journey and he was dropped off/collected each day. He spent a total of 5 days 6 hours on his feet and this is a mighty performance in the depths of winter.

ANDY BERRY – STEVE PARR ROUND RECORD

The Steve Parr Round, comprising all Lakeland peaks over 2,500ft, is about 1.6 Bob Graham Rounds, 116 miles (187km) and 42,000ft (12,800m) ascent. Last year Howard Dracup became the first person to improve on Steve Parr’s original time of 42 hrs 36 mins, reducing the 36-year-old record by 19 minutes. As with any run that is still in its infancy, there is scope to finesse the lines and Paul Wilson has found a significant time saving improvement in the route between Buttermere and the Scafells.

Andy set off on Friday 18th June at 04:00 from the Moot Hall, Keswick, on an ambitious clockwise attempt. It was a beautiful dawn with cloud inversion and Howard Dracup joined him for the first leg across the Northern Fells. The weather was warm and it was important to avoid dehydration throughout the day. By darkness Andy was well ahead of schedule on the long and challenging leg 6 from Cockley Beck to Buttermere. Some time was lost in the dark and clag and Andy struggled for a few hours before coming back to life and feeling like a new man as he reached Lingmell. The weather on Saturday was superb and Andy completed the round with a very strong final leg from Buttermere to Keswick. His time was 33 hrs 45 mins 59 secs and he had reduced Howard’s time by a massive 8½ hours to set a mark that will be very difficult to beat. Very roughly it is a Bob Graham in 20 hours, continued at the same pace for another 14 hours.



PAUL NELSON – A few weeks later on Friday 9th July, Paul set off travelling anti-clockwise on the Steve Parr and completed in the second fastest time of 36 hrs 52 mins 31 secs. Paul writes: “The route was brilliant, but it was claggy on most of the tops. This cleared late afternoon on the Friday and through the evening. The clag came back in on Saturday morning and we had a bit of rain. Even with that, it was very humid and didn’t make for great running, so I suffered with the heat. The skies cleared again in the late afternoon and it was baking on the north end of the Dodds and Blencathra. In my opinion anti-clockwise is the best way; to get the hard technical sections out of the way when you are fresh-legged just seems to make sense. Once you get to the Three Shires Stone all the legs have good runnable sections where you can make up lots of time.”

ANGELA WHITE (aka Running Granny) – On Wednesday 9th June, Angela completed the 62 peaks on the Steve Parr Round to celebrate her 62nd birthday year. She started/finished at Threlkeld Cricket Club and didn’t visit the Moot Hall. Her time was 3 days 3 hrs 35 mins. Angela only began her running career at the age of 53 and nine years later at the age of 62, she had climbed the 62 highest lake district peaks – something she could never have imagined ten years ago. Her mission at www.therunninggranny.co.uk is to raise awareness of health and ageing and encourage others to take small steps to improve their health and quality of life.



Previous page: Tom Hollins on his Wainwright’s round © Steve Ashworth; Above top to bottom: Adam Berry on his record-breaking Steve Parr Round © Paul Wilson; Paul Nelson on his Steve Parr Round, the second fastest time to date © Luke Kennedy; Angela White while training for her 62@62 challenge © Eddie Winthorpe

KIM COLLISON – PADDY BUCKLEY ROUND RECORD

Kim writes: “After dreams of breaking the Paddy Buckley Record in 2020, I was determined to give it an attempt in spring 2021. With Math Roberts setting a new bar in 2020, I knew I would have to be in great shape. With a good winter training block, my legs were feeling sharp and the lifting of travel restrictions combined with a good weather window meant I pencilled the 17th April for the round. I gathered a team at short notice and at 5am I set off on leg 1 from Llanberis, heading for Ogwen. The legs were feeling fantastic and I was bouncing up through the mines. Luckily I was carrying some of my own sandwiches for the first few tops. I really went after the record and while fresh made good time on the record splits. I danced my way through the boulders and descended with glee off Tryfan on a beautiful clear morning and a light breeze. The Carneddau leg was my favourite of the round, it’s just such a great leg if you love fell running and my legs still felt strong.

Arriving into Capel Curig I was about 20 mins ahead of Math and for the rest of the round I stayed around this mark, gaining and losing a handful of minutes with the highs and lows of energy. The long Capel to Nantmor leg was always going to be the crux and I leant on Sam Hill and Jack Scott to keep the pace high and find the best lines between the small knoll like tops which make you wonder, why is this a summit? My legs managed to keep flowing and I maintained a smile (or was it a grimace?) up Cnicht. The early spring sunshine was making me overheat slightly; however, I wanted to keep pushing this good runnable section to Nantmor, as I know how good Math is at this type of running.

The Moel Hebog leg is where I started to feel the early effort. After maintaining a good powerful hike to the summit of Moel Hebog, I started to suffer with appetite and a few less calories were entering my system. The pace started to slow and time was starting to slip slightly. Forcing in pizza and more Mountain Fuel Jellies, the legs eventually returned and the motivation of the goal kicked in again. The long descent to Pont Cae’r Gors enabled me to get back on track for the record.

For the last leg I had Andy Thompson and Roger Taylor pushing and pulling me (not literally) to the top of Snowdon. I was feeling strong and the knowledge of a 20-minute gap on the summit of Snowdon allowed me to have a mini-celebration of a cracking mountain day in Wales. A mini-drama of some calf cramp on the descent had me writhing on the floor for 30 seconds but this would not stop me now.

Somewhere near Foel Goch, Math Roberts booming voice was a welcome sound. I was grateful Math was able to help guide me down to Llanberis with a nice posse of runners. The smile was growing

and I still had a powerful kick through Llanberis to complete the round in 16 hrs 20 mins 40 secs. I had reduced Math’s record by 18 minutes.”

KIM COLLISON – SCOTTISH MUNROS 24 HOUR RECORD

Kim writes “After the Paddy Buckley record, I recovered quickly and my attention turned to the Munros 24 hour record. I enjoyed watching the Carnethy presentation Sasha Chepelin and Alistair Masson did this winter about the record Sasha broke with 32 Munros last August. I was watching it thinking that Braeriach was an enticing carrot. The draw of adventure and the opportunity to explore a new area with a Round captured my imagination. At the beginning of June I spent 4 days on the round trying to learn the route and understand the challenge. I realised that the terrain was one of the biggest challenges and would slow progress compared with the Lakeland 24 hour record. I was now committed to the round and started to ask for support, gathering a team of trusted pacers and generous local hill runners who knew the area.

Standing on the Bridge of Dee at 6 am on Saturday 3rd July I was excited to get the adventure underway. I see an adventure as a journey into nature where the outcome is uncertain. I was willing to explore my limits to see if this record was possible but aware the risk of failure was high. The round started off fun with bounce, smiles and the miles flying by. I chatted with the most energetic hill runner and West Highland Way record holder Rob Sinclair and Hamish Battle who beat me at my last race, the Carnethy 5 in 2020, although this was going to be Hamish’s longest run. There was some watch-checking and asking if I was happy with the pace? I was moving along at 7:00 min/mile NGP (normalised graded pace) for the first hour and it felt comfortable. I eased off a bit and got into a good climbing rhythm to Ben Avon. Here was the confirmation of my fast start with 12 minutes gained on my schedule. After Beinn a’ Bhuird the ground changed to boulders, heather and peat hags as we made our way to Beinn Bhreac where we waved goodbye to Hamish.

Descending into Glen Derry there’s no sight of Ally Beavan and Ross Brannigan to take over from Rob. No panic, I have Rob in support and he has an emergency Snickers. We fill bottles, look right in vague hope they would bounce into sight and then crack on up the steep heathery climb towards Beinn Mheadhoin. To be fair we arrived 35 minutes ahead of schedule and as we approached the top of the climb they appeared in the valley below. Rob let out a yell in the hope they would clock we have passed and give chase. Luckily with the out-and-back to Derry Cairngorm we find Ally who has put in a tempo effort, then pick up Ross near the summit of Ben Macdui heading home after thinking his chase was a lost cause.

Opposite page: Kim on his Scottish Munros 24 hour Record © Ross Brannigan

My spirit was high and it felt like a grand mountain day with great views. We waved good bye to Rob on Carn a’ Mhaim still with his Snickers and very grateful for his shift.

We descended steeply to Corroul Bothy where yet again we were too early for the support team. Ally drew the short straw and continued on the next leg. Halfway up to the Devil’s Point Richard Bannister and Ryan Gordon appeared running hard along the path and were waiting for us by the time we had done the out and back. The high summits were now coming in and out of cloud, the hills were becoming more of a slog and my bounce had faded. However, it was good to meet unfamiliar runners who very kindly headed out to support me. The extra top, Braeriach, added about 55 minutes to the round and by White Bridge I was this amount of time ahead of 24-hour pace. Things were looking good on paper but I was slumping to a low. The fast pace was starting to take its toll and I suffered up the long climb towards Carn Bhac with Konrad Rawlik and Matt Stapley keeping me focused. I wondered how I would keep this going for another 13 hours when I felt so rubbish. The energy returned and my sprits lifted enough to regain the determination to keep pushing hard. The weather was great for running during the day but by 8pm the showers had rolled in with thick mountain fog making life a little more challenging and unpleasant for all involved. I struggled to keep warm and needed an extra layer to keep the shivers away. Matt was on point with navigation while Konrad was on hand to keep the energy going in and hold my poles.

By Glenshee it was dark and wet with hill visibility less than 10m and the van loomed out of the fog. I imagine Matt and Konrad were glad to be done and climbing into

warm cars. The buffer was now down to 45 minutes and I knew this was going to be a battle. I picked up Adam Godwin who had paced me into Braithwaite a year earlier, Sabrina fresh from her Wainwright’s record, Ben and Al the Braemar local who really knows these hills. All I could do was concentrate on following the guys and digging deep into my reserves to keep relentlessly moving forward. The navigation was tricky, the rocks were slippery and I was struggling to keep food down. We slowly leaked hard won time but I was not going down without a fight. I couldn’t let the team down without giving everything. Adam knows to give me the hard cold facts and this enabled me to summon up my reserves. I pushed and pushed and slowly the tops ticked by. Dawn arrived and eventually I made it to Lochnager, the 33rd Munro. Two giant stags appeared close by and the cloud lifted to reveal some views. The relief and deep fatigue was in my face. I had 77 minutes to make it back to Invercauld Bridge. I knew I had a chance of breaking the record, however the first half of the descent before reaching the forest track is some of the roughest terrain you can experience. With wooden legs and on the verge of hitting the calorie wall, nothing was yet certain.

Shuffling up to the brow of Bridge of Dee to break the record with 33 Munros in 23hrs 48mins 33secs felt incredible. The total distance was 100 miles with 26,500 feet ascent. This adventure had it all - challenge, nature, community and tired smiles of success. Thank you Rob, Hamish, Ally, Ross, Ryan, Richard, Konrad, Matt, Adam, Sabrina, Ben and Al for your generous support and pictures. The biggest thank you goes to my wife Ally who spent lots of time in a car park and put up with a tired and unwell boy on the long drive home.”



ROSS JENKIN – BIG 4 AT 40

Ross Jenkin is the first person to complete a continuous traverse of all four of the UK’s classic 24-hour mountain challenges: Paddy Buckley, Denis Rankin, Charlie Ramsay and Bob Graham rounds. He had set out to complete the four iconic rounds in 2020 but poor weather and injury meant he had to pull out before the last round. This time Ross began his journey with the Paddy Buckley Round, which he completed in super-hot conditions in 25 hrs 36 mins. He travelled to Ireland to attempt the Denis Rankin Round which is based in the Mourne and this was completed in 23 hrs 2 mins. Back across the Irish Sea and then up to Fort William ready to start the Ramsay Round, which he completed in 29 hrs 7 mins. The final part of the road trip brought him to Keswick from where he completed a Bob Graham Round in 32 hrs 59 mins.

The Big 3 Rounds are all about 103km with 9,000m ascent and the Denis Rankin Round is about 12km shorter with 1,500m less climb. On the later rounds, Ross was struggling with blisters and sores on his feet. Sleep deprivation also made the later rounds more challenging.

OLI JOHNSON - RIGBY ROUND RECORD

On June 18th Oli set the record for the Rigby Round, starting/finishing at the Norwegian Stone in a super-fast time of 17 hrs 13 mins. This was some 2 hrs 20 mins faster than Sam Alexander’s 2020 record. The Rigby Round climbs 18 Munros, is about 72 miles (116km) with 20,000ft (6,100m) ascent and the ethos is that wherever possible the contender should have the skills to attempt it solo unsupported. Oli, Vivian Scott and Jasmin Paris all made their attempts anti-clockwise, solo unsupported on the same weekend in mid-June. Each was blissfully unaware of the others’ attempts and they never met en route.

Oli writes: “I have had my eye on this round for a couple of years now, since running the Big Three Rounds. The ethos of it appealed to me (it’s ideally run solo, unsupported and without recceing) and although I have been up Cairngorm and Ben Macdui before, I was basically a Cairngorms “noob”. I find this kind of challenge a lot easier when part of the motivation comes from exploring some new places. I set off at 01:30 on June 18th amid clouds of midges and after a pretty restless few hours in the tent, so it was a relief to get moving. The run out along Loch Morlich and through Rothiemurchus went quickly and my legs felt reassuringly good in spite of a heavy pack. Pretty sure I saw a wildcat staring back at me from a felled area, its eyes lit up green by my headlamp. Up the Lairig Ghru and onto the climb of Braeriach and the clouds started to close in as the temperature dropped. I had to stop to layer up and

actually start concentrating on the nav. Reached the summit cairn, ran off, checked my map and... no compass! Retraced my steps and found it nestled among some rocks near the cairn. A close shave and not sure I would have managed the next bit in the clag and dark without it. The next couple of tops went fine with the dawn breaking and a bit of mist swirling around. I took a direct line to Beinn Bhrotain rather than the long path run, which worked out well, and I seemed to be saving a bit of time on my planned splits. My main concern at this point was that I may have started too fast.

I enjoyed the dramatic section over Lothian Uaine, Cairn Toul and the Devil’s Point and was feeling good by the bothy at Corrour. But then came the vertical wall back out of the Lairig Ghru, which was a struggle. I lost time on my wildly ambitious split and had to fend off the negative thoughts. Ben Macdui was another long grind, but the next section of rolling Alpine trails perked me back up and I started to really enjoy myself again. The tor-studded summit of Beinn Mheadhoin was a highlight, as if a selection of Dartmoor’s best outcrops had been randomly dropped onto a Munro.

From Alpine trails to proper mountain marathon terrain on the next section, although I was fortunate that it was dry underfoot. I was still moving OK by the time I made it up to the Ben Avon ridge and enjoyed the chance to dump my pack for a few kms. Equally glad to find it again on my way back. The ridge itself was another highlight and I was still feeling OK at this point. The climb up to Beinn a Chaorainn put paid to that and the rest of the way was a real slog; sapping terrain up Bynack Mor then a proper grunt up Cairngorm. From there it felt like a long way down to the road and then a hard flat run home, which I tried to run really hard not letting myself look at the map or watch. Really happy to see the time when I reached the Norwegian Stone, but that was quickly replaced with nausea and shivers so it was a while before I could properly enjoy finishing.

Although everything went about as well as it could, the run was a case study of the imagination-reality gap. Having spent ages poring over the map and planning my route, it was a shock to finally get stuck into it and encounter the actual physical and mental challenges along the way. It took me a while to remember that it is a test of patience as the early hours crawl by before you reach that strange zone where time becomes fluid: some minutes seem endless while the hours slip by unnoticed. The heat was probably the biggest tangible problem and I had to work hard to find, carry and drink enough fluid, mostly electrolyte solution. But given the range of possible weather scenarios in the Cairngorms, being a bit too warm is not really a big deal. It almost felt like cheating because the conditions were so good!

Like the other rounds, this was a proper self-indulgent treat. I’m really pleased with the run and I can’t think of another challenge that would suit my niche skill set of navigating and trudging through rough terrain quite so well. That said, there are many people who could go faster and no doubt will - I would definitely recommend it as one to have a crack at!”

VIVIAN SCOTT – 22hrs 15mins. On the same day as Oli, Vivian completed her round in good weather and set an excellent time for the Rigby Round – the fastest by a woman so far. I’m afraid I don’t have any more details of Vivian’s journey.

JASMIN PARIS – 22hrs 19mins. The day after Oli and Vivian, Jasmin set off on her first big run for nearly two years and her longest ever solo unsupported run. By the time she reached the summit of Braeriach (Munro 1), she was enveloped in low cloud. Jasmin spent the next 20 hours feeling her way through cloud and mist, fixated on her compass and taking incredible care to avoid time-consuming mistakes. Considering the super-challenging conditions, all went well with minor inefficiencies until as the night drew in, she descended the wrong ridge off Bynack Mor, the penultimate Munro. A soul destroying extra climb onto Cairngorm Plateau was required in darkness. The final long descent from Cairngorm brought Jasmin back to the Norwegian Stone and the satisfaction of knowing that she had persevered, alone in the mountains in very challenging conditions.

FINLAY WILD – GLEN SHIEL ROUND

On 21st April Finlay completed a new round of 35 miles (56km), 18,300ft (5,600m) ascent in 8 hrs 47 mins 14 secs from Cluanie Inn. The route started and finished at the Cluanie Inn and was loosely based on the skyline of Glen Shiel. Included were the 9 Munros south of the Glen, the Forcan Ridge, Biod an Fhithich Ridge, the Five Sisters of Kintail (Sgurr na Moraich, Sgurr nan Saighead, Sgurr Fhuaran, Sgurr na Carnach and Sgurr na Ciste

Duibhe), and the Brothers (Saileag, Sgurr a’ Bhealaich Dheirg and Aonach Meadhoin).The day was hotter than expected, especially the climb up to Sgurr na Moraich. Finlay didn’t have quite enough water but eked it out with some snow! It was a day of brilliant spring weather with great views and extensive patches of snow around the Munro summits. The terrain was varied with some fast running but lots of rough stuff too.

JONATHAN TOMBS – A “GREAT” DAY OUT

Jon completed a new route that he had created during lockdown, on his birthday weekend of 21st-23rd May. The route is a circuit (start/finish Keswick) connecting all the Wainwrights with “Great” in their name, and taking in Great Langdale and Great Moss with their stunning mountain scenery. Jon called the route “A Great Day Out” and the basic stats from his Strava trace are 141km (88 miles) and height gain 6,435m (21,100ft). It took Jon 33 hrs 24 mins as his pace slowed in the second half due to painful feet issues. The weather was mixed on the Friday evening and night but then the Saturday was lovely with lots of sunshine and a stunning sunset over Crummock Water. The run was split into 7 legs and Jon had running support on each leg, and road support at each handover. He had planned more off-road between Buttermere and Keswick but increasingly painful blistered feet meant Jon included a couple of longer road sections, though off-road options are available.

STEPH DWYER – YORKSHIRE TOP 10 PEAKS LADIES’ RECORD

On Saturday 24th April Steph completed the 80 miles round of the 10 highest peaks in Yorkshire from Horton in Ribblesdale. She was raising money for two very worthy charities, the Cave Rescue Organisation and the mental health charity Mind. In 22 hrs 14 mins she climbed Ingleborough, Whernside, Crag Hill, Great Coum, Swarth Fell, High Seat, Great Shunner Fell, Buckden Pike, Great Whernside and Pen Y Ghent.



Above left to right: Jonathon Tombs at the start of his **A ‘Great’ Day Out**, with Kim Collison on support; Jonathon at the top of Great Borne, ‘Great’ number 10, with only one left; Steph Dwyer on her Yorkshire 10 peaks, coming off Great Shunner fell, summit 6 out of 10 and just over halfway around © Lee Redfern

MARCUS SCOTNEY – LIMESTONE WAY RECORD

Marcus set off at 08:00 on 3rd April from Castleton and ran the 46 mile route south to Rocester. He was aiming to break 7 hours and completed in the speedy time of 6 hrs 18 mins 18 secs.

JAMES STEWART – FIFE COASTAL PATH RECORD

On Friday 30th April James set off from Kincardine at 04:00 and completed the 117-mile (188km) coastal path to Newburgh in a time of 19 hrs 31 mins 46 secs. The record was previously held by Nicola Duncan who completed the route in 23 hrs 17 mins last September.

ANNA RUTHERFORD – SOUTHERN UPLAND WAY WOMEN'S RECORD

The 214-mile (344km) 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 (8,230m) of ascent. Last October, Jack Scott reduced Mike Hartley's record by 13 minutes to 55 hrs 42 mins. Anna set off from Portpatrick on Thursday 29th April at 05:00 and 62 hrs 34 mins 55 secs later she completed her journey. She ran 17 hours quicker than the previous female record holder, Rosie Bell. Anna's time is also only seven hours slower than Jack's overall record.

PAUL GIBLIN & GRAHAM CONNOLLY – CAPE WRATH TRAIL RECORD

Ultra-runners Paul and Graham set off heading south from Cape Wrath at 06:00 on Tuesday 27th April. They completed their 230 mile journey 3 days 23 hrs 44 mins later at Fort William. They

weren't paced but two friends provided road support throughout the journey. The previous record of 4 days 9 hrs 43 mins was set by Beth Pascall and Damian Hall who ran south-to-north unsupported in December 2018 in winter conditions, with 18 hours of darkness each day.

BRIAN MELIA – WAINWRIGHTS PENNINE JOURNEY RECORD

In September 1938, with Adolf Hitler poised to bring war once again to Europe, Alfred Wainwright left the railway station at Settle to begin a long, solo, circular walk. It was a walk that took him up the eastern flanks of the Pennines to the Roman Wall, west along the Wall as far as Greenhead, then returning to Settle down the west of the Pennines. This route of 247 miles (398km), through some of the finest upland scenery in England, was beautifully translated in 2010 to the needs of the modern walker by David and Heather Pitt in their guide "A Pennine Journey".

Brian set off on his Pennine Journey at 06:00 on Saturday 1st May. He writes: "I really enjoyed the Pennine Journey and all my friends who supported me on the road and fells were super-friendly. I was keen not to pressurise anyone into running fast and was totally happy trotting along. Susan insisted I complete it as it is the first time it has been attempted as a continuous run. I probably stopped for too long, but I am not sure it mattered in the end as there is no reference time to go by. The weather was horrendous after Garrigill, but I was well equipped with Páramo and warm waterproof mitts. My support suffered a bit, but we were a good team. The finish over Ingleborough in deep snow was great fun....". Brian completed his journey in 3 days 16 hrs 16 mins.



Above: The view down the Buttermere valley in the Lake District © Steve Ashworth/ La Sportiva

CURRENT 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! GPS navigation devices and poles may be used.

Timing needs to be to the second from now on as we head into a world of marginal gains. The support team should record the Start and Finish time of day 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 stopwatch 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.

Long distance mountain running records can be achieved in various styles:

SUPPORTED – You have pacers and supporters that meet you along the way. It can be one person handing you water once, to an entire team that accompanies you the whole distance giving you everything except physical assistance. Whether it's just once or continuously, any support at all means it is a Supported trip. Supported can enable the fastest trips due to the ability to carry less weight and be 'encouraged' by your pacers. For an achievement to be described as a Supported record you also have to beat the fastest Solo times.

SOLO SUPPORTED – As for Supported but with no pacers at any point on the route. For an achievement to be described as a Solo Supported record you also have to beat the fastest Solo Self-Supported and Unsupported times.

SOLO SELF-SUPPORTED – You may have as much support as you can find along the way, but not from any pre-arranged people helping you. This can range from caching supplies in advance,

purchasing supplies along the way, to finding or begging for food or water. For an achievement to be described as a Solo Self-Supported record you also have to beat the fastest Solo Unsupported time.

SOLO UNSUPPORTED – Carry everything you need from start to finish except water from natural sources. Public taps along the route are acceptable but if you ask for water, that's solo Self-Supported. Do not pick up anything from a cache or leave anything for collection later. Do not arrange to meet anyone en route. Accept no external support of any kind, nor any contact where moral support is offered.

FRA LONG DISTANCE AWARD – NOMINATIONS PLEASE

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@staminade.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, Martin Stone canvasses a panel of about 30 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 gofar99@gmail.com.

AMPHIBIOUS AMBITIONS

WORDS MARTYN PRICE, SECRETARY, FROG GRAHAM ROUND CLUB

The peculiar weather we experienced during spring certainly didn't help any aspiring Frog Graham Round contenders and I was beginning to worry that the busy year we'd forecast wasn't going to materialise, then a whole slew of attempt registrations turned up and it became clear that it was 'All Systems Go'.

There were 5 successful rounds on the 30th May: Mike Quinn (member 078) led a number of friends from Esk Valley Fell Club on a rare clockwise (CW) attempt and I was fortunate enough to spot them descending from Rannerdale Knotts while I was dropping down from Whiteless Pike. It was a hot, humid day and I know it will have been a tough outing – going CW brings its own challenges: you get the big swim across Derwentwater out of the way from the outset, but then you have the long climb up Skiddaw to finish off with, which isn't much fun if you're carrying a (wet) wetsuit from your swim across Bassenthwaite, whereas on an ACW round it's a pretty flat run in to Keswick once you've swum Derwentwater. I guess the same sort of analogy holds true for the BGR and going ACW/CW.

I've frequently heard it said of the Frog Graham Round that the route follows an elegant and logical line – it's one of the things that make it such an attractive proposition. However, it's not the only challenge of its type and other members of the fell-running community who 'swim a bit' have been seeking alternate swim/run challenges.

Chris Waters (Ambleside AC) has been at the forefront in this regard, he and Tim Hunt coming up with the marvellously titled 'Puddle Buckley'. It's really difficult developing a route that doesn't feel contrived, and they spent ages working on the Puddle. Chris was good enough to liaise early on with the Frog Graham Round Club as they wanted their creation to have the same basic ethos and of course, when you're working on something like this a second opinion is very worthwhile.

The result is a marvellous, albeit tough, route that takes in a good chunk of the Paddy Buckley itself while managing to have some decent and well-interspersed swims. The route starts and ends in Llanberis, and the rounds thus far have been ACW meaning the first top is Moel Eilio and last Elidir Fach. Along the way there are four swims (same as the Frog Graham) across Llyn Gwynant, Llynau Mymbyr, Llyn Ogwen (of course!) and Llyn Padarn, meaning you pretty much finish the round as you step out of the lake.

The first to complete the Puddle Buckley was erstwhile BGR Club Secretary Paul Wilson – I think I'm right in saying that it was absolutely freezing and he did it pretty much alone – while the

first ladies to complete were Natalie Hawkrigg and Clare Regan. The round is of a similar length to the Frog Graham Round with a bit more ascent/descent, but then the total swimming is slightly less. It's harder going though and the consensus is that it's at least an hour slower than the 'Frog'. More details available via www.puddlebuckley.co.uk

Many of you will now be thinking "but what about Scotland?" Well yes, exactly. The truth of the matter is that Glen Nevis and the surrounding areas don't easily lend themselves to this kind of endeavour because any potential swims would be just too brutal for anything other than individual challenges: I've heard of at least one idea for a 'Swimsey Ramsey' that would involve a 5K swim across Loch Treig! Chris Waters is once more ahead of the field in this regard. Although time commitments and injury – not to mention the ongoing pandemic – have prevented him from fully developing his concept, he has a great project in hand that he has named The Ring of Stirling in honour of Chris Stirling who sadly passed away in 2019. As many of you will be aware, Chris was an exceptional triathlete, fell runner and keen member of Ambleside A.C. who was invariably an inspiration to other members. I'm sworn to secrecy regarding the true location of The Ring of Stirling, but can say that the idea was borne from Chris's love of the Celtman triathlon. It will be worth the wait.



Background photo: Tim Hunt descending Cwm Llan on the first leg of his successful Puddle Buckley Round © Chris Waters; Above: Chris Stirling competing in the Kendal Winter League © Steve Ashworth

Joss Naylor Lakeland Challenge

WORDS IAN CHARTERS

One or two contenders made enquiries about early attempts during late winter and early spring but it wasn't until the easing of Covid-19 restrictions in mid-April that Joss was happy for the Challenge to resume. As in 2020, the prohibition on overnight stays away from home was the most critical restriction. Pacers are still required for safety reasons and, as in 2020, the number of pacers is restricted to a maximum of two per leg with only one per leg being preferred. Social distancing, other guidelines and rules are still to be adhered to. Unlike 2020, however, the long established tradition of previous completers meeting contenders on route to provide support and encouragement is resuming and Joss will endeavour to be at Greendale Bridge to meet and congratulate finishers.

A "Good Winter" on the fells is almost always a prerequisite for long days out in the summer and something most of us were denied by travel restrictions. Local hills can provide good days out, of course, but rarely offer the same opportunities for long climbs and sustained descents needed to develop the required hill fitness. A year ago the relatively short-lived travel restrictions were lifted in July and it was as though a dam had burst with 19 successful Crossings in July, August and early September. This year, I suspect, fewer runners have been able to get all the training and recovery they would like to have had before committing to an attempt and some comments on social media (of which more follows) tend to support this view.

With this in mind it was particularly encouraging to hear from two contenders regarding attempts in April, especially when neither was tentative about their plans. Both Alan Whelan (M55) and Simon Franklin (M55) had plans to set off from Pooley Bridge on 24th April at 05:00. Simon graciously delayed his start until 05:15 to reduce congestion at Pooley Bridge, Kirkstone Pass and Dunmail Raise. While Simon delayed his start Alan, having seen the weather on the 17th April, wondered whether he should have set off a week early but he needn't have worried because the 24th was at least as bright and sunny as it had been the week before. Rainer Burchett (first Crossing in 2005) met both Alan and Simon at Kirkstone Pass. Within their allowed time (15 hours) both reached Greendale Bridge where Joss was waiting to congratulate them. Pauline and I were in West Cumbria for a few days and able to be at Greendale to see both Alan and Simon finish. Apart from social distancing it was almost like the "before times": very heartening to see Joss looking so well having survived a very hot dry winter in Spain (tough for some, obviously) and to see the first two successful Crossings of 2021.

May saw Kevin Barron (Ambleside AC, M50) reach Greendale Bridge comfortably within 12 hours and recently Jon Wright (Todmorden Harriers, M50) submitted supporting details for his sub-12 hour Crossing in September last year. My congratulations to both Kevin and Jon whom I look forward to meeting at the Presentation Dinner in October.

Thanks to Martyn Price for creating the private "Joss Naylor Lakeland Challenge" group on Facebook. I know not everyone uses or is a fan of Facebook but if you do use Facebook this could become the easiest place to obtain general advice, up-to-date information and recommendations on the route. Joining the Facebook group isn't a requirement for completing the Challenge and won't be a requirement in the future.

If you are interested and looking for more information please have a look at <http://jossnaylor.blogspot.co.uk/> for the requirements, some history and a collection of individuals' accounts from recent years. I am happy to try to provide answers to specific questions especially if the information isn't already available on the blog.

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

For information and validation details - Ian Charters
<http://jossnaylor.blogspot.co.uk/>
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Background photo: Alan Whelan (M55) descending towards Greendale Bridge on his successful JNLC on the 24th April 2021 © Ian Charters; Inset: Simon Franklin (M55) at the end of his successful JNLC on the same day © Ian Charters.



Lorraine Slater, Pendle Way in a Day © Will Herman

runfurther update

WORDS KAREN NASH

Time for an update after what should have been the first six races of the series. As Haworth Hobble and Calderdale Hike were cancelled, we have opted to stay with a series of 10 races this year. As so many races have 'roll over' entries, we have agreed that runners can include any four races for points. One of these must be a 'Long'. Hopefully this gives people more flexibility to complete the counting four.

A huge shout out to the Jamies (McIlvenny and Glazebrook) who ensured that their races could go ahead through hard work and determination. First up was Pendle Way in a Day on a revised date in April. Runners were treated to amazing weather and probably the best underfoot conditions the course will ever see. Sadly, I was injured and so marshalling at Wycoller instead, watching with some jealousy. Records tumbled on the dry ground on this later date. First male was Charlie Parkinson 7.17.30, then Dave Motley 7.17.55 and thirdly Lawrence Eccles 7.26. Lorraine Slater was 6th overall and first female in a new record of 7.48. Next year hopefully we will be back to the February mud - and darkness for many.

The Spire Ultra follows rural paths around Chesterfield and is fast becoming a favourite for many. For the second year, the start was from High Ashes Farm and runners started in waves of eight. The weather was poor with steady rain for much of the day, although not the very heavy rain that had been predicted. Once running, it was fine, and people were just glad to be pinning numbers on again. At this race too, records tumbled, although it is not quite an identical course owing to the change in venue for Covid. First man was Julian Hood in 4.16.15, closely followed by Kevin Hoult in 4.16.25. There was also a battle for third with Lawrence Eccles in 4.30 and Rory Harris in 4.31. Christine Howard finished in 5.48

and Karen Nash in 5.49, both beating the old record, with Sarah Challans not far behind in third place.

Shires and Spires, also known as the Northants Ultra, was just a week later. It is a fast, flatter course as we try to get a real mix in the series. First men and women were all locals, not Runfurther runners: Andrew Siggers 4.08, Jack Chennel 4.17, Amy Sarkies 4.54 and Leatitia Brighton 5.07.

The leaderboard has been updated but only shows those who have run two races. It will be interesting to see how things change after the next few races: Lakes 5 Passes, Pennine 39 and Beacons 50/100.

As always, runners are welcome to join. Go to Runfurther.com, get a membership form and email it to me nash.family@talktalk.net. You will get a chance to win spot prizes and goodies at the end of the year. Short, medium and long races from 30 - 100 miles over a wide variety of terrain and in different parts of the country should mean there is something for everybody to enjoy. Thanks as always to our sponsors: Mountain Fuel, Tent Meals, Ultimate Direction, Injinji, Icebug shoes and Romney's mint cake.

RACE	DATE	CATEGORY
Beacons 50/100	7 August	L
Bullock Smithy Hike	4 September	L
3 Towers Ultra	2 October	M
Round Rotherham	9 October	L
Yorkshire Trod	23 October	L

IS A BUFF A BANDAGE?

FRA FIRST AID

WORDS & PHOTOS IAN WINTERBURN

Last weekend, the latest FRA Outdoor First Aid course for race organisers, marshals, coaches, and runners was run. The course is not intended to turn you into a doctor but to help you deal with emergency scenarios in a remote environment. Emergency first aid in the hills is summed up in the 3 Ps: preserve life, protect from further injury and promote recovery. The marshal sent up a hill could need both the knowledge and the basic equipment to accomplish these.

A runner won't die of a twisted ankle - but two hours on the ground in the rain and wind without any protection could be life-threatening.

Aside from first aid, the course looks at how to appoint suitable and experienced marshals. It considers what equipment they need, over and above their personal kit, at more remote checkpoints and discusses the when, where, and how of getting help from the emergency services.



SOME COMMENTS FROM RECENT PARTICIPANTS:

The course itself involves a mix of class-based discussions and (Covid-secure) hands-on sessions using resus mannequins, and then practising moving and positioning skills on each other. It is informative, interactive and friendly. It seems a little perverse to say this about a first aid course, but it was fun. The second day, we moved to the outdoors and practised the learnt skills in scenarios. There is no exam at the end (hurrah). The course is an ongoing assessment with some short multiple choice questions at the end of day 1. You are assessed by the instructor throughout the course. The course is ideal for any mountain/outdoor education leader.

If you want to do a course like this then I would encourage you to do so. It does not mean that you should feel obliged to be a designated first-aider on a race if you do not want to. What it does mean is that you will feel more confident in dealing with a situation if you are out on the hills regardless of whether you are marshalling

or running a fell race. This course is not just about how to patch up cuts and bruises to injured runners at the end of a fell race (you do not really need a first aid course to stick a plaster on) nor is it wholly like a work-based first aid course even though much of that is covered too. For me, it is about trying to keep an injured/sick person (and yourself) safe/alive until help arrives. It is about using what kit you have to hand to help a person, that is not necessarily in a comprehensive first aid kit (although ideal personal kit is discussed). It is amazing how useful roll mats and bike inner tubes can be when you do not have bandages or a sling. Or what you can use a buff for (no not a hat). I really hope I never have to use the skills but at least I'll be more confident now if an incident does arise."

For more info or to register your interest for a future course, please contact the FRA first aid coordinator and course facilitator Ian Winterburn (ian@everythingoutdoors.co.uk).

The course costs £85 (as at June 2021)

AN INTERVIEW WITH SCOUT ADKIN

FRA MEMBERS' REPRESENTATIVE



Scout on her way to winning Loughrigg Fell Race in May 2021 © Steve Ashworth

WHEN DID YOU START RUNNING? WERE YOUR FAMILY OR ANY OTHER SPORTS INVOLVED?

I was about 9 years old when I started running. I was picked to run for my primary school in a cross-country race and I haven't stopped running since. We have always been a very active family and would go on holiday to the Lake District which involved lots of fell walking. Both my brother and I were encouraged in a variety of sports when we were younger, and I was a competitive swimmer for a while. However, I decided I preferred running to swimming. I think my parents also liked my change of sport, swapping sitting on a hot poolside for wet, windy, muddy fields. I started being coached by Gregor Nicholson – he was a big influence on my improvement as a child. My brother then started running too, and my competitive side kicked in even more. I had to keep training to stop him getting faster than me... annoyingly it didn't take him long!

WHEN AND WHY DID YOU SWITCH TO FELLS?

I started fell running a few years later. I started doing track and cross-country races along with the Borders and Highland Games handicap races. I quickly got bored of running around in circles. I did enjoy some cross-country races – especially the Borders cross-country series – that was “proper” cross country! I realised I preferred the hilly courses and did my first hill race which happened to be the Scottish Junior Championships. I surprised myself at how well I did and this was when I properly started training for fell running.

HOW DID YOU FIND THE TRANSITION FROM JUNIORS TO SENIORS? WAS THERE PLENTY OF HELP AVAILABLE?

The transition from junior to senior is tricky. The races are tougher

- they aren't fully flagged, and the terrain is more challenging - but I did enjoy the 'longer' races. They were really only short and easy medium races! Also, during this time, you are finishing school and possibly going to university, further education, or starting a job which brings its own challenges. Looking after yourself (cooking, food shopping and washing all your own muddy running kit), making new friends and trying to train is a tricky balance. I did get a lot of support from my parents, coach, university, and the Scottish hill squad which all helped me during this time.

WHAT ARE YOUR FAVOURITE RACES?

This is a tricky question. I like to race different races each year, but basically any uphill only races are my favourite – it's a shame there aren't many in this country! I try to run different races every year as I like new challenges and variety. I think sometimes it's good when you don't know how tough the race is beforehand, as you tend to push yourself more.

HOW DOES RUNNING IN EUROPEAN OR WORLD MOUNTAIN RACES COMPARE WITH FELL RACES?

The most obvious differences in European and World Mountain races compared to fell races are:

Weather – it's normally a lot hotter. I am not very good in the heat and if we have had bad weather here in the UK or a cold summer, I think it's hard to acclimatise in the short time before the race. I remember when I was a junior and racing in Turkey, my coach suggested I wear a lot of layers of clothes to train in so I got used to running when I felt hot. I just remember it actually being quite a warm summer here in the UK, getting pretty sweaty and creating a lot of washing!

Time of day: due to the heat, the race can sometimes start earlier in the morning or in the evening. It helps to try sessions at roughly the time of day you will be racing so your body gets used to running hard at that time.

Altitude: this is a tricky one to train for in this country but be aware of how your body may be affected by the altitude.

Travelling: the time it takes to get to the race - car, trains, planes, buses - as well as overnight stays in unfamiliar places can affect your routine along with time differences. If possible, it is good to arrive earlier to allow your body to adapt to the time change. It also helps to keep your pre-race routine the same.

Food: if you struggle with eating, or like to have specific food, take that food with you. I would also recommend taking food in case

you don't like or aren't used to the meals where you are staying. I remember taking unripe bananas in my hand luggage because I am fussy about the exact ripeness of the banana I eat before racing.

Terrain: most races don't tend to be run on rough terrain like some of the fell races in this country. This makes them faster races so make sure your training reflects this.

WHAT IS YOUR SCARIEST MOMENT ON THE FELLS?

I have had a few scares with very strong winds. Being small, there have been a few times when I have reached a summit or turned a corner and nearly been pushed over the edge or down the fell side by the wind. If I know it's forecast to have very strong winds on higher ground, I tend to change my route plan. But I think the scariest moment on the fells was about five years ago before I lived in the Lake District. My partner and I were on holiday and we were running Kentmere Horseshoe. My partner knew that route but it was the first time I have done the full thing. It was really wet when we set off, but the weather just got worse and worse with strong winds and very persistent rain. I was wet through and was already wearing my emergency kit. The wind meant I was using more energy than normal, and I wasn't eating when I should have as I just needed to keep moving. There was a point when we seriously thought we might have to call mountain rescue as I may have been developing hypothermia. Fortunately, we managed to get back down, and I don't think I have ever been so pleased to see the car!

WHY DID YOU BECOME A MEMBERSHIP REP?

Fell running is a big part of my life and I wanted to give something back to this amazing sport. Also, I wanted to be involved in decisions and projects that would affect and shape the sport in the future. Having run as a junior and now senior, I feel that I have good knowledge and experience of the sport to be part of discussions and decision-making. Being a membership rep, I would like to think that I am approachable. If a member wishes to raise a question/issue, I would be able to help and take the query to the committee as required for discussion.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO BRING TO THE ROLE AND THE FRA?

I am new to the committee but, in time, I would like to be involved in some more of the projects that the committee undertakes. I feel I can offer ideas and opinions and I try to represent FRA members when doing this.



Pat in Wasdale © Pat McIver

AN INTERVIEW WITH PAT MCIVER

FRA MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

FRA MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY – WHAT’S YOUR JOB?

As Membership Secretary, my main responsibilities are: to manage the membership database on SiEntries and deal with membership-related enquiries from members, runners thinking about joining the FRA, and from other committee members. I also provide mailing data to the printers and send copies of the magazine directly to new joiners. Whilst I have your attention, I have no magic way of knowing if you changed address unless you updated your membership record in SiEntries, so I also have the task of tracking down the more nomadic FRA members to unite them with the many returned copies which land on my doormat. The record is a Fellrunner magazine which boomeranged its way back from Australia. I was able to contact the member and send it a second time – it hasn’t returned... yet.

HOW DID YOU GET INTO FELL RUNNING

I moved to Cumbria in 1988. When not caving, I liked to go walking in the hills and I did a bit of running. My wife, Kaye, kept a horse at a local equestrian centre and introduced me to Paul Potter, mountain guide and fell runner. Paul suggested I should do a fell race. A week or so later, in 1989, I completed the Fairfield Horseshoe and was hooked. It took another couple of races before I discarded the Dunlop Green Flash and invested in a pair of Walshes.

WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT THE SPORT?

Feeling exhausted, the occasional “good” run, operating at my limit of strength and stamina, the adrenaline rush of a fast hairy descent, breaking out of the cloud precisely where I wanted to be (more frequently somewhere completely unexpected), stealing a short-lived lead on a rival.

WHAT ARE YOUR BEST FELL-RUNNING ACHIEVEMENTS?

I did once make 8th in the Coniston / Dow Crag race from the Lake shore in a decent field, making it into the results pages of the Fellrunner magazine. The cloud was low, but my local knowledge was an advantage. I thought I’d been left standing when I broke back out of the cloud with no other runner to be seen. From memory, there was a gap of around 15 minutes between the 7th placed runner and me, in 8th. A large breakaway party returned from the Duddon Valley some while later. I also ran a Bob Graham round in 2009 with very few minutes to spare.

DO YOU HAVE A FAVOURITE RACE?

It’s usually the last one I did.

HOW DID YOU COPE DURING LOCKDOWN?

I’m fortunate to have access to a variety of low-level fells from the front door and within a short drive. Kirby Moor and Blawith Common provide lots of variety and don’t attract the numbers of the honeypots further North.

WHO IS YOUR BIGGEST INSPIRATION IN THE FELL RUNNING COMMUNITY AND WHY?

There isn’t a single individual who has inspired me to achieve the also-ran status I have ascended to. It is everybody who turns up at the start line of a race, with and without realistic prospects of winning, or even finishing, that gives me the confidence to shuffle into a realistic position, somewhere closer to the back of the start field than the front.

WHAT ARE YOUR AMBITIONS FOR THE FUTURE?

Avoid serious injury, show up for a few more races now that I am (officially) retired and keep enjoying the Fells.

WHAT ARE YOUR ASPIRATIONS FOR YOUR FRA ROLE?

To keep things in a condition which means it is not a hospital pass for my successor.

HAVE YOU HAD ANY SCARY MOMENTS ON THE FELLS?

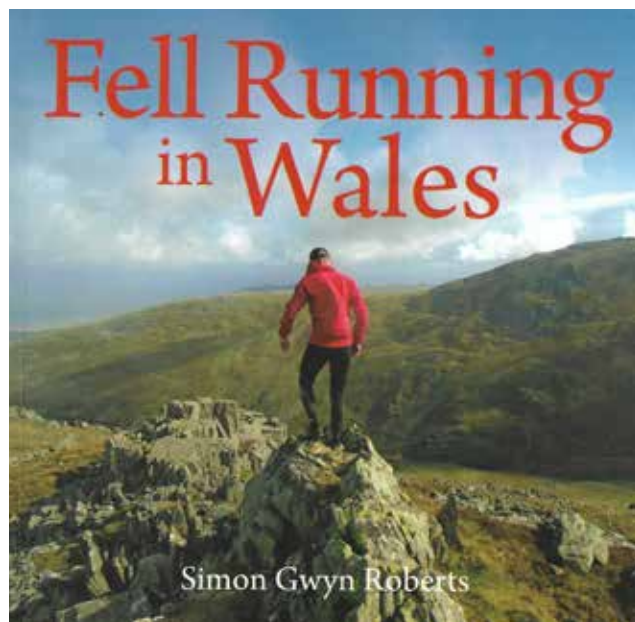
Yes. Usually involving ice and poor decision making.

FINALLY, WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO PEOPLE NEW TO THE SPORT?

Don’t follow a green and black vest when the clag closes in on Black Combe.

Pat (far right) with his fell running club, Black Combe © Pat McIver





FELL RUNNING IN WALES

BY SIMON GWYN ROBERTS

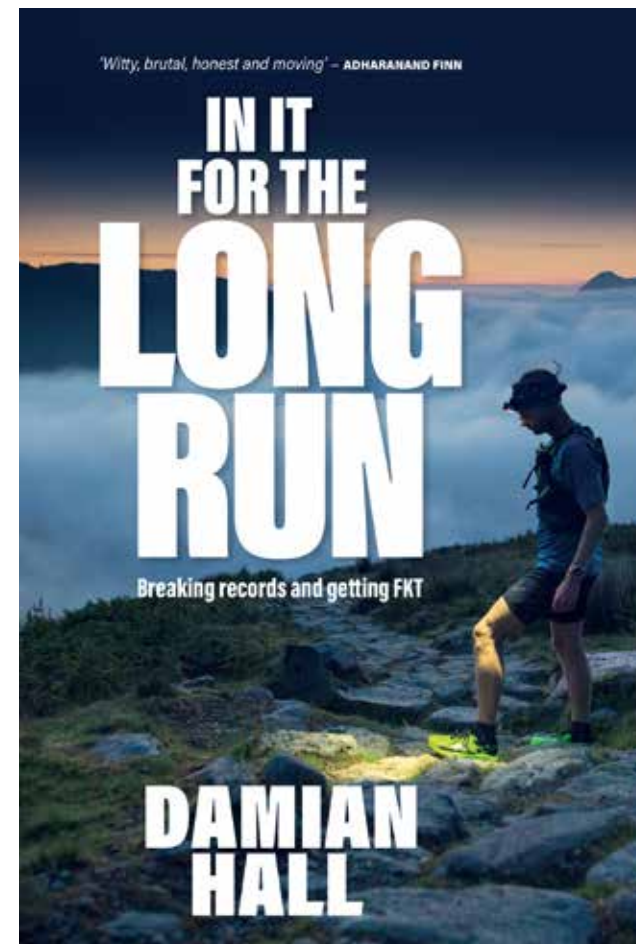
REVIEWED BY DAVE LITTLER

Some of the races get more coverage, such as Ras-Yr-Aran, Pedol Peris and Ras Yr Wyddfa (Snowdon), but Roberts uses this to emphasise some of the aspects that make each race distinctive and gives a little of the history of the race and the people involved. He argues for example how Ras-yr-Aran typifies the distinctively Welsh variety of mountain running – is there another race that takes you so high, in such a remote area far from help, so early in the year? But there are also good descriptions of lesser known races including Hotfoot up Famau, Rhobell Fawr and Ras Beca.

Roberts also introduces some of the people that make the sport special, whether in Wales, England, Scotland or Ireland without the volunteers and dedicated race organisers there is no fell racing. If you want to race, or just run, in Wales this little book will give you a great starting point and along the way you’ll read about some great races and people.

Published by Gwasg Carreg Gwalch and available at <https://carreg-gwalch.cymru/> Price £6.95

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As evidenced in *The Fellrunner* last Autumn, 2020 was the year the pandemic stopped racing and sent some people into the hills for some very long runs. Martin Stone and his fellow Long Distance Award judges had a hard time deciding which runners were deserving of the title. In any normal year, Damian Hall’s record-breaking run on the Pennine Way would have been a deserved winner, as would many of the other record runs of 2020. But 2020 was different.

In the absence of racing around the globe, Damian Hall spent his time setting three records in the UK – a winter Paddy Buckley, the 73-mile South Wales Traverse and the Pennine Way. In *“In It for the Long Run”*, Hall describes his journey from teenage footballer to record breaker. The journey is told with honesty and an openness – from teenage angst at being dumped leading to a failed ‘A’ level in Media Studies; to becoming a journalist and writer that allowed adventure, travel, discovery of the Pennine Way; and finally to becoming an outstanding ultrarunner.

As anyone who has read Damian’s articles in *The Fellrunner*, he did not fail Media Studies because he couldn’t write. This book flows along nicely and is easy to read. The narrative is honest and

IN IT FOR THE LONG RUN

BY DAMIAN HALL

REVIEWED BY DAVE LITTLER

Damian shares everything: the brutal reality of taking your body past breaking point; the “glorious simplicity of having no other task to do all day than simply run”; and being bossed about by Spinksy (Nicky Spinks). And like many youths, he had scrapes and experiences that you’d rather your mum didn’t know about. She does now.

Damian has a long and relatively successful running career which is covered in detail, from his first ultra “The Wall” in 2012, through UTMBs and Spine races. Damian Hall has had a great career but it is probably for his records in the UK that he will be most well-known by readers of *The Fellrunner*. And it is while discussing fell running and record-breaking runs that thoughts turn to support runners and road crew.

For many people wanting to challenge themselves on one of the UK challenges, the use of support runners or pit crew is a key part. There are many reasons why people support others – in the fell running world we seem to be blessed with people who help just because they can. For anyone who thinks they want to support a runner, one of the most fascinating chapters in the book covers everything you need to know. But just remember, as Nicky Spinks told Damian: “It’s a job, not a jolly.”

The book is about obsession. To run the races and records that Damian runs you must be obsessed – and he went through several obsessions. There has to be something in the mind that keeps you going when your body and brain say stop. It was fascinating to compare Damian’s route to the Pennine Way record with the journey Mike Cudahy describes in his book *“Wild Trails to Far Horizons”*. Obsession, dedication and a willingness to push beyond the limits of most people – attributes shared by Damian and Cudahy.

In It For The Long Run is available from Vertebrate Publishing, www.v-publishing.co.uk, or bookshops

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Ron at the 2013 Rivington Pike Fell Race © Woodentops.org.uk

RON HILL

1938 - 2021

Ron Hill, the international runner who excelled on the track, over the country and at the marathon included fell running on his impressive CV: Pendle, Pendleton, Rivington Pike, Sierre-Zinal, Skiddaw, Three Peaks and Barnoldswick's Weets race are a few of the fell races Ron Hill raced during his long career in which he was made a Life Member of Keswick AC.

He learned his trade with Clayton-le-Moors Harriers, the club he joined in 1953 aged 14, and by 1959 enjoyed his first race win in the club's Pendleton fell race. At the end of the season, he camped in Glen Nevis and was eighth in the Ben, Clayton being second team thanks to back-up from Alan and Ken Heaton. A year later his fortunes were reversed when he was descending to the Red Burn. He found himself "flying through the air", only weeks before his marriage to May. That year he was about eighth from the end.

The last Sunday in April 1961 saw Hill extend his race distance to beyond 20 miles when he raced his first Three Peaks. Hill could

not hang onto Clayton's old-war horse, Alan Heaton, and made his 'Peaks' debut finishing fifth having the day before raced for Manchester University. That season the post-graduate joined Bolton Harriers because "I was fed up with being a mountain goat".

From 1963 to 1973 Hill was a AAA medallist every year on the road and track (wearing the blue Bolton vest). The very misty weather in 1964 saw fellow England Cross-country international Colin Robinson, winner in 1969, with Ron on the final climb, but not at the Hill Inn. Colin said, "I ended up in the wrong valley and when I arrived at the Hill Inn Ron had a pint in hand and a smile on his face." Despite aiming for a third Olympic Games in 1972, the day after racing in the Northern 12 man road relay, he 'jogged' the Three Peaks in three hours.

Ron's friendship with Clayton's Harry Smith blossomed in 1972. They had both raced 'the Peaks' many times and Ron would be a loyal supporter turning up at Harry's Weets race in Barnoldswick well beyond his best years. His love of the fells and hills went through him like a stick of Blackpool rock. Clayton's President Dave Scott said, "A super guy. I have the utmost respect for him. He was one guy who'd done everything, world records and all, and carried on when he was beyond his best."

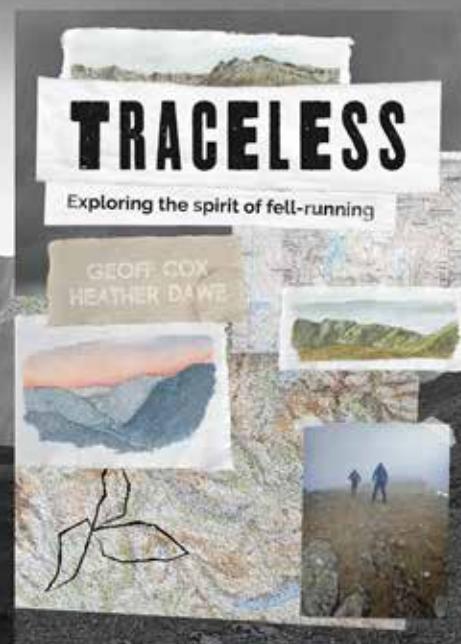
In 1961 Hill had his first of three wins in the Easter Saturday Rivington Pike classic, also his first open race win. His best time was 17:08, and by 2016 he was the first to have raced in forty Pike races, Horwich's Eddie Swift being the first to do that feat with consecutive races.

In the 1990s I took one of Ron's autobiographies to Peter Schofield, erstwhile organiser of the Rivington Pike, and found that Ron had dedicated it "To Pete, for keeping my favourite race alive." Peter adds, "I am proud to have met the great man and thanked him for his continued support, the signed book he gave me is one of my treasured possessions."

Returning with Ron from the 2015 Pike race I had burnt a CD with Radio 4s 'Great Lives' feature on Emil Zatopek, also a triple Olympian, and we listened to the 45-minute recording in his VW Tiguan.

Ron's too was a 'Great Life' who inspired many near and far, one who remained true to his roots.

- NEIL SHUTTLEWORTH



'Geoff and Heather's tribute to the Gerry Charnley Round mimics the run's unique nature – not a line on a map, nor a series of fell-tops but a collection of places. Through prose, poetry and artwork, *Traceless* presents a multi-layered ode to fell-running and going to the hills.'

Cumbria Life

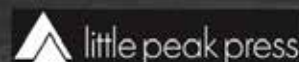
'... a fine double-twined homage to loved landscapes and a shared means of moving through them.'

Robert MacFarlane

'... what makes *Traceless* so special is its collaborative nature, and the way it spans poetry and prose, fact and fiction, cartography and creativity. It is, as a result of these factors, a truly unique fell-running book.'

UKClimbing.com

From all bookshops or order direct www.littlepeak.co.uk





Martin Hyman © Woodentops.org.uk

MARTIN HYMAN

OLYMPIAN, COACH, MENTOR, RACE ORGANISER,
ADMINISTRATOR AND MUCH MORE

1933 - 2021

In early April, Scottish hill running lost a well known and respected character in Martin Hyman. The following article captures the essence of the unique character Martin was, and his immense contribution to the sport.

THE EARLY DAYS – THE RUNNER AND ORIENTEER

Martin began his running career at Southampton University, and went on to become a GB international endurance athlete in the 1950s & 1960s. His speciality was 6 miles (or 10,000m as it is now), representing GB at the 1960 Rome Olympics (9th) and 1962 Belgrade European Athletics Championships (4th). He also represented England at the Commonwealth & Empire Games in Cardiff, 1958 (4th) and in Perth, 1962 (5th). In Perth he also ran the marathon (9th) and went on to captain the men’s’ GB team in international matches. Over cross-country he finished 3rd in the International Championships in 1961 which became the World Cross.

In the hills Martin was a regular competitor in the Lakeland Mountain Trial in the 1960s and one of his favourite events was the Highland Cross, a 50-mile duathlon (20 miles running, 30 miles cycling) traversing the Scottish Highlands from west to east. In his later years, his choice of race was often determined by a good pint of beer in a decent hostelry nearby.

In the 1960s, John Disley introduced orienteering to the south of England. Martin, along with Chris Brasher and Bruce Tulloch, formed the Occasional Orienteers and helped pioneer orienteering in the UK. He coached the sport at his first two schools and his club founded the Harvester Trophy Relay. In 1975 Martin became Chair of the British Orienteering Federation Elite Squad, where he took on several roles including lead coach, administrator and selector. He also developed training and competition opportunities and shared his experiences with athletes to enable them to obtain their goals. In 2003 Martin withdrew from working with the squad when, in his own words, *'After about 25 years, massive lottery funding became available to BOF for the Squad and we amateurs were fired. Professionals were hired to tell Squad Members what to do.'*

Orienteering’s loss was hill running’s gain.

MOVE TO SCOTLAND – LIVINGSTON AC AND LOTHIAN RUNNING CLUB

Martin moved to Livingston in 1979 to teach biology at Inveralmond High School and remained there until 1993 when he retired as Assistant Head. Over the next four decades Martin had a huge influence on the running scene in Scotland – initially with Livingston AC, then founding Lothian Running Club. He was a coach, mentor (helping many athletes gain international honours), administrator, race organiser, convenor of the hill running commission and team manager and organised raids home and abroad, as well as squad activities (these were open to all ages and abilities). He was awarded Honorary Life Membership of Scottish Athletics.

On his arrival in Scotland, Martin started running his legendary weekly Meadows interval sessions in Edinburgh, starting at 7.55pm on the dot! These sessions were originally for members of the British Orienteering Squad and still continue over 40 years later. Most runners based in Edinburgh have taken part in the session at some stage during their running career; his philosophy was that the session should be open to all.

THE COACH AND MENTOR

No-one truly knows the number of athletes Martin coached, advised or mentored over the years. He would offer help to any aspiring athlete no matter their standard or club. He truly wanted

each athlete to reach their potential and provide them with the means to do this.

Edel Mooney – *'Martin was one of the most altruistic people you could meet, money or material things did not bother him in the least. He fervently advocated Athlete-centred coaching. He never told athletes what to do, instead he would advise and encourage. If any of his athletes did not want to do an extra lap that was fine by him. He understood that running is not an entity, your personal life plays a massive factor too. He did not believe in pushing an athlete and advocated "quality over quantity" when it came to training.'*

Helene Whitaker – *'Martin was extraordinary and unconventional, and he was a very rare being – a talented athlete who was virtually silent about his own achievements. He was a thinking coach and I was fortunate that Martin agreed to mentor me in the 90s. He would simply ask questions, "How was I going to plan my taper?", "would it be a good idea to build in some rest periods and what would that look like?" I was given the tools to learn how to be an athlete.'*

When Martin looked at my plans the first time I met him I knew with one sentence that I could trust him: "For anyone else Helene, that would be a disaster, for you I think it will work." I then had my most successful year achieving 20th at both the World Mountain Running Championships and a week later the World 100km Championships. No other home nation would have considered permitting me to do both and I was fitter and faster than I had ever been. I owed it all to Martin.'

Martin also advised **Angela Mudge** for a few years in the 90s – *'Without Martin's help I would still be a plodder. Martin looked at my training, gave me his honest opinion and helped me devise sessions which would enable me to reach my potential. He saw something in me at an early stage in our relationship, telling me I could medal in a championship. This gave me confidence in my ability and with that, I was able to make the transition to the next level. He was highly critical when I made the wrong decision in training or racing but he was always right.'*

THE RACE ORGANISER

Martin helped organise numerous races over the years, on all surfaces, often working away in the background and letting others take the credit for an event. He was meticulous in his preparations, covering every eventuality.

Martin was a key part of the team that brought the World Mountain Running Trophy to Edinburgh in 1995, and he had the vision of setting the courses on Arthur’s Seat. This was no easy task, but through negotiations with Historic Scotland he secured permission for the main races to be run in the heart of the city, albeit the open

races had to be run in the Pentlands, effectively doubling his course organising workload!

Mark Johnston recalls working with Martin at the event *'I got to know Martin in 1995, when he was the course designer for the World Mountain Trophy on Arthurs’ Seat. It was a pleasure to spend several days with Martin helping him set out the courses, literally laying kilometres of tape and junctions all over the hill. His level of preparation and attention to detail, as well as his dawn-to-dusk work ethic and focus, were impressive. Helping out at such a big event was very satisfying, and I got a real buzz from watching the world’s best mountain runners racing over the course. That experience definitely lit a spark in me.'*

The list of other hill running events Martin organised or played a key role in supporting is a very long one!

Martin set up the Will’s Bothy Relay, after the tragic loss of Livingston AC club mate Will Ramsbottom, a four-stage event over 26 miles. Martin co-ordinated the renovation of a former shepherd’s cottage (known as Will’s bothy) near Riccarton Junction on the disused railway between Edinburgh and Carlisle in conjunction with the Mountain Bothies Association.

Martin set up the Glas Tulaichean Uphill Race from 1996 and continued to organise the race until 2011. Throughout he maintained an excellent relationship with the estate; they even transported the runners’ kit to the summit and the ‘estate boss’ occasionally competed. At the outset the race formed part of a series of four uphill only races organised by Denis Bell, an initiative set up to give athletes opportunities to gain experience in uphill racing in the UK. The next edition will be the 25th.

When the FRA Relays (now the British Athletics Fell and Hill Relay) came to Scotland for the first time in 1993, Martin was the lead course planner for the courses at Wanlockhead, working with Andy Spenceley as part of a Carnethy/Livingston/HBT joint effort. He was to be involved in numerous further championship and trial events, and for the trial events in particular, every effort and thought was put into planning routes which matched the race profile of the championship events themselves.

THE ‘ADMINISTRATIVE’ YEARS

In 1995 Martin became the Scottish Event Coach for Hill Running. This saw him taking on a more active role in team management (for over 10 years) and working with more of Scotland’s hill runners. Martin always put the athletes first and the ‘blazers’ last. On any international trip he would ensure all basess were covered and go the extra mile to ensure athletes performed at 110%. The 2003 World Trophy in Alaska demonstrated this, Martin managed the team whilst awaiting a much needed hip replacement. Martin



Martin racing © Margaret Hyman



Jonathan Whitehead, Mark Johnston, Jane Robertson, Ian Nimmo and Martin Hyman at the IC Fell Champs 2017; Opposite page: Martin played a huge role in the Hodgson Brothers Mountain Relay; the Patterdale school (pictured) provides the food for the event © Hodgson Brothers Mountain Relay

hobbled round the resort but still put the team ahead of his own needs. He'd often organise a 'raid' in conjunction with the international event to give runners the opportunity of a quality preparation race, including to the Swiss race Neirivue-Moleson for a few years.

It wasn't all easy going. Martin played a key role in restoring working relations between Scottish Athletics and the hill running community when the entire Hill Running Commission (HRC) resigned over disputes on race selection and the running of the Scottish Athletics office. Martin then stepped in as Convenor of the HRC until the end of 2004, and managed to get relations between the hill running community and Scottish Athletics back to a state of stability.

Mark Johnston (former HRC Secretary) – 'Whilst at the helm, he had a very athlete-focussed approach. Most importantly he was passionate about the development of junior hill running, and it's testament to the foundations he laid that so many successful junior runners transitioned into accomplished seniors (both hill/mountain runners and distance runners) within Scotland over the past few decades. Martin got all the reward he could want from helping people achieve their goals, and that went all the way from beginners and juniors, right up to world class athletes.'

Mark Munro (former COE Scottish Athletics) – 'As I moved into a career in sports development and administration, Martin was in regular communication. He was never a fan of the governing body, but I always had a great relationship with him where he would tell me what I was doing wrong, but he would always tell me how to fix it! I used to enjoy those discussions and always came away hugely motivated to keep trying to make positive change. A very hard working person, very humble (you would never have known what he had achieved as an athlete!), a great coach, always honest, and treated everyone as equals... a rare quality.'

JUNIOR HILL RUNNING

Martin was passionate about bringing juniors into the sport. He organised innumerable junior races, often in conjunction with senior races which he had no connection to but just offered to set one up to give the juniors a race.

Edel Mooney helped him on numerous occasions at Lothian training sessions and at races. 'Martin organised many junior hill races as it was his delight to see kids active. He was renowned for asking 10p for the kid's entry and half price for old age pensioners! Martin's introductory talk at the start of the races was legendary. He would tell the kids that if they had a beaming smile on their face at the end of their run, they would get more sweets. I've never seen so many smiley kids finishing a race in my life! The kids just stood in awe and lapped up all he was saying. He also organised a 'muddy patch judge' before the race, which meant that every child was told that they would get extra sweets if they fell and had a muddy patch on their clothes. This meant that the kids found falling over rewarding, rather than a setback.'

Martin didn't just coach athletes, he went out of his way to help them, often putting his hand in his pocket to help financially or travelling to their local area to find appropriate areas to train.

Scott Fraser (World Silver Medallist in Orienteering) describes how 'I first met Martin when I was 13 when I asked him for some training advice at a local young athletics match. The next day, he came to my council estate to help find some inspiring places to run as well as talking a bit about his training philosophy. I remember expecting a prescribed training programme but instead received a

lesson on how to think for myself and that enjoyment was one of the most important factors in any training plan.'

In the 90s, Squad weekends were a regular event on the fixture list. These were open to all ages and abilities. Wanlockhead was a favourite location and in later years it was organised solely for juniors.

Mark Munro – 'Martin had a major impact on my athletics career in more ways than he will ever have known. As a teenager, Martin led the national training weekends for Scottish hill running and I used to love attending those inspiring training weekends where Martin would provide some interesting sessions as well as some

MARTIN AND THE HODGSON BROTHERS MOUNTAIN RELAY

A brief account of Martin's involvement in the Hodgson Brothers Relay over the last 32 years. An event he once described as the highlight of the year, so I've been told.

Martin first came to the HBR in 1988 when he brought a team from Livingston, the first Scots team to take part. On that occasion they took the mixed team honours, benefiting from Martin's secret line up Hart Crag which he had told them to take. He continued to attend in successive years with or without a team in tow but sometimes in the company of Malc Patterson where he would be the guest at Malc's country residence in Glenridding. On these occasions he would help out in any way he could.

In 2005 when Dave and Shirley passed the baton onto the current organisers, Martin took over sole responsibility of organising the Patterdale changeover, ensuring a trouble-free operation.

It wasn't until the start and finish moved to Patterdale a few years later that we realised what Martin's organisation actually involved.

We would meet at 1pm on the Saturday before to get set up; Martin would already be there and in full flagging mode. This involved firstly, driving his car down the line of where he wanted the flags to go. The tyre tracks making an ideal line, and he would then place a flag 2 metres apart on both sides with tape joining them together with pedestrian passing places at designated points. He would then erect his finish gantry with banner, same place every year. No GPS needed, any movement of the flags had to be done without him noticing, or else! Absolutely brilliant and I must admit very comical as well. He would then hang around helping out with whatever needed doing and more often than not, despite the offer

wonderful education seminars and lectures, very much ahead of his time in the early 90s. There was one particular weekend at Wanlockhead that was particularly memorable, cramped together in rows of sleeping bags in the village hall, and sessions out in deep snow and freezing winds. But somehow, Martin always created imaginative sessions that kept you focused and smiling.'

Martin contributed so much, and in so many different ways, to the running community north of the border. He will be sadly missed by all and our thoughts go to Margaret, his wife of 62 years, and sons Michael and Patrick.

- ANGELA MUDGE

of a warm bed, he would sleep in the pavilion to keep guard and to be there first thing in the morning. Anybody who saw the old pavilion would have been impressed, it was the sort of place you wiped your feet when you came out and this at over 80 years old as well!

When everything was done and dusted on the Sunday, he would dismantle the aforementioned flags and gantry, strapping it to the roof of his car with a bit of manky rope, no roof rack! How it never ended up strewn all over the M74 north of Gretna, I'll never know. He would never accept any petrol money and he'd driven from Edinburgh! He was just glad to help.

I know this was one of many many things Martin used to do for the benefit of athletes, mainly north of the border, and a lot of people will have benefited from Martin's generosity and he will be greatly missed by them all.

Never a hint of wanting to be acknowledged, quite the opposite and all at his own personal expense.

I would like to think that when the flagging and marking takes place this year it will be done in a similar way but alas, I will probably just walk with a bag of flags and throw them in now and again. I will, however, think of Martin as I do so, though. The pavilion is now a singing and dancing affair with heating and hot water but I will still not be sleeping in it!

Cheers Martin RIP

SCOFFER





JUNIOR FELLRUNNER

WELCOME BACK!

Welcome back to running. Despite logistical and organisational obstacles Phil Hobbs, Greg Rimmer and Richard Patton have put on the first three of our four Junior Challenge and Championship races. Additionally the only inter-county championships event to be held this year (adult or senior across track & field, cross-country and fell) was the Junior Inter-counties Fell Race hosted by Des Gibbons at Up the Nab. A huge achievement! The final race in the 2021 series is Ilam on the 12th September and entries are now open. We have had to make the decision to limit the 2021 Challenge and Championships to four races. Please see the website for information on T shirt and Hoody orders.

A final plea from me: as we go to press, the Challenge and Championships in 2022 are in jeopardy as we have no volunteer for the Junior Co-ordinator role. If you feel you can help in any way, do contact me to find out more.

HELENE WHITAKER,
FRA JUNIOR CO-ORDINATOR



RESEARCHING YOUTH AND ADOLESCENT FELL RUNNING TRAINING PROFILE AND INJURIES

We have a unique opportunity to research the impact of fell running in our younger athletes. This is pioneering research as part of an MSc by a student at The Children's Health and Exercise Research Centre in Exeter (<https://sshs.exeter.ac.uk/research/childrenshealth/>)

We need all abilities and ages of young fell runners to help us develop an understanding of how training profile and injury are associated in fell runners within a youth and adolescent population.

The study will be 8 weeks in duration, and you will be asked to answer a brief questionnaire at the start of the study and one questionnaire at the end of the study. Any questions please ask Amanda Guzy (ag838@exeter.ac.uk) or Helene Whitaker (juniors@fellrunner.org.uk).

You can sign up here if you are under 18 year olds by completing both the Consent (Parent/Guardian) and participant (assent) forms:

PLEASE SUBMIT BY AUGUST 1ST 2021

Even if you have previously signed up to the study, please can you complete the following links:



11-17-YEAR-OLD FELL RUNNERS
flowcode.com/p/eit4qoDIQ?fc=0



18-YEAR-OLD FELL RUNNERS
flowcode.com/p/eit4qoDIQ?fc=0



CHARLIE'S WAINWRIGHTS

Keswick AC runner Charlie Butler (aged 9) ticks off all 214 Wainwrights and emerges as a competitive fell runner.

WORDS JOHN BATTRICK, KESWICK AC JUNIOR COACH

It's been a frustrating and often downright infuriating last year-and-a-bit for junior and senior coaches alike as we've tried to keep up with rapidly changing Covid regulations. But at Keswick AC Juniors we've been lucky enough to have an influx of enthusiastic and talented young athletes as the regulations continue to ease. Attendance levels are higher than we've seen for a long time, and each individual athlete deserves a word of high praise in their own right. However, one new face has accomplished a feat which takes many of us a lifetime, if we are to get there at all.

Charlie Butler got the mountain bug when his dad Ross, a keen fellrunner and Keswick AC member, began climbing mountains with Charlie tucked snugly into his backpack. Under Ross's steam Charlie ticked off 23 Wainwrights, and it was a relieved dad carrying a much lighter load who watched Charlie conquer Binsey, his first hill without 'rucksack support', aged five. From there the peaks came thick and fast – 12 miles and 9 tops round the Fairfield Horseshoe aged 7, and his 100th summit (Thornthwaite Crag) aged 8¾. It was this latter milestone which led Charlie to set himself a stern challenge – to have summited every Wainwright before he turned nine at the beginning of April 2021.

On a slight tangent, albeit a relevant one, his talents don't end at walking the fells bagging Wainwrights. Although he hasn't been at it long, Charlie seems made for fell running – he's slight, focused, deadly fast (as many of our junior athletes two or three years older will testify), and displays a dedication to training I'm sure some of our seniors could learn from! As junior races begin to get going again, Charlie has been testing himself against the (bigger and older) competition. The U12s race at the notorious

Coniston Gullies provided his first taste of shoul-der-to-shoulder competition. He admits that some inexperience led him to be boxed in (elbows out, Charlie!) at the start and on the climb, and he found himself way down the field at the turnaround. However, a brave descent saw him gain numerous places in the rough charge for the finish, and he came home in 15th position. Charlie has since achieved 14th position in the U11 FRA Junior Championship race at West Nab – not a bad way to kick off a championship campaign for a lad who has just turned nine – and 13th at the U12 BOFRA race in Kettlewell.

Charlie's remaining 114 peaks weren't going to come easy, but he and his dad set resolutely to the task for the next 9 months. Ross recalls Charlie's fitness gaining rapidly as he flew round the Kentmere, Coniston and Mosedale Horseshoes, and speaks fondly of the odd time when Charlie's competitive side got the better of him, racing more experienced fell runners as they came past and often coming out on top in a charge for the next cairn, gate, or stile. Finally, the challenge was all but complete, and Ross and Charlie stood at Martindale Church one Monday evening after school, ready for the climb which would enable them to tick off the final top. Robustly dressed against a cold, damp, overcast spring day, they took a direct route to the summit to avoid flooding on the lower path round the base of the fell. They made it to the top to enjoy a panoramic view which includes Gowbarrow, Barton Fell, Beda Head, Ullswater and more, and celebrated with a few enthusiastic air punches and a well-earned piece of cake. On 18th May 2018 (aged 39) Ross's final Wainwright was Hallin Fell, and on 29th March 2021, three days before his 9th birthday, it was Charlie's too. Well done Charlie and Ross on a truly inspirational achievement!



Opposite page: Charlie on Great Borne, 31st Dec 2020; Photos above left to right: Charlie and his dad, Ross, on Thornthwaite Crag, his 100th Wainwright - 4th July 2020; Charlie on the Kentmere Horseshoe; Charlie at the Far Arnside U9 race © Charlie and his family

FAMILY SPIRIT AT BINGLEY

Bingley Harriers describe their family focused race out of lockdown.

WORDS STEPHEN FRY

Bingley Harriers has always been very much a family club and it was this sense of family that I tried to use to our advantage as we began to emerge out of lockdown. Obviously throughout the pandemic family bubbles had become the norm. What better way to try and kick start our activities by putting on a series of races where father could race against daughter and mother could race against son. What we needed was a handicap race and if we are staging a handicap race, what better motivation for all concerned if we could get a few guest runners to turn out and give everyone, especially some of our talented juniors, the opportunity of racing internationals and British champions.

So, we staged a series of 5km monthly handicap races over various courses in and around the local area. Two of the races had to be virtual races when the restrictions kicked in again. We also staged a "One Mile" Championship where we had 80 runners aged from 8 to 80. In some cases, we had 3 generations from the same family. It was interesting to see who would win family bragging rights month on month. They gave people something to look forward to, resulting in some great racing and many wonderful memories for all concerned.

Alex Flaherty (Aged 16) leading Ian Holmes early in the race. Although Ian triumphed on the day by 14 seconds, Alex got his revenge at the mile championships
© Dave Woodhead



Theo Clay (Aged 15) out-sprinting Tom Adams at our first post lock down Handicap
© Dave Woodhead



William Johnson Aged 8 on his way to winning our January handicap with mum Marie Johnson trying to keep up © Dave Woodhead



Rebecca Flaherty (Aged U15) has consistently been our fastest female, junior, or senior. Here she is on her way to securing family honour from mum Sarah and brother Alex. She is followed by 11-year-old Charlie Robinson who made light of the 2-minute start given to Dad Jamie but couldn't overhaul Grandad Bruce Duncan
© Dave Woodhead



Jebb Family (Bingley Branch) about to start the February Virtual race on what must have been the wettest day of the year. Not to be out done by their Helm Hill cousins Thomas, Isabelle and mum Rebecca were 1,2,3 at our March race, sadly dad Andy couldn't catch them on the day and only finished 8th © Stephen Fry



LATRIGG LIFE-SAVER

ISLA TURNBULL (AGED 15) CHALLENGED HERSELF TO ASCEND LATRIGG SUMMIT 100 TIMES DURING LOCKDOWN, HERE IS HER STORY.

I am 15 years old, in year 10 at Keswick School and I love anything practical, anything I can get involved in. Sport has always been a big passion of mine and I am very competitive. I am currently part of the Keswick and Cumbria County rugby teams as well as an active member in dance schools and theatre by the lake youth company. I used to be part of the Keswick AC junior running club, but I now only run on my own for fun.

I was originally going up Latrigg to take a break from schoolwork, as Latrigg is basically in my back garden. I soon developed it into a challenge and set myself a goal of 100 days, just to see if I could. I love a challenge because it gives me a routine and an aim.

The objective was to summit Latrigg at least once every day over the 100-day period, ending 14 April. I think that I must have ascended Latrigg by foot over at least 30 different ways then a few more different ways by bike.

The hardest part of the challenge was not when it was wet and cold because I love the rain, but when I was tired after school. Some days I would get home from school, go to rugby training then still have to go summit Latrigg. I definitely slept well on those days. I think the best part of the challenge was having an excuse to be with my friends every day. During the time I was doing this challenge, my friends and I were building a bike trail in the woods so some days I would spend over 5 hours on Latrigg, sometimes longer.

Personally, I got a higher fitness level from the challenge as I was on my feet every day and doing aerobic exercise. Also, it gave me

a sense of self contentment and peace as I treated it as a break from everything and sometimes everyone. A few of the days I ran up on my own with my music in and it gave me a sense of freedom.

I also learnt my boundaries, both physical and mental, and I learnt to push them. I pushed my limits in terms of running faster and getting new PBs and getting faster and faster at one particular part of the downhill bike trails as well as the mental blocks that come with that. I learnt that I'm too stubborn to give up on something till I achieve it, and then there is also another goal just ahead to work on next.

I felt kind of overwhelmed on my last summit because so many people came out to clap me to the top. But after it ended, for a few weeks after I felt empty as I didn't have anything that I was working on or doing daily as this challenge had become a big part of my life for those 100 days. Currently I am looking forward for a new challenge to bury myself in. I am not sure of my next challenge yet, but I am currently planning new ideas such as walking Everest in a set time or something similar in the summer months after my exams.

I want to say thank you for all the amazing people who donated to my just giving page in memory of my Nanna and all the people who supported me and put up with me dragging them up Latrigg every day.



FELL TO UNI

Harry Bolton (Keswick AC) and Arran Horne (Leeds) talk about their experiences of transitioning to University and keeping up their sport of Fell running.



I have just completed my 3rd year at the University of Leeds, studying Biology. The main reason for choosing Leeds University was because of the course and the city, but the easy access to the fells and moors was a definite positive, and same with the fell running club.

When I'm at home I mostly run in the Northern Fells of the Lake District, and I am a member of the Northern Fells Running Club. I enjoy more relaxed and social runs, but also find races fun. My usual aim in races is to finish in the top 20%. My highlights are Blencathra Fell Race, as it's one of my favourite routes and Harriers vs Cyclists in Bingley, as it's a bit mad.

Leeds University Union Orienteering Club (LU00C) covers both orienteering and fell running. LU00C also has links with the cross-country club (which goes to a couple of fell races per year) and the hiking club.

Leeds is a relatively small club (around 30 members), but generally at least 4-5 members go to each fell race we attend. The club tries to go to 2 local fell races every month, but this is restricted mainly by distance from Leeds, and the time of year (Uni terms mean that we miss most of the fell running 'season' over summer). Despite this we do attend a good variety of races, usually finishing at a pub (which is also a definite plus!). Social runs and orienteering events are also put on, and in previous years the club has ventured for fell running weekends in the Lakes. I am currently the treasurer for the club and organise most fell running activities in the club.

Even if you go to university somewhere without fells, you can still train through xc running and hill reps etc. Orienteering is also very good, not only for navigating, but also gets you off road and to some interesting places. You tend to get long holidays at uni, so if you live somewhere hilly, you won't be away for that long.

ARRAN HORNE, AGE 22



I am currently in my final year of studying Sports Engineering at Loughborough University. My main focus was to find the best university for the course I wanted to do, however Loughborough's reputation for running was also a big draw.

When not at uni I live near Keswick in the Lake District and run for Keswick AC. After swapping football for running when I was 16, I quickly found myself running in the fells near to home. Since then, some of my fell running highlights include being part of the Keswick team that won the Hodgson Brothers relay, running the Tea Room Round this year, and a trip travelling and racing in the Alps in Summer 2019.

At Loughborough we have an orienteering and fell running club, which in normal years regularly travels to the Peak District for fell races and has also travelled to races in Wales and the Lakes. As the clubs fell running organiser, in December 2019 I organised a club trip to the lakes where we stopped for several nights in a village hall, raced and did a group long run. There are also lots of regular orienteering events going on in the area surrounding Loughborough.

My tip to others transitioning to university is to try to find people at university that are also already fell runners or are keen to give it a go. A lot of cross country or road runners may not have much of an understanding of what fell running is, so going to races or going for runs in the fells together is a good way to get them hooked! It's surprising how many people are interested when they know a bit more about it. Keep an eye out for races happening nearby or for hilly areas or areas with more interesting terrain. At first sight Loughborough didn't seem like it would be great for fell running training, but when you get to know the area there are lots of places to explore, I've even managed to do several 1000m climb runs here.

Make the most of opportunities to try new things or to join sports clubs/societies, this is a really good way of getting to know people and helps you settle in quickly. Having races/events at weekends can be a great way to switch off from lectures and working during the week.

HARRY BOLTON, AGE 21

THE RACE OUT OF LOCKDOWN

A 'Round Up' of junior club activity as clubs have emerged out of lockdown.

EDEN RUNNERS



©Derek Hurton

A

melie Marshall and Jacob Rankin just after a club training run with club coach Derek Turton. A 11km run around the Melmerby skyline in North Cumbria (North Pennines), including a relentless 40 min uphill run section.

IKLEY HARRIERS



©Robert Budding

W

harfedale Harrier juniors having fun back in training. Up and running since 29 March with a primary school aged session Monday night of about 24 runners and over 30 older kids every Tuesday with a mix of old and new faces.

WHARFEDALE HARRIERS



© Geoff Thompson

HELM HILL



© Justin Tancrel

W

heelbarrow race pose at Helm Hill training (from left to right) Naomi Carter, Isaac Donnini, Poppy Cater, Ava Bryant, Joseff Tancrel, Alfie Tipping and Reuben Donnini

TRANDEN AC



©Nichola Fenton-Clough

U

nder 13s off road sprint session taking place in Holt House woods near to the clubhouse. From front to back - Seth Fenton-Clough, Sam Midgley (Harry Walkers Grandson), Hugo Mulligan and Harry Jordan

CLAYTON-LE-MOORS HARRIERS



© Alan Dorrington

C

layton-le-Moors Harriers juniors during training descending "Geronimo" on Pendle Hill - a steep descent those who run Tour of Pendle will be familiar with. R-L: Lucille Pickles, Helana White, (Cassie Smedley, coach), Ella Dorrington, Jenson Bentham

THE 'GO-KARTING' BUXTON JUNIORS

The Story of how Buxton Juniors thought 'out of the box' to keep their training sessions going during Covid.

Sandwiched in a bowl between the Dark and White Peak, Buxton provides a perfect setting for running, especially if you don't mind the hills.

Pre-covid, the junior section of Buxton AC was going from strength to strength. Over the last few years, we'd picked up a few medals in fell and cross country, had a few of our athletes selected to compete at national level as well as some accolades for the team in local and regional sports awards. To top it off, the team took silver in the 2019 English Junior Fell Championship. We finished the year with a big get-together where we celebrated the performances of all our juniors, from our older ones to our very youngest ones, our faster ones to our steadier ones. Families got together as we thanked all those parents who'd supported their children, getting them to training, spending hours driving them to races and standing out in the open for hours cheering each and every one over the finish line.

2020 started off looking to be a great year as the threads on the club's Facebook page focused on the year ahead and the excitement for upcoming races. We all know what happened next. However, this didn't dull the positivity of our young athletes. Unfortunately, most of us believed that it would be just a few months and that, by the end of the year, things would be 'normal' again, that those missed races would just be rescheduled. How wrong we were.

To keep our athletes going and to maintain the interaction between our athletes and families, albeit virtually, we started setting challenges for our athletes and their families. The first one Terry's slipper challenge (lie on your back with your leg extended upwards and a slipper balanced on your foot, complete a full roll to return to this position whilst continually balancing the slipper) resulted in juniors, mums and dads spending hours rolling around on the floor before eventually being able to post a video of their moment of triumph. Further challenges followed including 5k virtual relays, an alphabetical hill-bagging challenge (our juniors found

hills we never knew existed for this) and finally scavenger hunts. Whilst these was no substitute for getting the juniors together for training, it kept everyone in touch and was a useful break from home learning.

In July, came the easing of lockdown and the news that we'd been waiting for – training could recommence. However, this came with restrictions. We had a limit on the number of athletes we could coach together. This was also restricted by the fact that we only had one or two coaches available for each training session due to changes in family and work commitments. With indoor venues and facilities still not available, we decided to open training to our older juniors, aged 11 plus.

Despite its great success, especially on the fells, Buxton has no training facility of its own. Training was to take place on a grass track, marked out by the local secondary school, on some community playing fields. We would be sharing our training space with numerous dog walkers as well as several junior football teams who'd lost their usual training grounds. There was also the challenge of devising coaching sessions which catered for all athletes of different ages and different abilities. However, we must have been doing something right as the juniors kept returning eagerly for each training session and it was rewarding seeing our younger athletes looking up to the older ones and who have proved to be great role models in inspiring them in their athletic abilities.

As autumn set in and the dark nights drew in, we were met with further challenges. The field we used had no lighting and very poor drainage. I remember fondly how parents all stepped in for our final session on the grass track, lighting it up with head torches to enable the youngsters to train safely. We still had no access to indoor facilities and all local all-weather areas were booked by local football teams so we had to think outside the box. After a couple of phone calls and meetings we were able to swap one track for another and moved training to a local go-karting circuit.

Situated on a hill on the edge of Buxton, Swains Karting provided the perfect answer to our training problem. A four hundred metre floodlit track with plenty of twists and turns and a bridge thrown in, we were able to provide plenty of variation and challenge for our young athletes. Unfortunately, we only got a handful of sessions at the track before the announcement of another lockdown in January.

As soon as restrictions eased on 29th March, we were back on the karting track with our older juniors. Straight away it was obvious to us how these juniors had not only missed out on training time but how they'd also really missed out on the social aspect of being with their friends. As a club, we have juniors from many different schools, including most of the different schools in Buxton but also many from further afield. In fact, we have regulars at our training sessions from surrounding places such as Leek, Bakewell and Hayfield. In our first few sessions back, we realised what an important role we had in not just training them in athletics but also in their mental health and interaction with those who they'd been cut off from over the previous months.

April should have brought lighter nights and more settled evening weather as we moved further into spring but not this year. Instead, we seemed to be clinging onto winter and our training sessions were often a battle against the elements on our exposed hilltop track. However, our juniors have proved hardy and our numbers increased. In recent weeks we have started to put together plans on how we can start to welcome back more of our younger members. With the help of parent volunteers, we have been able to open training to ten-year-olds. As we have finally started to get more seasonal weather, we have moved back to our grass track giving us a wider open space to train on so we are all feeling positive that very soon we'll be able to invite more youngsters to train with us.

Despite all the upheaval, the enthusiasm of all our juniors has never waned and once again we are looking forwards to what will hopefully be a successful fell season.



Buxton juniors training @ Frank Golden

TEXT TALK TIME



Fin Grizedale (left, aged 15) text interviews his fell running hero Rob Jebb

FIN: Hi Rob, it's Fin. Are you ready for your interview?

ROB: Yep

FIN: We'll start easy... how old were you when you started fell running?

ROB: Good, I started running when I was nine after I did my first fell race at Buckton Pike

Is that it can I go home now!!

FIN: Stolen my next question, I was going to ask what was your first race!

Nice try... What was the first fell race you won and how old were you?

ROB: I had to wait a long time to win my first fell race, it was the turkey trot in Keighley and It was on my 21st birthday

FIN: What's your favourite fell race?

ROB: That's a tough one it definitely used to be the Ben Nevis race but now I find that too hard so I think I'll go for Buttermere Sailbeck.

FIN: Is that an age thing... What's the best prize you've ever won for a fell race?

ROB: Yes it probably is an age thing, I really struggle with the with the rough downhill now. I used to enjoy winning the money in the sky races but I also liked winning whiskey in Scotland as that took care of my dad's christmas present!!

FIN: Good answer! What's your favourite fell running memory?

ROB: That's a really tough question. I've enjoyed so many good times racing and with friends afterwards. Definitely winning the Ben Nevis, Three peaks race and the British Championships are big highlights. Also representing GB on the fell and cyclocross, and now I really love watching my kids race.

FIN: Lots of moments to be proud of too. Have you ever got lost on a fell race?

ROB: Never!

FIN: Hmmmm

ROB: Well once or twice!!

FIN: Ha ha that's more like it!

FIN: What advice would you give to someone who's just started fell running?

ROB: The best advice I would give is to join a running club, race plenty and most of all enjoy it.

FIN: Which runner did you aspire to be like when you were growing up?

ROB: My absolute favourite runner growing up was a Bingley Harrier called Ian Ferguson, my hero.

FIN: Interesting. What's your favourite weather conditions to run in?

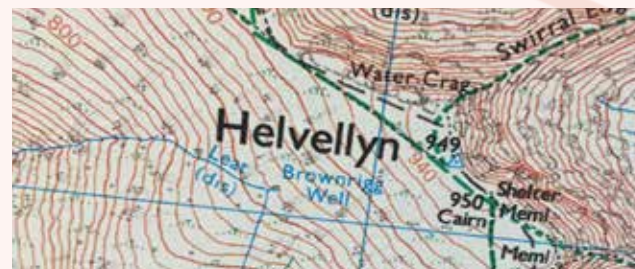
ROB: Probably cool and clear but as I'm getting older I don't mind a bit of mist!! Sunshine afterwards though!

FIN: What's your favourite training activity? I hate hill reps

ROB: My favourite run is just a nice 10 miler on the fells in nice weather and a good bike ride

FIN: I like biking too. Your training friends at Helm Hill told me that as well as running you're really good at spelling, which is the correct spelling - Helvelyn, Helvellyn, Helvelin (no googling allowed)?

ROB:



FIN: Crafty... I work at Pete Bland Sports and sell running kit, what's your all time favourite fell shoe?

FIN: *Crafty even....

ROB: For old times sake Walsh PB, but Scott Supertrac come a close 2nd!!

FIN: My great great Grandad won Grasmere Guides race twice in the 1800s (old route). How many times have you won Grasmere Sports?

ROB: A very proud 9 times, great race.

FIN: Awesome!! That's 30 mins, looks like my time is up. Thanks for talking. See you on a fell side soon.

ROB: You too, thanks.

Would you like to interview your hero?

To be the next junior who text interviews your fell running hero then please get in touch junioreditorfellrunner@gmail.com. Just let us know your hero and we will put you in touch.

WHO'S WHO

JUNIOR FRA CO-ORDINATOR HELENE WHITAKER INTRODUCES YOU TO THE JUNIOR FRA TEAM

I would like to introduce you to the FRA Junior team of volunteers who support our fabulous front line race organisers. But who are these volunteers who keep the wheels turning? I asked each of them which was their favourite race and what their pet hate is. We could not hold the races we do without every single one of our volunteers. A huge thank you to them all.



JAMIE MCILVENNY

I manage our brand new Junior social media accounts and am "Covid Chaos Controller".

I love long (ultra) races like Howarth Hobble or Fellsman where you're out for hours and the challenge is just finishing.

My pet hate cleaning my muddy shoes.



PIN DHILLON-DOWNEY

I ensure the race organisers have access to the up to date guidance and any support they require from the FRA connecting the FRA race rules and requirements with the race organisation.

My favourite (Junior) race was Malham.

My pet hate is Dog poop (someone has to say it)



NATALIE HAWKRIGG

I am the Fellrunner Magazine Junior Editor.

My favourite Race is the Wasdale fell race.

My pet hate is having to wear reading glasses to read maps and the Fellrunner magazine.



ANDY WATTS "WATT-OPEDIA"

I pay the bills. Really, the Treasurer is involved with nearly everything, so I'm well placed to ensure that junior activities benefit from work being done in other areas.

My favourite race is The Long Tour of Pendle

My pet hate is people who beat me in fell races.



NEIL TALBOTT

I support the Juniors with administration, updating documentation and the annual review of the FRA's race rules. I also have to decide what to do if a junior runner is naughty; luckily this doesn't happen very often, but when it does I try to remember how naughty I used to be...

My favourite race is the Lake District Mountain Trial (sadly not suitable for Juniors but you can run the short course with a parent when you are 14 years old)

My pet hates are tarmac and GPS.



CHRIS JONES

I coordinate the English Schools Fell Running Championships.

My favourite Juniors race is Clougha Pike.

My pet hate is negativity.



WENDY DODDS

I link the FRA with other athletic groups, such as UKA, EA, UKCAU, MRAG to ensure we work well with these organisations.

My favourite race is Wasdale.



BRETT WEEDEN

Mr Website



CHARMIAN HEATON

I validate all the orders for FRA T-shirts and Hoodies and I work with our wonderful sponsors, without whose support, we could not deliver such a fantastic series of races.

I enjoy any race, and following the Covid pandemic, it is such a pleasure to see all the happy smiling faces and to hear all the pre- and post-race chatter.

My pet hate is anyone who deliberately breaks the rules or is rude to marshals.



JIM GODWIN

I am the Junior statistician, maintaining U9 - U19 Challenge and Championship tables from race results. I also arrange for the engraving of medals and shields, printing of certificates and create the check lists for FRA t-shirt and hoodie awards. Additionally, I provide administration resources and process results for the English Schools Fell Running Championships.

Favourite race is Sedbergh.

My main frustration is incomplete entry forms.



GRAHAM WRIGHT "LEFTY"

I organise the junior do. I like to keep everyone updated on the latest news and results on social media.

My favourite race is Wasdale. For the Juniors it would be Kettlewell.

JUNIOR FELL RUNNING WORD SEARCH

(SET BY QUIZRUNNER)

Y	E	T	N	O	I	S	R	E	V	N	I	H	X	J
T	L	H	S	O	E	D	A	Q	Y	T	Y	M	B	W
I	U	U	E	V	E	R	G	L	A	S	D	H	R	H
L	K	N	C	B	C	B	I	G	N	U	Z	N	O	I
I	C	D	I	A	L	L	D	O	O	D	N	W	C	T
B	W	E	Z	I	A	E	R	L	L	A	E	W	K	E
I	I	R	A	M	G	T	C	I	I	U	Z	O	E	O
S	N	E	P	R	H	P	M	G	K	Z	O	B	N	U
I	D	Z	E	E	Z	R	Z	H	K	N	R	N	S	T
V	Y	E	R	H	M	R	O	T	S	H	F	I	P	A
D	Y	L	R	T	U	W	T	N	G	U	O	A	E	L
P	Y	T	A	O	E	P	O	I	L	M	V	R	C	Q
L	O	W	I	P	D	E	G	N	Q	I	J	A	T	M
S	U	N	N	Y	A	R	L	G	S	D	A	Z	R	P
N	X	H	Q	H	B	S	T	S	I	M	T	H	E	U

Words related to weather conditions

The following words are all hidden in the square – horizontally, vertically, diagonally or reversed

BROCKENSPECTRE	HUMID	NORTHERLY	THUNDER
CLAG	HYPOTHERMIA	RAIN	WHITEOUT
CLOUD	ICE	RAINBOW	WINDY
DEGREE	INVERSION	SLEET	VERGLAS
FROZEN	LIGHTNING	SNOW	VISIBILITY
HAIL	MILD	STORM	
HOT	MIST	SUNNY	



The FELLRACER

WEST NAB, 29 APRIL 2021
2021 FRA JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS

Phil Hobbs, Holmfirth Harriers, and Helene Whitaker, Junior Coordinator

After Covid decimated the whole of the 2020 English Junior Championships, we all needed something to look forward to in 2021; even more so after the first 2 races in the series were cancelled or postponed. Undaunted by the ever-changing rules and regulations (national and local), we re-designed the courses, drafted 4 pages of race instructions, and watched nervously as the pre-entries climbed to nearly 500 across all the age-groups!

Come race day, the rain finally stopped, and the sun shone throughout, and it was great to see so many smiling faces all eager to pick up where they had left off in 2019. With the numbers that turned up on the day for the juniors, we were able to either set races off together (U9/U11/U19's) or run separate boys & girls' races (U13/U15/U17's) without the need for any waves and it seemed to work out pretty well. Only in the senior/U23 race did we have to resort to 3 waves, as we had over 100 runners.

The competition was fierce across all the age-groups, as everyone vied to pick up their first Championship points or push themselves forward for selection for the upcoming Inter-Counties event. And in a strange turn-up for the books, we even had Lancastrians competing in Yorkshire for their Lancashire Junior Championships and we hadn't charged them extra!

There are so many people who helped us stage the event, so many thanks to the landowners, to Meltham CE Primary School & the Carlyle Institute, to the FRA Committee (particularly the Junior & Covid Co-ordinators), to Kirklees SAG and the residents of Meltham, to Pete Bland Sports for sponsoring the junior races, to Up & Running (Sheffield) for sponsoring the senior race and to the many Holmfirth Harriers who helped before, during and after the day. But mainly a big thank you to everyone who competed - you all understood the challenging nature of holding the event in these crazy times and did everything that was asked of you, without any grumbles or groans. Here's to a return to normality in 2022!

Cheers,

Phil Hobbs (Holmfirth Harriers)

Thank you to Holmfirth Harriers AC for kicking off the 2021 first Junior Challenge and Championships and for bravely stepping into the new world of organising the fell race under Covid compliant conditions. They also managed to welcome the start of summer with a scorcher of a day that caught many by surprise despite the forecast thunderstorms. It was great to see so many out racing again despite the year off with a few new names making the rankings.

Helene Whitaker



Alice Ross (Rossendale Harriers) U11 ©Woodentops

UNDER 9 BOYS (0.8k/35m)

1. Jos Jebb	Helm Hill Runners	03.58
2. James Canaway		04.47
3. Emmett Edwards	Barlick Fell Runners	04.53

UNDER 9 GIRLS (0.8k/35m)

1. Bleu Bailey	Staffordshire Moorlands	04.13
2. India Bellwood	Keighley & Craven AC	04.46
3. Ishbel Symington	Calder Valley Fell Runners	05.10

UNDER 11 BOYS (2k/100m)

1. Harry Cliff	Calder Valley Fell Runners	10.58
2. Joseph Green	Ambleside AC	11.04
3. Charlie Dobson	Rossendale Harriers	11.04

UNDER 11 GIRLS (2k/100m)

1. Isla Jebb	Helm Hill Runners	11.52
2. Marcie Ford	Bingley Harriers	11.52
3. Annabel Hinds	Settle Harriers	12.38

UNDER 13 BOYS (2.8k/130m)

1. Joshua Hatton	Wirral AC	13.53
2. Daniel Campbell	City of York Athletics	13.58
3. Henry Ward	Chorley Athletic & Tri	14.24

UNDER 13 GIRLS (2.8k/130m)

1. Clara Mckee	Calder Valley Fell Runners	14.13
2. Estelle Lowe	Westbury Harriers	14.45
3. Millie Jebb	Helm Hill Runners	14.46

UNDER 15 BOYS (4.7k/220m)

1. Jack Sanderson	Settle Harriers	19.35
2. Jacob Reeday	Wharfdale Harriers	20.28
3. Charlie Pickens	Calder Valley Fell Runners	20.30



Amelie Lane (Wharfdale Harriers) U17 ©Woodentops

UNDER 15 GIRLS (4.7k/220m)

1. Maisey Bellwood	Keighley & Craven AC	22.31
2. Graihagh Turner	Penistone Footpath R	23.11
3. Megumi Hoshiko	Wirral AC	23.25

UP THE NAB, 13 JUNE 2021
BRITISH INTER-COUNTIES JUNIOR FELL AND HILL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Andy Watts, Cheshire Hill Racers, and Helene Whitaker, Junior Coordinator

Charlesworth, near Glossop, was the venue for the 9th Junior Fell and Hill Inter-Counties Championship, held as part of the annual Up the Nab fell race in this attractive corner of rural Derbyshire. The race doubled as the second FRA Junior English Championship event of the year and attracted over 300 junior club or county athletes.

The Up the Nab fell race is a classic in fell running circles. The nab in question is Whiteley Nab, a rolling grassy area rising to over 1,000 feet, in the foothills of the High Peak to the east. The venue provided excellent competition for the junior age groups; from the 0.8km which challenged the under-9s, through to the Inter-Counties distances of 3.8km for the under-15 category, and 4.5km for the under-17s and under-19s.

The need to take precautions against spread of Covid-19 had prompted a move to accepting online entries only; mask-wearing was a requirement in the covered registration area, and the other activities took place fully in the open air. The weather was kind, though perhaps a little too warm for racing. Runners and supporters were able to watch the action - and enjoy the pizza and ice cream stalls - in the open air.

This year, for the first time, the Junior Inter-Counties included the under-15 age category, as well as the under-17 and under-19 as previously. The under-15 age group proved popular, with 89 runners crossing the start line, while the older age groups mustered 67 and 32 respectively.

UNDER 17 BOYS (6.1k/335m)

1. Charlie Almond	Ambleside AC	27.54
2. Jacob Deacon	Chorley Athletic & Tri	28.45
3. Harry Bowen	Ambleside AC	29.09

UNDER 17 GIRLS (6.1k/335m)

1. Amelie Lane	Wharfdale Harriers	30.06
2. Jess Bailey	Leven Valley AC	30.57
3. Eve Whitaker	Harrogate Harriers	32.26

UNDER 19 BOYS (8.1k/520m)

1. Toby Middleton	Horwich RMI	37.05
2. Tom Spencer		37.19
3. Edward Cordon	Stockport Harriers	37.32

UNDER 19 GIRLS (8.1k/520m)

1. Alexandra Whitaker	Harrogate Harriers	46.53
2. Lucy Bednall	Buxton AC	47.18
3. Chloe Rylance	Ambleside AC	50.40



The leading group in the U15 men's race, climbing the hill ©Woodentops



Left to right: Alexandra Whitaker on her way to winning the U19 women’s category for Yorkshire; Chloe Rylance, second U19 female finisher for Cumbria ©Woodentops

The under-17 race followed the same approach of a 5 minute delay between male and female start times, with the boys setting off first. This was the moment for Cumbria to shine, with Charlie Allmond coming home well clear of the chasing field. Jacob Deacon for Lancashire and Dylan Cater, also from Cumbria claimed the other podium positions. For the girls Yorkshire again took the first place, with Amelie Lane out of sight of her competitors at the finish. Jess Bailey carried the flag for Cumbria, and Isabel Holt for Lancashire, in second and third spots.

For the under-19 age group, with fewer runners than the younger categories, male and female runners were able to start together without congestion. This was Derbyshire’s moment of glory, claiming first and second in a sprint finish between Finlay Grant and Tom Spencer. These two athletes are both members of Buxton Athletic Club, and thus probably old adversaries! Edward Corden for Greater Manchester was in touching distance behind, and Will Longden, also for Derbyshire, missed the podium by only 20 seconds. The female race was not quite as close, but nonetheless Alexandra Whitaker for Yorkshire, Chloe Rylance for Cumbria, and Lucy Bednall for Derbyshire, came home within a minute of each other.

In the team competition, Yorkshire showed their strength in depth by winning both male and female under-15s, and the under-17 and under-19 female competitions. Also claiming ‘top spot’ were Cumbria (under-17 male), and Derbyshire (under-19 male). The other counties also made a good showing, with Lancashire, Merseyside, Shropshire, and Greater Manchester taking the other medal positions.

Overall, despite the current restrictions and impediments to competition, 109 County athletes took part, representing 11 counties, including Wales North and Scotland East – all credit to those runners, team managers and parents for making the long trip to Derbyshire. Breaking with tradition, and to observe the current public health regulations, there was no formal prize-giving presentation, but the individual medals were awarded at the finish, and team medals will be posted when the points calculations have been finalised.

We are grateful to Des Gibbons for holding the event, which involved a huge amount of additional effort to meet public safety requirements, and to stage the race using a different start and finish venue.



Lucy Bednall in bronze medal position in the U19 female race, for Derbyshire ©Woodentops



RESULTS

INDIVIDUAL UNDER-15 WOMEN

1. Maisey Bellwood (Yorkshire)
2. Izzy-Mai Wilson (Yorkshire)
3. Graihagh Turner (Yorkshire)
4. Libby Rickerby (Lancashire)
5. Megumi Hoshiko (Merseyside)

INDIVIDUAL UNDER-15 MEN

1. Jack Sanderson Yorkshire
2. Tom Hooper Yorkshire
3. Jack Lamb Lancashire
4. Luke Carrington Greater Manchester
5. Jack Marwood Cheshire

INDIVIDUAL UNDER-17 WOMEN

1. Amelie Lane Yorkshire
2. Jess Bailey Cumbria
3. Isabel Holt Lancashire
4. Eve Whitaker Yorkshire
5. Isla Hedley Scotland East

INDIVIDUAL UNDER-17 MEN

1. Charlie Allmond Cumbria
2. Jacob Deacon Lancashire
3. Dylan Cater Cumbria
4. Alex Poulston Merseyside
5. Theo Clay Yorkshire

INDIVIDUAL UNDER-19 WOMEN

1. Alexandra Whitaker Yorkshire
2. Chloe Rylance Cumbria
3. Lucy Bednall Derbyshire
4. Isabel Richardson Yorkshire
5. Betty Bergstrand Yorkshire

INDIVIDUAL UNDER-19 MEN

1. Finlay Grant Derbyshire
2. Tom Spencer Derbyshire
3. Edward Corden Greater Manchester
4. Will Longden Derbyshire
5. Edward Woodhead Wales North

Photos top to bottom: U15 men’s winners left to right - Jack Lamb (Lancashire) 3rd, Tom Hooper 1st and Jack Sanderson 2nd, both for Yorkshire; U15 women’s winners left to right - Maisie Bellwood 1st, Izzy-Mai Wilson and Graihagh Turner all for Yorkshire; U17 men’s winners left to right - Jacob Deacon (Lancashire) 2nd, Charlie Almond 1st and Dylan Cater 3rd both for Cumbria; U17 women’s winners left to right - Jess Bailey (Cumbria) 2nd, Amelie Lane (Yorkshire) 1st and Isabel Holt (Lancashire) 3rd; U19 men’s winners left to right - Edward Cordon (Greater Manchester) 3rd, Finlay Grant (Derbyshire) 1st and Tom Spence (Derbyshire) 2nd. ©Woodentops



TEAM RESULTS

UNDER-15 WOMEN

Pos	County (Points Total)	Name (Position)		
1	Yorkshire (3)	Maisey Bellwood (1)	Izzy-Mai Wilson (2)	Graihagh Turner (3)
2	Lancashire (11)	Libby Rickerby (4)	Matilda Duffy (7)	Elsie Haygarth (14)
3	Merseyside (13)	Megumi Hoshiko (5)	Emma Poulston (8)	Amber Neal (15)

UNDER-15 MEN

Pos	County (Points Total)	Name (Position)		
1	Yorkshire (3)	Jack Sanderson (1)	Tom Hooper (2)	
2	Greater Manchester (11)	Luke Carrington (4)	Alfie Bundy (7)	Jay Hutchinson (17)
3	Derbyshire (14)	Euan Beswick (6)	Jack Cooke (8)	

UNDER-17 WOMEN

Pos	County (Points Total)	Name (Position)		
1	Yorkshire (5)	Amelie Lane (1)	Eve Whitaker (4)	
2	Cumbria (8)	Jess Bailey (2)	Georgia Bell (6)	Sophie Rylance (9)
3	Shrophire (17)	Zoe Gilbody (7)	Maggie Preece (10)	Beth Rawlinson (11)

UNDER-17 MEN

Pos	County (Points Total)	Name (Position)		
1	Cumbria (4)	Charlie Allmond (1)	Dylan Cater (3)	
2	Lancashire (8)	Jacob Deacon (2)	William Walker (6)	Joe Ormrod (11)
3	Yorkshire (13)	Theo Clay (5)	William Hall (8)	Joe Minchella (10)

UNDER-19 WOMEN

Pos	County (Points Total)	Name (Position)		
1	Yorkshire (5)	Alexandra Whitaker (1)	Isabel Richardson (4)	Betty Bergstrand (5)
2	Derbyshire (9)	Lucy Bednall (3)	Amy Whelan (6)	
3	Lancashire (17)	Bethany Reid (8)	Ellie Richardson (9)	Sophie Ashworth (10)

UNDER-19 MEN

Pos	County (Points Total)	Name (Position)		
1	Derbyshire (3)	Finlay Grant (1)	Tom Spencer (2)	Will Longden (4)
2	Greater Manchester (10)	Edward Corden (3)	Toby Middleton (7)	
3	Yorkshire (15)	Hugh Mackie (6)	Alex Flaherty (9)	Jenson Brogden (13)

UP THE NAB, 13 JUNE 2021
2021 FRA JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS

Helene Whitaker, Junior Coordinator

Held in Derbyshire, this well-known course once again hosted the FRA English Junior Championships and was made memorable by the heat and pizza van which proved very popular.

Second in the series of four races confirmed for 2021, the competition was intense with some athletes getting some well-earned points back on their rivals from West Nab.

UNDER 9 BOYS (0.8k/50m)

1. Jos Jebb	Helm Hill Runners	03.10
2. Huw Davies	Staffordshire Moorlands	03.15
3. James Neil	Halifax Harriers	03.22

UNDER 9 GIRLS (0.8k/50m)

1. Bleu Bailey	Staffordshire Moorlands	03.10
2. India Bellwood	Keighley & Craven AC	03.29
3. Georgia Cudahy	BuxtonAC	04.04

UNDER 11 BOYS (1.6k/110m)

1. Mani Kaler	Calder Valley Fell Runners	07.23
2. Charlie Dobson	Rossendale Harriers	07.25
3. Isaac Reeday	Wharfedale Harriers	07.27

UNDER 11 GIRLS (1.6k/110m)

1. Bleu Bailey	Staffordshire Moorlands	03.10
2. India Bellwood	Keighley & Craven AC	03.29
3. Georgia Cudahy	BuxtonAC	04.04

UNDER 13 BOYS (2.4k/150m)

1. Henry Ward	Chorley Athletic & Tri	07.13
2. Joshua Hatton	Wirral AC	07.21
3. Thomas Wood	Macclesfield Harriers	07.36

UNDER 13 GIRLS (2.4k/150m)

1. Clara McKee	Calder Valley Fell Runners	15.50
2. Estelle Lowe	Westbury Harriers	16.44
3. Millie Jebb	Helm Hill Runners	17.05

UNDER 15 BOYS (3.8k/220m)

1. Jack Sanderson	Settle Harriers	25.14
2. Tom Hooper	Wharfedale Harriers	25.59
3. Thomas McKee	Calder Valley Fell Runners	26.12

UNDER 15 GIRLS (3.8k/220m)

1. Bethany Trow	Shrewsbury AC	28.39
2. Maisey Bellwood	Keighley & Craven AC	28.42
3. Izzy-Mai Wilson	Dark Peak Fell Runners	29.28

UNDER 17 BOYS (4.5k/290m)

1. Charlie Almond	Ambleside AC	26.40
2. Jacob Deacon	Chorley Athletic & Tri	28.04
3. Dylan Cater	Helm Hill Runners	28.23

UNDER 17 GIRLS (4.5k/290m)

1. Amelie Lane	Wharfedale Harriers	29.46
2. Jess Bailey	Leven Valley AC	31.25
3. Isabel Holt	Blackburn Harriers	32.10

UNDER 19 BOYS (4.5k/290m)

1. Finlay Grant	Buxton AC	26.21
2. Tom Spencer	Buxton AC	26.22
3. Edward Corden	Stockport Harriers	26.28

UNDER 19 GIRLS (4.5k/290m)

1. Alexandra Whitaker	Harrogate Harriers	33.00
2. Chloe Rylance	Ambleside AC	33.45
3. Lucy Bednall	Buxton AC	34.08



SAUNDERS LAKELAND MOUNTAIN MARATHON, 3-4 JULY 2021

Stephen Ross, *Organiser*, and Roger Smith, *Race Director*



The 42nd Saunders Lakeland Mountain Marathon was held on 3rd/4th July in the North-West Lake District with the event centre at Gatesgarth and the overnight camp at Seathwaite. Our thanks to Robert Wilkinson and Peter Edmondson respectively. The courses were planned by Julie and John Ferris Worth who did a great job of making the most of classic Lakeland terrain with the shorter courses heading north into Bob Graham leg five territory on day one before sweeping back over Honister and then skirting the Gables before descending into Borrowdale. Day two saw a more direct route back to Buttermere.

The longer linear courses and the score course used an area as far as Scar Craggs in the north and the central Scafell plateau in the south. Karen and Dan Parker played an invaluable role as Controllers in making sure the courses were challenging but safe and delivered winning times to our standards. The weather was classic Lake District, with all the seasons in one weekend, and added to the navigational challenges. Harvey Maps provided our usual high quality dedicated mapping.

When we cancelled the 2020 event, due to lockdown, we thought we were in for an easy year, as we rolled over the locations and most other arrangements with the great understanding from the landowners and all others involved in the event. We could not have been further from the truth, as the normal organisational challenges were dwarfed by dealing with a wave of Covid-related changes we made to allow the event to go ahead within the restrictions which we had expected to be lifted. Our thanks to Martin Stone and the team at SiEntries, who helped move our registration process online at short notice.



Some of the changes we may consider keeping for the future: the extended rolling start on day two worked particularly well in spreading competitors and avoiding some of the bottlenecks that can occur with 1,000 runners starting within a short period. Other traditions were sadly missed, and we look forward to a time when competitors can gather round results boards at the overnight camp, watching the leaderboard change in real time. Our thanks to all participants for their understanding in abiding by strict rules. Fortunately, our strict limits on marquee numbers were not tested as the weather held off at the times competitors were outside at HQ.

The tough terrain, combined with showers on dry ground, made for slippery conditions and we had a number of injuries, the most serious of which was a fractured ankle requiring the rescue of one competitor by Keswick Mountain Rescue. Our thanks to them for a highly professional rescue, and to the partner of the runner and the teams who stopped to help – all behaved in an exemplary fashion.

This year we trialled trackers from Open Tracking for the first time, for the purpose of safety and monitoring Out of Bounds transgressions. Each year, the Saunders covers a very large territory (upwards of 100 sq km) and often includes areas where access is restricted by landowners or environmental agencies or are simply not safe for runners to race over. We take adherence to these restrictions, which are clearly marked on the map, very seriously and have disqualified a number of teams where the trackers clearly showed they have entered prohibited areas.

Following detailed analysis of historical mountain marathon results and winning times in comparable races, we have changed our prize policies to recognise category rather than overall winners. This brings us into line with fell races, with separate female and male prize-winners. The vast majority (over 90%) of our competitors are in teams of two and we also have a very large number of mixed teams, so these are recognised as a separate category. We have a complicated formula, used by other mountain marathons, that seeks to compensate for both age and gender, so the normal vet subgroups do not apply. We therefore present four equal category winners for each course, except where they are not relevant.

We are grateful to inov-8 and Alpkit for sponsoring the marquees at the event HQ and overnight camp respectively. Also, particular thanks to Alpkit for their subsidy of the entry fees for the 150 U25 runners that are so important for the future of this event.

Finally, and most importantly, we would like to thank the small army of hard-working and loyal volunteers that make staging this complicated event possible. Many have supported the Saunders Lakeland Mountain Marathon for 10-20 years and it is heartening to see this contribution recognised by our competitors.



All photos taken on the course by marshals during the 2021 event © Saunders Lakeland Mountain Marathon

SCORE COURSE			
FAIRFIELD			POINTS
PAIRS	F	Becky Raftery + Laura Daniel	585
	M	Ian Jones + Jeff Powell Davies	725
	VET	Barry McElearney + Keith Masson	737
SOLOS	MIX	Eleanor Johnstone + Jack Redvers Harris	755
	F	Sarah Rowell	510
	M	Mark Clarkson	765
	VET	Mark Seddon	770
LINEAR COURSES		PLANNERS ROUTE DISTANCE/ASCENT	TIME
SCAFELL		54KM / 4400M	
PAIRS	F	Bodil Oudshoorn + Lisa Watson	16:30:13
	M	Philip Vokes + Matthew Vokes	11:49:28
	MIX	Chris Jones + Hannah Moulton	12:38:04
	VET	Jonathan Whilock + Bryan Carr	13:30:10
SOLOS	M	Philip Rutter	09:51:24
	VET	Calvin Routledge	11:57:19
KIRKFELL		40km/3600m	
	F	Katie Reynolds + Charlotte Watson	11:01:59
	M	Matthew Franklin + Joe Mercer	09:25:45
	MIX	Catherine Litherland + Ross Litherland	11:33:12
	VET	Anthony Emmet + Garry Beardwood	10:23:43
CARROCK FELL		38km/3000m	
	F	Elizabeth Adams + Outi Kamarainen	12:48:47
	M	Graham Rush + Linton Taylor	08:09:49
	MIX	Alistair Hearn + Maria Hearn	09:57:41
	VET	Mike Harrison + Ange Jackson	11:03:15
HARTER FELL		33km/2600m	
	F	Lisa Ferrero + Claire Wilshaw	09:49:42
	M	Peter Tryner + Euan Tryner	07:09:47
	MIX	Jo Scott + Maya Hampshire Wright	07:09:39
	VET	John Taylor + Jo Taylor	08:08:34
WANSFELL		28km/2200m	
	F	Michelle Aukland + Alex Snow	09:27:13
	M	Stuart Nash + Harvey Nash	06:53:57
	MIX	Hannah Yorwerth + Daniel Wilson	07:25:48
	VET	Keith Tonkin + Christine Kiddier	05:22:10
BEDAFELL		28km/2200m	
	F	Kirsty Bryan-Jones + Ffion Patton	05:52:16
	M	Paul Hammond + James Hammond	04:52:26
	MIX	Natalie Hawkrigg + Ruben Razzetti	05:22:25
NOTE: Vet results adjusted for handicap, http://www.slmm.org.uk/rules/			

THE HB21 FELL RACE

INTRODUCING THE 2021 BRITISH HILL AND FELL RUNNING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Jude Jepson and Morgan Donnelly

This year’s British Championships will be rolled into one race rather than a series because of ongoing disparity between the home nations regarding the easing of Covid restrictions. This has made it impossible to plan a series and now with much of the year passed we have planned a single event rather than have no Championships at all.

SO..

Morgan Donnelly of Borrowdale Fellrunners has generously created a fantastic A-Medium race route using some of his favourite training ground in Dufton, North Pennines. We hope you will make a good weekend of it by enjoying the main event and, fingers crossed, the cheeky little up-hill race on the Friday night. That’ll sort out the slackers from the diehards.

Dufton is lovely village with a good pub, café and a variety of accommodation. Most importantly though, it has a public toilet. The village community take responsibility for its upkeep. Proceeds raised will help to fund its upkeep. We all appreciate somewhere to go, so your entries do matter and are appreciated.

WHY HB21?

Sadly (H)annah (B)rown, a young woman from Dufton lost her life this year 20(21). The race route crosses Hannah’s family’s land. She was much loved and big part of the farming community. She and her fiancé Ben delayed their marriage because of Covid and tragically never did make it to the altar. Ben came up with the race name and has been a stalwart marshal at the High Cup Nick race over the years. He and local landowners have all been very generous and supportive of the race. Hannah’s passing has left a big hole in this small community. We hope the race will be a fitting tribute to her memory.

MAIN EVENT

One-off British Championship Fell Race over a variety of terrain on the edge of the Eden Valley and Pennines.

11km with 900m of climb

Race will start next to the iconic fountain in the centre of Dufton and it will finish in the field behind the Stag Inn (Dufton).

A fell race that effectively finishes at a pub, what’s not to like!

Most of the course formed the backbone of my training runs from back in the day when I was good (former Brit Champ etc). However for a once only deal, we can run down the famous line that can clearly be seen from the village and which runs down the front of Dufton Pike (locals call this Morgan’s Line), before running through farm fields for a very spectator friendly and visible finish.

There will be enough space on the village green for everyone to start together at noon (Saturday 4th September 2021). Winning time expected to be round about the hour mark. Course will be obvious (anyone who has done my High Cup Nick race can vouch for the efforts I go to on that front).

The race will also contain a Preem relating to fastest ascent on the second climb (Brownber).

POSSIBLE PROLOGUE EVENT

If we have sufficient interest, we will also have a short uphill only time-trial event on the evening before the main event. The intention is that for folks travelling from afar having two events will enable them to make a weekend of proceedings. Or it will allow the rest of the family to also get something out of the weekend. I’m also hoping it will add to the post-race banter for the main event for those that do both!

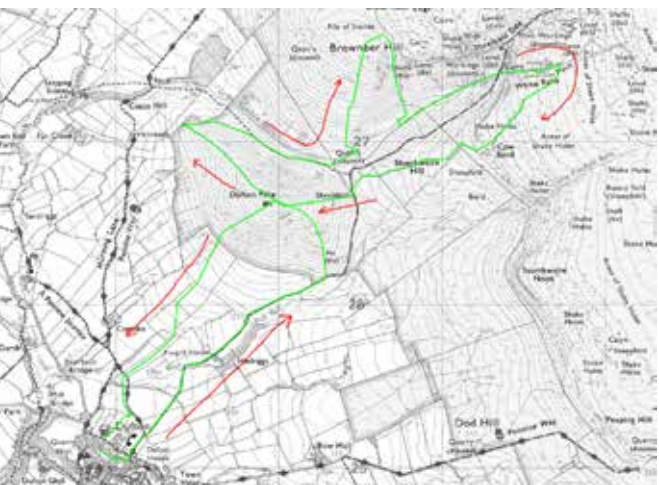
This time-trial will be an ascent of Dufton Pike from the kissing gate. Getting to the start will mean a 25 minute walk from the centre of Dufton.

We really need 150 entrants to make the Prologue economically viable. We will take expressions of interest before making final decision.

FEES

Event	Adults	Kids
Prologue	£5	£3.50
Championship Race	£16	Not applicable

THE ROUTE



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CALENDAR UPDATE

The fixtures listed in this section reflect races which have been licensed by the FRA. Due to the continually changing Coronavirus situation please check the FRA website, <https://fellrunner.org.uk/races.php>, which holds the most up-to-date Calendar. There are also links to the other national fell running organisations where information can be found about races that are not in the FRA Calendar.

ANDY MCMURDO, FRA FIXTURES SECRETARY

RACE INFORMATION

Events which are licensed by the FRA are identified by (R) and will be run in accordance with FRA rules and requirements. Race not identified in this way are not licensed by the FRA and are included for information only. This includes all races in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales.

TUE. JUL 20. BLACKA MOOR CHASE (R). BS. 7.30 p.m. 6.7km/252m. Venue: Totley AC Pavilion, nr Cricket Inn GR302800. GR 302800. £4.00 pre-entry, £5.00 on day. Over 14. Juniors: Juniors 14 and over will run the full course alongside the seniors, with their own category prizes. Counter in the Totley Series. Details: Steve Franklin, 330 Baslow Road, Totley, Sheffield, S17 3BG. Tel: 07749 646272. Email: steve.w.franklin@gmail.com. Website: www.totleyac.org.uk.

WED. JUL 21. BLISCO DASH (R). AS. NG. 7.00 p.m. 8km/650m. Venue: Old Dungeon Ghyll Hotel, Great Langdale, Ambleside. GR 286061. £2.00, pre-entry. Entries now open to the first 100 FRA members to send me a completed FRA entry form. I will email bank details to successful applicants. Teams. LK/NS. Over 16. Records: J. Maitland, 36.01, 1987; f. L. Roberts, 47.25, 2004. Details: Selwyn Wright, Craighouse, Foxfield Road, Broughton-in-Furness, LA20 6EZ. Tel: 01229 716797. Email: selwyn.wright@btinternet.com. Website: www.amblesideac.org.uk.

SAT. JUL 24. DARREN HOLLOWAY MEMORIAL RACE (BUTTERMERE HORSESHOE) (R). AL. 11.00 a.m. 35.5km/2515m. Venue: Loweswater Village Hall. GR NY140211. £15.00, pre-entry.

Entries will open 1st March via SiEntries. Teams. ER/LK/NS/PM. Over 18. Records: C Bell, 03.45.20, 2018; f. J. Paris, 04.29.28, 2018. Very limited parking this year - car share if possible. Details: Paul Jennings, Carr House, Kirkland, Frizington, CA26 3YB. Tel: 01946 861084. Email: dhmr@c-f-r.org.uk. Website: www.c-f-r.org.uk.

SAT. JUL 24. DARREN HOLLOWAY MEMORIAL RACE SHORT (R). AL. NG. 11.00 a.m. 20.8km/1518m. Venue: Loweswater Village Hall. GR NY140211. £15.00, pre-entry. Entry will open 1st March via SiEntries. ER/LK/NS/PM. Over 18. Records: S Pymm, 02.33.39, 2016; f. C Bradshaw, 02.58.07, 2017. Very limited parking this year - car share if possible. Details: Paul Jennings, Carr House, Kirkland, Frizington, CA26 3YB. Tel: 01946 861084. Email: dhmr@c-f-r.org.uk. Website: www.c-f-r.org.uk.

THU. JUL 29. DICK HUDSON'S (R). BM. 7.00 p.m. 11.2km/335m. Venue: Bottom of track up to White Wells, Wells Road, Ilkley, LS29 9RF. GR SE117471. £4.00, on day. ER/LK/NS. Over 18. Records: J Smith, 46.25, 2014. Please park in the Darwin Gardens car park by the cattle grid. Details: Ali Burns, 7 Harrison Grove, HG1 4QJ. Tel: 07470 113967. Email: alisdair.burns@gmail.com. Website: www.wharfedaleharriers.co.uk.

SUN. AUG 1. KENTMERE HORSESHOE (R). AM. 12.00 p.m. 19.8km/1006m. Venue: Kentmere Village Hall. £15.00, pre-entry. entries via sportident entry or website from 10th June. Teams. ER/LK/NS. Over 18. Records: S Bailey, 01.22.36, 2004 ,f. V Wilkinson, 01.40.23, 2018. Refreshments in village hall for small charge. Pete Bland Sports/inov-8 Lakes Grand Prix counter. Details: Paul Brittleton, 31 Meadowcroft Avenue, PR3 1ZH. Tel: 07583 077128. Email: paulbrittleton@yahoo.co.uk. Website: www.kentmerehorseshoe.org.uk.

THU. AUG 5. ESHTON MOOR (B O F R A) (R). CS. G. 7.15 p.m. 8.3km/172m. Venue: Old Hall Farm, Gargrave, BD23 3UT. Pre-entry. Registration from 6pm. Entry details on BOFRA website. LK/PM. Over 17. Records: G Hird, 32.25, 2010; f. M Hyder, 37.25, 2011. Juniors: Age categories U9(min age 6)/U12/U14, start at 18:30. U17 will set off with the seniors. £1 entry Juniors. See website for directions to venue.

Details: Chris Jones, 2 Raygill Cottages, Lothersdale, Keighley, BD20 8HH. Tel: 07753 799386. Email: chrisxjones66@gmail.com. Website: www.wharfedaleharriers.co.uk.

SAT. AUG 7. BORROWDALE (R). AL. 11.00 a.m. 27km/2000m. Venue: Rosthwaite village, Borrowdale. £14.00, pre-entry. Entries will open on 13 July via sportident, limit 500. ER/LK/NS/PM. Over 18. Records: W Bland, 02.34.38, 1982; f. J. Paris, 03.15.33, 2015. Race will only go ahead if all covid restrictions are lifted. Go to Borrowdale website for details . Details: Andrew Schofield, Rose Cottage, Braithwaite, Keswick, CA12 5XH. Website: www.borrowdalefellrunners.co.uk.

SUN. AUG 8. ROUND HILL (R). CM. 11.00 a.m. 14.1km/335m. Venue: Timble village crossroads, nr Otley. GR 170531. £5.00, on day. Registration in Timble village, about 1km from start. Part of entry fee going to Brain Tumour research and support charity www.btrs.org.uk. Teams of 2 men and 2 women. LK/PM. Over 18. Records: T. Adams, 51.41, 2019; f. J. Waites, 01.03.16, 2012. Details: Andrew Robertshaw, 36 West Busk Lane, Otley, LS21 3LW. Tel: 01943 464170. Email: androbortshaw@gmail.com. Website: www.otleyac.org.uk.

WED. AUG 11. ECCLES PIKE (R). AS. 7.30 p.m. 5.4km/305m. Venue: Navigation Inn, Bugsworth Canal Basin, Buxworth, SK23 7NE. GR 821023 on Dark Peak map. £5.00 pre-entry. Pre-entry via SiEntries - see GVS website. Teams. PM. Over 14. Records: A. Wilton, 19.26, 1996; f. O. Bush, 24.53, 2011. Juniors: 14+ as part of main race. Details: Tracy Vernon, 93 Macclesfield Road, Whaley Bridge, SK23 7DH. Tel: 07747 309711. Email: tdvernon@mail.com. Website: www.goytvalleystriders.org.uk.

THU. AUG 12. KINGS CHALLENGE (R). BS. 7.00 p.m. 9.6km/360m. Venue: The Kings Arms, Silsden, BD20 0JY. GR SE 042 465. £4.00, on day. Registration at the Kings Arms. LK/NS. Over 16. Details: Chris Jones, 2 Raygill Cottages, Lothersdale, Keighley, BD20 8HH. Tel: 07753 799386. Email: chrisxjones66@gmail.com. Website: www.wharfedaleharriers.co.uk.

THU. AUG 12. RICKY'S RACE (R). BS. 7.00 p.m. 7.3km/240m. Venue: Square and Compass, Darley Dale, nr Matlock, DE4 2EQ. £6.00, pre-entry. Race limit 200. Entry on the day only available if race not full, check race website to confirm. Pre-registration preferred at <https://www.webscorer.com/register?raceid=197630> (no advance payment required, simply pay at the race). PM. Over 16. Records: S Bond, 27.18, 2010; f. C Howard, 33.10, 2009. Details: Andy Mellor, Hawthorns, Warren Carr, Matlock, DE4 2LN. Tel: 07789 262960. Email: caz.andy@btinternet.com. Website: www.webscorer.com/register?raceid=240070.

THU. AUG 12. WHITTLE PIKE (R). AS. 7.00 p.m. 8.2km/488m. Venue: Cowpe Village Hall, Waterfoot, Rossendale. GR 837212. £4.00, on day. Teams. PM. Over 16. Records: J Mercer, 44.08, 2019; f. H Page, 47.36, 2018. Substantial cash prize for male and female winners. Second race in Rossendale mid-week series. Details: Nick Harris, 8 Hardman Close, Rossendale, BB4 7DL. Tel: 07956 344174. Email: nick.harris@northmanchester.net. Website: www.rossendaleharriers.co.uk.

SAT. AUG 14. ELDWICK GALA (R). BS. 3.00 p.m. 4.8km/168m. Venue: Eldwick Memorial Hall, BD16 3EQ. GR 123404. £4.00 pre-entry, £5.00 on day. Pre-entry open from 18th July. Non FRA members - pre-entry £5, entry on day £6. All Junior £2. Race limit 200. Entry on the day will be limited, mostly for local unattached runners, so please pre-enter where-ever possible. Teams. PM. Over 13. Records: D. Slater, 16.01, 1981; f. C. Haigh, 17.45, 1985. Juniors: A 1.6km and 2.0km races for Juniors U11, U13 and U15 are possible but not confirmed yet. U15 (minimum age 13) can do the Senior race. See website for updates. Details: Becky Weight,

16 Glen Road, Eldwick, Bingley, BD16 3ET. Tel: 01274 510920. Email: beckyweight@btinternet.com. Website: www.bingleyharriers.teamapp.com/events/14398240-eldwick-gala-fell-race-bs-4-8km-168m?_detail=v1.

SUN. AUG 15. LAKELAND COUNTRY FAIR (R). AS. 2.30 p.m. 9km/705m. Venue: The Showfield, Little Arrow, Torver, LA21 8AU. GR SD288947. Free pre-entry. Please register by completing standard entry form and emailing to race organiser, who will reply to confirm your entry. Pay to enter Show. ER/LK/NS/PM. Over 18. Records: R Jebb, 46.19, 2017; f. H Horsburgh, 57.07, 2017. New records following course change 2017. Juniors: U11(over 7)/U13/U15/U17/U19 races starting at 1pm, age at following 31st Dec. Popular Country Fair - good day out for all the family. Show starts at noon. As the start and finish are in private farm fields they cannot be reccied. Details: Alison Bolt, Downfield House, Leece, Ulverston, LA12 ORD. Tel: 01229 837680. Email: aboltpv@aol.com. Website: www.lakelandcountryfair.co.uk.

SUN. AUG 15. PEAK RAID 3 AUTUMN SERIES ROUND 1 OF 4 (R). MM. 8.00 a.m. Staggered starts 8:00 to 10:00. Venue: Peak District - exact location tbc 1 month before event. £18.00, pre-entry. Entry via SI Entries 1 month before event, closing date Sunday prior to event. Post-race tea and biscuits. ER/NS. Over 14. Runners under 18 must run with parent or guardian over 21. Juniors: Minimum age 14 if running with a parent. A three hour score event in the Peak District. Pre-printed maps provided, run solo or in pairs. Details: Andy Jackson, Stoney House, Queens Street, Tideswell, SK17 8JZ. Tel: 07762 630755. Email: andy.jackson26@yahoo.com. Website: www.explorerevents.co.uk.

WED. AUG 18. NOT ROUND LATRIGG (R). BS. 7.00 p.m. 8.8km/244m. Venue: Cricket Club, Fitz Park, Keswick. £7.00, on day. Teams of 3. PM. Over 16. Records: J Battrick, 35.07, 2019; f. H Horsburgh, 40.01, 2018. Details: Julie Carter, Oakdene, Portinscale, Keswick, CA12 5RF. Tel: 017687 80467. Email: jecarter@doctors.org.uk. Website: www.keswickac.org.uk.

SUN. AUG 22. COOMBE HILL (R). BS. 11.00 a.m. 7km/220m. Venue: Shoulder of Mutton, Wendover. HP22 6EJ. £3.00, on day. Entry includes a pint. Teams. PM. Over 14. on the day. Records: T Grimes, 28.11, 2019; f. C Shelley, 32.37, 2019. Juniors: Prizes for U23, U18, U16. Juniors run in main race. Details: Rick Ansell, 22 Granville Road, Northchurch, Berkhamsted, HP4 3RN. Tel: 01442876901. Email: rickansell@hotmail.com. Website: tringrunningclub.og.uk.

SUN. AUG 22. PIETHORNE (R). BS. 10.00 a.m. 10km/275m. Venue: Bulls Head, Lane Bottom, Newhey, Rochdale, OL16 3TD. GR 952 120. £8.20 pre-entry, £10.00 on day. Cheque for £7 payable to Darren Graham. Enclose FRA entry form & send to 4 Mount Pleasant, Thorney Lane, Midgley, HX26UR. A 'Runners' meal available to book for £6 (meat & vegan option) and is advisable to book in advance. Teams. Over 16. Details: Darren Graham, 4 Mount Pleasant, HX2 6UR. Tel: 07876 631490. Email: cragrunner@hotmail.com. Website: cragrunner.com.

SAT.AUG 28.BLACK COMBE DASH (R).AS. NG. 1.00 p.m. 7.2km/600m. Venue: Silecroft. GR SD13218251. £12.00, pre-entry. Teams. ER/LK/NS. Over 18. This is a one-off Black Combe Special organised for the English Championships. Details: William Ross, Cheese Press Cottage, Scales, Ulverston, LA12 0PF. Tel: 01229 869053. Email: blackcombe@bcrunners.org.uk. Website: www.fellrace.org.uk/races/bcdash/.

SUN. AUG 29. KONG MINI MM ROUND 2 (R). MM. NG. 8:15 to 10:00. 0km/0m. Venue: Exact location tbc 1 month before event. £24.00, pre-entry. For pre-entry, see website. Teams Solos or pairs. ER/NS. Over 18. 14 if running with parent. Waterproof Harveys map and post-race lunch

included. 4 Hour score navigation event. Details: Alison Wainwright, Digby House, Thorpe, Ashbourne, DE6 2AW. Tel: 07760 558031. Email: info@minimountainmarathon.co.uk. Website: www.minimountainmarathon.co.uk.

MON. AUG 30. DARK SIDE OF THE COMBE (R). AM. 1.30 p.m. 12.5km/625m. Venue: Black Combe Country Fair Show, Bootle, LA19 5TL. GR 106887. £5.00, on day. Entry to the race is free after £5 entry to show. Teams. ER/LK/NS/PM. Over 18. Records: John Heneghan, 01.03.32, 2018; f. Hollie Orr, 01.14.10, 2018. Juniors: Junior BS race, minimum age 14 (on day of race), 6.7km, 180m climb, start 13:40hrs. Race also suitable for novice fell runners. Details: Peter Tayler, Rowans, Belmont, Ulverston, LA12 7HD. Tel: 01229 583456. Email: peteandhaze3@gmail.com. Website: fellrace.org.uk/races/bootle.

SUN. SEP 5. BLEAKLOW BLITZ (R). AM. NG. 9.00 a.m. 12.9km/452m. Venue: Torside car park. GR SK 0686 9834. £6.00 pre-entry, £7.00 on day. ER/LK/PM. Over 18. Details: Barry Sherwood, 14 Langley Court, Hadfield, Glossop, SK13 1QR. Tel: 07868013126. Email: barsherwd@aol.com. Website: www.start2jog.co.uk.

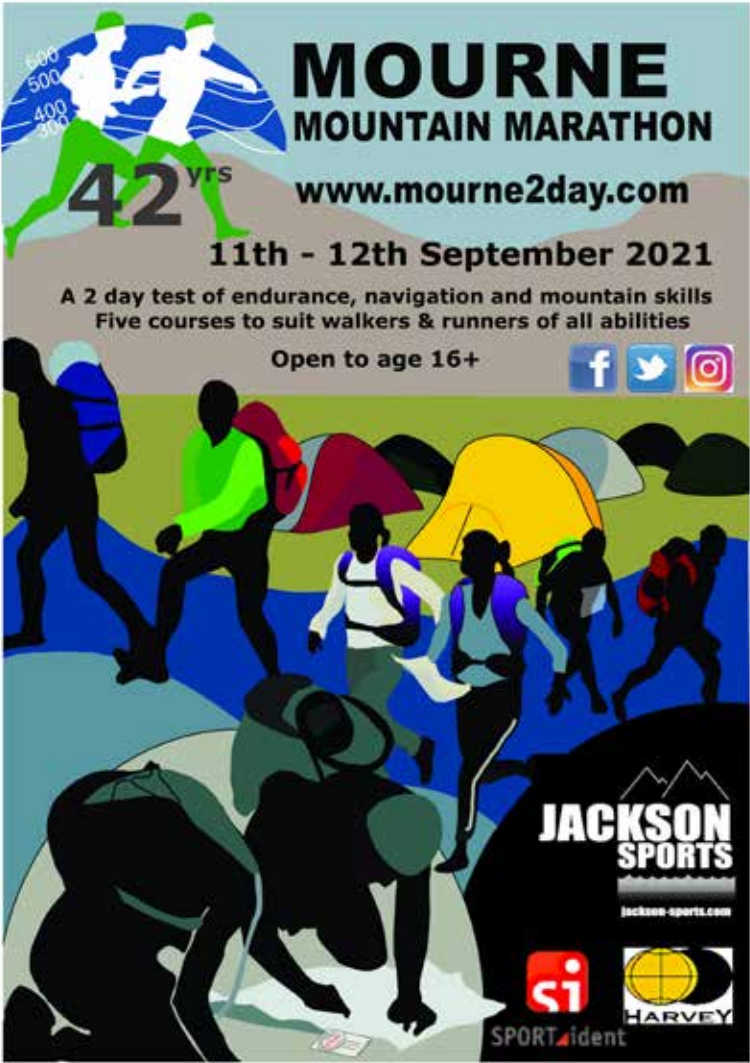
WED. SEP 8. SOURTON TORS (R). AS. 7.00 p.m. 3.9km/244m. Venue: Bearslake Inn, Lake, nr Sourton. GR SX528888. £5.00, pre-entry. PM. Over 12. Records: J Best, 19.25, 2014; f. H Heard, 24.49, 2012. Juniors: £1 entry- U9 and U11 race together approx 2k course min age 8 – U13 and U15 race together approx. 4k race. Last race of the 2021 Dartmoor Fell Series. Points will count towards the Series championship. Series Champions will be announced after the race. Details: Hugh Robinson, School House, Bratton Clovelly, Okehampton, EX20 4JZ. Tel: 07807 237149. Email: hugh.robinson78@gmail.com. Website: www.okehamptonrunningclub.com/summer-series/sourton-tors-race/.

SAT. SEP 11. LOST SHEPHERD (R). BL. 9.30 a.m. 24km/820m. Venue: Good Shepherd Church, 20 New Rd, Mytholmroyd.HX7 5EA. GR SE 040 271. £8.20 pre-entry, £10.00 on day. Teams. ER/LK/NS/PM. Over 18. Records: Andrew Worster, 01.57.36, 2018; f. Annie Roberts, 02.07.58, 2019. Cut off checkpoint 6 12.45pm. Amended route for 2021. Details: Darren Graham, 4 Mount Pleasant, HX2 6UR. Tel: 07876 631490. Email: craggrunner@hotmail.com. Website: craggrunner.com.

SAT. SEP 11. ST BONIFACE FELL (R). AS. NG. 11.00 a.m. 3.9km/235m. Venue: St Catherines School, Grove Road, Ventnor, IOW, PO38 1TT. GR SZ562776. £8.00, pre-entry or on day. £20 for series. Teams. PM. Over 12. Records: A McGrady, 16.30, 2019; f. R Thomas, 19.35, 2019. Race 1 of the IOW Fell Running Series. Pre-enter by 10th Sept for SEAA Fell Running Championship. Details: Christopher Lewis, 21 Melville St, Ryde, PO33 2AF. Tel: 07817481139. Email: clewisrydeharriers@gmail.com. Website: www.rydeharriers.co.uk.

SAT. SEP 11. VENTNOR HORSESHOE (R). BM. 3.00 p.m. 12km/443m. Venue: St Catherines School, Grove Road, Ventnor, IOW, PO38 1TT. GR SZ562776. £8.00, pre-entry or on day. £20 for series. Teams. PM. Over 18. Records: H Lobb, 52.45, 2010; f. J Fanning, 01.06.47, 2009. Race 2 of the IOW Fell Running Series. Pre-enter by 10th Sept for SEAA Fell Running Champs. Details: Christopher Lewis, 21 Melville St, Ryde, PO33 2AF. Tel: 07817481139. Email: clewisrydeharriers@gmail.com. Website: www.rydeharriers.co.uk.

SUN. SEP 12. CAP TEN (R). BM. NG. 10.30 a.m. 16.1km/731m. Venue: Seatown, Chideock Hill, Bridport, DT6 6JU. £16.00, pre-entry or on day. Entry via SI Entries. Race limit 200. PM. Over 18. Details: Brian Shelley, 9 Victoria Grove, Bridport, DT6 3AD. Tel: 01308 459942. Email: jane_brianshelly@yahoo.co.uk. Website: www.bridport-runners.co.uk.



SUN. SEP 12. ILAM (R). AS. 2.00 p.m. 7.2km/350m. Venue: Ilam Hall, DE6 2AZ. £10.00, pre-entry. Entries open on SI entries on the 1st June. Teams. ER/LK/PM. Over 18. Records: H Holmes, 34.48, 2018; f. S Taylor, 44.09, 2019. Juniors: £5 entry includes drink and cake Under9 start at 11am distance 900m under 11 and under 13 start at 11.30 (1.9km) under 15 and under 17 start at 12.30 (4.7km) under 19in the main race starting at 2pm. All proceeds to local charities. Details: Alison Wainwright, Digby House, Thorpe, Ashbourne, DE6 2AW. Tel: 07760 558031. Email: alisonwainwright306@gmail.com. Website: www.kongminimountainmarathon.co.uk.

SUN. SEP 12. PEAK RAID 3 AUTUMN SERIES ROUND 2 OF 4 (R). MM. 8.00 a.m. Staggered starts 8:00 to 10:00. 0km/0m. Venue: Peak District - exact location tbc 1 month before event. £18.00, pre-entry. Entry via SI Entries 1 month before event, closing date Sunday prior to event. Solos or pairs. Three-hour score event. Pre-printed map provided. Post-race tea and biscuits. ER/NS. Over 14. Runners under 18 must run with parent or guardian over 21. Juniors: Minimum age 14 if running with a parent. A 3 hour score event in the Peak District. Run solo or in a pair. Details: Andy Jackson, Stoney House, Queens Street, Tideswell, SK17 8JZ. Tel: 07762 630755. Email: andy.jackson26@yahoo.com. Website: www.explorerevents.co.uk.

SUN. SEP 12. WROXALL ROUND (R). CL. 10.30 a.m. 21.1km/487m. Venue: St Catherines School, Grove Road, Ventnor, IOW, PO38 1TT. GR SZ562776. £8.00, pre-entry or on day. £20 for series of 3. Teams. PM. Over 18. Records: H Lobb, 01.19.58, 2010; f. K Williams, 01.30.45, 2014. Race 3 of IOW Fell Running Series, pre-enter by 10th Sept for SEAA Fell Running Champs. Details: Christopher Lewis, 21 Melville St, Ryde, PO33 2AF. Tel: 07817481139. Email: clewisrydeharriers@gmail.com. Website: www.rydeharriers.co.uk.

SAT. SEP 18. THREE SHIRES (R). AL. 11.00 a.m. 20km/1220m. Venue: Three Shires Inn, Little Langdale, Ambleside. GR 317034. £12.00, pre-entry. Entrants need appropriate navigation and mountaintcraft skills. Enter online on the Sportident website from 1st July. Teams. ER/LK/NS. Over 18. Records: G Bland, 01.45.08, 1997; f. M Todd, 02.05.29, 1997. Details: Selwyn Wright, Craighouse, Foxfield Road, Broughton-in-Furness, LA20 6EZ. Tel: 01229 716797. Email: selwyn.wright@btinternet.com. Website: www.amblesideac.org.uk.

SUN. SEP 19. BROUGH LAW (R). AS. 10.30 a.m. 8km/400m. Venue: Bulbys Wood car park, Ingram Valley, nr Powburn, Northumberland. GR NU008164. £5.00, pre-entry. Email entries only, closing date 31/08. PM. Over 16. Records: P. Sanderson, 36.08, 2011; f. F. Blackett, 40.38, 2012. Toilets at car park and National Parks Info Centre en route. Details: John Butters, 20 Bluebell Drive, Morpeth, NE61 6FT. Tel: 07981 170123. Email: broughlawrace@gmail.com. Website: www.northumberlandfellrunners.co.uk.

SUN. SEP 19. FAT BOYS STANAGE STRUGGLE (R). BS. 11.00 a.m. 9.9km/355m. Venue: Hathersage Primary School, School Lane, Hathersage, S32 1BZ. GR 235817. £6.00, on day. Registration from 9.30 a.m. Online registration may be implemented. PM. Over 16. Records: S. Bond, 38.00, 2009; f. P Williams, 42.41, 2019. Juniors: The School PTA organise a fun run (2.7km/70m) (not covered by FRA Permit/insurance) immediately after senior race starts, £2 on day. Toilet & changing facilities. Field parking if dry. Refreshments available. NO DOGS on school field. Details: Chris Martin, The Cottage, Towngate, Bradwell, S32 9JX. Tel: 07775 435311. Email: c.martin@sheffield.ac.uk. Website: www.stanagestruggle.co.uk.

SAT. OCT 2. CURBAR COMMOTION (R). BM. 10.00 a.m. 16km/415m. Venue: Curbar Primary School, S32 3XA. GR SK248739. £8.00 pre-entry, £10.00 on day. ER/LK/PM. Over 18. Records: D Combes, 01.05.58, 2017; f. A Hooghamer, 01.19.39, 2017. All proceeds to Curbar Primary School. Details: Helen Walton, Thorn Cottage, Froggatt Lane, Froggatt, S32 3ZA. Tel: 07968 561519. Email: thecurbarcommotion@yahoo.com. Website: www.curbarprimary.co.uk.

SUN. OCT 3. B O F R A MALHAM CHARITY RELAYS (R). AS. 11.30 a.m. 2.5km/100m. Venue: Listers Arms, Malham, BD23 4DB. £3.00, Pre entry. Teams Relay of mixed teams of juniors and seniors chosen at random on the day. Over 6. Juniors: As part of mixed teams. All proceeds will be donated to a charity chosen by BOFRA. Details: Kristian Clayton, 24 Kirkstall Drive, Barnoldswick, BB18 6EZ. Tel: 07812589721. Email: kris.clayton@hotmail.com. Website: www.bofra.org.uk.

SUN. OCT 24. KINGS TREE (R). AL. NG. 10.15 a.m. 28km/901m. Venue: Langsett Barn. GR SE210601243. £10.00 pre-entry, £12.00 on day. Please: Car Share, Bring your own cup for hot drink/water. ALL profits to local Mountain Rescue. HQ opens at 8.30 - registration 9.00am. Teams. ER/LK/NS/PM. Over 18. Details: Simon Rippon, Littlegate, Little Lane, Wooldale, Holmfirth, HD9 1QF. Tel: 07904 239284. Email: Thekingstreefellrace@gmail.com.



SUN. OCT 24. PEAK RAID 3 AUTUMN SERIES ROUND 3 OF 4 (R). MM. 8.00 a.m. Staggered starts 8:00 to 10:00. 0km/0m. Venue: Peak District - exact location tbc 1 month before event. £18.00, pre-entry. Entry via SI Entries 1 month before event, closing date Sunday prior to event. Post-race tea and biscuits. ER/NS. Over 14. Runners under 18 must run with parent or guardian over 21. Juniors: Minimum age 14 if running with a parent. A 3 hour score event in the Peak District. Run solo or in a pair. Details: Andy Jackson, Stoney House, Queens Street, Tideswell, SK17 8JZ. Tel: 07762 630755. Email: andy.jackson26@yahoo.com. Website: www.explorerevents.co.uk.

SAT. OCT 30. RACE YOU TO THE SUMMIT (R). BS. NG. 11.00 a.m. 7km/260m. Venue: Summit Inn, A6033 Todmorden Rd, Summit, nr Littleborough, OL15 9QX. GR 946188 on OS21. £5.00, on day. Halloween Special! Fancy dress competition. Teams. LK/PM. Over 16. Records: T Adams, 27.29, 2016; f. A Mason, 35.12, 2017. Juniors: U17's run senior race. FOC for all juniors. 54th annual race to the White House and back. Halloween fancy dress optional but encouraged. Details: Darren Graham, 4 Mount Pleasant, HX2 6UR. Tel: 07876 631490. Email: craggrunner@hotmail.com. Website: craggrunner.com.

SUN. NOV 7. SOYLAND MOOR (R). CM. 10.00 a.m. 22km/400m. Venue: Hinchliffe Arms, Church Bank Lane, Cragg Vale, HX7 5TA. £8.20 pre-entry, £10.00 on day. Teams. ER/LK/NS/PM. Over 18. A point to point

route which will require participants to self-navigate. Partially flagged at the start and finish only. Details: Darren Graham, 4 Mount Pleasant, HX2 6UR.Tel: 07876 631490. Email: craggrunner@hotmail.com. Website: craggrunner.com.

SAT. NOV 13. DUNNERDALE (R). AS. NG. 12.00 p.m. 8km/550m. Venue: Broughton Mills Village Hall. GR 223905. £9.00, pre-entry. Enter online at SI Entries. Teams of 3. ER/LK/NS/PM. Over 17. Records: K Anderson, 35.51, 1991; f. V Wilkinson, 41.21, 2017. No dogs on course. Car share scheme in operation - please see race website for details. Park as advised by marshals - no parking at or below pub. Details: Nick Sebley, Chapel Cottage, Ulpha, Broughton in Furness, LA20 6DZ. Tel: 01229 715021. Email: nsebley@aol.com. Website: fellrace.org.uk/races/dunnerdale.

SAT. NOV 20. MOORHOUSE'S TOUR OF PENDLE (R). AL. NG. 10.30 a.m. 27km/1473m. Venue: Barley Village Hall. BB12 9LD. GR 823403. £9.00 pre-entry, £20.00 on day. Entries on FRA Entry Form only, cheques to "Tour of Pendle". No refunds. Ensure postage is correct for size of envelope. Entries on day only if limit of 500 not reached. Teams. ER/LK/NS. Over 18. Records: L Taggart, 02.11.00, 2007; f. V Wilkinson, 02.23.25, 2017. 12.30 p.m. cut-off time at CP4. There will be a head count at the gateway to the lane 30m from start just past village hall, therefore access to this lane for warm ups is not permitted. Details: Kieran Carr, Oakdene, Whalley Road, Billington, Clitheroe, BB7 9LG. Tel: 07760 667842. Email: kieran.carr@yahoo.co.uk. Website: www.tourofpendle.co.uk.

SUN. NOV 28. LEE MILL RELAY (R). 10.00 a.m. 10km/340m. Venue: SD866211. GR SD866211. £28.00, pre-entry. Entries available on day unless full - 120 team limit. ER/NS/PM. Over 18. Records: York Knavesmire, 03.18.48, 2016; f. Ribble Valley Harriers, 03.48.11, 2016. Details: Richard Stott, Stamford House, Burnley Road East, Water, Rossendale, BB4 9QR. Tel: 07456 486266. Email: richardstott53@yahoo.com. Website: www.rossendaleharriers.co.uk.

SUN. DEC 5. PEAK RAID 3 AUTUMN SERIES ROUND 4 OF 4 (R). MM. NG. 8.00 a.m. Staggered starts 8:00 to 10:00. 0km/0m. Venue: Peak District - exact location tbc 1 month before event. £18.00, pre-entry. Entry via SI Entries 1 month before event, closing date Sunday prior to event. Pre-printed map provided. Post-race tea and biscuits. ER/NS. Over 14. Runners under 18 must run with parent or guardian over 21. Juniors: Minimum age 14 if running with a parent. A 3 hour score event in the Peak District. Run solo or in a pair. Details: Andy Jackson, Stoney House, Queens Street, Tideswell, SK17 8JZ. Tel: 07762 630755. Email: andy.jackson26@yahoo.com. Website: www.explorevents.co.uk.

SAT. DEC 11. MOORS THE MERRIER 21 (R). BL. 9.00 a.m. 08:00 early bird start. 34km/1220m. Venue: Hebden Bridge Golf Club, HX7 8PH. GR 0095 2734. £11.20 pre-entry, £15.00 on day. A 21 mile circular route, starting and finishing at Hebden Bridge Golf Club. 8am early start; 9am start for the race. The anti-clockwise route takes you over Midgley Moor, Wadsworth Moor, Heptonstall Moor, Erringden Moor and finally the big climb out of the valley back to the Golf Club. It's Christmas so as well as full FRA kit (SEE WEBSITE FOR FULL LIST), you must include a Santa Hat and also a present to hand in (worth no more than £2) for the Bran Tub afterwards. Participants can look forward to an optional hot meal afterwards and there are changing rooms with showers available. Teams. ER/NS. Over 18. FRA kit is the minimum kit requirement. Please see website for the full list. No kit, no start! Details: Darren Graham, 4 Mount Pleasant, HX2 6UR. Tel: 07876 631490. Email: craggrunner@hotmail.com. Website: WWW.CRAGGRUNNER.COM.

MON. DEC 20. SILENT NIGHT (R). AS. NG. 7.00 p.m. 6.6km/370m. Venue: Chatterbox Cafe, St John's Chapel, Weardale, Co. Durham. GR NY885360. £6.00, pre-entry. This is a night fell race. Unmarked rough pathless route, navigation will be required, verifiable experience of races with off trail navigation such as mountain marathons or long races will be required. Strict kit requirements will be enforced. ER/LK/NS. Over 18. Records: J. Malley, 41.11, 2020, Details: Andy Blackett, 5 Esperley Lane, Esperley, Cockfield, Bishop Auckland, DL13 5AN. Tel: 07739 462684. Email: andyblackett@googlemail.com. Website: <http://chapelfelltop.fellrace.info/silent-night-race/>.

FRI. DEC 31. DALESIDE BREWERY AULD LANG SYNE (R). BS. 11.30 a.m. 10.8km/300m. Venue: Penistone Hill Country Park, nr Haworth, Keighley. GR 025364. £8.00, pre-entry. Entries NOT accepted before Nov. 1st. Limit 400. Bottle of Daleside beer for all finishers. Coffee and biscuits inc. Teams. NS/PM. Over 18. Records: A Jones, 38.57, 2008; f. M Wilkinson, 46.33, 2010. Details: Paul Crabtree, 2 Fountain St, Barnoldswick, BB18 6AQ. Tel: 07419 990366. Email: crabtree7@me.com. Website: www.wharfedaleharriers.co.uk/events.



Race Results

Opposite page: Julie Carter and Wendy Dodds at the Skiddaw fell race 2021 © Stephen Wilson www.granddayoutphotography.co.uk

HOPPIT'S HILL/ West Yorkshire
BS.5.6km/250m/ **11.04.21**

The Hoppits Junior and Senior races were held under Covid compliant conditions with online entries and staggered starts. Having had the November races as a trial I learnt a lot about spacing the registration and finish out. The registration tent was now located in the middle of a field on its own! The day went very smoothly and a huge thank you to everyone, marshals, runners, and the local community. We all made it work and the sun shone for us (and then it snowed heavily at 5pm!). I was buzzing for the whole weekend and couldn't stop grinning. It was so good to see everyone out and enjoying themselves with some semblance of normal racing.

There was an excellent turnout of Juniors in all the races and some great running. It was especially impressive to see the Under 16s and Under 18s running in the Senior race with six Under 23s in the top ten and Euan Patton U18 winning the race outright. Katie Walshaw had a great run coming 10th overall ahead of 2nd placed Julie Darigalia who as V50 is showing all the youngsters how it's done.

I bought flat pack Easter chocolate and posted them out for Junior prizes. Inov-8.com donated two Stormshell jackets for the winning Man and Lady, while Pete Bland Sports have kindly sponsored the race with category prizes, which were all sent via post to the winners, along with

several Spot Prizes. Thank you to www.inov-8.com and https://www.peteblandsports.co.uk/. Dave and Eileen Woodhead came along, and you can't have missed them! They have posted their wonderful photos on their website http://www.woodentops.org.uk/.

Thank you to all the runners for complying with all the Covid rules and social distancing. A huge thank you to all my marshals and timekeepers and Chris Lawson of https://events360.co.uk/ who did the online entries and race results. I hope to see you soon for another day of proper racing!

Nicky Spinks

OPEN

1. E.Patton U18	DkPk	18.56
2. D.Dry	Ilkley	19.07
3. L.Parker U23	Stockpt	19.27
4. J.Walton	Taunton AC	19.35
5. H.Mackie U18	Peni	20.07
14. D.Kilpin V40 (1)	Peni	22.05
25. E.Gamble V50 (1)	Ches	23.06
66. A.Baker V60 (1)	DkPk	27.13
92. R.Kersey V70 (1)	HolmH	29.02
138. R.Brown V80 (1)	Peni	36.57

LADIES

10. K.Walshaw	HolmH	20.59
18. I.Richardson U18	HolmH	22.26
23. E.Patton U23		23.03
28. R.Pilling	Pud&B	23.16
36. J.Darigalia V50 (1)	Peni	24.13
54. J.Buckley V40 (1)	Bingley	26.00

119. N.Edery V60 (1)	HolmH	32.24
133. B.Haigh V70 (1)	Peni	35.32

UNDER 8 BOYS

1. M.Hallam		06.16
2. J.Raby	Chorley	06.17
3. J.Canaway		06.31

UNDER 8 GIRLS

1. I.Hallam		07.06
2. A.Pendlebury	Chorley	07.07
3. B.Atkinson		07.32

UNDER 10 BOYS

1. S.Nolan		12.42
2. J.Walwyn	DkPk	13.24
3. N.Byrne	Spen	14.19

UNDER 10 GIRLS

1. S.Brady	Abbey Jn	13.20
2. F.Johnston	DkPk	14.12
3. F.Gerrett	Otley AC	14.20

UNDER 12 BOYS

1. D.Poulston	Wirral	14.58
2. H.Ward	Chorley	15.59
3. Z.Jardine	K&C	16.56

UNDER 12 GIRLS

1. B.Buckley	K&C	16.45
2. H.Williams	Otley AC	18.44
3. G.Twist	K&C	19.30

UNDER 14 BOYS

1. N.Gallagher-Thmp	Otley	22.16
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2. E.Wilkinson	K&C	22.27
3. J.Barnes	Wirral	22.32

UNDER 14 GIRLS

1. G.Turner	Peni	24.10
2. C.Chambers	K&C	24.12
3. E.Poulston	Wirral	25.07

UNDER 16 BOYS

1. A.Poulston	Wirral	19.38
2. I.Battye	Horw	20.56
3. L.Carrington	Traff	21.49

UNDER 16 GIRLS

1. E.Whitaker	Harro	23.30
2. F.Patton	DkPk	24.28
3. A.McLean	HolmH	24.39

CLOUGH HEAD / Cumbria
AS.7.3km/570m/ **24.04.21**

As the first fell race in Cumbria in 2021, we were extremely pleased with the turnout and the many kind comments received by the race team on the day. It was not easy to get everything organised due to the COVID restrictions, but the patience and co-operation of all runners meant that the event ran smoothly and successfully.

We were blessed with clear blue skies and temperatures of 16 degrees.

142 competitors headed out of the quarry amidst a cloud of dust and grunts.

Our marshal team on Clough Head summit reported the first runner through – Daniel Spencer – followed 20 seconds later by Matthew Atkinson and then, another five seconds behind; Max Wainwright together with Scout Adkin!!! That girl is flying!!

We waited at the finish to see how the race would pan out. After clocking the fastest descent time, Max Wainwright powered through to take the win 19 seconds ahead of Matthew Atkinson, then another nine seconds later Daniel Spencer arrived home in third – He doesn't run for a fell club yet so who will sign him up first??

Scout easily won the women's race finishing 12th overall and some 2 minutes 11 seconds ahead of the flying descender, Nicola Jackson who topped Clough Head 37 seconds behind Hannah Russell but managed to narrowly beat her by four seconds in the end – a very close battle!

Other notable performances were Ben Bardsley, who easily won the M50 and M40 categories and finished in 11th place overall and Wendy Dodds who easily won the F70 and F60 categories.

Well done to the winners of all categories, it was a pleasure to put on a race for you all.

Lou Osborn

OPEN

1. M. Wainwright	Matlock	36.54
2. M. Atkinson	Kesw	37.15
3. D. Spencer	Unatt	37.24
4. A. Thornton	Howgill	37.41
5. O. Dawson U/23 (1)	Unatt	38.50
6. J. Cox	Eden	39.15
7. S. Hebblethwaite	Kesw	39.26
8. H. Bolton U/23 (2)	Kesw	39.26
9. J. Hartley	Bl Combe	39.39
10. W. Rigg	Unatt	39.44
11. B. Bardsley M50 (1)	Borr	39.47
16. B. Pennington M40 (1)	Howgill	41.02
22. C. Roberts M40 (2)	Amble	42.21
25. S. Shorrocks M40 (3)	Barlick	42.54
31. A. Jackson M50 (2)	Nthn F	43.55
35. M. Robinson M50 (3)	DkPk	44.29
59. P. Pearson M60 (1)	Nthn F	48.28
70. R. Gibson M60 (2)	Kend	49.45
89. A. Redi M60 (3)	Ellenb	53.08
99. J. Downie M70 (1)	Kesw	56.24
121. J. Taylor M70 (2)	Bowland	62.55

LADIES

12. S. Adkin	Amble	39.50
20. N. Jackson	HelmH	42.05
21. H. Russell	HelmH	42.05
47. R. Pilling	P&B	47.07
54. S. Allport	Unatt	48.02
56. E. Butler	Howgill	48.10
93. R. Browne F50 (1)	Bowland	53.40
98. A. Wainwright F50 (2)	DkPk	55.11
103. F. Summerfield F50 (3)	GateshdH	57.49
106. W. Dodds F70 (1)	Dallam	58.26
127. V. Atkinson F40 (1)	HelmH	65.03
140. S. Vietoris F60 (1)		89.29

142 finishers

COCKFIELD CHASE / County Durham
CS/7km/160m/ **29.04.21**

Cockfield Chase is unique in many ways, and it was great to be able to host it again this year. The event is part social run, part race all taking place on the largest scheduled ancient monument in England.

The weather was beautiful, and spirits were high for what was most runners first race in over a year.

First of the ladies was Meghan McCarthy, followed by Andora Holden. Claire Calverley was third. In the men's race, Richard Bateson took the win by 15 seconds from junior Sam Rhodes Dawber and Rory Woods.

The prize fund was donated to local charities. Darren Fairclough took some incredible drone footage of the race which is linked from durhamfellrunners.org.

Andy Blackett

OPEN

1. R. Bateson M40 (1)	RAF	13.03
2. S.R. Dawber MU21	Unatt	13.18
3. R. Woods	DurhamFR	13.22
4. C. Henderson	Crook	13.27
5. G. Watt M40 (2)	ElvetStr	13.31
6. T. Grimwood M40 (3)	Swaled	13.41
7. A. Malloyt	NFR	13.49
8. P. Hodgson M40 (4)	DurhamFR	13.55
9. M. Wilson	DurhamFR	14.00
10. T. Abel	Unatt	14.11
20. C. Featherstone M60 (1)	DurhamC	17.40
23. F. Tennant M50 (1)	Quakers	18.43
24. R. Bennett M50 (2)	Evenwood	18.43

LADIES

16. M. McCarthy	DurhamFR	16.09
18. A. Holden	DurhamFR	16.47
21. C. Calverley F40 (1)	NFR	17.53
22. R. Kelsey F40 2)	DurhamFR	18.36
36. L. Carruthers F60 (1)	DurhamC	22.50
37. C. Woods F60 (2)	DurhamC	22.52

46 finishers

KONG MINI MM EVENING/ Derbyshire
18.05.21

It was a great pleasure to see real people again at an event after all this time . This was our local two hour evening score event starting from Ilam Hall near Ashbourne , Derbyshire, and covered the White Peak area around the valley of the River Dove.

The weather preceding the event day had been dry and sunny but torrential rain started on the day of the event so the rivers were in spate and competitors had an evening of wind and rain, but most seemed to find this better than lockdown.

Alison Wainwright

OPEN

T. Leather	277 pts
R. Thatcher	263 pts
M. Preedyt/J. Bridge MU23	180 pts
R. Kaul/G. Wilson M40	279 pts
K. Morgan M50	300 pts
S. Caldwell M50	265 pts
M. Hadland/P. Hadland M60	219 pts
N. Lyons M65	200 pts
F. Cummins F	160 pts
J. Stevens/A. Barrett F40	255 pts
E. Sanders F50	221 pts
C. Jones F60	
L. Godfree F65	150 pts

TEAMS

H. Waring/C. Waring Mix	230 pts
P. Dawid/B. Dawid Mix40	203 pts
M. Busfield/K. Busfield Mix50	161 pts



W.Rigg (unattached) and Scout Adkin (Ambleside AC) racing at the Clough Head fell race 2021

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M. Fowler/N. Fowler Mix60	220 pts
M. Fletcher/J. Booth Mix65	135 pts

BATCH BASH / Shropshire
AS/4.8km/305m/ **19.05.21**

Our first race since Covid struck! And how desperate were the local runners to get back. It was a pity we had to limit things to 100, as I am sure we could have doubled this – but a great success, and what fun!

The persistent rain held off for the evening. Everyone stuck to social distancing and tolerated the masks at the start. No injuries, and no complaints at my making the second climb longer up Haddon Hill. It was lovely to get lots of compliments - from local people too.

A thanks to my friends who helped mark the course, put the tent up and to the Mercia team who used our new timing systems without glitch.

Tim Parker

OPEN		
1. D. Connolly	Mercia	24.58
2. J. Agnew	Mercia	25.25
3. H. Webb MU19	Mercia	26.57

LADIES		
1. O. Mott	unatt	29.56
2. M. Price F40 (1)	Mercia	33.18
3. L.Higgins FU23 (1)	Hales ACC	34.16

MANX MOUNTAIN MARATHON / IoM
AL/51km/2500m / **26.05.21**

OPEN		
1. O. Smith M40 (1)	Manx	5.06.23
2. S. Jones	Unatt	5.06.17
3. M. Christian	Unatt	5.08.36
4. O-G. Blackwell	Manx	5.21.30
5. B. Corkill	Manx	5.31.40
6. M. Burman	Manx	5.32.47
7. B. Scott M40 (2)	Unatt	5.39.19
8. N. Arthur F (1)	Manx	5.40.47
9. O. Chambers	Unatt	5.46.23
10. P. Knox	Unatt	5.48.30
11. G. Kelly M40 (3)	Manx	5.54.22
16. A. Watson M50 (1)	Manx	6.03.51
24. C. Kirk M50 (2)	Manx	6.31.17
27. G. Rice M50 (3)	Western	6.48.36
65. I. Callister M60 (1)	Manx	8.47.47

LADIES		
8. N. Arthur	Manx	5.40.47
23. R. Craine F40 (1)	Manx	6.23.48
36. C. Brogan F40 (2)	Manx	7.13.11
39. L. Dunwell	NthnAC	7.24.40
40. C. Caren F40 (3)	Manx	7.26.41
42. J. Gledhill F50 (1)	Manx	7.27.42
62. J. Rose F60 (1)	Manx	8.21.58
69. J. Farquhar F50 (2)	Manx	8.58.42
22. R. Kelsey F40 (2)	DurhamFR	18.36

36. L. Carruthers F60 (1)	DurhamC	22.50
37. C. Woods F60 (2)	DurhamC	22.52

76 finishers

HALF MANX MOUNTAIN MARATHON
/ Isle of Man
AL/21.5km/1200m / **26.05.21**

OPEN		
1. J. Cain	Manx	1.54.46
2. A. Nash	Manx	1.57.52
3. J. Callister	Unatt	2.00.01
4. J. Killey	Unatt	2.03.47
5. J. Bond	Manx	2.05.06
6. A. Sandford M50 (1)	IOMV	2.08.57
7. C. Reynolds M40 (1)	Manx	2.09.15
8. N. Quaye	Manx	2.09.25
9. R. Shipway M50 (2)	Unatt	2.12.59
10. A. Fretwell	Manx	2.13.24
13. G. Crowe M50 (3)	Nthn	2.17.22
19. D. McGreevy M40 (2)	Manx	2.23.42
21. B. Cox M40 (3)	Manx	2.24.35
80. R. Pitts M60 (1)	Manx	2.57.15
87. J. Watterson M60 (2)	Western	3.02.08
97. S. Willmott M60 (3)	IOMV	3.14.55
103. P. Cooper M70 (1)	Manx	3.19.06
117. G. Hall M70 (2)	Western	4.17.15

LADIES		
12. R. Pate	Unatt	2.17.14
14. J. Bryan	Manx	2.18.29
24. H. Taylor F40 (1)	Western	2.25.22
25. C. Wernham	MTC	2.25.28
46. M. Watkins F50 (1)	Manx	2.38.29
67. A. Clague F40 (2)	Manx	2.51.27
81. A. Stennett F40 (3)	Nthn	2.57.15
83. K Paige FU21	Unatt	2.57.43
106. R. Hooton F60 (1)	Manx	3.24.44
107. M. George F50 (2)	Western	3.24.50
111. T.Salmon F50 (3)	Manx	3.31.40

117 finishers

THE CAKE RACE / Lancashire
BM/16km/518m/ **29.05.21**

Would there be no cake? Would there be no race? Saddleworth Runners were determined that their annual race crossing the Pennines and back would return after a year’s sabbatical. We started organising our event back in March when the nearest to gourmet dining you could get was a takeaway bag of chips stood up in the park. Adjustments had to be made. These were the choices we enacted to make our race possible.

We moved the date from the Early May bank holiday to the Spring bank holiday.

We decided to set people off in groups of six at 90 second intervals, rather than a mass start.

We bought extra car parking and bottled water.

No prize giving. Numbers sent out in advance so no registration.

Normally we have a bake off where runners bring home baked cakes, judged while they run, eaten on their return. This was cancelled. Arghhh, was it to become ‘The Cakeless Race’?

With these changes made we planned our race. The peculiarity of Saddleworth is that the Pennines narrow to 50 yards or so. The race starts going up for a mile along ‘boat lane’ which is the route, back in the day, the canal horses took when the barges when through the tunnel. It then flattens out as you weave your way over the moors to the Wessenden valley which has a number of reservoirs. I love the confidence and scale of Victorian civil engineering; I’m not sure that all the runners were convinced because the route takes you 160 steps down a dam wall and then 160 steps up the other side. I hope they considered its grandeur as they puffed their way up. The route takes you back up and over the Pennines with last mile tearing back down boat lane.

We organised the race by asking runners to declare an expected finish time. In this way we could set the slower runners off first. By setting people off in groups of 6-8 we could check off any no-shows at the start which replaced the, on the day, race registration. We had heard that two minute intervals are too long, so we chose 90 second intervals which is about right. This worked really well. It meant the marshals were not on the course any longer than normal and the slower runners were very much part of the race. The extra complication of doing the results was not too tricky. It had the added advantage of meaning there was no crush in the hall beforehand, not even a queue for the loo. Runners very much liked receiving a number in the post - I can assure you they enjoyed receiving them more than the organiser enjoyed addressing and stuffing 180 envelopes! They all remembered to bring them too.

There was one concern remaining. By setting the slower runners off first it might be a bit like a handicap race where everyone returns at the same time. This could overwhelm our finish team. There were moments when the finish was busy; but we were not overwhelmed. The slight disappointment is that it was not clear who had won until the results were completed – which was after the runners left.

We could not gather for a prize giving so I spent the prize money on cake. It turns out that £175 buys more Costco cake than even hungry racers can eat. Hurray - the race ended up cake-full not cakeless.

In the end, summer arrived for our race which encouraged 164 runners. Chris Phillips was the fastest man; Holly Page was first woman, and the Rochdale men and Saddleworth women won the team prizes.

James Sheard

OPEN		
1. C. Phillips	Sadd	1.06.41
2. J. Gritt	Royton	1.06.54
3. L. Hinchcliffe	Roch	1.09.36
4. H. Page F (1)	CaldV	1.09.40
5. R. Bateson M40 (1)	RAF	1.10.27
6. R. Mills	RunCl	1.10.50
7. B. McCartney M40 (2)	Salf	1.13.10
8. J. Burke M40 (3)	Middlet	1.13.42
9. M. Burley	Macc	1.13.58
10. H. Roberts	DkPk	1.14.18
11. D. Bennett M50 (1)	Roch	1.15.05
25. I. Ferguson M60 (1)	Bingley	1.19.27
28. A. Davies M50 (2)	HillsbRiv	1.20.21
33. N. Sheard M23 (1)	Sadd	1.22.22
36. I Fraser M50 (3)	ECheshH	1.23.21
37. D. Clarke M60 (2)	Unatt	1.23.37
43. P. Jeggo M60 (3)	SpringfStr	1.25.12
125. K. Jones M70 (1)	DkPk	1.49.39
126. M. Crook M70 (2)	Horw	1.50.50
152. J. Hall M70 (3)	Middlet	2.08.35

LADIES		
4. H. Page	CaldV	1.09.40
13. M. Tibbot	Sadd	1.15.51
21. R. Pilling	P&B	1.17.50
38. H. Burgess	HillsbRiv	1.23.45
44. K. Macfarlane	PennyL	1.25.16
50. G Keane F40 (1)	Sadd	1.27.02
62. M Blackhurst F50 (1)	Tod	1.28.57
67. J. Lawton F50 (2)	Stockp	1.31.00
109. J. Gardner F60 (1)	Unatt	1.42.19
150. M. Jeal F60 (2)	Ilk	2.07.40
163. B Roberts F70 (1)	Sadd	2.46.39

163 finishers

WEST NAB/ West Yorkshire
29.04.21

SENIORS		
1.O. Beilby MV40	Wharfe	38.30
2. O. Heaton	Bowland	38.45
3.B. Bergstrand MU23 (1)	Midd	38.58
4.S. Soles MU23 (2)	Bux	39.33
5.T. Kaye		41.22
6.J. Logue MV50 (1)	CaldV	42.19
7.S. Corbishley	Ross	42.22
8.K. Walshaw F (1)	HolmH	42.42
9.E. Hassell	Wharfe	42.45
10.M. Fanning	Borr	42.55
18.D. Raby MV40 (1)	Chorley A	43.58
33.M. Keys MV60 (1)	Ross	49.30
106.A. Cardinale MV70 (1)	Otley	01.55.09

LADIES		
8.K. Walshaw	HolmH	42.42
16.E.Clayton		43.39
27.F. Royle FU23 (1)	Chorley	47.21
44.F. Walsh	Ilkley H	51.44
51.T. Entwistle FV50 (1)	CVFR	54.01

63.J. Howells FV50 (2)	Wharfe	56.42
66.K. Busfield FV50 (3)	Ashb	57.33
70.S. Walch FV40 (1)	Penst	58.33
73.R.Weight FV60 (1)	Bingley	59.10

DUDDON VALLEY (LONG COURSE)/ Cumbria
AL/29km/1830m/ **05.06.21**

We were blessed with a fine day which made Covid compliance easier with everything done outdoors taking advantage of the FRA marquee. A total of 101 runners started the race and we had a higher than usual entry in the short which suggests some runners were saving themselves for the championship long at Ennerdale the following week.

Rob Jebb led the pack to the top of Harter but was passed soon after by Mark Atkinson and Gary Greenhow who maintained their positions to the end with Matthew the only runner under three hours in 2.59.40 ahead of Gary in 3.00.28 and Rob in 3.02.33. The women’s race was won convincingly in 3.29.09 by Sharon Taylor who found the navigation somewhat easier than in the mist last time. Next was Sue Richmond in 3.53.26 and third Bryony Halcrow 3.59.31 also getting under four hours.

The team prizes were won by Ambleside’s men and the ladies of Dark Peak.

For Covid reasons there was no formal prize giving but as usual the winners of the men’s and women’s

aces will be added to the shields (and extensions) and displayed with past winners and their times in the Newfield Inn which makes interesting reading for keen fell racing historians.

No music evening was possible this year so the mountain rescue teams will benefit from a larger than usual donation.

Thank you to all the marshals and other volunteers, many of whom have assisted for many years now and helped to make everything run very smoothly despite the Covid disruption and to the landowners and for the support of the FRA in enabling us to bring the race back into the calendar at a relatively late stage.

Thank you also to Inov-8 and Pete Bland Sports who provided additional inov-8 coupons and Pete Bland vouchers as part of the Lakeland Classics.

James Goffe

OPEN		
1. M. Atkinson	Kesw	2.59.40
2.G. Greenhow M40 (1)	Amble	3.00.28
3. R. Jebb M40 (2)	HelmH	3.02.33
4. S. Dixon	HelmH	3.05.28
5. P. Davies M40 (3)	DkPk	3.09.10
6. J. Harris	Amble	3.09.34
7. M. McGoldrick M40 (4)	Wharfe	3.10.20
8. M. Fretwell	Settle	3.13.05
15. J. Hunt M50 (1)	DkPk	3.23.33
17. C. McIntosh M50 (2)	P&B	3.35.20
26. D. Nuttall M50 (3)	Bowland	3.53.29



Toby Middleton (Horwich RMI) racing at the West Nab fell race, where he won the U19 boys race. ©Woodentops

33. P. Crompton M60 (1)	CFR	3.58.26
38. L. Warburton M60 (2)	Bowland	4.11.36
43. P. Pearson M60 (3)	NthnF	4.22.03

LADIES

14.S. Taylor F40 (1)	HelmH	3.29.09
25. S. Richmond F40 (2)	Penn	3.53.26
35. B. Halcrow	Amble	3.59.31
39. E. Wainwright	DkPk	4.20.05
73.A.Wainwright F50 (1)	DkPk	4.54.01

DUDDON VALLEY (SHORT COURSE)/

Cumbria

AM/15.3km/915m/ **05.06.21**

This was the year when the Duddon Short came alive. In past years it has effectively been the undercard of the long race with numbers in the twenties or thirties. This year we had 77 runners and a good quality field particularly in the women’s race as a few of the runners may have been saving themselves for the championship long at Ennerdale the following week. We have new course records for both races, something that went unnoticed on the day as there was no formal prize presentations due to Covid concerns.

In the men’s race Calder Valley club mates Martin Howard and Darren Kay were neck and neck at the top of Caw but Martin completed the descent with the reckless abandon of youth to win

in 1.27.44 with Darren in 1.29.40 and another youngster, Jack Walton, third in 1.31.41.

In the women’s race the first three were inside the previous course record with Hannah Russell winning in 1.36.29 with Emma Clayton second in 1.37.28 and Ailish Graham third.

Slightly further back in a tad over four hours was fell racing legend Joss Naylor making a welcome reappearance in this race so there will be a new generation of runners who can say they raced with the great man.

Let’s hope the ‘short’ can continue its upward trajectory, it’s a cracking A/Medium fell race with a bit of everything and also a good preparation for those not quite ready for the long with the last three check points shared.

James Goffe

OPEN

1. M. Howard MU23 (1)	CaldV	1.27.44
2. D. Kay M50 (1)	CaldV	1.29.40
3. J. Walton M23 (2)	Kghly	1.31.41
4. D. Poole M40 (1)	Barlick	1.34.54
5. D. Aspinall	Tod	1.36.24
7. S. Green	Wharfe	1.36.54
13. C. Balderson M50 (2)	Bowland	1.42.04
27. G. Davies M60 (1)	Mercia	1.55.18
29. N. Sebley M60 (2)	BICombe	1.57.10

J. Naylor	CFR	4.06.00
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LADIES

6. H. Russell	HelmH	1.36.29
9. E. Clayton	Unatt	1.37.28
11. A. Graham	Wharfe	1.39.09
25. E. Pannone FU23	Eden	1.54.27
33. L. Thompson F40 (1)	Kesw	2.05.25
37. C. Holden F50 (2)	HelmH	2.05.56
37. W. Dodds F60 (1)	Dallam	2.19.39
56. L. Buck F60 (2)	CFR	2.29.10

KONG MINI MM / Cumbria

06.06.21

Round 1 of the postponed series of Kong mini mountain marathons was held in Borrowdale with great support, parking and start from Stan Jackson and the Rosthwaite Institute committee along with the National Trust.

The weather for setting out the course was unexpectedly grim but perfect conditions on the day if not a bit too hot. It was great to see everyone again and the food will return hopefully at the next event.

Alison Wainwright

OPEN

H. Kingston	Unatt	575 pts
M. Atkinson	Kesw	573 pts

P. Rutter	HelmH	557 pts
S. White M40	Kesw	380 pts
M. Harrison M50	CFR	500 pts
D. Tyers M60	Unatt	320 pts
R. Johnstone M65	WCOC	260 pts

LADIES

E. Johnstone	Penn	533 pts
V. Thompson	HelmH	350 pts
E. Stuart	NthnF	333 pts
L. McGuinness FU23	ECesh	290 pts
S. Richmond F40	PENN	438 pts
R. Browne F50	Bowland	370 pts
J. Davies/L. Tromans F65	Sadd	250 pts

MIXED

W. White/E. Maguire	MDC	370 pts
N. Hockley/A. Hockley Mx40	Eryri	305 pts
D. Cummins/R. Platt Mx50	Unatt	330 pts
B. Mumford/G. Mumford Mx60	Eden	150 pts
S. Richmond F40	PENN	438 pts
R. Browne F50	Bowland	370 pts
J. Davies/L. Tromans F65	Sadd	250 pts

LANGSTRATH / Cumbria

AS/7.5km/430m / **29.04.21**

We had an overcast and humid evening for the race. As ever the midges were desperate. Covid restrictions and a limited start area meant that the field started in two columns, the regulation 2 metres apart, with the fastest runners (according to their own predictions of their finishing time) at the front and the slowest at the back. Each row was 2 metres behind the row in front so the whole field of 79 runners was spread over about 80 metres. This seemed to work well, and they were pretty much still socially distanced as they passed the start line whilst still removing and stowing face coverings.

One lad who got his estimate correct was Jacob Adkin who started as No1 and finished in first place setting a new record of 35.15 thereby beating the 22-year-old record of Gavin Bland by seven seconds. Mark Lamb finished in second spot having been third at the top of the big climb and Matthew Elkington took third. Multiple race winner, Ricky Lightfoot, coming back from injury claimed a very encouraging fourth.

The U23 category was a good race with Ben O’Dowd (5th) just ahead of Harry Bolton (6th) - two names to watch out for in future. Ben Abdelnoor was first M40, Darren Kay first M50 and Jim Downie first M60 (although he is a M70).

In the ladies’ race Sophie Likeman led throughout to take a good win from Catherine Spurdén with U23 Eve Pannone in third place. Katie Hall was second WU23.Trudy Beetham was first F40, Caroline Holden first F50 and the ever-present Lindsay Buck was first F60.



Langstrath fell race © Stephen Wilson www.granddayoutphotography.co.uk

There were no team prizes this year (I could not face mailing out boxes of chocs) but Keswick would have won from Ambleside and Ellenborough. In the ladies only CFR had a full team.

The race only works because a lot of folk put in a shift and thanks are due to Andrew Schofield and Steve Birkinshaw for parking (and Mick McLoughlin who I pressganged in). Andrew Davies, Jim Davies and Ann Bland for marshaling out on the hill. James Archbold, Nicola Davies and Jon Bardgett for sweeper duties. The other Jim Davies was an unflappable timekeeper and Carol Morgan provided First Aid cover.

Guy and Jacqui at the Langstrath were welcoming as ever and Ralf Smits at Borrowdale School lets us use the school grounds for parking.

J.M. Hind

UP THE NAB / Derbyshire

AS/6.4km.365m / **13.06.21**

OPEN

1. L. Fairclough MU23 (1)	Ross	27.33
2. G. Hill	Unatt	29.22
3. S. Coldrick M40 (1)	Penn	29.24
4. B. Kirkman MU21(1)	Ross	30.49
5. J. Ross	Unatt	31.00
6. j. Williams	DkPk	31.07
7. S. Corbishley	Ross	31.10
8. J. Whitfield M40 (2)	Wharfe	31.16
9. S. Greenwood	Ross	31.34
10. L. Piercy	DkPk	31.42
12. S. Diamond MU21 (2)	Bux	32.53
13. P Skuse M40 (3)	Gloss	33.26
18. S. Crossman M50 (1)	Gloss	34.38

24. K. Mitton MU21 (3)	Ross3	35.48
26. C Lawson M50 (2)	DkPk	36.27
28. C. Bedson M50 (3)	CheshHR	37.29
53. K. Jones M70 (1)	DkPk	50.26
55. I. Hartman M70 (2)	Baildon	52.07

LADIES

33. P. Barrett	CaldV	39.38
34. L. McNally F40 (1)	LevenV	40.19
36. S. Welch F40 (2)	PstoneFP	40.29
38. K. Busfield F50 (1)	Ashbou	40.44
39. A-M. Jones F60 (1)	Macc	40.55
45. J. Gardner F60 (2)	Unatt	45.10
7. S. Corbishley	Ross	31.10
8. J. Whitfield M40 (2)	Wharfe	31.16
9. S. Greenwood	Ross	31.34
10. L. Piercy	DkPk	31.42

58 finishers

ENNERDALE HORSESHOE - ENGLISH

CHAMPIONSHIP RACE / Cumbria

AL/36.8km/2290m / **12.06.21**

When the general online registration opened in March the remaining 350 places, plus 100 on a wait list, sold out within 2 hours. This was an English championship race, places were bound to be taken, but I hadn’t expected them to go at “Glastonbury” speed. After 18 months of restrictions people were obviously keen to test (flog) their body over the 23-mile course.

Of the 450 pre entered, 316 people lined up on the two start lines. Normally I expect 20% of registered runners to not show up, but this year was a disappointing 25%. To cope with the Covid 19 requirements and the number of runners in a



very narrow start line, the race was started 30 minutes earlier than normal.

The women’s race started at 10.30 and the men’s race started at 10.45; Sportident merged the times to run as one race. Overall, 303 runners completed the course.

The weather on the day was perfect with temperatures of 7 to 10 degrees on the tops and westerly wind speeds 14 to 19 mph. The breeze meant that the runners and marshals at the race base were spared the midges, but there was plenty of sunshine to make life easy. The race registration went well with runners easily and readily complying with new requirements, for which I thank them.

The number of runners and the championship status, as predicted, produced some fast times. The men’s winner Billy Cartwright finishing in 3hrs 32mins and the women’s winner Nichola Jackson finishing in 4hrs 13mins. The front three runners were together until after Iron Crag when a small gap between them appeared. It must have been caused when climbing over “that bloody stile” going up the final summit of Crag Fell. In the end, both the men’s and the women’s times were around 10 minutes short of the records; although it was impressive that the front three made Kirk Fell in 2 hours and made it to the next summit of Pillar in 27 minutes.

The day concluded in sunshine with runners strewn “distantly” over the scout base campground, consuming their bags of food and reliving the pain and pleasures of the race.

Thanks to the runners for the manner in which they turned up, competed, and just enjoyed “being out there”.

Thanks to the 50+ summit and base marshals for their efforts and commitments.

Colin Dulson

OPEN

1. B. Cartwright	MAC	03.32.16
2. D. Haworth	MAC	03.34.10
3. B. Townshend	Kesw	03.37.58
4. T. Adams	Ilkley	03.39.52
5. A. Thornton	Howgill	03.41.02
6. R. Jebb V45 (1)	HelmH	03.41.19
7. J. Dugdale U23 (1)	CFR	03.43.16
8. M. Atkinson	Kesw	03.43.39
9. P. Rutter	HelmH	03.44.05
10. G. Greenhow V40 (1)	Amble	03.45.46
11. B. v Dijk U23 (2)	Howgill	03.48.33
14. M. Roberts V40 (2)	CaldV	03.51.03
15. K. Gray V50 (1)	CaldV	03.51.05
19. P. Davies V40 (3)	DkPk	03.53.40
25. O. Dawson U23 (3)	Unatt	03.58.51
27. I. Holmes V55 (1)	Bingley	03.59.08
40. P. Vale V45 (2)	Mercia	04.06.53
52. B. Stewart V45 (3)	Borr	04.14.04
53. D. Birch V50 (2)	Kesw	04.14.30
62. J. Logue V50 (3)	CaldV	04.23.09
73. J. Hunt V55 (2)	DkPk	04.30.43
93. I. Ferguson V60 (1)	Bingley	04.41.50
105. S. Pyke V55 (3)	DkPk	04.50.16
115. M. Johnson V60 (2)	Bowland	04.58.35

119. P. Pearson V60 (3)	Nthn F	05.01.30
241. B. Horn V65 (1)	Borr	06.05.31
265. H. Balfour V65 (2)	Dulwich	06.29.02
275. K. Holmes V65 (3)	DkPk	06.40.37
246. A. Watts V70 (1)	ChesHill	07.11.30

LADIES

51. N. Jackson	Kesw	04.13.59
60. S. McCormack	Amble	04.22.06
63. S. Taylor W40 (1)	HelmH	04.23.50
78. H. Wingfield	Dk Pk	04.33.55
91. A. Fan	Amble	04.40.03
112. S. Richmond W40 (2)	Penn	04.53.31
121. A. Hassell	Tod	04.57.24
135. J. Brown W50 (1)	Clayton	05.05.06
136. S. Hodgson	Unatt	05.05.18
137. E. Townshend	Kesw	05.05.49
147. K. Archer W40 (3)	Ilk	05.14.05
151. J. Darigala W50 (2)	PenFR	05.16.22
158. D. Gowans W55 (1)	Acc	05.18.58
172. R. Browne W55 (2)	Bowland	05.26.01
187. F. Lynch W45 (1)	CaldV	05.32.24
197. A. J. Meeks W60 (1)	Borr	05.37.47
202. J. Chatterley W50 (3)	Cumb	05.39.32
213. D. Hosking W45 (2)	Durham	05.43.18
218. J. Downs WU23 (1)	SaleH	05.46.49
245. A. Weston W55 (3)	Ilk	06.08.48
266. A. Cummings W60 (2)	CFR	06.29.30
274. W. Dodds W70 (1)	Dallam	06.40.35
291. L. Malarkey W70 (2)	Kesw	07.15.01
302. I. Mancebo W45 (3)	Cumb	08.30.30

303 finishers

Nichola Jackson on her way to winning the women’s race at the Ennerdale Horseshoe fell race © Stephen Wilson www.granddayoutphotography.co.uk



WORDS DARREN FISHWICK

PICTURES JIM TYSON



DARRREN FISHWICK

A RETURN TO NORMALITY

Like a good subordinate, I settled down to receive further instructions. Then obediently watched the Prime Minister announce that stage three of his ‘roadmap’ out of lockdown would go ahead as planned. Mr Johnson hailed the easing of restrictions as “a very considerable step on the road back to normality”.

After listening to Boris, I’m left with feelings of cautious optimism whereby I’m unwilling to let my heart rule my head. If champagne was my celebratory tippie of choice, it would be kept on ice as I can’t help but feel there’s already been too many empty promises where the pandemic is concerned. I was surprised to see that my dog Nellie appeared to be interested in Boris. An interest presumably based more on appearance over personality as she’s profoundly deaf with old age and therefore oblivious to Boris’s bumbling.

Personally, I think Nellie has selective hearing, but the vet says differently, so I’ll give her the benefit of the doubt even though her husband is from Yorkshire – thus demonstrating her judgment isn’t always ideal. There’s certainly nothing wrong with Nellie’s eyes, as she stared at Boris then gazed longingly in my direction. I think she was comparing the two of us, a comparison based upon who’s the more dishevelled? The jury’s still out. She then snuggled in beside me and periodically tilted her head and nudged my hand with her cold, wet nose. I know this routine performance well, and with repetition I instinctively bestowed her with generous quantities of ear rubs. I swear my actions made her smile – evidently her persistence was worthwhile. Fully content, she fell soundly asleep, when sometimes she’ll fart and twitch her feet. This is normality in Nellie’s little world, where lockdown talk and flatulence are just full of hot air. She isn’t flustered, she hasn’t a care.

Pre-pandemic I was living in my own little world. For ten years straight, normality centred around fell running – it wasn't just a hobby, it became a lifestyle.

Then during lockdown, with plenty of time to reflect, I concluded that maybe my pre-pandemic behaviour was anything but normal. For example, in the month of June 2013, I attended 21 fell races. In the following month I attended 16 fell races, with the highlight being a category AL back-to-back consisting of Wasdale on the Saturday followed by Holme Moss the next day. In 2013 alone I completed 121 fell races and it became a regular practice to reach 100 plus races year after year. My wife was convinced I had a fell race fixation. I'd often disagree and light-heartedly tell her she was my only obsessive interest. Alison would chuckle, roll her eyes and tell me I don't half talk some crap.

Admittedly, racing had become an obsession, which in turn started to sometimes feel like a chore. In 2018 I'd decided it was about time I attempted the Bob Graham Round, but I wasn't prepared to sacrifice too many races, so they became my main source of training. I completed my BG (20 hours and 49 minutes) and 95 races in that year. I could've done over 100 races again, but purposely didn't because I needed to break the cycle as it had become too time-consuming – and yes, obsessive.

The following year, I completed the Paddy Buckley Round (23 hours and 25 minutes) and another 92 races. Once again, it became apparent that attending fell races and attempting challenges were still governing my life. Then the pandemic came and started to govern everyone's life. Looking back now and reminiscing, I could probably write a book on my unorthodox approach towards running, filling it with facts and figures, but I find statistics tedious. Even whilst writing the few stats within this paragraph, my concentration had started to lapse. I think I know why...

I'm currently irritated by Tesco Pickled Beetroot. To be more precise, it's the packaging that's the problem. Granted it's a strange predicament, but the bottling of the beetroot has recently made me question my masculinity. It appears that I simply don't have the brute force required to remove the lid. Unfortunately, it's not an isolated incident as numerous jars have been tried and lids have seldom been opened. Even using hot water for expansion and a tea towel for extra traction has proved insufficient. After one such failed attempt my wife proclaimed, "At times, Darren, I wish you'd shape yourself. You're neither use nor ornament." Slightly taken aback I 'shaped' myself into a ferocious bear and chased my wife around the kitchen – I prowled and roared with pretence aggression. Alison roared with genuine laughter as, apparently, I looked like a right knob... what a charade.

On a positive note, I'm pleased to say the beetroot dilemma is now solved. We've switched brands to Baxters for ease of opening, as I'm convinced there's a manufacturing flaw in the bottling process adopted by Tesco. However, I've never experienced any problems with Tesco Pickled Red Cabbage – what a conundrum. I was in a pickle! So, just for peace of mind regarding my beetroot failures, I read some reviews confirming my 'jarred' suspicions were completely justified. I was pleased.

My wife called me sad for looking online and I laughed in agreement... then slipped away to delete my own scathing review. Recently after a successful opening of the Baxters, I'm left hanging when trying to instigate a high-five. I think the extra expense over the supermarket own brand is a touchy subject.

When my wife arrived home following the government's lockdown announcement, she displayed a joyful demeanour. Alison suggested we have a lockdown party with hotpot and beetroot, "If it's not too much trouble?" I feel she was being sarcastic. Alison then instantly apologised as she knows I'm not a party person. I'm told to "turn that frown upside down" as she's only pulling my leg.

My hostility towards parties is deeply rooted, as it stems from childhood. My mum is immensely house proud and for that reason my parties were held in the garage – a cold, damp garage in the middle of winter. Games were optional, but musical chairs played along to heavy metal undoubtedly helped to prevent hypothermia. It's fair to say that invites to my pre-adolescent birthday celebrations were never the hottest tickets in town. A few years ago, I was in my parents' garage fixing some shelves when I noticed a message written on the wall in faint pencil. The message simply said: 'Rubbish party'. Given the innocence of the 'review' it did make me laugh. However, I erased the comment – out of sight, but obviously not out of mind.

Alison promised not to be too elaborate with our 'lockdown easing party' but did insist it wouldn't be in the garage. We decided to celebrate with a chippy tea. Nellie joined us and became so engrossed with the food that any attempt made to grab her attention was completely ignored. Her actions put me in my place as I played second fiddle to pie crust and pea-wet. I must clarify that even though my dog displayed complete devotion towards the chip shop cuisine, I'm pleased to say she's not from Wigan!

Back to the stats, for during the numerous lockdowns there's been one statistic in particular that's been hard for me to ignore, for it's a financial one. Coincidentally, I recently saw a post on social media highlighting the fantastic value for money associated with fell races. The following question was playfully asked: "Fell running, is there a better value sport anywhere?" I added my two-penneth with the following reply: "Pre-pandemic I'd competed in more than 1000 races in just 10 years, the majority of these races were fell. Consequently, I've spent a small fortune." Admittedly, my reply was tongue-in-cheek as I totally agree with the sentiment, but there's no denying it: I have genuinely spent a small fortune. It's taken the prolonged absence of races for me to fully recognise the financial implications of my past escapades.

It's now over a year since life centred around travelling hither and thither, feeding my racing addiction, and without the temptation of races I've been surprised by the substantial savings I've amassed.

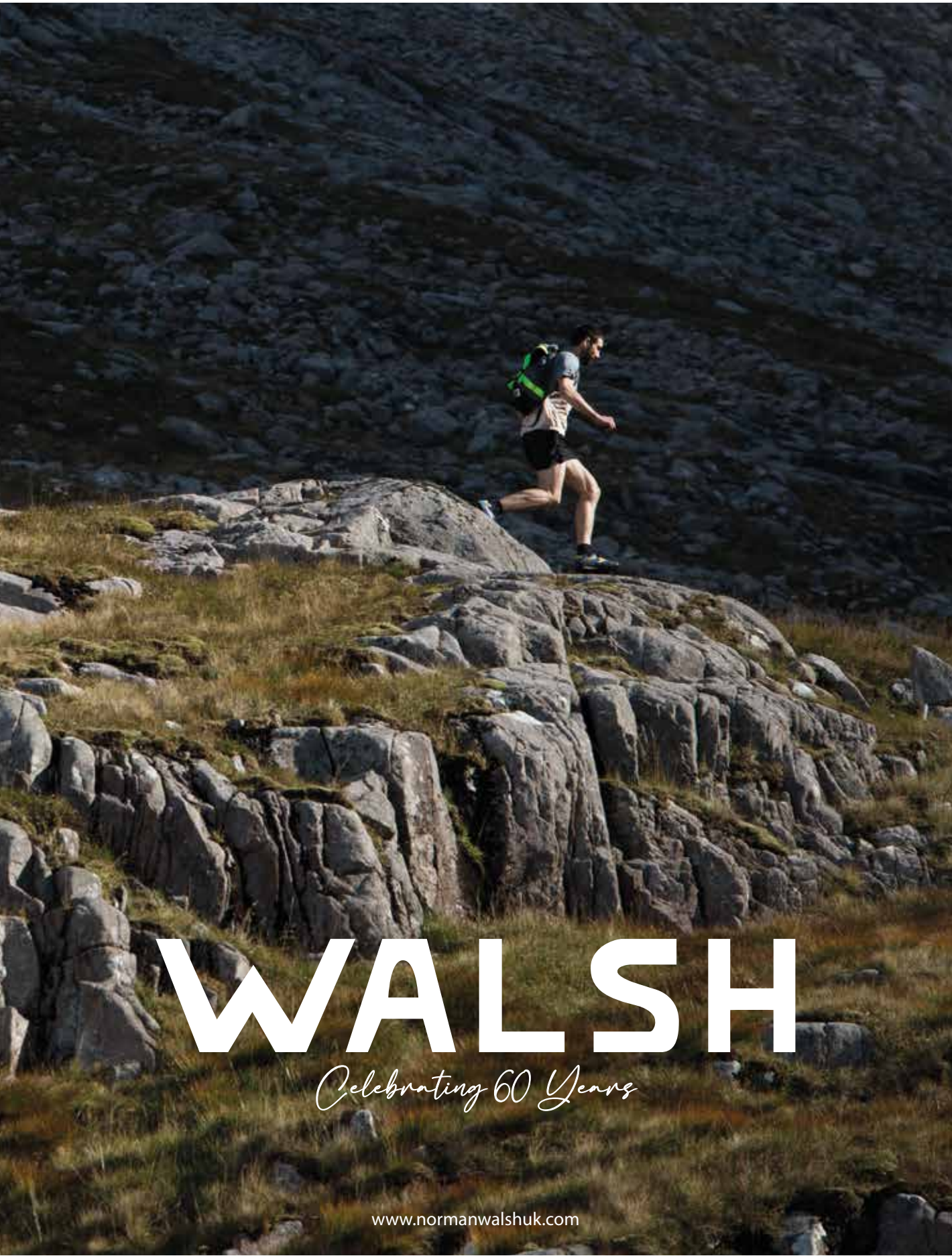
I confessed to my wife that we'd probably be higher up the social ladder if I hadn't become a fell runner. With the money saved we could've participated in spontaneous spending sprees whilst 'keeping up with the Joneses'. Maybe we'd have purchased a prestigious motor and felt a sense of superiority over other road users. We could've

driven everywhere without due care or attention and careered out in front of disgruntled commuters. We'd never use one parking space, we'd always use two – minimising scratches and dints, that's what we'd do.

I'd misuse my parents' Blue Badge and park up for free: pay-and-display machines weren't designed for me, disabled bays with ample space are what I wanna see. We'd jump any queue by simply cruising on through, reaching destinations quicker than we currently do. Keeping two chevrons apart wouldn't see the light of day, we'd always be bumper to bumper shouting, "Get out of the way!" At every junction we'd have right of way. "This motor cost over fifty grand!" you'd hear us say. And when traffic lights have switched over to red, in our prestigious motor we'd go straight ahead – NOT ON OUR NELLIE WE WOULD.

Excessive horsepower doesn't appeal to us, unlike running with friends...now that's simply a must but reaching 100 races – I'm no longer fussed.

“
Here's to the return of fell running: It's more than prestigious, it's priceless!
”



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