

## Winter Pack Runs- 10 Essential Etiquette Points

None of us like rules but...

1. Remember, you're running with other people, this means looking out for the well being of other members of the group. This means trying to be aware if your group is being spread out or anyone's struggling. If somebody hurt themselves at the back of the group would you know?
2. This is probably the most important rule. Enjoy yourself! It's not a race. Don't feel challenged if someone's in front of you. You don't have to bust a gut to prove you can overtake them. Also please bare in mind that as two people start racing, it becomes a race for everyone behind as they try and keep up.
3. Don't think you have to run with the same group every week. We have several different groups on most Wednesdays. If you want to push yourself, move up a group, if you want an easy night go down a group. Being in the correct group will help you abide by Point 2.
4. Wait at junctions where there's a choice of which way to go. If you shoot off, the people following won't know where you've gone. If you're getting itchy feet because you feel like you've been waiting a long time, run back and find anyone struggling. They'll appreciate a bit of encouragement.
5. If you decide to cut your run short and head back on your own, let somebody know.
6. Wear something reflective on the roads in winter.
7. Again on the roads at night, try and all go to the same side to let cars pass. Often we're on narrow roads without a pavement and it's difficult for cars to get by.
8. If your group feels a bit unwieldy and it seems like a good idea to split it in two during the run, do this when regrouping at a junction (see Point 4) and make sure everyone knows what's going on.
9. Watch out for pedestrians; if at all possible get out of their way rather than waiting for them to get out of yours. They've just as much right to be there as you.
10. Never call the Bats group the 'Batty Boys' as this can cause offence.

## Are you a Humble Blanc Buddhist?

Are you bored with us wittering on about the Tour Du Mont Blanc. Well by all accounts it's not going to improve. Entries for 2007 open online on the 8<sup>th</sup> January. We expect feverish demand for places so you need to be quick.

Why do I want to do it again ?.....err, good question. For me it's a spiritual thing. In the middle of nowhere with only flimsy tape markers guiding the way. No detailed map, no compass. Completely at the mercy of the helpers not only for the regular food stops but for their encouragement and support.

I understand that trainee Buddhist Monks spend one year, or more, in society with no money, fully reliant on the good nature of people. Not even able to beg. If no one offers them food then they don't eat. How humble can that be ?

The UTMB has parallels to this. Totally reliant on the support of others. Completely knackered, possibly not thinking straight, even hallucinating, in the middle of a strange country, not able to speak the language, body hurting, feet on fire. The only way to finish is to venture forward into the unknown, getting even more knackered, getting even more reliant on the help of others. A leap of faith is required, for which you are rewarded. Rewarded big style.

If you want more information then speak to either Phil, Richard Leonard or myself ('cos we did it last year) – but expect us to rabbit on for a while. It's worth noting that at least 2 Toddy ladies are considering it so it is most definitely not limited to blokes. Accommodation and food in Chamonix is good so why not make a long weekend out of it.

Check out [www.ultratrailmb.com](http://www.ultratrailmb.com) 98 miles around the undulating valleys and cols of Mount Blanc. Where else can you run through the middle of a village to the ringing of cow bells, clapping and shouting of the locals – at 4 o'clock in the morning.



Rhys Watkins (I know..... it's time somebody shot me)

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