

Injury strikes

I've always done loads of sport and games. Running about, football, cricket, tennis, snooker, golf, chess, darts, cards (rummy, three card brag, cheat) and never practised or thought about my technique. Warm up and down? I used to shuffle the cards before late night poker. On odd occasions I'd get a twinge but this would soon pass and for all that time I'd never been injured apart from falling over and grazing my leg or getting bruised fingers from a cricket ball. When I joined the club and people told me someone was injured elastoplast always came to mind.

And now it's happened. Two months ago on the squash court I found out that if I wore my running shoes rather than my squash shoes I could reach more balls and turn and swivel quicker which made me chase a ball I would have previously given up. I lunged towards the back of the court, planted my right leg and swivelled 90 degrees on my knee to make a shot. It wasn't until the next day when I went running that it hurt and since then the following four runs I've had to stop and walk back. Acute pain below the knee made it impossible after 30 mins running even on the canal bank and on my last attempts I took some bus fare with me just in case.

So I'm really gutted. I never thought about how complicated the knee joint was or the unnecessary strain I was putting it under or that the 32 bits of them might not last forever.

So I've learnt something. If I want to run again soon which I hope to in a few weeks I need time off for it to heal and the physio and other runners suggested in the meantime the gym.

I'd never been in one before. Had an induction at Waterside and a guy called Duncan put me through my paces on the different cardio machines. They were all new to me. He looked very fit and highlighted the bits of me that would be improving. Can you feel those quads working Jeff? he said. Unashamedly I asked which bits are they then? He smiled but then he's always smiling. I would too if I had a body like his. But there must be reasons why he looks like that. Never seen him down the Fox and Goose.

So when I'm back running I'm going to do it properly. Warm up and down, keep my tummy tucked in (more difficult at the moment) not loll about from side to side as if I'm on the catwalk and most importantly listen to my body.

When I return I mean to run up hills like Lisa Parsons, down hills like Jane Leonard and on the flat like Mel Blackhurst or Sarah Glyde (sorry I couldn't decide, but either will do).
Will need to grow my hair though.

See everyone soon (I hope!)

Jeff Anderson

Message from Mandy

I'm sure most of you are aware that in December 2006 I found a lump, which turned out to be malignant. Thankfully due to the help and support of Phil and many friends both in and outside Todmorden Harriers, I managed to keep reasonably fit throughout the chemo and radiotherapy. I am now back out and about and enjoying participating in races and hope to soon be back to 100% fitness.

I feel that I was very lucky to have such backup and would now like to put something back in. The main problem with a lot of cancer charities is that the money all disappears into a big pot and I also feel very strongly that a lot of research is put into drugs and not into the why. Also once you've finished your treatment you are very much left to get on with it.

In Hebden Bridge, they are in the process of setting up a Women's Cancer support network called Living Well. They aim to promote the health and well-being of women with cancer, and their supporters, in the Upper Calder Valley area by enabling women with cancer to access complementary care, support, and therapies alongside their conventional NHS treatment and to promote a holistic, complementary approach to cancer within the wider community. (I have more detailed information on the group it's aims etc if anyone is interested)

I am running the Verdon Canyon Challenge www.trailverdon.com in France on 28th June 2008 this is a 102km trail race with 6150m of ascent and I am looking for sponsorship with a view to providing some funds to help the Living Well Group get started.

If you would like to sponsor me I will be at pack runs or you can always e-mail me on mandy@todharriers.co.uk

I will be putting more information on the news page on the Tod website in the next week or so