

## One Year Later

What a great year it's been. I joined Tod, purely because I couldn't get to CVFR's pack run as it clashed with my 10 year olds session. Thank you Luka! Turned out to be a great decision because I've loved running with/for Tod – the people, the places well I don't need to tell you lot! Prior to joining Tod I'd started running again to lose baby weight and just have some space away from my lovely, yet full on, little boys! So, I just started running down the canal, then progressed to running to the Blue Pig and finally all the way down the Craggs – at the time believe me this was an achievement!

So, since I've been with Tod it's been a steep (excuse the pun) learning curve. When I first joined Tod Harriers at the start of '08 my first pack run was with the beginners and involved a climb up Mytholm Steeps (a road which I hadn't dared drive up previously let alone run up!) The following week I went with the medium (fast surely!) group and panted my way round, wondering where they found the energy to chat and run (still pondering on that one). First few months held were spent holding everyone up during the climbs, then bombing down the other side; I'm still not the fastest going up but it's getting better.

Anyway, after several road races and a few fell races (scary but fun) I realised there is only one secret to running – you get out what you put in. So, the more hills you run up the better you'll be at it, if you do slightly longer runs you'll get stronger and faster, speed training works, mix up your distances etc. Anyway, Grandma sucking eggs and all that...

Lucy on the Stoodley Pike Fell Race



So, the highlights and there have been many, were a few of the road and trial races (such as the Helen Windsor 10k, Harewood Trail 10 mile, Kirklees 10k) where I started to run slightly nearer the pace that I probably achieved as a sprightly 18 year old. Also, the gradual realisation that fell races are good fun, painful and inspiring (our very own Shepherd Skyline springs to mind). The relays were great, enjoyed the team spirit and reminded me why I used to enjoy team sports; I think I even set a few new Tod records with Mel B

The lows – well there haven't really been any. I haven't got injured (touch wood) and I don't think I've reached a plateau yet (nearly but not quite!), I've had a few disappointing races but these have been the minority. Getting lost during the Half Trog (when due to Lisa Lacon's misadventure and Chris Preston's dodgy knees I may have actually had a crack at the trophy) could be classed as a disappointment. However, in many ways, this was the most inspiring race of all: the snow, the terrain, the madness of it etc. I've taken on the wise old words of one wise old Tod Harrier waiting at the finish (yes Simon I'm referring to you) who suggested that this is necessary rite of passage to becoming a better runner. I've certainly taken on board the need to learn to map read, do a

recce beforehand and most importantly of all never give up – just keep going!

So, what do I hope for '09? Well like most of us I'd like to just carry on enjoying it, push myself a bit more, train that bit harder, and one day maybe even love the climbs as much as the descents. Thanks go out to all of you have offered encouragement, humour and kindness over the last year, especially the women who I've run with regularly over the last year Kath, Mel, Jane, Claire, Sarah, Lisa, Rachel to name but a few, and also for Paul B's pearls of wisdom ('lift your knees up') and not sure who, because I couldn't breathe at the time, but it may have been Phil H ('love and embrace those hills') and of course Graham and his words of encouragement ('it's only pain love'). Finally, thanks to Dan, Scott and Joe who've only recently joined Tod Harriers and are making me run that bit faster on a Wednesday!

*Lucy*