

Favourite races 2013

Well it has been a great year for many, with loads of Toddlies gaining new PB's on the fells and on the road and with many showing some real significant improvement.

Finally I scored some points in the English champs at Edale skyline which was a beautiful day for a good long run. My guardian angel made me pass out in the heat at Heptonstall fell race deterring me from running the big W the following scorching weekend.

(Paul Hobbs told me a great tale about his experience on the big W) It seems me and big W aren't meant to be, as the last time it was in the champs - again one week prior to the race, I tripped and spit my knee requiring stitches. None the less I had recied the course first in Jan and



Wasdale recce 2nd Jan - not much to see compared with June



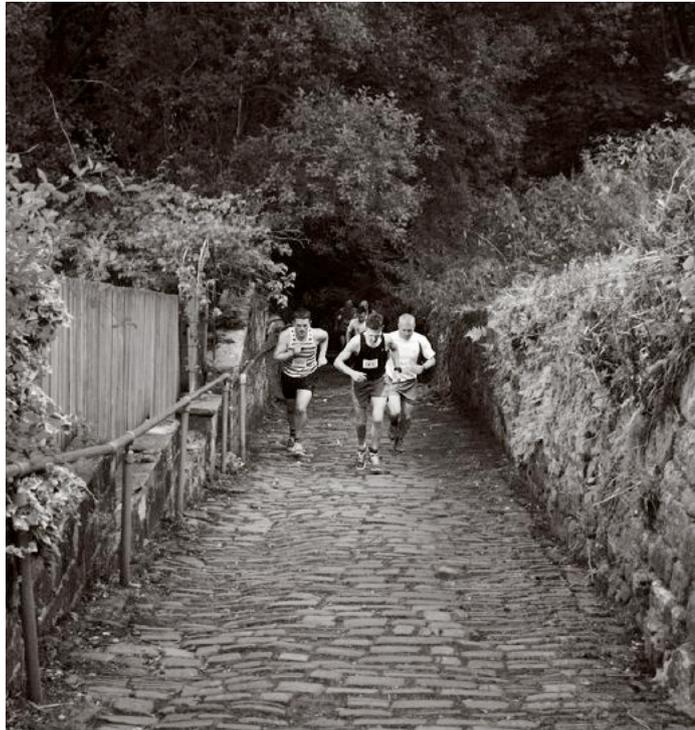
later in its entirety in June, sharing a great day with my mates and getting some great photos. In January the views weren't spectacular but in June it was fantastic

My mate and competitive motivator Cannonball has gone off to CVFR but I still see him and we have entered the Lakeland 50 as a pair. I shall miss the enthusiasm and encouragement he brought us and we are still good mates. After seeing what great results JCB had

during his marathon training I have recently entered Manchester marathon - it's my turn to put my mark on the post. I especially like training and must confess I have developed a real enthusiasm for the treadmill. It gives me a high quality session during the bleakest of months. Robin Metro Tuddenham and I have been creating quite a spectacle splashing around engaging in Jack Daniels sandwich's, abusing the treadmills at Tod gym.

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I'm waffling....favourite race.....? The terrain of this race was a real combo of everything and when I initially heard about it I was dismissive. But when I raced it I absolutely loved it. It was a frantic frenzy of ups and downs at break neck full speed. Loads went wrong but not the first three. I thought I may have been in for a win but when James Rogue/ Logue turned up I nearly went home. The race organizer talked us through the route and referred to a scruffy looking street. "Oi! thats where I live I shouted". It was undoubtedly an unusual race but very unique. Up and down the cobbled ginnels and snickets of the first HB Urban Fell Race. **Nick B**



Nick Barber making it first up the Buttress at the first HB Urban Fell race (finished 2nd - J Logue first by 17 seconds)

The risk of becoming predictable precludes me choosing the Rab Mountain Marathon for the third successive year, so my vote must go to the **Calderdale Hike**.

After a year's injury it was a bit of a comeback race through 35 miles of the best of Calderdale . A strong navigation element only added to the fun.

Sun, snow, showers, and scenery. Then a prize at the end. Fantastic.
"Well, I must endure the presence of a few caterpillars if I wish to become acquainted with the butterflies."

— *Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, The Little Prince*

- Colin D

The Langdale Half marathon for me has everything – inspiring scenery, challenging hills, relaxed atmosphere. Whilst I am veteran at this race (I have lost track of the times I have done it!) this year was still as enjoyable as ever and helped consistent mileing and the V45 prize.

- Mel B

Managed to complete 50 park runs, all at Heaton Park. Failed miserably to achieve a time of 40 minutes, which is equivalent

to brisk walking pace. Defeated by six year olds, human brick outhouses, runners pushing prams, etc. No longer embarrassed about anything.

- Jim S

A memorable year. For the first time I took part in all four British championships races and enjoyed great trips away with some of you lot to the Mourne Mountains, the Scottish borders and Snowdonia. I accompanied Daz on leg 4 of his successful BG, in truly filthy weather. I enjoyed running at almost 3000 metres with seven others from the club on our Pyrenees trip in June as we ran between huts in Spanish Catalonia and France. Later in the year I surprised myself by managing PBs for both 5k and 10 miles (and almost a marathon PB) despite having just had a significantly large birthday.

But I've chosen two races as favourites for the year. Firstly, Ovenden in February, on a beautiful sunny day when the snow was still lying thick on the moors. And secondly the Peris Horseshoe in September, an AL fell race with plenty of miles and plenty of

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feet to climb. Not normally my thing, but I got round in just under five hours.

- Andrew B

My favourite race this year was the Longshaw sheepdog trials race! It takes place on the beautiful N.T.Longshaw estate in the Dark peak. The sheep dogs, sheep and farmers have a break from their competition in order to watch the runners and most of the course can be seen from the show field. We took the camper and for £5 got 2 nights in the van and a race! The course runs along the gritstone edges and over grassy moorland- 6 miles and 1000ft of climbing. Everyone finishing gets a mention on the tannoy and there was a prize for the fattest runner! No I didn't win it!! Lots of lovely real ale and cakes watching the sunset with friendly flat capped folk, collie dogs and the Dark Peak runners! An ace weekend! Mind you if I have much more beer and cakes I will be in with a chance of winning next year!! Hee! Hee!

- Sue R

Sedbergh 3 peaks takes place on the 1st Tues in March. It's organised by the school, but open to anyone. It's FREE. Food, showers and changing facilities are provided. This year's race was blessed with fine, clear weather and numbers were swelled by pupils and staff. Highly recommended friendly event on lovely runnable terrain.

- Martin R

My best race is (as usual) Coniston. A lovely climb from the start to get your leg muscles pumping & the taste of blood from your lungs within seconds!

One year I will beat that bloomin' Roger Haworth - he always zooms past me on the final decent! Next year it's in the English champs & the organiser is having a bit of a do afterwards with a bar & band. Let's have a Tod Harrier camping trip out. Skinz :-)

I haven't managed to do any running races this year.. how about a cycling one!

My highlight this year is on wheels rather than foot - primarily because of injuries and also the fact I've fallen in love with riding my bike. So, while its not a race (never ever mention the r**e word) my favourite sportive would have to be Emma and Ali's Shibden Spinner Sportive. It must have been the wettest, wildest day of the year and I was only one of a small number of women to take part (hence for the first and probably last time fastest lady!). The winds were really ferocious (nearly came off a few times) but still decided to go for it, not such a Southern softy after all ;-). It was a great route, full of naughty climbs (well it is Emma's route) and a good introduction to parts of our corner of Yorkshire that I'd never come across. And to top it off the most lovely pizza ever at the finish. Good do all round

- Lucy H

In performance terms my highlight of the year was probably to have two 'best V60' places during the year. (For one I ended up with £15 Up and Running tokens which my wife claims she will frame and hang on the wall rather than let me get more socks!). However my personal highlights were definitely the two longish fell races I did. Howtown in the Lakes and Edale Skyline in the Peak District. These were very, very different races. At 13 miles, Howtown was only moderate length but in true Lakes fashion it rained hard, blew a gale and was foggy most of the way round making navigation difficult given my limited experience. I was proud of myself on this run not for doing a good time or anything - but simply for finishing! Edale Skyline was significantly longer. At 21.5 miles this was far longer than anything else I ran during the year. However there were plenty of Toddies saying 'no problem David for you' so I set off on what proved to be a lovely warm day with superb views over the Edale valley throughout the race. A triumph again in that I did finish (last finisher in fact though just a few seconds

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behind the man in front) and this has certainly motivated me to sign up for more of this sort of race next year.

- David L

'Cold buckets of water and sponges at the finish of the Turnslack run were a welcome end to a very hot but enjoyable race. This was my first time at Turnslack and I thought it was a great community run which I'll be doing again next year. The home-baked millionaire shortbread served in the church afterwards was pretty good too.'

- Chris M

My favorite running moment of 2013? It has to be hammering down the last half kilometre of Middlefell with Mandy and seeing her touch Greendale bridge, just in time. Phew! Her Joss Naylor Challenge tankard now has pride of place next to mine.

My favorite cycling moment of the year? Racing along the dark lanes in the outskirts of London to complete London-Edinburgh-London after four and a half days in the saddle. Ouch!

My favorite race of the year? There's only one contender. The Isle of Jura Fell Race. If you've never done it put it on your radar and start training up the three biggest hills you can find, and downhill training over big, wet loose blocks the size of refrigerators, throw in a long bogtrot, and a 5k road race...put them all together and knock back a dram or two afterwards and it'll feel a bit like doing Jura...but you can't beat the real thing. Entries open March 1st



- Phil H

One of my running highlights this year has to be "flying" (well, that's what it felt like to me!) down the hill from Gaddings Dam to the Shepherd's Rest pub at the end of my charity triathlon challenge. It's a great little descent and I was running on adrenaline, knowing I was going to reach the finish

(some 10 hours or so after setting off).

Thanks again to Toddies Clare H., Kath B., Dave S. and Geoff for their support.

- Jonothan W

After a couple of injury prone summers, and an injury ridden winter, I decided not to race this year but to enjoy running! Being based in Scotland I took the chance to walk and increasingly run up a number of my remaining munros. It's a strange highlight considering first that these were two quite dull, rolling munros (An Sgarsoch and Carn an Fhidleir), and second that I had to turn back after cycling in for five miles when I realised I had brought the wrong map. But this was probably the run where I got some form back, and after I had once more completed the 10 mile cycle in and a significant amount of tussock and peat bog hopping, the bouncy mossy 1500 foot descent off the hill of the fiddler, with the Cairngorm massif spread out in front of me in the (really hot) sunshine was magical. After cycling out again (note to self mountain bike is better suited to such adventures than cross bike) I ran straight into the river Dee to cool off.

- Lucy B

The race I've chosen is Wasdale - which may seem strange as I missed the 2nd cut off. However, I really enjoyed training towards it as my main target for the year and the "Big Race Atmosphere" on the day



Hats off to all those who finished, especially in such hot conditions. This time it was not to be but hopefully I will have other chances in the future. Such an awesome valley. My favourite.

- Simon G

Mine was beating Wasdale. Monster of a race in sweltering heat. It felt so good to triumph.

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-Peter B

"When last means first" Mickelden Straddle! Those of you who ran this year will still be nursing bruised derrieres, ribs and egos. Never been blown over so many times in a race. What a miserable day, driving rain and gales but we all turned up and set off at a fare old lick. Unaware that the course had been extended by nearly two miles with a much faster start, on hard track I was soon in trouble. At about half way round wind felled me again onto a sharp rock and a resultant bust knee. Just like the old soldier that I am, I batted on not really being aware of what day it was or which planet I was on. Picked up Dave Wilson (also having an epic!) and we limped in together to the finish. My LAST place in 3hrs 20 odd mins was a first ever for me so really quite proud. It was also the last Long fell race I will ever do —ever! —ever!!—But had a crackin day at Buckden Pike-Great race!

-Ranter.

You would expect doing the Bob Graham Round and getting Joolz to say yes when I popped the question at the end of it to be my highlight of the year! Well, it was, but my favorites moment was when I realised I was going to do the Haworth hobble in under 5 hours after 10 years of trying! It took me over 9 hours the first time. I was ill prepare, ill equipped and totally unable to run the 33 miles I thought I could. So, running in to the school at the end of the hobble and seeing how much I had improved from the first time has to be my moment of the year.....and I didnt need anyone to help me along

- Daz

I've actually got two joint first races in 2013. They are Duddon and Borrowdale. Ironically neither were races I was particularly targeting but hey, that's the way it goes sometimes. The long Lakes races aren't (or weren't) really my thing but in my training for Wasdale I ran Duddon.

What struck me was the relatively forgotten corner of the Lakes - the Duddon Valley. A fantastic race I'll definitely do again. No doubt the drop I did on the way there at the Three Shires Stone helped... Then Borrowdale...After the disappointment of Wasdale, I ran Borrowdale and enjoyed every minute. Next year I'll crack Wasdale!

-Paul H

Blackpool to Fleetwood Pier to Pier 10 Mile Race

It was on concrete. It was perfectly flat. It was in a straight line. What's not to like? The icing on the cake Peter the Hoodie cringing at the disco music on the double decker getting us to the start. The cherry on the icing a PB at 49 years old and PBs from lots of other Toddies.

- Paul B

I' v had a few favourites this year. Starting with Silent Valley in N.Ireland in April. A superb mid-length mountain race. The food, accommodation and company for the weekend was excellent. Glaramara in May was a first for me, but will deffo be back to do this again. I went up the hill second from last in a field of 28, mainly local young men. Was delighted to finish 12th overall as so many had gone off like headless chickens and got lost in the mist. Borrowdale has long been a favourite of mine, but I was very pleased with my time this year and unusually did not feel at all knackered, even going up Dale Head near the end.

-Jane L

Sometimes, but rarely in my experience, you run a race when everything comes together. Reservoir Bogs was that race for me this year. Decent weather, legs and lungs felt good, lovely scenery and plenty of Toddies to run with. Memories of finding a good trod through the bracken to the reservoir, choosing an alternative route off High Brown Knoll and everyone following,

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then being overtaken by Richard Blakeley !
A great day out!
- Richard L

Think I will have to plump for Turner Landscape. The start was one of the worse running moments of the year, an interminable track that went on forever. Once on the fell it picked up considerably with lovely running on the tops with views worthy of the race title. Great cakes and atmosphere at the end, enjoyed getting in front of Dan an extremely rare event this year (although he had done about 500 miles in the week up to the race!). Good to see Richard clinch the v70 national title. Also really enjoyed Beamsley Beacon, Cracoe, Edenfield and Top of Leach (all new races for me) and Reservoir Bogs and Heptonstall Festival (local classics). I didn't think much of Pike of Blisco, despite Branny getting lost.
-Dave C

My running highlight of the year came right at the end of the year. The tour of Pendle race was a lowlight in 2012 and so I felt I had to have another go. The weather was perfect with a crisp November morning and bright sunshine by race start. A good group of toddlers entered amongst the field of 500 and expectation high on the start line. Learning from last year I spent the first half of the race at a steady pace knowing the 'highlights' of big dipper and big end were to come. I had a chat along the way with fellow runners and admired the views. I paced the race perfectly and managed a good time with a strong finish from the trig point home. A cracking race and plenty of friendly chat afterwards.
- Andy McF

Keswick/Buttermere 34k. What a fantastic day out Elise "Crazy Legs" and I had. This is a wonderful event, cheap as chips and super low key. A gorgeous run out through Borrowdale and then over the Honister and Newlands Passes on a beautiful uncharacteristically warm February day.

Topping out at Honister and then running down that snaking valley towards Buttermere was truly awe-inspiring and I felt perfect joy at running so freely through such amazing scenery. I said at the time that it would be my race of the year, even the long fought for sub 4 marathon couldn't match it in terms of pure joy. Just wonderful. Joolz

Had to be the Tour Of Pendle, I love the race I love the reccys I love the pub, the village, the beer, I blew my previous record away and set myself thoughts of being potentially able to get some of those elusive English and British championship points this year....
- Ben C

I was originally trying to decide between my Spring PB's at Trafford 10k or Lottie Wilcocks 5k when things were going well, but actually my highlight of the year was having the privilege of running the last kilometre at Heaton Park with Jim Smith as he completed his 50th parkrun in November. After I've had a year when injury has brought me close to never running again, runners such as Jim, Ian Stansfield, etc. are quite inspirational and are not only what parkrun is about, but what running is about. Maybe I won't give up hope just yet.
-Buddy