

# THE TORRIER

**AUTUMN/WINTER 2019**



NEWS, INSPIRATION, RACING, OBSESSION,  
MEMORIES, ADVENTURE AND MORE!





**Running and racing on the fells, trails and roads. We're a friendly lot, and we cater for all, come and join us for a run, and bring a friend!**

Every month we visit a different pub on Wednesday evenings and try to organise four different groups: slow, moderate, medium and fast. We also try not to lose anyone. All runners are welcome. The runs are off-road in daylight hours and on-road (or choice of off-road with headtorch) in the winter months. Take a look at **[www.todharriers.co.uk](http://www.todharriers.co.uk)**

*Front cover courtesy of Antony de Heveningham.*



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## A word from the Editor...

Todmorden Harriers have so much to answer for. You're a wonderful pillar of the national sports community, and the local community. A club made up of extraordinary individuals quietly achieving seemingly impossible things is of course very special indeed. Personally, since I joined Tod Harriers, running has become a massive part of my life. I even use it to remember how old I am (how many miles I ran to celebrate my last birthday). It's massively expanded my comfort zone and brought me great friends, amazing memories and more pairs of shoes than I care to count. The Toddies are my support group, sounding board, \*ahem\* kit hire, cheerleaders and so much more.

Now onto this edition of the Torrier. As usual, it's a good 'un. Antony's managed to write a tale of a bike race that gripped even me, someone who doesn't know anything about bikes. Stu's provided loads of humorous material (sorry not sorry) and even a crossword. We've got some Ted Hughes writing, an interview with a local councillor, musings on long distance feats and of course plenty of opportunities to fill your calendar for the coming year.

If you enjoy an article, do tell the author, and if you'd like to see your name in lights/print, details are at the back for the next issue. You can already look forward to Darren G's race report that wouldn't fit in (sorry Darren), and rumour has it that Elise is writing something...

Until next time, see you on the fells

Kim Ashworth

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## A word from the Chair...

It is with proud honour that I offer a sincere welcome to all members old and new to this issue of the Torrier. Compiled by ultra runner, wild swimmer, great baker, Tod Harrier Kim Ashworth. Kim has been instrumental in setting up our new Instagram account @todmordenharriers and is also a regular at our new couch to 5k/ return to running, Monday group or the Happy Rundays as I call them (this hasn't caught on though.....I'm not sure if they know who Sean Ryder is).

Elsewhere we have Kerry Edwards providing coaching to senior runners and Claire Duffield and co. ensuring that our next generation also reap the numerous benefits that our beloved sport provides. These sessions take place every Tuesday (check the threads on the forum and FB for more info) and provide a great introduction to elements that you can introduce into your training to ensure good progression and allow you to train in a group environment.

Wednesday pack runs (the twelve month pub crawl) continue to be well attended and some of the nutrients provided post run have been spectacular (the dahl at the Golden Lion was sensational and I've got a few proposals for next year). Feedback on venues and suggestions is always appreciated.

The club is positively thriving with newer and older members enthusiastically participating in numerous events and personal challenges beyond the club championships. Well done to our Stoodley Pike RO Joey Daniels on completing his Bob Graham.

I'm sure that we can recollect days before running and may also recall the transition we made into becoming a Tod Harrier. It's wonderful to see such success, be it in completing the couch to 5K programme, individual and team success in the National championships, XC and in your own activities. That said the club championships offer a fantastic

array of events all offering unique challenges and all are as tough as you want to make them and soon we will be filling out our calendars with next years race dates. My own favourite events continue to take me to new places and allow me spend quality time with team mates.

Recently I took part in the FRA navigation course held in Elterwater. In beautiful conditions myself, Katch (Mrs Chairman) and others were tutored in the not so dark arts of navigating the fells (though we did partake in some nav in the dark). I came away feeling much more capable and confident in my navigation skills. My nav skills have been mocked many a time (quite often by myself). It was very clear that many runners like myself included simply shove the map in our bumbags with no intention of reading it. The tutors included several Tod Harriers and the ratio of participant to tutor was around 3:1. The course was subsidised by the FRA and I cannot emphasise how good it was. It was fantastic value for money, good accommodation and food. The competence and experience of the tutors was outstanding. If you're not already member of the FRA it may be worth considering joining as of next year fell races may see differential entry fees. Membership benefits also include delivery of Fellrunner magazine 3 times a year, Handbook and fixtures diary. The FRA also organise the English and British championships and provide insurance to all FRA affiliated races. If you're not a member the cost is £16 per annum or £24 for family membership. See [sientries.com](http://sientries.com). Much like Tod Harriers the FRA are a not for profit organisation. Next year FRA races will be using 2 entry forms. One for members and the other for non-members. This will allow the FRA to see how many non-members are participating. Being a member ensures that you are kept in the know. I'm sure we can speculate about how the data will be used once it is collected. Perhaps we may see an increase in prices for non-members much like what you see in road races?

Back in March the club's AGM took place and it was here that club officials Darren Graham - Membership, Stuart Wolstenholme - Club secretary, Paul Brannigan - Treasurer, Dave O'Neill - President and

myself (Chair) stood for our positions. There was and in the months prior much discussion about the duration of our positions.

March 2020 will see the need for Chair. 2019 I was undecided as to whether I would be holding an official position and changes in my circumstances mean that 2020 will see a fantastic opportunity for somebody. The Chair position is not a challenging one, it does not generate a huge workload. During my term it has given me a fantastic insight and appreciation for what goes into the club. The position does not have a job description attached to it. It is there to make your own and to help facilitate the club and allows opportunity to nudge the club on a course. The club and the meetings are held democratically and the philanthropic basis in which Tod Harriers operate is something of which I and I hope we all are very proud of.

So take this opportunity and make it yours. Club meetings take place at the Golden Lion in Todmorden on the first Monday of each month (unless it's a bank holiday) 7pm usually last a little over an hour. Hope to see you there :D

Nick Barber



## Toddy thoughts on volunteering

“We get a buzz from helping people on Monday nights. It’s great that people are enjoying it.”

“I volunteer because my wife tells me to! Actually it was better than I expected. It is quite nice seeing people suffering knowing it’s doing them good.”

(on pacing at parkrun) “I enjoyed it when I finished. Keeping the pace was a good challenge. I feel like I should do it again. I feel like I’m giving a bit back and encouraging others. The runners really appreciate it. There were cakes at the end so it’s all good!”

(on pacing at parkrun) “It was a nightmare keeping to the pace! It was very rewarding knowing people were trying to stick with me.”

“The whole community is volunteering; it needs to be done. I like the social side of it. You get to watch other people running who you wouldn’t normally see when you’re running too, see their different forms and styles and faces of pain.”

“It’s good to give something back.”

“I love ringing a cowbell – I figure it spurs people on either way; either they love it, or they hate it so run faster to get away from me!”

“I like watching the back half of the race, putting all the effort in”

“Because if I don’t, someone else won’t.”

“I think volunteering is great because you get to eat cake! Marshalling is a dead easy job, generally straightforward. parkrun is a great family event.”

“Surprisingly I enjoyed pacing. We did a really good job [at the Toddy parkrun takeover].”

(on parkrun takeover) “We need to do it again. We have a moral duty to be involved. parkrun is such a good institution. I was sniffy about it when it started but I’ve completely changed my mind about it.”

(on juniors) “I enjoy getting the next generation interested in fitness, not just running. I like seeing them progress and I get a buzz seeing kids enjoying it.”

“Really enjoy volunteering and seeing so many people doing things for the first time. I get lots of smiles and “Thank you marshal”s from competitors. I try to clap and give encouragement. It is nice to be out with people enjoying themselves and achieving things. It is great to be part of making parkrun work for Todmorden. It is an asset to the town as parkrun is to any area and to support it as a runner is fantastic but the volunteer support is vital.”

“If we don’t volunteer then there will be no race. From a race organiser’s point of view, it’s important to look after your marshals as much as the runners. I’ve been on the tops in the Lakes for 7-8 hours. Luckily it was good weather that day and we had a radio for contact but smaller races wouldn’t have that.”



Curated by  
Torrier Special  
Correspondent  
Pauline May



## An interview with Josh



*With an election campaign coinciding nicely with the publication of this Torrier, the compass was pointing to an article to help us navigate these uphill climb kind-of times. Not many running clubs will have a prospective MP in the ranks so we thought we'd ask Josh Fenton-Glynn, local councillor and the Calder Valley's Labour candidate, a few questions.*

### **What made you choose Tod Harriers?**

I'd been running on roads for a while and wanted to try fells, I also wanted to be social and run in actual races. Everyone I knew in Tod Harriers was friendly and the fact you start your weekly runs from a pub helped!

### **What's your favourite run route?**

I live in central Hebden, my favourite route is out to Top Within's (via the top path in the Craggs) then back via Cock Hill. It's about 15 miles

and a mix of paths and bogs!

**What's your favourite thing about the Calder Valley?**

The people and the fact it's my home.

**Preferred running shoes?**

Brooks for road, Inov8 x-talons on fells.

**Preferred running snack?**

Flapjack - I have been known to use gels for longer stuff.

**What was your first fell race and how did you feel?**

It was the Wadsworth Half Trog. I came lower mid table obscurity. I felt tired but it's such a privilege to be able to run in such a beautiful setting.

**Explain Labour's Brexit position as succinctly as you can.**

We will renegotiate the deal - as it stands, areas like ours will lose out as we have manufacturing and agriculture as a large part of our economy. Our priorities are protecting workers' rights, the economy and environmental protection.

Then we will have a vote on that deal with Remain on the ballot paper. Myself I'd vote remain in that vote.

**Give us three reasons to vote for you.**

- I will work hard for Calder Valley. It's my home and my community and if I'm your MP, I will be your voice in Westminster - not Westminster's voice in the Calder Valley.
- I've worked on welfare policy for a lot of my career and run campaigns which changed the law. I'd love to do that as an MP. If Labour win, this will be the last Christmas where over a million people use food banks.
- From flooding to transport I can take my experience at the front line to get results in Westminster.

## **What would be your first act as MP for Calder Valley?**

My first act would be to write five letters:

One to the Education Secretary saying we need proper funding for our schools and Todmorden and Calder High Schools need rebuilding

One to the chief executive of Yorkshire Water asking them to make permanent policy to hold reservoirs part empty to prevent flooding

One to the Health Secretary saying Calderdale and Huddersfield hospitals both need A&Es

One to the Chief Exec of Northern telling them their incompetence has cost our local economy too much and we won't accept it

And one to the Business Secretary saying the green industrial revolution starts in Calderdale.

## **One vote can't make a difference, can it?**

Last time I lost by 609 votes. Every vote will count. This will be the most important election in a generation. Do we invest in a green future or do we allow five years of a government so extreme they expelled Phillip Hammond and want a coalition with Nigel Farage?

I'd like more proportional votes- but even without that system in Calder Valley your vote could make the difference. Make it a vote for hope.

*Thanks to our Political Editor for interviewing Josh. We offered to speak to candidates of other parties but none responded. Josh can be found at <https://vote.labour.org.uk/josh-fenton-glynn>, on Twitter @joshFG, on Facebook Josh4CalderValley or on a doorstep or fell near you.*

## **A crash course in endurance**

So there I am on the start line for Holme Moss fell race, my first AL category fell race. Going into this race I had been on a string of half decent results, particularly in local races, so I was full of confidence. How hard could it be to just add a few more miles on?

I've set off at what felt like a good pace. I'm going a little slower than usual but definitely feel like I'm in a race. I'm doing well, hitting my targets through the race and feeling strong. The run from Holme Moss Tower down to Crowden is just delightful, a nice long gradual and runnable descent.

Up to now I had never felt such a sudden change in momentum. I hit the checkpoint at Crowden and suddenly my legs start to feel heavy and it's spreading through my entire body. I make it up Bareholme Moss in a reasonable time but a tricky descent and sudden climb up to Laddow Rocks just kills me off. I find the line ok but I feel like a zombie, and I'm only half way into this race. I sit at the top and take a breather, knowing that the next section is runnable so I should be able to get some momentum going again. This is when I take a real hit when it turns out my body won't let me run. My stomach is cramping and every step is exhausting. I continue on but I begin to cry and sob as I realise I still have 8 miles to go.

I somehow manage to drag myself to Holme Moss Tower and into the final stretch. I have a giggle to myself as a fellow competitor forgets how to drag his legs over the stile into the car park. He still ends up beating me significantly. Serves me right I guess.

It would have been so easy to quit at this point, but knowing that my parents and family were at the finish meant that I had to drag myself through the pain and awfulness. You see, my parents had a lifechanging motorbike accident several years ago, and my dad always tells me how envious he is that I can go out running in the hills. How could I possibly turn up at the finish line in the back of someone's car? My thought process at this stage is that I may be moving slowly but I can still walk and I'm not injured, and I'm stubborn enough that I'll still drag myself through it because I can. After all, I chose to put myself through this misery and I'm in a privileged position that my pain and suffering is a choice, which is something I try to use to keep on going.

So off I trot. Even running downhill feels impossible. I try to block it out, but the thought of having to climb that final hill is just exhausting me even more. I hit the climb and it's zombie steps, sit down, head in hands, feel sorry for myself and repeat. I'd recce'd the course the week before and was chased up the hill by swarms of flies. I didn't even have that to motivate me today!

So eventually I make it over the finish line, with Nick following me down the road telling me "we've all been there, in Dicky's meadow". I reach the finish line and just sit on the floor, unable to really say anything. I had expected most Toddies to have left by the time I got in, so it was nice to be surrounded by friends and family with words of encouragement. The worst part was, I couldn't even enjoy the cake selection as I just couldn't get anything down me and I kept wanting to throw up. At least my dad took full advantage of the spread for about five of me!

So what did I learn from this experience? Well, not much it seemed at first, as I had a very similar experience at Borrowdale only two weeks later. However, I went into it lowering the bar of expectation on myself. Just because I can run hard around the Calder Valley for 6 to 10 miles, it doesn't necessarily translate to long distance running. Crawling up Dale Head at the end of Borrowdale, only narrowly avoiding the cut off, I was adamant that I wasn't going to do any more long distance stuff. But you tell yourself stupid things in that kind of state. I found myself looking up ultras and all sorts of gruelling Lakeland classics only days later. So after some encouragement from Dave Garner, I realised that to even get round those courses so early in





my running 'career' is something to be proud of, so I decided to stick with it, devised some tough local training routes, figured out an eating plan during long runs and told myself I was going to get over this.

And so it was... I lined up at the starting line for Castle Carr AL fell race. I put my ego to one side and let the main field run ahead. I ran at my own pace right near the back, fuelled appropriately and decided not to worry about my position in the race. I found myself half way in overtaking people and feeling strong from start to finish, which at this stage is pretty much all I want from a long race!

I've rambled on a bit now, but the main thing I've learnt is perseverance and now I'm even starting to enjoy my longer distance running, as it's a real battle with yourself and just makes for a proper adventure. I still expect it's going to take me a long time to really nail it, but I just see it a puzzle now, something that I have to figure out through trial and error, but that's all part of the fun with running, it's a continuous journey and that's why I love it!

Ricky Parrish

## **2019 Mountain Traverse Wasdale-Wasdale (Santon Bridge)**

"The fleeting hour of life of those who love the hills is quickly spent, but the hills are eternal. Always there will be the lonely ridge, the dancing beck, the silent forest; always there will be the exhilaration of the summits. These are for the seeking, and those who seek and find while there is still time will be blessed both in mind and body."

— Alfred Wainwright, [The Western Fells](#)

"Summer has set in with its usual severity" - Samuel Coleridge



So, the first of the Mountain Traverses treated everyone taking part to some weather over the weekend. We had constant low cloud, with the exception of late Saturday, and rain, only to finish on Sunday in glorious sunshine!

This year's event started on the Friday evening at Wasdale Head farm, a ruin near the Shap Pink quarry just off the A6. The weather was gloomy and breezy but 13 hearty souls set off towards Wasdale Pike. We all had a view for a while before the low cloud and rain kicked in. Everyone who had great intentions of camping that night instead headed over to the Mosedale bothy for shelter and a social. It was a new experience for some and a welcome relief for Stuart who had carried a shopping bag of beer and food in his hands from the start! The hut was quite busy as there was also another group staying the night. 5 of the lads slept on a sleeping platform whilst the girls had a room to themselves. But during the night, Elise ended up sleeping on the settee in the lounge.

However, we all managed to stay warm and dry and get a good night's sleep. Kirsty and John had other plans, however. When we all set off at the start, John and Kirsty turned back to their campervan and slept in there as they planned to start early on Saturday instead.

Saturday started very promising with sunny spells. The forecast was for the day to be dry but cloudy so hopes were high for a better day than Friday evening. The first challenge of the day was the Mosedale Bothy's toilet. They had actually got a composting toilet in an out house or the other option was a short walk away.....with a spade. Whilst John & Kirsty were already bagging summits from early in the morning, most of us at the bothy didn't get going till after 8am. Most

people headed towards High Street in the morning. From there, route choices split. Some headed towards Howtown, some towards Ambleside and Grasmere. The rain started by mid afternoon but soon passed to give us all sunny intervals for the evening.

By then, though, a lot had decided to head towards the Achilli Ratti Hut for the night in Langdale. Jono, Kirsty and John were the only ones who stuck to their guns and camped.

So come the final day! At least it started dry! But by late morning, the rain started....hard! Most people were high up by then in the clouds, I remember being at Esk Hause and could not see the shelter, it was that bad. The high fells were missed by everyone that day, due to the weather and a bee line was made directly to the finish.

By the time we all reached Santon Bridge, the weather was great! We had left behind the rain and low cloud and was treated to sitting outside the pub in glorious warm sunshine. Ricky even went in the river!

So, after gathering all the points off everyone, remembering it wasn't all about the points (or am I being bitter?), its a pleasure to award John & Kirsty with this year's Mountain Traverse trophy and a free pint off me. Its fitting that they get it as they camped on Saturday so didn't have to make the long climb out of Langdale on the Sunday morning. BUT, there are no losers on this event. John & Kirsty are the winners but everyone else were runners up. Here are everyone's points.....

**John & Kirsty:** 420 + 20 (camping Saturday.....D'oh!) = 440 points

**Dave & Dazz :**420 points

**Nick and Clare:** 380 points

**Team Menopawsome! (Joolz, Elise & Michelle):** 320 points



**Jono Wright:** 270 + 20(Camping Saturday) + 20 (for swimming at every opportunity) = 310 points  
**Ricky Parrish:** 230 points  
**Matt & Stuart:** 200 points  
**Robin & Norman's 4 day trek:** 60 points + 140 points for having 4 days out. = 200 points



Again, well done everyone for surviving the weekend. Special well done to Ricky, Matt and Stuart who were new to this style of event, even if you didn't actually camp out! I think I made this year's event too easy! Also, a massive kudos to Jono who, in between gathering summits, swam in as many Lakes and Tarns as possible. Here is his list....Skeggles; Small Blea; Angle (Patterdale); Grizedale; Loughrigg; Stickle; Angle (Rossett); Sprinkling; Styhead and lastly Wasdale! I'll give you 20 extra points for doing that, Jono! Well done.

Special thanks to the Santon Bridge Pub for accommodating us on Sunday afternoon and treating us all to some fine food and beer after an epic weekend.

Also, to the Mountain Goat coach company who brought us back to Shap via god knows where trying to drop off Robin and Norman on the way!



Lastly, I would like to thank Norman and Robin for turning up. They have taken part

in many of the old Traverses in the past and their experiences between them has been a great help for me whilst re-inventing this event (although I did organise one back in early 2000) . Robin has won this event on 3 occasions! It must be his 2 binliners selotaped together bivvy bag that is the secret! Norman, however, was the person who got me into running many moons ago. He had no partner for the Karrimor (now the OMM) and dragged me along even though I had not run a step and was determined that would continue! Thanks Norm.....I think! ☺



Next year? The mighty Snowdonia! We will take our leave of the Lakes for a more rugged, wild and just as spectacular weekend. Rowen to Garreg is the straight line. Date tbc but I'm initially looking at 26th - 28th June 2020. Details on the forum.

Hope to see you there!

Darren Graham

## Monday recovery runs

Many years ago the orienteering club for Calderdale, Kirklees and Wakefield (East Pennine Orienteering Club) used to have a well supported pack run on a Monday night.. There were three groups. Fast medium and slow. The key idea was that the whole group would roughly do the same route. The faster runners would be sent in a series of longer loops, the slower ones sent in a series of short cuts. These loops/cuts always saw the three groups rendezvous at a predetermined point. Well planned runs would mean that everyone arrived



at the rendezvous point at the same time.

It also meant that runners could move from group to group. As a medium runner, I'd sometimes go to the fast group, till my eyeballs popped out. At least at the next rendezvous I could go with the slow group for a bit!

Sadly due to retirements, people moving away and so on, these runs declined until there were just two of us going out! That is until I found myself retired early. Here was a chance to perhaps kick start the Monday run, but in the day time?

So now to the Science! I read an article somewhere about recovery exercise. Which if you watch the pro cyclists on their turbos after a Tour De France stage makes sense. The theory is that gentle exercise after serious exertion loosens up the muscles, and speeds recovery. Problem is I can't find the original article I read. (This link is just a tribute: [www.runnersblueprint.com/the-complete-guide-to-recovery-runs/](http://www.runnersblueprint.com/the-complete-guide-to-recovery-runs/))

That was the lightbulb moment! After a few months of seeing if it worked by running solo, I decided to try and arrange a revamp of the old EPOC Monday run. So that's what I did. Also being a member of CVFR I knew there were quite a few retired, part timers and shift working runners that might be up for this in the valley. Tod Harrier, CVFR and EPOC member Jackie suggested I share the runs to Tod Harriers through the Facebook page. So I did!

Now it's early days, but numbers are already better than two! We have had as many as 14 out. We have also got a group of walkers who struggle to run due to injury etc. but still want to get out. It is definitely a gentle affair, though not a slouch either! It's always from a café, always an hour, usually five miles with a mixture of surfaces, but with focus off road, in good weather we go high, foul weather low!

So if you find yourself free on a Monday morning at 10:00 then come along, it is not any particular club thing, just a social run/walk.

So at the moment we are rotating round these cafés.

First Monday of the month: Secret Café Tenterfields Business Park Luddendenfoot.

Second Monday: Craggies, Craggies business park Cragg Vale.

Third Monday: Just Scrumptious Rishworth.

Fourth Monday: Blue Teapot Café Mytholmroyd.

If there is a fifth Monday we'll go somewhere different. The next one will be Todmorden way.

So watch out for the weekly post on Facebook if you can't remember where we'll be.

Graham Lloyd

EPOC/Calder Valley Fell Runners.

## **Last Toddy on Peris (again!!)**

I have form when it comes to Peris—an enviable 100% track record – I either get lost or I am last – or I get lost and I am last.

“Bill Johnson reckons the Peris Horseshoe is tougher than Wasdale”. This bombshell was delivered to me on the A646 just outside Hebden Bridge i.e. too late to back out. I reflected on Wasdale, not that I have ever done Wasdale – clearly that would be insane. But in the July as some kind of support on one of many Bob Graham reconnaissances I had encountered the Wasdale Race from Pillar over Great Gable and to Sty Head where I saw Tod Harriers I usually only ever encounter on Facebook looking distraught.

Now I found myself en-route to the Peris Horseshoe. How? Well it is very cheap; Peris is one of the best value races around - £6 for the half and £7 for the full. An extra 8 miles and 4,000' of ascent for just a

pound extra and a free mug – it would be foolish not to (surely!). And so it was that I found myself peering out from the windscreen as we approached the jaws of Llanberis - rain lashed. My previous attempt at Peris in 2017 with the attack up the nearly 3,000 feet of Elidr Fawr through the slate quarries had left me falling off the back of this fell race. I had seen my friends ascend the shoulder of the summit ridge and disappear into the cloud. I had scanned the horizon and sought my fellow runners in vain. I came across what I thought were runners and enquired “are you part of this race?”. They looked at me with a puzzled response. As I approached Y Garn I met another runner retiring and began to see myself as some self-appointed sweeper announcing myself as number 42 to the marshals and giving a very detailed account of what I had seen (which to be fair wasn’t much!). From Glydr Fawr Pen-y-pas looked so close... and yet so far away. At the finish overlooking Llanberis, the two ladies from registration looked at me and in a strong and judgemental Welsh accent responded “oh ...so you are number 42!”.

In 2019 I was determined not to repeat my mistakes. and I kept up with the race benefiting from my early start and holding off the front



*Above: Near Pen y Pas : Llyn Cwmflynnon- a view completely unspoilt by runners!*

runners as far as Y Garn at which point I for some crazy reason decided to follow the runners in front (always a foolish move) and head off Y Garn in a north easterly direction only to retrace my steps. The concerned marshal at Glydr Fawr enquired if there was anybody behind me. I said there was but by the time they got to Pen y Pas they had used local knowledge (how dare they!). I met that marshal later on who said with some pride that that lady who'd been behind me was his wife; she's 72. They build them tough in the valleys.

Of course, those with a concern for the honour of the club will be relieved that we do have some stalwarts putting in respectable performances. Dan Taylor did hold the good name of Tod Harriers aloft with his respectable 4 hours and 7 minutes and Paul Cotton on 4 hours 49 minutes.

## The 2019 World Rogaining Championships

La Molina, Spain

"Are you two up for doing the World Rogaining Champs?" asked Jackie and Phil, "it's in northern Spain this year."

"The World what?" Mandy and myself replied in unison.

They explained: Invented in Australia in the 1970s, (by three Aussies: **Rod**, **Gail** and **Neil**), Rogaining is similar to an orienteering score event. Running in pairs each team must navigate to as many controls as possible within a given timescale. Checkpoints have score values from 1 to 10. The objective is to accumulate the highest score within the allotted time. Getting back to the finish within that time is essential as points start to be deducted for every minute you are late. The timeframe in the World Championships is 24 hours. That's a long time to be out running...but you do have the option of returning to the central start/finish point, known as the 'hashhouse' where food is



provided and you can grab a few hours kip in your pre-pitched tent. Many competitors ignore this option and just keep going!

It sounded right up our street. “We’re in”, we replied enthusiastically. The four of us flew into Barcelona on a Thursday in late July and drove north to the ski resort of La Molina, home to the World Rogaining Championships 2019. On the edge of the southern foothills of the Pyrenees it is an area of high grassy ridges, rising up to 2536m, and abundant forest. The Race HQ marquee and camping area was located in the ski village at the bottom of a ski jump. It was hot and sunny so we pitched our tents on the edge shaded by trees.

Friday was practice day; a chance to get a feel for the terrain and navigate to practice controls outside the main competition area. Jackie and Phil guided us through the art of micro navigation on densely forested slopes. My pre-trip assertion that we wouldn’t need overtrousers or thicker running tops appeared to be justified by the continuing 25 degree temperatures and clear skies.

On Saturday we woke up to thick clag! The temperature had dropped to 10 degrees. The maps are issued three hours before the mass start to give competitors the opportunity to plot their optimum route. Many use coloured pins and string to compute the most effective route for scoring points. By now it was lashing down. We retired to the car to prepare our plan of attack.

The mass start was at 12pm. Four hundred runners from around the world (mainly Australia, New Zealand, Scandinavia, Eastern Europe, Russia and N America) bounded off in a myriad of directions. We started steadily, finding a few urban controls before climbing up through woods and along ridges, sticking to paths and tracks where we could, and accumulating points as we found each orange and white marker in succession. Jogging the downhills, and walking the up, we soon clocked up the kilometres. The rain stopped by late afternoon but it stayed cold. We knew, as darkness descended, that



the controls in the forests would become much more difficult to find so we planned a high route to controls on clearer ground. The downside was that it was even colder, particularly when it started to hail!

After 10 hours, and with me on the verge of mild hypothermia, we headed for the hashhouse...hot food and a warm tent offering the most attractive proposition for passing the darker hours of the night. Although our alarm was set for 5am, the howling wind outside excused an extra hour of warmth and it was an hour later before we emerged. A quick breakfast and off up into the hills again. The weather had improved and we continued our quest for points for another five hours, returning to the finish fifteen minutes inside the cut-off.

What a great long weekend of sport...we'll definitely be looking to do more rogaining. The event was impressively organised with a very friendly international atmosphere. Following a tasty post-event sit down meal we attended the prizegiving. We finished 13<sup>th</sup> Supervets (Vet55+) in the world (out of 21 teams). Most impressively Jackie and Phil **won** the Supervet category. They are currently the reigning **Rogaine Supervet World Champions**. Chapeau!

Phil Hodgson



## Celeb spotting

Kev Sinfield, Head Coach at Leeds Rhinos Rugby League club and Ex England Captain, sweeping one of the junior races at Alderman's Ascent. Picture courtesy of Darren Graham.



## Ten amazing facts that you never knew about the Tod Harriers

- 1 - The average height of a Tod Harrier is 1.71m. If all the Harriers were laid out head to foot there would be a line of toddies 342m long - that's enough Harriers to stretch around the world 0.0008534 times!
- 2 - If all the Toddies stood on each other's shoulders there would be a tower of Toddies the same height as 77.3 double decker buses!
- 3 - After an average pack run the host pub will serve 37.5 pints of beer to refresh a pack of thirsty Toddies - that's enough to fill 0.000000007 Olympic swimming pools!
- 3(a) - After an average pack run there will also be an inquest held into

who had the half?

4 - The club is 40 years old, there have been 2080 pack runs, that's a staggering 78,000 pints or 0.00014767 Olympic swimming pools of beer.

5 - A toddie is strong but light! the combined weight of the entire club is only 10000kgs that's 0.00003532 Jumbo Jets!

6 - An anagram of Todmorden Harriers is Doortmend Hisrearr, which is also a town in the Netherlands (co-incidentally it also means 'gullible' in Dutch)

7 - In Roman times the club was named Todmordinuim quaestio currit potio bibentibus illam\* It was later shortened to Tod Harriers as no-one sober could say it.

8 - I doesn't happen often but when a Toddie loses a race to a Calder Valley runner the average sulk time is 3,882,450years - that's one and half Ice Ages!

9 - Tod Harriers have one club member, a Mr Armitage Shanks and no-one in the club knows who he is..

10 - ...or where he lives.

\*Google it

Stu Wolstenholme—who else?!



## Why suffering hurts so good

In 1986, 23 years after Sylvia Plath took her own life at the age of 30, Ted Hughes wrote to their 24-year old son, Nicholas. The letter, which can be found in *The Letters of Ted Hughes* is full of lucid, insightful fatherly advice and is well worth a read.

Reading the letter recently, I found one particular passage of the letter resonating loudly. The passage talks about the inner child inside us, and it's longing to be seen, heard and let loose, with Hughes suggesting to his son the importance of this for anyone wanting to live a truly meaningful life. This made me consider a possible relationship between my inner child and my interest in running, which over the last couple of years has moved from a vehicle to get fit and lose weight towards becoming an important and necessary part of my life. I began to see a connection between the nature of the hardest aspects of running-at-your-limit-running, and how this might be nourishing a primitive, inner need for occasionally raw, powerful, uneasy, challenging experiences, as a counterpoint to the stifling comforts of everyday modern life. A way in, a channel to communicate with the inner child. Perhaps this is what people mean when they write about really getting an insight into themselves during their hardest, most traumatic races.

By writing a little about Hughes' letter to his son here, I invite you to reflect on whether a desire for unshackling and exposing your inner child might be a shared experience amongst runners, whether it could be the driving force behind many a person's sustained devotion to the activity, that brings us out to the start-line time after time... even though we know, if we feel like going all-out, that it's probably going to involve moments of physical and mental pain and suffering; things which we actively avoid during those other parts that make up the rest of our daily lives.

Hughes writes:

*“Nicholas... know about people this first and most crucial fact: every single one is, and is painfully every moment aware of it, still a child. To get beyond the age of about eight is not permitted in this primate – except in a very special way, which I’ll try to explain.*

*When I came to Lake Victoria it was quite obvious to me that in some of the most important ways you are much more mature than I am... But in many other ways obviously you are still childish – how could you not be, you alone among mankind? It’s something people don’t discuss, because it’s something most people are aware of only as a general crisis of sense of inadequacy, or helpless dependence, or pointless loneliness, or a sense of not having a strong enough ego to meet and master inner storms that come from an unexpected angle.*

*But not many people realise that it is, in fact, the suffering of the child inside them. Everybody tries to protect this vulnerable two three four five six seven eight year old inside, and to acquire skills and aptitudes for dealing with the situations that threaten to overwhelm it. So everybody develops a whole armour of secondary self, the artificially constructed being that deals with the outer world, and the crush of circumstances. And when we meet people this is what we usually meet. And if this is the only part of them we meet we’re likely to get a rough time, and to end up making ‘no contact’.*

*But when you develop a strong divining sense for the child behind that armour, and you make your dealings and negotiations only with that child, you find that everybody becomes, in a way, like your own child. It’s an intangible thing. But when they too sense that is what you are appealing to, and they respond with an impulse of real life, you get a little flash of the essential person, which is the child.*

*Usually, that child is a wretchedly isolated undeveloped little being. It’s been protected by the efficient armour, it’s never participated in life, it’s never been exposed to living and to managing the person’s*



*affairs, it's never been given responsibility for taking the brunt. And it's never properly lived. That's how it is in almost everybody. And that little*

*creature is sitting there, behind the armour, peering through the slits. And in its own self, it is still unprotected, incapable, inexperienced.*

*Every single person is vulnerable to unexpected defeat in this inmost emotional self. At every moment, behind the most efficient seeming adult exterior, the whole world of the person's childhood is being carefully held like a glass of water bulging above the brim.*

*And in fact, that child is the only real thing in them. It's their humanity, their real individuality, the one that can't understand why it was born and that knows it will have to die, in no matter how crowded a place, quite on its own. That's the carrier of all living qualities. It's the centre of all the possible magic and revelation. What doesn't come out of that creature isn't worth having, or it's worth having only as a tool – for that creature to use and turn to account and make meaningful.*

*So there it is. And the sense of itself, in that little being, at its core, is what is always was. But since that artificial secondary self took over the control of life around the age of eight, and relegated the real, vulnerable, supersensitive, suffering self back into its nursery, it has lacked training, this inner prisoner.*

*And so, whenever life takes it by surprise and suddenly the artificial self of adaptations proves inadequate, and fails to ward off the invasion of raw experience, that inner self is thrown into the front line – unprepared, with all its childhood terrors around its ears.*

*And yet that's the moment it wants. That's where it comes alive – even if only to be overwhelmed and bewildered and hurt. And that's where it calls up its own resources – not artificial aids, picked up outside, but real inner resources, real biological ability to cope, and to turn to account, and to enjoy.*

*That's the paradox: the only time most people feel alive is when they're suffering, when something overwhelms their ordinary, careful armour, and the naked child is flung out into the world. That's why the things that are worst to undergo are best to remember.*

*But when that child gets buried away under their adaptive and protective shells – he becomes one of the walking dead, a monster. So when you realise you've gone a few weeks and haven't felt that awful struggle of your childish self – struggling to lift itself out of its inadequacy and incompetence – you'll know you've gone some weeks without meeting a new challenge, and without growing, and that you've gone some weeks towards losing touch with yourself.*

*The only calibration that counts is how much heart people invest, how much they ignore their fears of being hurt or caught out or humiliated. And the only thing that people regret is that they didn't live boldly enough, that they didn't invest enough heart, didn't love enough. Nothing else really counts at all.*

You may recognise this beautiful, vulnerable child by another name. Herman Hesse's *Siddhartha* called it "the bird in his breast", whose intermittent singing he longed for and strained to hear. But whatever it is, I'd like to think we can all agree there is some inner nut we are sometimes aware of, some kernel that contains our real selves, some clamshell that will be at various times fully open, cautiously ajar, or tightly shut.

But I'll tell you one thing I know. Running, I mean when you're really



pushing yourself to the limit in a fell-race kind of running, fighting that almost overwhelming, burning urge to slow down, that's when the top half of that clamshell shears clean off, and that naked child springs up like a jack-in-a-box, shouting with joy, revelling in its complete aliveness. We might be suffering too much to realise it in that moment, but afterwards, when the race is over and we get our senses back, the effects of that clamshell opening are still with us, and can sustain us for days, weeks. And when we get the sense that the shell needs prising open once more, when we feel like we're closing ourselves off to the world, we know where to go. Out on the fell. To the start-line. Time to suffer, time to shed a skin, time to wake the child again.

Anthony Lee

## Seriously delirious!

"Towards the end of Lakeland 100 I met a guy who could just see cats EVERYWHERE. He pushed on and we later found him asleep, standing, with his face against a tree... I was mainly spared from hallucinations, just felt like there were branches above me at night (when there weren't), and on the final climb I was excited but confused to see Andy and Hannah waiting to take my photo - partly confused as Hannah seemed to be wearing my jacket... Nah. Just some bracken." - Kim Ashworth



Ultra Tour of Mont Blanc 2006: half way through our second night we're trudging up a hill in the rain. Dave Makin suddenly wakes up from his "sleepwalking". 'I just dreamt we were going fishing' he said, 'I thought my walking pole was a fishing rod!' With such fishy thoughts planted in my tired and fuddled brain we plodded on. Ten minutes later we were splashing through puddles in the gravel, our lights reflecting in the ripples. 'Look there' I exclaimed, 'Can you see

the prawns?’ I swore I’d seen pink(?) prawns swimming in the puddles!!

We entered some woods a few miles further on. With the wind blowing the branches, the shadows appeared to move and come alive. We saw the outline of a man with a dog waiting for us to pass. When we got there – he wasn’t there!

Running through a village pedestrianised area not far from the finish, the light and shadow reflected from the wet pavement morphed into street furniture as we approached. ‘Watch out Dave’ I shouted as I swerved to avoid non-existent benches.

London – Edinburgh – London Audax 2013 - Richard and myself cycling towards the Humber Bridge in brief heavy rain on the return leg, two and a half days after setting off. ‘Look’, I called, ‘Can you see the frogs?’ ‘You’re hallucinating’ he replied, until a few seconds later he saw them too. There really were lots of frogs hopping across the road.” - Phil Hodgson

Running in a Lake District ultra, Darren Gilman saw a guy was appearing to pick things up from the floor whilst running ‘this is great isn't it?’ said the chap to Darren. ‘What is?’ Darren replied. ‘all these fivers!’ There were no five pound notes. After the event, on the drive home Darren stopped the car on a country road. ‘Why have you stopped?’ asked Katie. ‘Red traffic light’ replied Darren. ‘Swap seats, I'll drive from here Darren’ ... there was no traffic light.

I met a cyclist who described how on a Edinburgh-London-Edinburgh Audax ride he was passing a remote row of houses in the middle of the night when all the residents came out to cheer him on ...all completely naked! A bit further on the road was unlit and flanked by trees. Suddenly the road was blocked by a man chained by his wrists and ankles to the trees either side ..it was the man monster "Eddy" from the Iron Maiden album covers.

As told to Torrier Special Correspondent Stu Wolstenholme

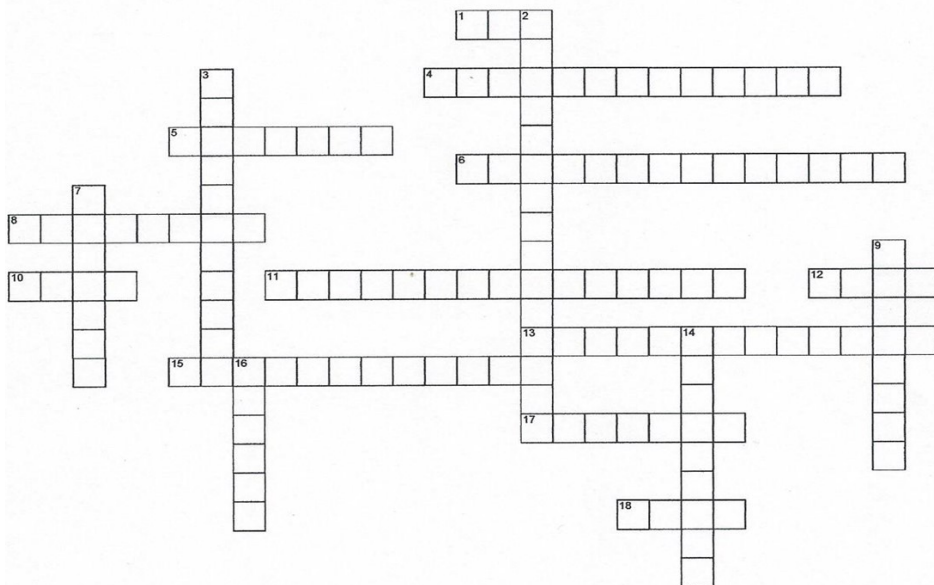


# TOP GURNE



Send your favourite gurns in to Torrier editor [kkashworth@gmail.com](mailto:kkashworth@gmail.com)

# Toddy Crossword



## Across:

- 1 - They have eyes everywhere.
- 4 - Getting started. Who? When?
- 5 - These hints won't help you
- 6 - Tod's Supergrass
- 8 - Raced recently, backwards
- 10 - Done something silly? What's the points?
- 12 - It didn't start at 11am
- 13 - Valjean's stomping ground
- 15 - Fell race, so?
- 17 - Best race-face wins this
- 18 - Non-Isotonic Tod Harrier recovery drink

## Down:

- 2 - This man is going up, in English champs
- 3 - A beacon monument
- 7 - Enjoyed twice yearly
- 9 - 1.59 or mini-mountain?
- 14 - Red, will leave you breathless
- 16 - Cuts hair but also the chair

*Badger Stu Wolstenholme for the answers to be in the next issue if you \*cough\* can't work them all out.*

*—Ed.*

# **TODMORDEN HARRIERS GET RUNNING AT THE TODMORDEN HARRIERS STARTER GROUP**

TARGETED AT BEGINNERS OR THOSE  
WANTING TO RETURN TO RUNNING

**Mondays at 7pm  
Meeting at Bramsche carpark**

**[www.todharriers.co.uk](http://www.todharriers.co.uk) for more  
information or email  
[mandy@todharriers.co.uk](mailto:mandy@todharriers.co.uk)**

**Free & all welcome! Share with your friends who don't run (yet)**





## **An ode to bogs**

Stick with me; bogs are awesome: I used to think they were at best an inconvenience to forward progress; at worst stinking, cold, potentially lethal pits of despair.

It's only since I've simultaneously got into fellrunning and started geeking out about bogs in a professional capacity that I've come to realise the depths of my love for these much maligned and underappreciated habitats.

Indulge me and let me throw some facts\* about UK bogs at you in an attempt to convert the peat-haters:

- We're surrounded by them! Maybe it's Stockholm Syndrome, but you'd better learn to love 'em. The South Pennines Special Area of Conservation has been designated as internationally important for its Peatland, Wet Heath and (this one's my favourite) Quaking Mire habitats. The South Pennine Moors

support heaps of rare species, including mountain hares, birds such as short eared owl, merlin, curlew, golden plover and twite as well as loads of cool butterflies, creepy crawlies, mosses, wildflowers and carnivorous plants that you don't find anywhere else.

- They're where the best running is. Whether they're providing character building February days out; up to the buffers in clinging squelch, or maintaining the "just the right side of dusty" underfoot conditions of May and June; bogs are the key to the hydrology of most of the fells we run on and it's that hydrology that makes the UK fells so special and unique.

- Sphagnum moss (which is a key indicator species of bog habitat) absorbs around 20 times its own mass in water. This makes bogs absolutely crucial when it comes to combatting flooding, drought and wildfire. For those of us living, working and running in the North of England, bogs can have a very real impact on our day to day lives.

- Peatlands (AKA bogs) cover less than 3% of the land surface of Earth in total, but are thought to contain twice as much carbon as the world's forests. Whilst we all sing and dance about the importance of planting more trees, our bogs are up there quietly doing their best to save our planet.

- Sphagnum moss has fabulous antiseptic qualities and can be used as a wound dressing or nappy (it's also nature's perfect toilet paper). Next time you're having a really bad day on the fells, you'll thank me for that information.

- International bog day is the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of July every year – There's an excellent excuse for a fell run if ever there was one! (Kentmere Horseshoe 2020 anyone?)

- Peat bogs preserve dead stuff really (creepily) well. Which if you're into archaeology, mammoths or recreating paleo environments to

research climate change is very helpful. It also means if you come over all “Churn Milk Joan” and succumb to the elements; you and your perfectly anaerobically preserved short shorts and inov8s might have something valuable to teach future humankind (about 21<sup>st</sup> century fashion?).

- As a fellrunner you probably see more than your fair share of bog habitats, but they’re actually pretty rare globally, and in the UK they’re under threat. Industrialisation, agriculture and climate change have damaged and fragmented our bog habitats and they’ve been in a pretty shocking state for decades. This is starting to change, but there’s lots still to do.

I suspect you’re probably already well acquainted with bogs, maybe you love them, maybe you hate them. My plea to you is to appreciate them for what they are; one of the many things that make our funny little corner of the country unique, bleak and beautiful and blimmin’ EXCELLENT for running on.

*\*Not necessarily facts – the production of this article was enabled by some red wine.*

For more info:

Moors for the Future (you can donate or volunteer):

[www.moorsforthefuture.org.uk/](http://www.moorsforthefuture.org.uk/)

Yorkshire Wildlife Trust & Yorkshire Peat Partnership (donations and volunteering opportunities): [www.ywt.org.uk/give-peat-a-chance](http://www.ywt.org.uk/give-peat-a-chance)

Calderdale Countryside Volunteers (possible volunteering opportunities at Norland Moor): [www.calderdale.gov.uk/v2/residents/jobs-and-volunteering/volunteering/countryside](http://www.calderdale.gov.uk/v2/residents/jobs-and-volunteering/volunteering/countryside)

National Trust (volunteer opportunities at Marsden Moor): [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/marsden-moor-estate/features/join-the-marsden-moor-team](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/marsden-moor-estate/features/join-the-marsden-moor-team)

Rosie Holdsworth



## CX-y boy

Flashback to September 2017. I'm stood at a gate halfway up Pen-Y-Ghent Lane, watching a stream of cyclists coming uphill. The first twenty or so look strong - still on their bikes, giving it full beans up the uneven rocky surface. The next fifty or so are riding, but can't mask the hurt as they tick off the final big climbs of the race. And the riders that come after them look broken. Literally, broken. If a domestic appliance was operating as slowly as them, and making similar noises, it would be whisked away to the tip. I'm there marshalling because I want to see what this race is like, and because I want to do it myself. I promise myself there and then that I will prepare. I will train. I will not end up as one of the broken people.

Fast forward to 2019, and I am one of the broken people. I inch my way up Pen-Y-Ghent on a borrowed bike, forcing my legs to turn even though they're locking up from cramp. Each metre forward is a victory, but a hollow one, because I know that there are many more of them to follow. And not only that, when I get to the top I'm going to turn round and ride straight back down the track I've come up, which is covered in loose gravel, rocks and square-edged water bars. What's the point of carrying on?

Welcome to the Three Peaks Cyclocross. One thing everyone knows about this race is that it's tough. "The hardest bike race in the world" is a phrase you hear often. On paper, it shouldn't be that bad. 40-odd miles, 5,000-odd feet of climbing, 4 hours if you're a decent rider. Not that challenging, surely? Well, it kind of is. There's a convoluted entry process because it's hugely oversubscribed. There are ridiculously restrictive rules on what type of bike you can use (Tyres have to be 35mm wide at most, handlebars have to be drops, absolutely no suspension allowed.) Everyone knows about the notorious, precipitous carry up Simon Fell, and the sketchy, rocky descents. But the whole race is hard. Get up Simon Fell, and there's a load more

pushing and carrying to make the proper summit of Ingleborough. The rideable bits are soft and draggy, or rocky and bashy. The fast gravel tracks are dotted with water bars and river crossings. Even the road sections are 25 mph time trials.

Still though, it's hard not to find yourself thinking that you'll be able to cruise it. If you've had plenty of experience of plodding up steep hills, can ride off-road happily on drop bars, and don't mind hurting yourself a bit, the temptation to have a go will eventually become irresistible. I'd marshalled, so I was in automatically. Time to see what all the fuss was about.

To be fair, the first half of the race wasn't that bad. I got registered in good time, spotted mountain bike legend Nick Craig cracking jokes in the toilet queue, and jostled into a start position that wasn't too optimistic or pessimistic. The first road section went off a bit fast for me, but I got in a group and didn't ruin myself before the race



properly started.

The climb up Simon Fell was every bit as bad as expected, but despite a lack of toe studs I didn't slide fifty feet back down the hill. The descent on the other side was wild - riders going over the bars as the bogs gobbled their front wheels - but I followed someone who'd clearly ridden it before and managed to stay out of trouble. After a surprisingly hilly road section (where my seatpost chose the worst possible time to start slipping) it was up the huge stone steps of Whernside, and I felt good enough to overtake a couple of people on the way. Then I got an inkling that all might not be well, as I made the top plateau and my legs started to give way. I'd heard the tales of the legendary Three Peaks cramp, which kicks in on Pen-Y-Ghent and leaves riders hobbling to the finish, but here it was in all its leg-locking brutality, an entire hill earlier than expected.

The only option at this point was to keep going. The descent from Whernside is frankly terrifying on drop bars, and all around me I could hear the crack and hiss of tubeless tyres exploding against square-edged rocks. My home-made tyre inserts (basically a skinny bit of pipe

lagging tucked inside the tyre) seemed to be doing their job, although my course knowledge was lacking, and missing out a short cut line cost me a few places. But then the track levelled out and I started trying to make up the lost ground.



At this point my bike handling skills ran out, and I found myself flying through the air, before landing very hard in the middle of a rocky track. Both of my legs immediately cramped solid. Having established that my

collar bone was still in one piece, I dragged myself off to the side and lay in the heather, listening to the hiss of air escaping from a punctured back tyre. From hero to zero. A nice spectator helped me reinflate my tyre and I jumped back on. Then jumped back off again to straighten my brake levers. Then on again. Then off again to straighten my handlebars. Then on again. Let's do this.

The problem now (apart from adding a load of scrapes and bruises to my personal pain tally) was getting round the rest of the course. Despite having a load of sealant inside, my tyre had a hole through it which wasn't sealing, and from previous experience of tubeless punctures I knew it was likely to be a faff to get it sorted. The procedure for fixing them involves poking a sticky rubber strip into the hole from the outside, then pumping the tyre back up, but the idea of crouching next to my bike for even a few minutes was more than my cramping calves could stand. Luckily I had a contingency plan - my support crew (a.k.a. Celia and the baby) were at the Ribblehead Viaduct, and Celia rides the same size bike as me.

So, back on the bike, and off down the hill, my rear rim clanging out a merry tune every time it hit a rock. Luckily the tyre insert seemed to be doing its job, the clangs were muffled, and I could pedal on. I got to a river crossing but couldn't lift my feet high enough to get onto the stepping stones, and just blundered through the water instead. The long flattish section to Ribblehead, which I had thought would be a great section to rest up on, seemed to drag on forever. Finally I arrived at the viaduct and babbled something like "It's all going wrong! I need your bike!". Said bike came equipped with a rack, a child trailer hitch and skinny 33 mm tyres with inner tubes. (For anyone not familiar with the niceties of 3 Peaks bike setup, using inner tubes is generally considered to be a bit like turning up to a fell race in crampons.) Not the ideal machine, but the best option under the circumstances. Just one more hill to go - how hard could it be?

One strange aspect of the 3 Peaks CX is how it seems to shift from being a race to a social ride, with the competitors chatting and joking, then on some hidden cue it turns back into a race again. On the tarmac, heading towards Pen-Y-Ghent, it very much turned back into a race again, and I could only twiddle my legs in frustration as rider after rider came past me. Even worse, I knew what was coming - a long, drawn out slog up the final hill. It's mostly rideable but that only makes it worse.

I kept thinking about the enormous mountain bike cassette on my first bike, although if I'm being frank, this was a classic case of a workman blaming his tools. I actually managed to ride a surprising amount of the climb (by which I mean some of it), but as alluded to earlier, the uphill at this race aren't the sort where you can just settle into a rhythm and get them over with. There was a long steady drag, then a long steeper drag, then a rocky push/carry, then a load of steps. By the time I got to the steps, I would probably have been overtaken by a passing mollusc. Luckily there were none about.

I finally wheezed my way to the summit, stopped, and pumped my tyres up as hard as I could get them. Then started off down the descent, a useless passenger on a runaway dandy-horse. Somehow I made it to the bottom without wrecking the fragile air-filled chipolatas on which my race finish depended. Another short section of utterly horrible undulating road and I was at the finish, where I celebrated in the traditional 3 Peaks style by slumping against a dry stone wall while shivering uncontrollably. Even with multiple disasters I'd managed a finish time of 4 hours 24 minutes: not disgraceful, but annoyingly close to the magic 4 hours. Which means I'll probably have to go back for another go. I'm sort of hoping they don't let me in.

Antony de Heveningham

# TOILET SEAT

IF YOU HAVE ANY CONFESSIONS OR TALES ABOUT YOUR CLUB MATES, EMAIL THE MYSTERIOUS [ARMITAGESHANKSTODMORDEN@GMAIL.COM](mailto:ARMITAGESHANKSTODMORDEN@GMAIL.COM)

REMEMBER: I WALK AMONGST YOU, I HAVE SPIES EVERYWHERE AND I KNOW WHAT GOES ON!

SEE YOU EVERYWHERE (OOH, THAT'S A BIT DARK ISN'T IT) - AS



**Rob Holdsworth:** Didn't realise that Centre Vale Parkrun finished in a different location to the start so he left his jacket there, then forgot about it and only missed it later that day. He went back on Sunday afternoon to find it in the bushes, trampled and looking sorry for itself - 5 points

**Dazz Graham:** Turned up for some physio to find he'd packed Joolz's prized Helvellyn t-shirt in his kit bag, fortunately no damage done to the t-shirt - 5 points

**John Ashworth:** Doing stair "reps" in his hotel, used the emergency stairs and set an alarm off - 5 points.

**Andy Worster:** Andy managed to set off to Ilam fell race a whole day early, only realised when he arrived at Littleborough train station and called his lift who "hadn't turned up" - 5 points

**Dom Leckie:** bought his race picture from Whittle Pike to be used as a profile pic... He only realised when it was pointed out to him on Instagram that he was wearing his vest backwards... 5 points

**Dom Leckie:** Did everyone note the keyword in the last confession? Bought? Not very Yorkshire that lad! - 1 bonus point

Speaking of vests... **Richard Butterwick** managed to put his on backwards Baildon WYWL fixture. 5 points but not very original.

**Andy Worster:** went to Scotland BC race and forgot: shorts, underwear appropriate to running, toothbrush. Realised about the clothing half an hour before the start, managed to borrow shorts (not underwear) from Max Wainwright - 5 points

**Ricky Parrish:** Revived the Crow Hill Reverse fell race in August this year, however he managed to initially advertise the race as 6th April! - 5 points

**Paul Brannigan:** Went for a five minute walk to the rim of the grand canyon to see the sunset. Got 'a bit lost' in the woods - several miles and 90mins later in the pitch dark he found his way back to the hotel reception - 5 points

**Andy Worster:** On holiday in Portugal lost his ticket on the metro, cue intervention from Kim "com licença senhor, meu namorado é um idiota, você pode deixá-lo sair por favor, obrigado" and 5 points

**Kim Ashworth:** on the last day of her holiday, about to return hire car, Kim happily fills the car with GASOL. Then realises with horror that the car says DIESEL .... The lady in the shop was very nice and didn't laugh whilst explaining that GASOL is Portuguese for diesel – Kim's first ever 5 TS points

**Kim Ashworth:** Almost home now.. Manchester Victoria platform, Andy asks "Kim, have you got the house key? You said I couldn't be trusted so you put it somewhere safe" Kim goes pale, can't find it in

the 'safe place' they search both bags twice...Andy finds it in the original Safe Place bag pocket - 5 more points

Right then, where do I start with this? If you didn't see this on Facebook recently, **Dom Leckie** and **Andy Worster** stand before the high court of Toilet Seat Justice for their involvement in what has become known as "Dad-Mug-Baby-Gate". Andy affectionately refers to Dom as his "running-son" evidence of this err 'special' relationship can be seen recently when Andy paced Dom to a recent parkrun PB. A grateful Dom then gifted a mug to Andy emblazoned "Totally Awesome Dad" which Andy promptly took a photo of and proudly posted on Facebook.



Cue an immediate flood of congratulations to Andy and Kim on the perceived new arrival until someone posted another photo of a baby scan with a bearded Dom face in there (*artwork courtesy of Fran Miller*).

For the number of congratulations received both publicly and privately, Judge Shanks was going to award a point each. But this would be a massive points haul for these lads who frankly, don't need them. Therefore 5 points each.

The toilet seat competition is still wide open! - **Send confessions and snitches to [armitageshankstodmorden@gmail.com](mailto:armitageshankstodmorden@gmail.com)**





As club secretary I often get helpful tips emailed to me by other Toddlies\* Here is the latest batch:

When living off the land remember that all fungi is edible, but most of it you'll only eat once - Stu Pidmoron

Road runners! Avoid disappointment and unnecessary commiserations by never applying to enter the London marathon - thanks to all 457,861 of you who sent in this tip.

Can't get a signal on your GPS watch? Simply wave your arm in the air to improve your chances, those extra two feet will make all the difference to that satellite 20,000 kilometres away - Lou Dacress

Race organisers, start the race through a pool of used engine oil. Then if any runners get lost simply follow the footsteps to find them - Stan Lee-Knife

AL Race organisers - save money on expensive radio communications by using smoke signals from the checkpoints, if you need to highlight your message in bold simply chuck a tyre onto the fire - Stan Doverthere

Fell runners, avoid injury by wearing a used truck tyre around your waist. If you fall over you'll simply bounce back up again - Stan Dupsitdown

Running to lose weight? Save money on expensive weighing scales by standing on the set at your local post office, remember to stand on

them again after you've posted your package to get an accurate measurement - Stan Dupforyouself

Recreate the fun of running with Dazz Graham by filling a camping shower with ice water, strapping it to your head and selecting 'full power' - Stan Dingovation

Running the Auld-Lang-Syne this year? Wrap yourself in toilet rolls to make an inexpensive although ultimately very poor and highly flammable mummy costume - Stan Dinginthewayofcontrol

\*Toddies? I can't find any of these people on the members list, is someone winding me up?

Stu Wolstenholme

## Variation on a Meme

Kim Ashworth



## Torrier Spring/Summer 2020: We need YOU!

Want to contribute to your club's newsletter, but not sure what? Here're some ideas...

Send a race report. A running cartoon strip. A song. An agony aunt column. An article about the local flora and fauna. Five words about your favourite race. An abstract black and white painting about what it means to be a Tod Harrier. A good gurn. A bad gurn. A picture of your dog. A haiku about foraging whilst running. A mildly interesting limerick about Hebden Bridge. A picture of your dog. Front cover artwork. A drawing by your 2 year old child. An interview with an inanimate object. A quiz. A random stream of consciousness vaguely related to running/the Harriers. Time-of-life musings, holiday stories, tales of epics, vintage articles from the past... As seen in this issue, we even permit submissions that aren't running-centred! Openings available for Torrier Special Correspondents (ie I can give you an idea for an article).

Send word documents, email text and jpeg files to **kkashworth@gmail.com** with '**Torrier**' in the subject heading (thank you for not sending PDFs and Pages files) for the next issue - **send at any time from now** (to save my blood pressure) until the deadline which will be in April. Deadlines will be announced on the Facebook page and forum.

-Ed.

Left: Grohl is excited to see your submissions

Right: Mountain Kim, Autumnal Grohl and parkrun Pippa being very good dogs. 12/10 would pet.



Dogs of Tod Harriers







# Christmas Party

7th December 2019

7pm Golden Lion, Todmorden

Prizes!

Thai Feast!

Music - Live band Rimka  
& DJ Major Naylor!

Tickets £15 - pay at pack run or by BACS  
**before 4th Dec**

