

THE TORRIER



SPRING/SUMMER 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



Special thanks from the Editor to India Bird www.instagram.com/byindiabird for the cover artwork and Phil Dickinson for a spot of sub-editing.

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A word from the Editor...

Here's a piece I recently wrote for my blog entitled '**Why should I join a running club?**' to encourage the lurkers, friends and family members who are thinking about joining - feel free to show it to them. Obviously it'll be mainly preaching to the converted, but it's also nice reiterate what Dave says on the next page about why we run with the Toddies, and maybe some ideas on how else to get involved in your club.

As a member of two running clubs, I think they're the best thing since waffle makers. I imagine these points also apply to other sports clubs, but feel free to correct me if it turns out cycling and tri clubs are awful...

The main argument 'for' is **camaraderie**. A whole community. Friends outside of work. Todmorden Harriers are a fantastic local club, with loads of active members, meaning there's always a friendly face at local races. Sometimes I even bump into them on the Lakeland fells! Encouragement, support, lifts, training tips, they're all included. Tod Harriers get to parkruns everywhere, and when you wear the vest it's likely someone will yell "Go on, Tod!" or "Well done lass!"

When you first come to any club meets or training, it can sometimes feel a little cliquey. I've never found this with the Toddies; everyone's super friendly, although of course there will always be a few inside jokes (or a lot, if you're Stu Wolstenholme – see the back end of this issue for just a taster of his excellent sense of humour, and that's not me being sarcastic), as with any tight-knit group. I've decided the easiest way to deal with this is to throw myself into training sessions and races, then I quickly had some shared experiences. It doesn't take long to be 'one of the gang'.

Training and meetups: Kerry and Claire are fantastic coaches on Tuesday night training, all sorts show up to Wednesday night pack

runs and there are often invites to social runs on the facebook page, forum and team app. Not to mention (again) local races.

The kit: who wouldn't want their local landmark on their back and their town emblazoned on their chest? It means we can spot each other in a crowd, and serves as an opportunity to be an ambassador, whatever that means. Represent the Toddlies in a national event, encourage more people to get out there and run.

Team team team: Namely cross country, relays and being a team counter in fell races. Practically speaking, there are a few types of races that are only available to club members. As a recovered sport-hater, I never thought I'd enjoy the thrill of carrying a cut-off bit of pipe ("baton") so much, or the energy-sucking mud of a playing field. The encouragement and support I have received from the Toddlies cannot be understated. Running doesn't always have to be an individual sport.

An opportunity to give back: Tod Harriers organises several local races, and it is so much fun to wave a cowbell while directing runners round a corner, help at registration or sweep with a friend. Editing the Torrier is super inspiring, as is helping out with the Monday (more info on that from Claire and Clare later). The club always has plenty of volunteering opportunities, and the occasional chance to coach or serve on the committee, all places to widen your skill base and give back.

Kim Ashworth



Left: ringing the cowbell enthusiastically on Day 1 of the Dragon's Back Race, May 2019. Read about Louise's journey on page 40.

The Presidential Address

"A president's hardest task is not to do what is right, but to know what is right." Lyndon B. Johnson



My fellow Toddies.

It is indeed a privilege to address the membership of our great club. Though from the outset let's make my position clear - "the buck does not stop here" with this President. I'm just one of many who help out with club activities and keep things functioning for the benefit of all. Firstly a big welcome to those who have recently joined the club, and especially those who have come to us from the inaugural Monday night Beginners Run. Congratulations to all of you - both helpers and participants - who have made this a great success. I trust that you find us a genuine local and social club welcoming a big diversity of runners. And thanks to all of you renewing your subscription – our membership total remains hovering around the 100 mark and significantly our female membership is not far short of being half of it.

You are part of a club that prides itself on its friendliness and inclusiveness – for which it has a deserved reputation amongst other runners. We continue to gain plenty of prestige – not just through the performance of top runners in the English or British Fell Championship who rightly "have nothing to fear but fear itself". In the past 6 months the club has been chosen, for the first time, to stage a Red Rose Cross Country fixture and the National Inter Counties Championship over the Flower Scar route.

It is in hosting these and other club races that the collective becomes more important than the individual. The feedback on the organisation and marshalling of Tod events is universally one of praise from the participants, so please do not hesitate to volunteer to help out and be part of it... if only to add a sense of self-righteousness the next time you run! As my infamous predecessor said "only if you've been

[marshalling] in the deepest valley can you ever know how magnificent it is to be on the highest mountain" - a far more memorable observation than his "there can be no whitewash at the White House" claim during the Summit fell race.

So, "Ask not what your club can do for you, ask what you can do for your club". Getting involved with various activities will give you a great insight into how your club runs, who helps keep it going and what more you can do. From marshalling races to becoming a race organiser, from turning up to training sessions to getting a Coaching Qualification - many have done it - and you never know, from turning up to a monthly club meeting to becoming a committee grandee.

Our monthly Club meetings (first Monday of the month, see the forum for details) are open for any Tod Harrier to attend, join the discussion and vote. They are not meetings run by and for committee members. Recent topics raised – which may or may not have been acted on – include concern about slower runners at pack runs, the start-up of a 'begin to run' session, the proposal for a waterproof jacket with the club logo, recalculating GP points and many other issue raised by members. It's ideas like these that, unless you read the minutes, may often go unnoticed the majority of members.

There is plenty to be proud about in how the club is run. For example we must be one of the few clubs where a very large proportion of money raised by holding races is given direct to local charities rather than to swell the club coffers. Whilst it's not just "about the economy, stupid"; through the hard work of its members and officials, the club in good shape; one could say thriving. Here is an opportune moment to publicise the very special and touching gesture of Jim Smith who has left Tod Harriers a small legacy in his Will. There are plans for something special to raise a glass (or two, or more) to him very soon.

Happy running,
Dave O'Neill



Jim Smith

19th May 1939 – 17th November 2018

Mandy and I knew Jim for getting on 30 years. He was in his early fifties and retired before he joined Todmorden Harriers and we got to know him. Together with Jane and Richard Leonard, and many others, we've had some great adventures with him and we've spent countless hours in his company at races, on holidays, and down the pub.

Jim graduated from the London School of Economics. It was there that he first took up cross country running which eventually led him into fellrunning. Jim didn't pursue accounting but went on to become a maths teacher. He put his maths skills to good use in other ways as

well. He loved horse racing and was partial to a bet or two. In fact, in his mother's later years, he used to take her to the betting shop in her wheelchair, leave her there for the afternoon with a few tips, and come back after work to pick up his mother, and their winnings. They were so good that they got banned from William Hill's.



He took up fellrunning in 1960, running for Bury and Radcliffe, and it became one of his great passions. We didn't know Jim when he was in his fellrunning prime but by all accounts he was a first class runner.

He completed his first Ben Nevis race in 1961 and went on to complete another forty-two, a feat only surpassed by Eddie Campbell and Jimmy Jardine. He used to meet up with Eddie the week before to train. They didn't believe in tapering towards a big race...every day up to race day they'd run a full Ben and then a Half Ben, and I mean run. No walking up the hills; they ran every step, that's hardcore! Jim's best position was 6th and his fastest time was a very quick 1:39.

Wasdale, arguably the toughest race in the calendar, was another of Jim's favourite races and he managed 4th place in 1974. In the Manx Mountain Marathon he came 2nd three times. He used to say that Joss Naylor always used to follow him and pip him at the finish. In the annual Fellrunning Championships he was 12th in 1972 and in 1979 he came 5th in the Veterans Championship. I quote from Bill Smith's classic history of fellrunning, 'Studmarks on the Summits'

"He'd never say so himself, but Jim was an outstanding fellrunner, particularly in the tougher races".

Not content with just racing, Jim was one of the founder members of

the FRA (Fell Runners' Association). Number 5 on the membership list, he was the treasurer from 1970 to 1974. Membership in those days was the princely sum of 25p!

He contributed numerous articles to The Fellrunner magazine. One, his tongue-in-cheek "Diary of a Fell Running Fanatic" is well worth a read to get an insight into the daily life of a finely tuned athlete in the 1970's:

Monday am: Hard session on the coal slag heaps of the Wigan Alps. Socks permanently discoloured.

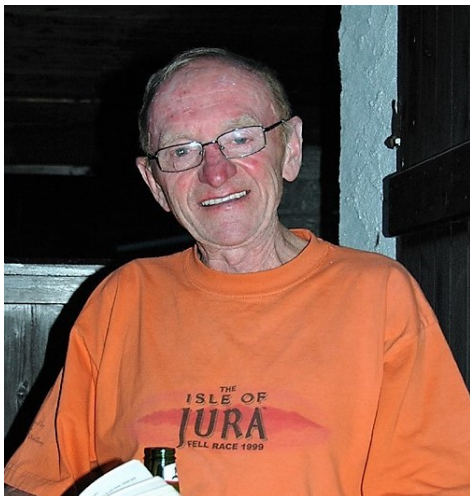
Monday pm: Stepped on a chair 150 times in 5 minutes. Staggered to pub. 6 pints of stout to steady the nerves.

Tuesday am: Ran up stairs of block of flats for 18 floors – twice.

Tuesday pm: Ran in park in hobnail boots for two hours. Exhausted. Managed a gallon in the local followed by double pudding, chips and peas.

Now that's what I call proper training! Bill Smith also noted in 'Studmarks':

"Jim claims to do more elbow bending than knee bending!"



Jim organised the 3 Towers race for Bury in 1969 and 1970 where the winner received a rather unusual first prize courtesy of my granddad, who owned a furniture shop; a new fitted lounge carpet.

Together with George Broderick, Jim started the Isle of Jura Fell Race in 1973. He only ran Jura a dozen times or so but he came 2nd two years running before winning

it in 1975. He used to say he was the only person ever to have won Jura and come last.

When he was in his forties, Jim was hit by a car and suffered severe damage to his leg. Although this slowed him down he still carried on running and racing albeit not in the long, tough events that had been his forte. That's one thing about Jim, you never heard him complain. He just got on with it; doing and supporting the thing he loved. Although he stopped running Jura he still went up every year with us to support the race. In the last few years he provided the race commentary at the finish and knew most of the runners.

We spent many happy hours with him on the Paps and in the lounge bar of the Jura Hotel. Jim was the one who showed us the best ways off Pap 3. I still remember him drawing it on a napkin and getting abuse off the Jura lounge committee for giving up hard earned secrets to newbies: "You leave the summit and drop down to the bowling green (that's a little patch of grass), but make sure you don't end up in Dickie's meadow."

Jim loved being in big mountain country. On Jura he'd often disappear off into the hills for a walk and leave a note telling us where he'd gone and sign it T.F. BUNDY. He used to wear a cap with T.F. BUNDY embroidered on the front. (For those that don't know, it's a covert term used by the medical profession. It means, excuse my language, "Totally f**ked but unfortunately not dead yet")

It was typical of Jim to affectionately refer to himself in such terms. I'm glad to say that he outlived his hat by many years.

He'd always be covered in deer ticks when he got back from a walk. Mandy used to help him pull them off with tweezers. We once got back home after a week on Jura with him and he phoned us up. "Mandy, I've got one of those little blighters in me nether regions. Can you bring your tweezers to the run on Wednesday?"

It was the same at the Ben. He went up every year, even when he wasn't running, having already run forty-three of them! He was there for every one of Mandy's twenty-one Bens, including the one when I first met her. He was always up for a bevy of beers in the 'Grog and Gruel' afterwards and he was always shouting words of encouragement for, although not participating in, the obligatory mooning on the bench outside the pub.

He used to come out to the Alps with a big group of us in summer where we had some great adventures. Most of us climbed but Jim stuck to long walks, although he did climb a 4000m peak with us. He'd borrowed a 1960's vintage axe and crampons from Tony Shaw. Half-way up the snowy ridge he called for a stop, and he did look a bit grey. It was the first we knew of his heart condition. "Don't worry," he said, "if I pop me clogs just leave me here and pile some stones on top. Look at that view. What a place to go!"

He did get to the summit. It was his first and only 4000'er.
For more about this ascent, see Torrier Spring/Summer 2018 -Ed.

Jim didn't smoke but one night in the Alps our group had been out for a meal, toured the bars and ended up in a nightclub. We'd had so much to drink that Jim decided to try a fag. When we left I had to help him get down a steep hill back to the campsite in the early hours, and I was as drunk as he was. Those in front say they kept looking back to see two headtorch beams next to each other weaving slowly down the hill and every now and then, they'd both suddenly point straight up in the air, which was Jim and me falling on our backsides laughing.

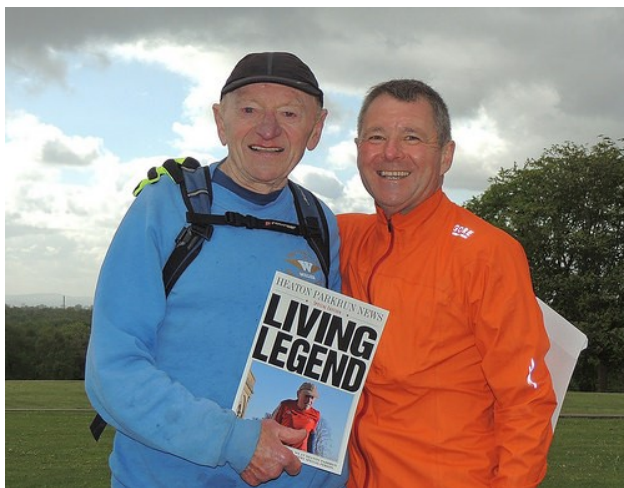
As he got older Jim stopped fellrunning but he was ever present at races. I think he just loved being part of the fellrunning scene. He was always popping up with an encouraging word, a satsuma or a camera. He must have taken thousands of pictures of us over the years and made sure that a copy found its way to us. Despite hanging up his

running shoes, a few years ago Jim ran in a one-off trail race organised by prolific charity fundraiser Andy O'Sullivan: the Jim Smith 5k. Nearly forty Todmorden Harriers, and many other runners, turned up to support the race and to honour our former President.

After Jim stopped fellrunning, from 2012 he started park running at the age of 72. Over the next four years at Heaton Park he completed one-hundred and forty-one 5km park runs and volunteered as a marshal over fifty times. He offered encouragement to runners of all abilities and in 2017, Jim was presented with the inaugural Heaton Parkrun Inspiration Award, to recognise his inspirational example to the park running community. This has since been renamed the Jim Smith Award.

There's a great photo of Jim holding a Heaton Parkrun magazine, it has a big picture of Jim on the front under the banner headline "Living Legend", which Jim would have hated! He didn't like fuss. He used to say "I'm a leg end, not a legend" with typical Jim modesty, but I think the headline nails it...to many of us Jim **was** a living legend.

Some of you might remember that Jim officiated at our wedding. We got married in Todmorden registry office but we asked Jim to perform a blessing at Stoodley Pike. He took this literally and turned up in a vicar's cassock, a big wooden cross round his neck and a bob cap. My religious uncle Bill was there. "He'd better not be blasphemous" he warned me. Well, Jim, the perfect gentleman, gave us a



very meaningful and non-blasphemous blessing in true Jim Smith style.

Jim used to enjoy Todmorden Harriers Sunday runs. An 11am start, 2 hours running and back to the Lane Ends pub. The pace always quickened at the end of the run, which Jim called "the craving of the jug".

We'd sit there with Jim, Tony Shaw and Alan Ainsworth, the "Three Musketeers", drinking Timmy Taylors Landlord. We used to call him the vicar, and "More tea vicar?" was the response to an emptying of pint glasses. If you had the temerity to say "I'll just have a half" Jim would snort and tell you "I don't do halves".

We'd end up staying all afternoon listening to their stories and banter. Then you'd see them wriggling and a great shout would go up when the first one of them got up to go for a pee. "Ah ha, it's you, you're the one that's not run hard enough!"

There are other sayings of Jim's that will stay with us. "Hurry up and take your time," was one. "Overdressed wazzocks" was his reference to walkers but in later years he gladly admitted that he'd become one himself. Whenever he returned from the loo he'd tell you "I wouldn't go in there, I've done some damage" and if you left the pub before him it was "Come when you can stop".

Jim was the last of "Three Musketeers"; he gave very moving eulogies at both Alan and Tony's funerals, and now he's gone to join them. His was a life well lived. We've had some great times with him and a lot of laughs. He was stoic and modest but inspirational to so many people. He loved the mountains and he was a hardcore runner but a very kind, humble and generous man; and one of our best friends. Like many of you, we're going to miss him.

I'm sure that if there's any uphill on the way to heaven Jim will run

every step of it.

Phil Hodgson



Above: a memorial to Jim erected on Jura.

Below: some Toddies with Jim's plaque in May.



Club Championships Update (as of 05/05/19)

*Grand Prix
top 40:*

Pst n	Name	Cat	total RACES	total FELL races	total ROAD races	total TRAIL races	Qualified?	GP SCORE
1	Stuart Wolstenholme	M45	8	2	3	3	Q	691.9
2	Paul Brannigan	M50	6	2	1	3	X	536.2
3	Richard Blakeley	M75	5	1	2	2	X	484.3
4	Claire Duffield	F45	5	3	0	2	X	472.7
5	Duncan Ritchie	M45	5	1	2	2	X	437.6
6	Christopher Goddard	M40	5	3	1	1	X	437.3
7	Melanie Blackhurst	F50	4	4	0	0	X	401.5
8	Rebecca Patrick	F45	4	4	0	0	X	394.4
9	Duncan Cannon	M	4	0	2	2	X	362.8
10	Dan Taylor	M40	4	1	1	2	X	359.7
11	Pauline May	F35	4	2	2	0	X	357.0
12	Helen Wilson	F50	4	1	1	2	X	351.2
13	Roger Haworth	M50	4	2	1	1	X	351.0
14	Jon Wright	M45	3	3	0	0	X	317.4
15	Peter Ehrhardt	M70	4	1	1	2	X	311.8
16	Andrew Worster	M	3	3	0	0	X	286.8
17	Matt Flanagan	M45	3	0	2	1	X	286.4
18	Sarah Glyde	F40	3	0	3	0	X	272.1
19	Elise Milnes	F55	3	2	1	0	X	263.4
20	Dave O'Neil	M60	4	1	0	3	X	239.7
21	Matthew Annison	M40	3	0	2	1	X	223.8
22	Kerry Edwards	F45	2	1	1	0	X	190.7
23	David Wilson	M60	3	1	0	2	X	189.6
24	Nick Barber	M40	2	2	0	0	X	182.8
25	Darren Shackleton	M	2	0	0	2	X	182.8
26	Guy Whitmore	M50	2	1	1	0	X	174.3
27	Kate Mansell	F45	2	2	0	0	X	173.3
28	Rob Halstead	M55	2	2	0	0	X	171.9
29	Simon Anderton	M55	2	1	0	1	X	167.6
30	Louise Abdy	F55	2	0	0	2	X	166.2
31	Kevin Coughlan	M55	2	0	0	2	X	158.4
32	Graham Milnes	M60	2	1	1	0	X	154.4
33	Zoe Dijkman	F35	2	1	0	1	X	153.0
34	Heather Rostron	F35	2	0	1	1	X	148.9
35	Kim Ashworth	F	2	2	0	0	X	142.3
36	Dave Garner	M50	1	1	0	0	X	101.9
37	Darren Graham	M50	1	1	0	0	X	100.9
38	Kath Brierley	F55	1	0	0	1	X	98.9
39	Annie Roberts	F	1	1	0	0	X	97.0
40	Jane Leonard	F60	1	1	0	0	X	94.9

2019 FELL TABLE Race 4			Qualified?	Qualifying TOTAL
	attendance			
	average points			
1	Rebecca Patrick	F45	X	307.9
2	Melanie Blackhurst	F50	X	293.7
3	Andrew Worster	M	X	286.8
4	Jon Wright	M45	X	282.7
5	Christopher Goddard	M40	X	249.1
6	Claire Duffield	F45	X	225.3
7	Nick Barber	M40	X	171.0
8	Stuart Wolstenholme	M45	X	153.1
9	Pauline May	F35	X	153.1
10	Roger Haworth	M50	X	150.2

Pos	2019 Ultra TABLE Race 3	Cat	Qualified?	Qualifying TOTAL
	attendance			
	average points			
1	Dan Taylor	M40	X	93.1
2	Steve Pullen	M45	X	82.6
3	Anthony Lee	M40	X	81.9
4	Peter Kerridge	M50	X	79.3
5	Dom Leckie	M	X	73.0
6	Bev Holmes	F45	X	68.4
7	Elise Milnes	F55	X	59.3

2019 ROAD TABLE Race 5			Qualified?	qualifying TOTAL
	attendance			
	average points			
1	Stu Wolstenholme	M45	X	238.5
2	Sarah Glyde	F40	X	225.2
3	Duncan Cannon	M	X	179.0
4	Matt Flanagan	M45	X	177.2
5	Pauline May	F35	X	163.2
6	Duncan Ritchie	M45	X	162.7
7	Matthew Annison	M40	X	140.8
8	Richard Blakeley	M75	X	130.9
9	Andy Ford	M	X	88.5
10	Dan Taylor	M40	X	87.6
11	Chris Goddard	M40	X	83.8
12	Chris Dewhirst	M	X	82.3
13	Roger Haworth	M50	X	79.3
14	Kerry Edwards	F45	X	78.5

2019 TRAIL RACES			Qualified?	qualifying TOTAL
	attendance			
	average points			
1	Stuart Wolstenholme	M45	Q	241.2
2	Dave O'Neil	M60	Q	146.4
3	Duncan Ritchie	M45	X	167.4
4	Kevin Coughlan	M55	X	134.6
5	Peter Ehrhardt	M70	X	110.9
6	David Wilson	M60	X	97.5
7	Roger Haworth	M50	X	80.5
8	Matt Annison	M40	X	76.6
9	James Riley	M45	X	75.9
10	Zoe Dijkman	F35	X	71.8
11	Rebecca Senior	F	X	70.5
12	Sally Chesworth	F50	X	66.4
13	Heather Rostron	F35	X	65.8
14	Myra Wells	F60	X	42.1

More detailed standings and information on how to qualify are available on our website www.todharriers.co.uk

Tod Harriers Juniors Update

It's all go with the Todmorden Harriers Juniors. The junior Grand Prix continues to encourage racing for the sheer joy of getting out there and participating. So far we have 7x gold, 2x silver and 6x bronze qualifiers with just 1 race left to go. In true Harrier style our fierce juniors have shown true grit running through the mud, wind, rain and even snow!

Our coaches continue to support our regular Tuesday night sessions and our Youth section is thriving under our head coach Claire's guidance, but did you know we have a huge and expanding waiting list for new members and a bit of a gap in our ability to comfortably extend our age group ranges such that we can truly deliver an end to end coached experience from juniors through to seniors.

We'd love to be able to run parallel under 12 and over 12 Tue night sessions and accommodate a larger group but with existing commitments and the park as our main venue we could really do with a bigger coaching/helper team to get this started.

Thinking you'd love to help and get involved with making sure our club maintains its sheer brilliance both today and for the future? Please get in touch with Claire & myself for club helper opportunities, with a view to developing your own run leader and coaching skills if you want to take it further.

Kerry Edwards

Mandy's Monday Masses

A short while ago, Mandy approached me to say that the poor turnout of slower members at our pack runs had been discussed at the monthly club meeting and, in response, her plan was to start a new running group. Always keen to welcome new runners to the club, I put my name down as a helper and went along to the first session on that dark, cold Monday night in early March, not quite sure how it would all work out.

The group, Mandy had explained, was intended to be a "get back to running/beginners" group, catering for a variety of abilities and hopefully attracting runners who didn't have the confidence or inclination to come to pack runs.

The sessions were well-attended right from the start, attracting around 30 runners of different abilities in the first few weeks. The group has continued to grow since.

Originally planned to run for just eight weeks, the group has proved so popular that we've decided to keep going and are now, at the time of writing, in week nine.

There are four or five groups every week which set out from Bramsche Square at 7pm with their group leader for a 30-45 minute run, with the various groups running at different paces.

The fastest runners do a continuous run; the slower groups do a mixture of running and walking, building up running time each week. When we started the runs in March, we were confined to the main roads, usually going out and back along Burnley Road in the dark, but

now that the nights are lighter, we are enjoying the variety of the park, the canal and the surrounding areas.

As well as runners new to the club, we have also welcomed back a few familiar faces who haven't run with us recently. In addition, we've had couple of junior runners join us.

Now, at nine weeks in, the word is spreading and we are receiving new enquiries from still more people interested in joining us. We also have a Facebook group where we post our runs, pictures and notices, and it's encouraging to see people also using it to ask advice and chat with each other.

Thanks to Mandy's hard work and direction, the group's proved a real success, with most people returning every week, and bringing others along with them.

We've also been thrilled to receive some lovely comments from the runners, such as, "I would never have got to where I have on my own"; "it's great to have a local starter group"; and "everyone's so friendly and welcoming". Quite a few have said it's given them the confidence to start doing Park Runs and some are now also coming to Wednesday pack runs and have joined up as members.

The group leaders and helpers are: Mandy, Helen Wilson, Kath Brierley, Louise Abdy, Kim Ashworth, Andy McFie, Rebecca Senior, Suzy Straughan, Kevin Coughlan, Bob Halstead and me (sorry if I've forgotten anyone!). Huge thanks go to them all for coming along every week and making Mandy's grand plan possible!

Claire Duffield



Now for an account from Clare M who runs with us on Mondays:

After the birth of my second child in January 2019 I wanted to improve my fitness. So, in early March I decided I was ready to start and my partner told me about the Todmorden Harriers Starter group which had been set up.

Having not done much running before I felt quite anxious about joining a group and wasn't sure I'd be able to keep up. However, as my partner (Chris Dewhirst) already runs with the Harriers he was able to advise what I could expect, which put my mind at ease.

I turned up at my first session at the Bramsche Square car park feeling very nervous, but was welcomed by lots of friendly faces and needed not to worry. I was surprised to see so many people of a variety of levels turn up. We were then given a choice of different groups to run with for various timings and off everyone went.

I joined the starter group and this was a 3-minute run with a 1-minute walk. I know this doesn't sound a lot but after 9 months of no running I was impressed I managed. We did these 3 times in total and to my surprise we made it to the Hare and Hounds and back. *No, we didn't stop for a drink!!*

I've continued to go to each session each week and we are currently up to a 10 minutes run and couple of minutes rest. There's still a good turn out and the time flies whilst we are running, I'm always smiling once we've completed another session. The good thing is the variation of routes we can do and you get to see some different parts of Todmorden which you wouldn't notice sat in your car.



I've found the Monday group helps me improve my fitness, meet new people and have some me time. Everyone is warm and we keep encouraging each other to keep going when we start to tire. I'm truly grateful to the people who have set up this group and the people who help keep it going on a weekly basis, as I'm sure with busy lives getting in the way it's not always easy.



Since joining the group my confidence is starting to grow and I have run 5K at Towneley Park, one in Keswick and the Hollingworth Lake Cannonball series. Some of the views have seen whilst completing the runs are truly stunning. I'm by no means the fastest but I feel I'm improving each time. On to the next one...

Clare Manley

Flower Scar

The turbines cut the tussocks
of my eye and all this purity
adrenaline was shitting it.

I'd willingly give my insides to
the flower that scarred a mountain.
I even dreamt of stopping-
up the hillside with sky.

The peewits are like sugar-acid
burning through the bog moss veins
and the eerie sibilance of electric wind
becoming.

I extended my flower-scarred body
to the moor and ran with it

Lucy Burnett

It turns out Calder Valley hills aren't so big after all

So I've been whizzing around the Calder Valley now for almost a year, gradually getting faster, fitter and stronger; thinking I might actually be getting the hang of this fell running malarkey and having gradually started to get some results I can be proud of on the local circuit. So, I figured it was time to test the legs on a bigger stage with the Coledale Horseshoe fell race on 6th April.

Having spent a few days in Snowdonia and the Lakes in the weeks leading up to the race, the prospect of actually racing on this type of terrain felt like a huge undertaking. How am I supposed to race on hills like this?!

So race day comes along and I'm standing at the start line with that same sense of anxiousness as usual, although itching to get started. It's a strange mix of feelings. Running through Braithwaite I managed to settle into a nice steady rhythm, trying my best to ignore those around me as I've become notorious for setting off far too fast at the start of races.

The first climb was truly brutal. Any preconceived plans and ideas of how I was going to settle into a cyclical, rhythmic alternation between running and power hiking soon went out the window. I was soon gasping for breath and chanting my own little mantras in my head while trying desperately to ignore the burning in my legs.

In some ways it felt exhilarating to be running over the tops, giving it every ounce of energy in my body. But, at the same time, it kind of felt like a slight shame to not be able to stop and appreciate the stunning views that were on display that day, particularly as I'd had some awful luck with the weather in recent mountain days.

Heading up Eel Crag was a proper scramble. It's strange how I often get quite nervous towards a scrambling section if I'm out hiking, but in

the race situation I didn't even think about it and climbed with childlike enthusiasm and freedom. I don't even really remember looking down and feeling any sense of anxiety during the climb. This was truly exhilarating although there were three false summits on this section which tended to bring me down a peg or two every time I got a bit giddy.

I started to gain a bit of momentum again on the descents. Having targeted 1hr 45 for the race, I knew it was going to be tight as I still had 35 minutes to go from the top of Crag Hill. With all the major climbs done and dusted, I had to pick up some pace if I was going to make it. The question was had I left enough in the tank?

It's funny: I always think of descents as being fairly effortless and natural, just controlled falling right? That's ok for a short Calderdale descent but I didn't quite realise the toll thirty odd minutes of descent would take on my legs. By the time we had to do a short rise up to barrow, I'd hit zombie mode and what was only a small lump felt like another huge obstacle to get over.

Just as I crested the top of Barrow, and thought I would just have to jog it back due to fatigue, I had another rush of optimism. I had 5 minutes or so left to hit my target. Maybe I could do it? The rest of the descent is a grassy hill, not too dissimilar to what I'm used to.

It was on! I opened up the legs, accepted the pain and sick feeling that was slowly brewing and gave it everything. I whizzed past one competitor as I found a few smooth lines coming down off the fell. He shouted "Well played!" as I flew past, giving me an extra 10% boost of confidence. That final push wasn't pretty, and it was full of expletives, but I rushed down that hill, only just losing out by 2.5 minutes on my target (153rd / 1:47:30).

I gave it everything and that's all you can ask for. I slumped on the grass as always, feeling sorry for myself for a few minutes. As the

fatigue and sickness faded I felt a real sense of euphoria and excitement over what I'd just been through. I think it's safe to say this fell running obsession is really starting to take a hold of me!

Ricky Parrish

Stanners' Retirements

In March I called it quits after 35 years of triathlon at the event, which was my first in 1984 (and a first at Warrnambool); a nice time to finish!

Any road, I got a presentation and a speech! Some wag shouted out that I'd "retired" a year earlier at Portland (another presentation and speech!)

Stoodley Pike was different because at the tail end I felt bad about the officials all waiting. 50 years after the first one was a significant milestone and my Tod vests are well-travelled.

Bit of a *laff*; I was once 11th fastest in the World Championships in T2 (transition 2--bike to run and that included the "elites" of the day). Was 11th in the worlds M40 at Chicago in 1985. So, we all have our moments.

I suppose what I'm saying is that you don't *ever* want to give up on the essence of what you enjoy and love, and the camaraderie of the people you have spent such valuable time with.

See'thee', Ian.

Happy "Retirement" to Ian Stansfield! – Ed.



First parkrun for Charlotte

My daughter Charlotte turned four in April, and a couple of days later she took part in her first official parkrun at Towneley Park. On the day, a girl (in the picture) was celebrating running her 100th parkrun, so we celebrated with cake!!!

Heather Rostron

Cake and running? Sounds like Charlotte's got this sussed! -Ed.



The Tri Factory Sahl Hasheesh Olympic Distance Triathlon

I've never done a triathlon. I bought a bike once with the intention of doing one, but couldn't be bothered with all that kit faff and changeovers etc.

We went on holiday and the Tri Factory Olympic Distance Triathlon was right on my Egyptian hotel doorstep.

The swim and the bike were nothing to write home about. I rarely look back in a race, but when I ran through the bike-run changeover

the commentator announced "last year's winner Englishman Luke Grenfell" was just behind me. I tried to stay in front of Luke, but after about 2K I realised there was no chance so I just cracked on with my own run. It was a fun experience and certainly not one I'd planned.

Branny

More on Paul Brannigan's adventure in Egypt on page 52 -Ed.



My 40 at 40

I thought, having come up with the idea of something 40-themed for a challenge last year, that I should at least make a start and see how I went on. I decided to try to complete 40 races. I've done very little racing in recent years, so this was no easy prospect, particularly as I didn't begin until the Pendle Dark Dash in late March. I was overweight, slow, and surgically altered. Insert your own obvious gag here...

Spring went well, with lots of Andy O'Sullivan 5k races, and the odd trail and fell relay. Then I went up to do the Tiree Half Marathon, and finished the race strongly. This gave me a bit of confidence. Kirkby Malham fell race was done on dead legs, although a fantastic route. Went up to watch Jura, which gave me inspiration to complete Foe Edge and Pen y Ghent in the same week. I then did Hebden Bridge and Stoodley Pike, which gave me another idea. Shortest and hottest race was Morton Gala, near Keighley.

On 9th July I had done 17 races, and had started my Snowdon marathon programme. Halfway was the Littleborough 5k in the Grand Prix. I had by now got my head round seeing my name right down the

results pages, and was incorporating races as part of my Marathon schedule. One of my favourite intervals sessions from this period was 5 x 800m outside the gates of the Laphroaig Distillery on Islay!

Race 23 was the most fabulous parkrun in Penrhyn Castle grounds in North Wales. Followed by Petra in Majorca, where I wasn't far behind Phil and Martin Roberts. I reckoned I was getting fitter, although people were increasingly telling me I was running out of weeks to complete my challenge. One of the other pressures I had was that I had gone up to Flowerscar in June to help Dan with his 40 reps, and, having been inspired, had foolishly declared that I was going to do 40 reps also, plus 40 Stoodleys.

The day before Snowdon, I went down with a bad cold, so only ran 5 miles before sacking it off. That meant I hadn't completed my main target, and was left on 25 races, 5 Stoodleys and 11 Flower Scars with 8 weeks left in 2018. There were just enough races in the calendar to enable me to complete, but could my ageing body handle it?

In addition, I was now faced with going out to Stoodley Pike in Dog-Poo weather, just to fit them in. The most I did in a session was 5 and they had to be from the level of London Rd. One particular session was in the lonely dark, lashing rain and thick cloud, and I came home absolutely buzzing from the wildness of it all. The Flower Scar reps were really lovely, and I liked to go up there just as darkness was falling, to see the lights go on at Emley, Winter Hill and Holme Moss transmitters.

By 10th December, the figures were: Races 34, Stoodleys 31 and Flower Scars 30. I had planned to go to Auld Lang Syne for my last race, but in the event I finished the 40 at Towneley parkrun on 29th December with a season's PB. The other challenges were done just before this, with 4 races done in the last week, along with last of the reps. Most of this was done on my own, of course, but now and again friends (including Fin Leonard) turned up to run with me, which gave

me a massive lift.

So there you go. Glad it's not our 50th Anniversary anytime soon!

Simon Anderton

Running in Oz

In April I found myself in Australia – our son has emigrated and we were visiting the 10 month old grandson. Running there was amazing. I never saw any rain and the landscape was quite different to what we are used to in UK. Different trees, plants, wildlife. Same people though – lots of people I met were very, very, British.

I ran pretty much every other day. Mostly early mornings. I ran with two different clubs; I ran with an Olympian. On one run in a National Reserve at Jarvis Bay I met a Kangaroo couple and we faced one another down before they both hopped off into the bush. On the same run a bit later while running along the beach I saw Dolphins – maybe 10 to 12 – feeding just 20-30 yards off the shore.

There was only one race. I did a rather gentle half marathon where I ended up with a nice cup for second in my age group. There were also a few parkruns but I only made it to one of these – just to prove that my barcode would work there just as well as in Leeds.



Anyway – now a few weeks back in Yorkshire I am again getting accustomed to our climate.

David Leslie

Todmorden Mini Mountain Marathon (MMM): how many mistakes can you make?

I love the MMM, it is a great start to the year. I don't usually partake in long training runs but the MMM helps me get out for at least 3 hours. I joined Tod Harriers in 1996 and the first event I did, a few days later, was the MMM. Mandy gave me a lift to the Red Lion near Bacup (now a house) for the MMM organised by Jon Sutcliffe. I believe this might have been the first MMM but I could be wrong. I have tried to do it every year since only interrupted by holidays or helping to organise it. I will try and get a list of venues/organisers/winners etc together – a number of the pubs are unfortunately no longer.

Back to this year's event, expertly organised by Chris Goddard (with help from Ricky Parrish) from the Waggon and Horses above Oxenhope, here is my catalogue of errors just to prove that practice doesn't make perfect.

Lesson 1: read the map/instructions

Went correctly to the checkpoint close to the pub but mistakenly punched the points for the control rather than the control number. Also wondered what a Sycamore tree was doing down a well which bemused Rachel from CVFR (the points were 10 and the Sycamore Tree was for control 10!)

Lesson 2: read the map

Made a bit of a mess in finding my second control – a bit of help from Jo D and we found it. Checked the map – next control on a weir close to crossroads in Oxenhope – easy, I know Oxenhope like the back of my hand. Can't understand why the river is on the wrong side of the road and why is there nobody around? – after 10 or 15 minutes meandering around I looked at the map more closely and realised I was on the wrong cross roads – it was the major one down the road!

Lesson 3: read the instructions

On the way up to Penistone Hill I caught up with Rachel again – next control Dimples Quarry. I cut up too early and spent a bit of time searching the wrong quarries, oh yes I remember now aren't Dimples Quarry where the Bunny Run starts from?

Lesson 4: read the map

Looking at the map I can see that a good route from Penistone Hill to Ponden Kirk roughly follows the route of the Stanbury Splash fell race – well full speed ahead, really pleased with myself that I realise the checkpoint at the edge of the reservoir runs parallel to fell race route. Sorted back on race route – path junction should be easy why isn't it here? – also no other runners around. Oh well spent 10 minutes searching better head off for bigger points up Ponden Kirk. See Rachel again who had found the checkpoint and also better route to the kirk. Checked the map – shouldn't have been on race route.

Lesson 5: read the instructions

Perfect route to the crag at Ponden Kirk and very good route to the Alcomden Stones on the skyline, going well now and the 2 metre stone is 50 points. Definitely on the right side of all the stones checked all the larger stones before going into headless chicken mode. 50 points I can't give up on this, 20 minutes later realised that it doesn't say 2 metres in height – very quickly found the 2 metre flat stone!

Lesson 6: be realistic and read the instructions

I should realise by now that you slow down in the latter stages, I always overestimate what I can do. In fact the only time I have won the MMM I got a calf strain half way round which curtailed my foolish plans. Anyway I could keep on high ground or get an extra lot of points around the Bronte waterfall. Should be worth it after all it is only 2 points lost for every minute late back – I will only be 10 minutes late surely. Decided that I wouldn't check my mobile for the time and just concentrate on my navigation. I get back to the pub and

burst in, to my surprise the prize giving is in full swing, it was 5 points for every minute late and I lost 185 points. Oh well at least I won the prestigious homing pigeon trophy, surprisingly the first time I have won this fine trophy.

I did really enjoy the day despite all these mishaps, compounded by losing my bum bag with full kit inside.

Dave Collins

Calderdale Way Relay: Chairman Valjean's Team (Men's Vets) - Leg 6

We'd done a recce on the Thursday. An accident on the road meant we got over there late. The light was serving notice on us long before we got to the end and saw where the finish line would be, but we made it round and had taken all the wrong turns and bad paths that we weren't now going to take on Sunday. Do you think they'll make us run a lap of this field before the finish line? Yeah probably.

Saturday morning and for the first time Mia rolls over and yawns at me she ain't doing the parkrun today. She'll do the junior one tomorrow instead. Go back to bed or run it on my own? Rest up or loosen up? Okay run it. Strong but not flat out. It works and I feel great for the rest of the day.

Sunday morning and over to Burnley for the junior parkrun. Then push the kids round and round on the playground for three quarters of an hour. Best stop running round so much else I'm gonna be tired later. Home and something to eat and get my kit together.

Dan picks me up, then we drive to get his wife Andrea and their two kids. Drop off a bag at the finish line and get changed out of the boot and notice how warm it is. Pull on my new vest for the first time. Never run in just a vest before, feels airy. Arrive at the start line in

Shelf. Step out of the car and begin to feel like I left something as I watch Andrea driving it away. Nah, relax.

Over the road and onto the grass and into the throng. We'd been checking the rolling results on my phone in the car and it wasn't making much sense but reckoned we were probably close to the lead if not in the lead for Vets trophy. Dan sees some Tod Harriers from the ladies' team and we go over to say hi as I realise I've left a piece of mandatory kit in the car. I don't say much, just smiling whilst frantically trying to figure out what I'm going to do as we are about to have our kit checked. Dan had no spare, but Sarah from the ladies' team does. Okay relax. Kit check done and mill around for ten minutes and then we get the call via the walkie-talkie that our leg-five team-mates are about to finish. We must be first vets! The other team that were in the lead earlier are right there waiting but haven't had the call yet. I look up at them and can tell that they've been following the live results as well. "They're here! Wait - wait for the second man. Right - Go!

Steady away. It's ours to lose now.

All downhill at first and within five minutes I'm glad Dan knows the way as I can't remember s*** from Thursday. I'm in front and Dan's directing. I ask if it's left here and he barks right. And I used to think I had a good sense of direction! Up the steps, now I recognise where we are and that's the first bit done. Dan's talking in minutes and miles but I learned about pace and distance in kilometres so I don't know exactly what it means; I gather from the tone of his voice that we're making good time. Just ease up a touch, there's a long way to go. The country opens out and I point excitedly as a pair of runners briefly come into view in the middle distance. If we're catching people up it feels like we're further away than our chasers. We lose sight of them and continue on alone. I'd forgotten all about them by the time we see them again ten minutes later, much closer now. Within five minutes we pass them on the first steep bit of the leg and as we run

past I briefly try to figure out if one is hobbling or just struggling.

But this is a race and one of things I've noticed from the few I've done is the difference in intensity and what that does to your thought processes. No time to dwell on things like that during a race. Thoughts are stripped down to the animal. At least they are for me. I guess that's part of the attraction of running, or racing – it's simple, primitive, vital, alive. And this race is maybe a bit more intense than the other ones because you've got ten guys who've come and busted a gut before you and earned you this little lead and you want to protect that and then you think as well about how cool it would be if we actually won this thing. Hadn't realised this morning that actually winning something could be on the agenda today.



A mile up the road and we pass another team on the climb. Dan's chipper and I tell him I'm feeling good. Enough said. After cresting the hill, Dan says we're over halfway and I think to myself this feels easy. Most of the climbs are ahead of us though, remember that and keep it steady boy. Don't blow up. Through another village and unlike Thursday I keep all my questions of geography and where we are in the world to myself. Along the canal and begin to feel like I'm blowing a bit. Tiny doubts start creeping in. You sure you can actually do this? This silly question that always creeps in about whether I can actually make it to the end. Don't take that one too seriously anymore though. (Not like at the Tour of Pendle last November when I followed that doubt all the way to its logical conclusion that I would probably have to be airlifted off the hill if I blew up and couldn't continue. Major relief after I'd got two thirds of the way round and managed to

convince myself I was definitely going to make it off the hill and to the end.)

No, sure I can get round this, although may slow us down a bit. Eat your gel. Come on, you're fine, you're doing well. Let Dan say the hellos to the people we pass on the canal and just keep going.

Now we're going up the big hill and I'm almost more comfortable with this than running fast along the flat. Maybe it's the gel. At the top and that familiar feeling of relief and easy air. It's going by in a bit of a blur now. Down a steepish bit and keep to the left of the field and Dan tells me to stay left and not to go where we went wrong on Thursday. I'm in too deep by now to look up at the guy at the stile as he tells us we are three or something minutes behind the team in front. I couldn't really give a monkey's about the team in front though, relatively speaking.

Further on down and then turn right and on up into the woods and the intensity ratchets up a bit more as we began the other main climb, a long runnable straight path through the woods that just keeps going onwards and upwards. Feeling strong now but it just keeps going. I begin counting to myself. One thousand, two thousand, three thousand. I read an interview with Paula Radcliffe once and she'd said she counted to herself when she felt things getting really tough. If it works for Paula. Twenty six thousand... okay where the f*** is that downhill turn-off to the left? Fifty six thousand and this is way higher than I've ever counted before. Have we run too far? Oh f***, have we just made the same mistake as Thursday? Open my mouth to express my fears to Dan when the path suddenly, finally, blessedly appears up ahead. Grunted gasp from behind me suggests Dan is as relieved to see the path as I am.

Out the woods and then a big downhill and it's only a couple of miles from here. Dan flies ahead down the road as I feel for the first time like I'm struggling to keep the pace. Slow down a bit mate, let's save a

bit for that last climb eh? Yeah that's more like it. Bottom of the hill and we are getting really close now. Can't see anybody behind but can't see that far so had better keep going. Through the woods and I'm digging deep trying to keep up. Across the last main road and just time for me to try and run the wrong way one more time before a shout from Dan drags me back to the other side of the road and to the start of the last steep cobbled path. I'm only thinking about the finish line by now, managing to mutter "we've got this in the bag mate" as a code for "please slow down a bit mate". Partner's having none of it though, skips up the cobbles whilst I struggle on behind on jelly legs. Turn into the football field and oh the buggers are making us run around it. Wait for me mate! Wonder for a second why I always seem to struggle towards the end of a race no matter what the distance, but now there's clapping and over the line and we are done!

It's alright this running lark isn't it?

Anthony Lee, Leg 6 (ran with Dan Taylor).

Congratulations to the 'Chairman Valjean Team' for their well-earned victory as first vets! -Ed.

Below: most of them in their scrubbed-up glory.



Chairman Valjean Ends his Silence

A few have enquired and probably regretted asking about this pseudonym that I have recently adopted. Did you watch Les Mis? Jean Valjean—prisoner 24601—possesses super human strength. Let me explain some more: winter is a long season. I don't mind the first eight months but then cabin fever gets a grip. Every two years the cycle seems to be that I like to fettle* my winter training. Get a spring goal in mind and try out some training techniques. Some of you may recall my experiments with Jack Daniels and fishing with dynamite. Some of these methods have proven to have some success. This winter I decided I was going to hit the gym and get some big gains and myself a big hench pair of Valjean glutes, perfect for climbing massive hills,



and lifting apple carts etc. So be it I spent four months in the gym doing strength and conditioning. I've seen some great improvements in my strength and conditioning but not in my running. Basically at my first few races this year my massive hench ass has been as tight as a Titan. It's time to ease it back and get on with running... and stretching and core work and maybe some weights and cycling and yoga and ...

Nick Barber

Pictured: Nick before his Winter fettleing

For all the Southerners: **fettle*

/ˈfɛt(ə)/

verb

verb: **fettle**; 3rd person present: **fettles**; past tense: **fettled**; past participle: **fettled**; gerund or present participle: **fettleing**

1. trim or clean the rough edges of (a metal casting or a piece of pottery) before firing.
 - **NORTHERN ENGLISH**
make or repair (something).

The Two Crow Hills Challenge

Both Crow Hills loom above Mytholmroyd at either side of the Calder Valley, not sure which one Ted Hughes was writing about in the poem of the same name although likely to be the one we all love on Midgley Moor. I have been up both lots of times but I have never combined them in the same run.

I set off from home in Mytholmroyd on a beautifully sunny Easter Sunday (not the usual Easter weather). Up through a gorgeous bluebell bank on the edge of Redacre Woods, steeply uphill to Raw Lane. I decided to add Sheepstones trig point and Churn Milk Joan to the route before arriving at Crow Hill (Midgley). A good view across to Crow Hill (Sowerby) – looks fairly close – how unimaginative to give them the same name!

A great run down through Foster Clough Delves and then the lovely Han Royd Wood – got a couple of options here but take the main path to Brearley. Across the road, canal, river and railway then an uphill slog to the top of Scout Road. Straight across, and then a new path for me, and I eventually come out on a lovely moorland/common above the old quarries. A bit of a boring track and then intricate paths through fields, giving the highland cattle a wide berth. A final steep climb to reach Crow Hill 2.

An excellent view from the top, both Manshead and Stoodley Pike are prominent. Down from the trig on a track by the farm to pick up mainly small delightful trods all the way into Mytholmroyd, ok I did go wrong once – what do you expect from me!

Yes I know it is not a major undertaking like Dan's Ten Trigs epic or Jackie Scarf's Twelve but it is a satisfying route of a couple of hours ish (quicker for the fast lads and lassies). It could be a pack run or challenge from the Hare and Hounds at Old Town? – the one proviso is that you don't cover the same ground at any point – e.g. no out and

back. Obviously it could be extended to take in Manshead, Stoodley etc for the ultras.

Dave Collins

The Dragon's Back 2019

Known as the toughest five day mountain running race in the world, the Dragons Back travels from North to South down the spine of Wales, 195 miles, ascending almost twice the height of Everest. Louise Greenwood of Tod Harriers crossed the line in an aggregate time of 66:37 with a massive smile on her face to claim her dragon trophy. Only 62% of starters completed the race, but she ran strong and finished 7th vet woman, 188th overall, gripping us dotwatchers till the very end. Hero. –Ed.

So the dust is still settling and the legs are definitely still aching, but slotting myself back into 'real life' after the experience of the Dragons Back race is proving very difficult.

After weeks of increasing panic, nerves and kit faffing, I was finally headed to Wales and the atmospheric and very imposing start line at Conwy Castle. I was so glad I'd worked as crew on the Cape Wrath Ultra last year because it meant a lot of familiar friendly faces among both competitors and crew.

I met up with my friend Ian and his friend Corrie at the start and we huddled together nervously



listening to the Welsh Male Voice Choir and seeing all the flags hanging from the castle walls. Then finally we were off.

Getting out of the castle took ages but finally the journey had started and the nerves disappeared. Running south over the Carneddws was the perfect start. Not long after I mentioned to Ian and Corrie that we would probably see my friend Human Kim somewhere along the way, we heard the clanging cowbell and excited shouts of support. What a lovely boost to see Kim and Andy out on the hill.

We soon reached the first day's dropbag checkpoint, and the pattern for the days to come had started. A quick snack and we were off up Tryfan, and for the first time starting to see people struggling and falling by the wayside. The rest of the day was fairly technical rather than fast running, but on fresh legs it felt great. Another friend, Victoria, was waiting for us on Crib Goch and we saw the train leaving the summit of Snowdon.

A few more summits and we were descending to our first overnight camp. That was the night I decided I dislike camping very much, and it didn't improve through the week. I was cold, uncomfortable and it was too noisy to sleep! I'm spoiled by the luxury of having a camper



van!

I'd reccied day 2 with friends and although it's got a reputation as one of the toughest days, I really enjoyed it apart from the scree descent off Rhinog Fawr. The rest of the day was stunningly beautiful with blazing sunshine and blue skies. The day just flew by, we only realised how tired we were when we hit the long road section at the end, when we took it in turns to be really grumpy! After such a beautiful day, the night was absolutely freezing. Even sleeping in all my clothes including a down jacket I was shivering.



The morning of day 3 was a low point for me, my quads were screamingly tired and lack of sleep was making me feel really ratty. I'd conveniently blanked out the rocky parts at the summit of Cadair Idris and replaced them in my mind with runnable grassy tracks. I was so pissed off up there; it was really hard not to have a total meltdown. Ian and Corrie were fantastic, pushing me on and being strict but kind. Ian gave me a crash course in using his poles, and by the time we reached Tarren Hendre and the slog up and down Tarren y Gesail I was running well again. Absolute bonus, we didn't get lost in the forest, and we were soon running round the Coop in Machynlleth like excited kids. The ice lolly was the nicest thing I'd had in a long time, and a real sandwich for lunch set us up well for the afternoon. I took Ian's spare poles from my drop bag and wow they made a difference. Day 3 is very long, and very tough. By far the hardest day for me, and I was really happy to finally see the blue tents in camp.

Our camp routine was by now very slick. Get clean, warm and dry, look after feet and any injuries, get beds ready and all kit and food

ready for the next day, then go and eat in the big marquee, which was our only few moments of downtime, reading our Dragon Mail while we ate. It became quite competitive between the three of us who had the most mail! It was so lovely to receive messages from loved ones, and to find out my brother's year 2 class had become avid dot watchers!

Day 4 started so differently. Although legs were trashed the pressure seemed to be off, and the feeling that we might actually make it to the end was starting to take root. Although there's some long road sections the route on day 4 is stunning. Absolute wilderness as far as the eye can see, and lovely soft ground. Even the tussocks were a welcome change from hard rock. The Elan Valley is just beautiful, and just before the midway checkpoint we stopped for a glass of coke at the hotel in Elan Village. This was the only point of the journey where I almost cried. I patted the hotel dog, and was suddenly overwhelmed by how much I was missing Canine Kim! The scenery after the checkpoint just got more and more beautiful, to the point where we were so busy looking at the views that we couldn't remember if we had dibbed at one checkpoint, so had to retrace our steps and make sure.

Day 5, the final day, started off well. There is a lot of road at the beginning, a real load of it, and we were pushing the pace quite hard



as the midway cut-off was earlier than previous days. Then I got a terrible pain in my shin, the leg with the pins in that I broke almost 30 years ago. The rest of the day was agony, I taped it and carried on, no way I was dropping out at this stage, and Ian and Corrie were absolute stars,

pushing and pulling me through the pain to the finish. Again the route was beautiful, the Black Mountain was like a grassy rollercoaster, I want to go back and run on those perfect hills with fresh legs!

Proud to finish, but very sad that the amazing journey was at an end. I love my 'baby dragon'. Possibly my most treasured possession!

I do feel like I'm under the careful watch of The Dragon now. There is a lot of talk of dragon slaying, but I like to think that we respected The Dragon and became one with it. Maybe a little Dragon magic has even rubbed off on us. It was a truly life changing experience and one I may never completely return from.



The mountains are calling.

Louise Greenwood

Top Porridge Tips

Some call me the Porridge Queen, so I thought it was time to bring back the Torrier recipe pages.

1. Compile your porridge with plenty of liquid as soon as you get up, bring to the boil (in pan or microwave), turn the heat off and leave covered for as long as possible until you've fuffed about doing morning things... Then reheat & eat, it'll be much creamier.

2. Try overnight oats. That just means put your liquid (and flavours) in your oats the night before. Use more liquid than you expect. This also

minimises morning faff, or can be easily transported to work.

3. Put more things in, like:

- Chia seeds (leave in longer for them to really swell up)
- Frozen berries (they defrost quickly and make it a pretty colour)
- Desiccated coconut, ground ginger and lime zest
- Cinammon and grated apple
- Grated pear
- Grated carrot and spices for “carrot cake oats”
- Cinnamon, ground ginger, ground cardamom and nutmeg for a ‘chai’ flavour
- Cocoa powder



4. Change it up. Experiment. Jumbo oats, pinhead oatmeal, anyone? Different non-dairy mylks will introduce different flavour combos, like

- Hazelnut mylk + cocoa powder
- Coconut mylk (from a carton so it’s not super heavy) + ginger + lime
- Almond mylk + vanilla + raspberries
- Hemp mylk + cinammon + apple

5. Top with stuff that’s not just brown sugar and golden syrup. Like

- Dark chocolate (mmm melty)
- Brazil nuts (mmm selenium)
- Coconut flakes
- Maple syrup
- Seeds
- Peanut butter
- Powdered peanut butter
- Blackstrap molasses (mmm iron and calcium)

- Elderflower cordial (yes really)
- Crystallised ginger
- Dried fruit, e.g. cherries, strawberries, raspberries, raisins

6. Travelling? For 'dehydrated', camping-friendly fancy oats, try adding coconut mylk powder + dried fruit to oats/oat flakes. Just add hot water and heat.

Kim Ashworth



Well done to Dan Taylor for being the first winner of the title. If you're not gurning, you're not earning! Here at Torrier Towers we love seeing your best race faces. Send them in to kkashworth@gmail.com for a chance to be featured in the next issue.

Ignoring a Niggle

It's just a twinge, I'll run some more,
A few more miles won't be a chore.
Tomorrow, I'm sure all will be fine,
I'll just ignore this niggle of mine.
Hmm, perhaps I'll roll a little more,
A few more minutes won't be a chore.
Tomorrow, I'm sure all will be fine,
I'll just ignore this niggle of mine.
I'd love to go for a run today,
Trainers on, out the door to play.
It's just a grumble from my knee,
It'll settle soon, and I'll run quite free.
I'll stretch, and roll and have a bath,
Massage oil, all that faff.
It's just a grumble from my knee,
It'll settle soon, and I'll run quite free.
Now I need some distance in the bag,
It's just a niggle, no need to lag.
I'll run, then run a little more
It's only just a little sore...
Hmm, I think I'm limping,
Well.. just a tad
A little more, won't be too bad?..
The race is here, I'll struggle on,
This niggle of mine, will soon be gone.
I'm feeling ready, kind of strong,
But this niggle of mine, he knows I'm wrong
His little nudge and gripes are through,
He screams at me to stop! I do!
Though not before I just get round,
And collapse in sobs upon the ground.
Next time a niggle gripes and grumbles,
I won't ignore those little mumbles,
I'll sort them out and listen good...
I probably won't... but know I should!

Kerry Edwards



Clockwise from top left: Darren leading the men alongside Hollingworth Lake, Phil getting very excited at Krypton Factor, Mandy doing well keeping up with a Literal Giant at Orchan Rocks



TOILET SEAT

IF YOU HAVE ANY CONFESSIONS OR TALES ABOUT YOUR CLUB MATES, EMAIL THE MYSTERIOUS 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



My intelligence gathering network has made me aware of the following acts of stupidity which I have judged accordingly:

For treating himself to a brand-new Black Diamond climbing harness only to later realise that he already had the same one – step forward **Dave Garner** for 5 points (see the Forum Marketplace for further details!)

“So, I am at the bar last night... Lucy Hobbs orders, doesn't have enough cash, asks hubby he has none, asks Mel to pay, Mel agrees, Mel orders, now she no longer has enough money for her order, hence borrows a fiver off me. I order and have enough to pay” well snitched Paul Brannigan! 5 points each for **Lucy, Paul** and **Mel**.

Dan Taylor: was cheerfully rounding up volunteers on the forum for his Hoofstones race on 13th January. The race was actually on 19th January! 5 points

Dan Taylor: Leaning on a drystone wall to catch his breath after running up from the Blue Pig to Heptonstall Road towards the end of a pack run and causing the whole thing to topple over. 5 points

Helen Wilson: At the trail race around Cowm Reservoir recently Helen turned up on the day and paid £5 to enter the race. Only when given

two tee shirts by the organiser of the race did she realise that she'd pre-entered as well paying twice to enter the race... 5 points

Helen Wilson: Earns bonus points for arriving at the Cowm race penniless and *then* borrowing the extra fiver from husband David to enter the race twice!! 5 points

David Wilson: At OMM lite festival on Cannock Chase in May, husband and wife duo Helen and David Wilson running as a pair... David thought day 2 was an hour longer than it was = Null points for the OMM but 5 points for the Toilet seat! (See Jackie Scarf's fb post for more info)

Andy Worster: Pre-race navigation fail... about 30 mins after using the (men's) loo before Mytholmroyd fell race, Andy wandered into the women's facilities. He had time to think "ooh it's nice and spacious in here" before Kim dragged him out. 5 points

Sue Roberts: after the heavy 'sesh' of the Jura ceilidh, Sue's tent collapsed in the night. The next morning she threw it in the skip...along with her thermorest, Swiss army knife and Martin's bike repair kit. They were not retrieved. 5 points.

Dave Collins: for selflessly seeing *exactly how many mistakes he could make* in the Tod MMM. See article in this issue to learn his lessons. 5 points.

Toilet seat photo special!

Daz "weather warning" Graham: Demonstrated his superpowers by dragging an entire storm system with him to Majorca (see photo) to "enhance" a Toddie cycling holiday! 10 points

Daz "weather warning" Graham: Excelled himself by dragging storm Gareth *away* from the UK leaving behind perfect clear blue sky and sunshine! ..Redemption for Daz.. Minus 5 points!



*HALFWAY THROUGH THE YEAR AND IT'S ANYBODY'S GAME...
PLENTY OF TIME TO DETERMINE THE WINNER, SO KEEP UP YOUR
ANTICS AND CARRY ON DOBBING IN YOUR CLUBMATES!*

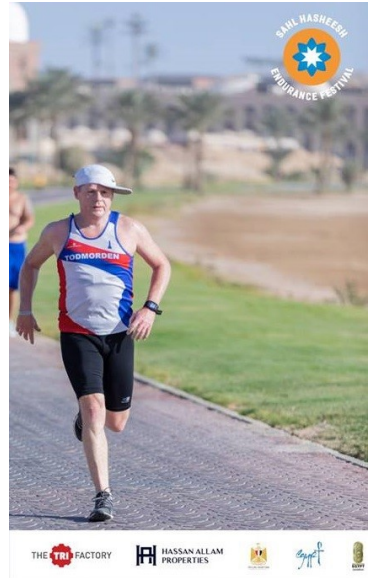
Toilet Seat Points table as of 1st June 2019
1= Helen Wilson: 10 points
1= Dan Taylor: 10 points
2= Daz Graham: 5 points
2= Mel Blackhurst: 5 points
2= Paul Brannigan: 5 points
2= Lucy Hobbs: 5 points
2= David Wilson: 5 points
2= Andy Worster: 5 points
2= Dave Garner: 5 points
2= Sue Roberts: 5 points
2= Dave Collins: 5 points

The Tri Factory Sahl Hasheesh Olympic Distance Triathlon (version 2)

I was on holiday in Egypt doing a 13.1 mile training run along the Egyptian coast and had a great view of the cycling element of the Tri Factory Olympic Distance Triathlon. I couldn't get around the bike-run changeover area, so had to run through it.

As I went through the changeover the commentator called out that "last year's winner Luke Grenfell is starting the run". It took him around 2K to pass me. It was great to have an inside view of the race and I enjoyed the free drinks at the water stations and the encouragement of spectators. I even got an official photo. I still don't fancy the faff of a triathlon though, give me a pair of running shoes and the associated simplicity.

Paul Brannigan



Who's the Boss?

Are you the boss? Are your legs the boss? Is the Governor the boss. Who is the governor I thought I was the boss? The Governor AKA the gremlin, the chimp, AKA that f£@*ing whinger that seems to only appear during the worst runs. Sometimes I'm the boss but that comes with risk as the Governor is always there but sometimes they are on side. Apparently the Governor is there to protect me from myself. Well I wish the Governor would do one as I run better when the Governor is out of the office. Pre race I act out the conversation that will take place and convince myself that I can deal with the Governor

when they come back in... because I'm the boss. The Governor comes back in and... Ok boss. One day they'll accept that I am the boss... sometime soon! Pain...what pain? Ultimately it's a competition against myself. Who wins isn't always obvious.

Nick Barber

Torrier Autumn/Winter 2019: We need YOU!

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

Send me a race report. Your favourite running meme. A song. A love letter to the club. An article about the local flora and fauna. Five words about your marshalling experience. An abstract black and white painting about what it means to be a Tod Harrier. A picture of your dog. A haiku about foraging whilst running. An analysis of race results over the years in the form of a spreadsheet, proving that fell runners have got slower. Or faster. A picture of your dog. A drawing by your 6 month old child. An interview with an inanimate object. A wordsearch. 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... We even permit submissions that aren't running-centred! I'd love to see a quiz, a Worst Race Gurn competition, more poems... If you fancy being a reporter for the Torrier, get in touch and I'll give you a fun assignment.

Send word documents, emails 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 in October. Deadlines will be announced on the Facebook page and forum.

Toddies

EPISODE 3

As Club Secretary I often get helpful tips emailed to me by other Toddlies*. Here is the latest batch:

*Who are these people? I'm off to check the members list...

"Parents of new-born children can keep fit by bench pressing your child. As they grow you get fitter!" - **Chris Anthemum**

"Mess with road race organisers' heads making them think there's going to be emergency gasworks by spray painting loads of lines, dots and squiggles on the road the day before." - **Dane Brammage**

"Race organisers: avoid unlucky people entering your race by randomly throwing some entry forms away" - **Tom Ahawk**

"Take your isotonic drink, boil it down to a lump and get a whole bottles worth of hydration in one handy bite" - **Frank Lee**

"Fell runners: recycle broken glass into your shower gel and hey presto! - exfoliating soap to get the mud off your legs." - **Chris P Onions**

"Save money on expensive GPS watches that tell you how far you've run by occasionally looking behind you." - **Justin Thyme**

"Road runners: keep your earphones in place by smearing them with

‘No-More-Nails’ before jamming them in your ears really hard.” -
Brooke Lynbridge

“Recalling the initial letters of the four points of the compass is a great way of remembering to **Never Eat Shredded Wheat.**” - **Terry Torial**

“Fell runners: save wear and tear on your expensive ‘Mudclaws’ by sellotaping potato waffles over the soles” - **Lou Natick**

Stu Wolstenholme

Meme Queen



Thanks Helen Hodgkinson for her permission for these photos to be used in (I believe) the Torrier's very first meme. –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 for more
information or email
mandy@todharriers.co.uk**