

THE TORRIER

AUTUMN/WINTER 2020



NEWS, INSPIRATION, SELF-ISOLATION, OBSESSION,
SILLINESS, MEMORIES, ADVENTURE AND MORE!





**(After lockdown...) 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 location 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** and **Todmorden Harriers** on Facebook. Remember to check current local restrictions and complete a participation form (free of charge, no membership required)



*Front cover
courtesy of Josh
Fenton-Glynn,
this page: Stu
Wolstenholme
and Wayne
Warburton*



Contents

- 04** A word from the Editor
- 05** A word from the Chair
- 06** A word from the President
- 07** Juniors Report
- 10** Toddlies in Exile
- 13** Untimely Meditations
- 17** Beer Over Here
- 20** London Marathon
- 23** Joss Naylor Challenge
- 26** Little Victories
- 27** Words of Wisdom
- 29** The Hebrides and a bit extra
- 34** The Tod Graham Round
- 40** Tod Tips
- 41** The next Torrier
- 43** Spotted
- 43** Dogs of Tod Harriers



A word from the Editor...

Welcome to another lockdown edition of the Torrier - what fortuitous timing!

This year has been somewhat lacking in races, events and general travel, to say the least. It's been wonderful to see club members making the most of our little valley and any additional headspace and time to complete personal projects and just *keep on getting out there*.



We've yet another action-packed issue, perhaps with a little more introspection and fewer stats (sad times), but still lots of lovely smiling faces and accounts of adventure and challenge. There's Tod Tips on how to win races, tales from outside the valley (even abroad!!), more beerienteering, and we've even somehow got several limericks about Mytholmroyd from multiple poets (not *all* written by my Dad...)! Rather sadly, everyone appears to have been extra sensible and not got any toilet seat points...do better before the next issue, please!

May our excellent club continue to inspire its members, new and experienced alike, into the new year and beyond.

Stay safe everyone.

Kim Ashworth

Torrier Editor

torriernewsletter@gmail.com

Instagram: @adventureandcake

A word from the Chair...

As I write this on the eve of the second lockdown I have a little 'earworm' to the tune of Chumbawamba's famous song 'Tubthumping' Only the words going around in my head are "we get locked down but we get up again, you're never going to keep us down" This was a post on the Tod Facebook page by Paul Brannigan (thanks for that Branny!) Its true though, so whilst it's disappointing to have to once again pause our club activities... **We will be back.**

2020 eventually yielded some positives, in spite of the constantly changing situation a lot of club members put in some great work to get us back running regular Wednesday pack runs, Monday beginners groups, C25K and Junior training sessions. On behalf of the club I would like to thank everyone who contributed to this.

We have a lot to look forward to. Our first ever 'Virtual' Grand Prix championship kicks off in December with a series of 12 races on the Fell and 12 on the road. The Tod winter league mini series will go ahead as soon as it's possible.

As for myself, I'm off to drink a Whisky drink, drink a Vodka drink, drink a Lager drink, drink a Cider drink...

Stay safe, Keep on running and I hope to see you all soon.

Stu Wolstenholme



A word from the President...

In December 2019, I made a speech as incoming president. I described some of the little things that happen that make Todmorden Harriers what it is today. In that speech, I mentioned how the pack run came about and that there has been one every week for thirty years.

Well...didn't I speak too soon regards that comment?!

Not only has Covid19 taken away our weekly social event, in all probability, it has taken away our annual event as well.

But, let us be positive and look at some of the imaginative activities that we have found to replace the pack run. Whoever would have thought that 'beerienteering' would emerge as a popular pastime?! I didn't partake myself, but it was good to see some of the smiling faces on social media when a successful find was made. Other challenges were devised and attempted- and again logged on social media. We might not have been able to meet in person but we could still communicate our interests.

Club chairman Stuart Wolstenholme played a significant role in organising a weekly virtual pack run-type social gathering on Zoom. He certainly kept us entertained with his weekly quiz, trying to guess people, places and races with much of the detail missing.



Whilst we have finally in recent weeks been able to get back to a more socially-distanced type of pack run, alas lockdown number 2 has taken it away from us again.

But not to despair, it is (hopefully) only for a short period this time. We can hope that in the near future we will return to a

normality that is the community of Todmorden Harriers; and that pack runs will return to our preferred hostelrys; and more importantly, the post run debrief with a good pint of real ale (or your preferred tipple) and a basket of chips or two.

Take care out there Toddies and keep running.

Dave Wilson

Juniors Report

Autumn Challenge

Over the summer period, the Todmorden Harriers junior coaching team set their members an Autumn Running Challenge. In the absence of formal coaching sessions due to Covid, the challenge was intended to help get the juniors back exercising regularly, and to keep them motivated during a difficult time when formal opportunities to keep active remained so limited.

The challenge for each junior involved selecting a 1km lap of their choosing, one that could be run safely come rain or shine. Each week for 8 weeks the coaching team then set a specified number of laps (either 1, 2 or 3 laps) for completion in the fastest time possible. Times were submitted to the coaching team for inclusion on a challenge table that was shared weekly with all members. Anyone completing at least 3 of the weeks earned themselves a participation award. Special prizes were also on offer for the runner participating for the most number of weeks, and for the most improved runner over the 8-week period.

The names of the 12 members who took part are set out below. Twelve of those participating completed 3 or more weeks to earn themselves a well-deserved participation medal.

The special prize for the runner completing the most weeks ended up as a '100% participation' trophy as, incredibly, four juniors completed all 8 weeks. The coaches decided to award a fifth junior a trophy as well, since they only missed one week due to a bout of tonsillitis – the commitment and dedication was clear! Special mention must go to each of these budding, committed young athletes: Zachary Edwards; Rebecca Haworth; Dessie Holland; Shania Holland; and Lile McGrath.

The decision on who to award the second special prize for 'most-improved' runner was much clearer cut. An outstanding improvement week-on-week throughout the challenge saw Lile McGrath picking up this well-deserved prize - a new running belt stuffed full with chocolates!

The coaches were really pleased to see such commitment and dedication from the junior runners and hope that it can be maintained over the coming winter months!

'Autumn 2020 Challenge' participants: Zachary Edwards; Imogen Grunhill; Joseph Grunhill; Georgina Haworth; Rebecca Howarth; Dessie Holland; Shania Holland; Lile McGrath; George Suthers; Finn Tweed; Ben Wigley; and Charlotte Wigley.

Junior Grand Prix

In recent years, Todmorden Harriers has also run a Grand Prix of races for the juniors running through from September to June. The Grand Prix comprises 11 selected races and wildcard options such as Park Runs or Cross Country for inclusion as counters. The 2019-20 grand prix was well over half way through when lockdown was brought in earlier this year, however for obvious reasons it was not able to be brought to its natural conclusion. The awarding of Bronze, Silver and Gold medals dependent upon the number of races completed will not be possible; however all participants (25 in total)

will receive their own Grand-Prix medal and certificate to acknowledge their achievements pre-lockdown.

Hopefully normal service will be resumed as soon as possible and Todmorden Harriers Juniors will be seen racing in the red white and blue vests on road, trail or fell somewhere near you!

'2019/20 Grand Prix' participants: George Barnett; Oliver Barnes Dowling; Leoni Brady; John Paul Cash Birks; George Collins; Agnes Daniels; George Daniels; Mabel Daniels; Ella Edwards; Zachary Edwards; Alfie Elmwood; Esther Fielden; Imogen Grunhill; Joseph Grunhill; Dessie Holland; Shania Holland; Will Pollard; Raphael Rogers; Sophie Smith; George Suthers; Delilah Swift; Finn Tweed; Ben Wigley; Charlotte Wigley; Elizabeth Yates

Darren Tweed

Spitting Image

Below Left: Mick Hucknall after a run with Eric Morecombe

Below Right: Paul Brannigan promoting a Simply Red concert



Toddies in Exile

We're missing you all!

We were fortunate enough to have the opportunity to move to the Lake District earlier this year – an absolute dream come true for anyone who loves to run in the mountains. How lucky we are, and it really is absolutely fantastic living - and running here.

I drove up to Glenridding one snowy, flooded and windy evening in mid-February for a job interview for the role of caretaker at Glenridding Public Hall. By the time I'd made it safely home after a scary snowy drive over Kirkstone Pass, and then the same over Cockhill, I'd been offered the job!

A quick look at our rental contract in Luddenden and we realised that we should hand in our notice the next day, or else be tied in to another month's rent, so just 4 weeks after interview we were cramming our belongings into a far too small (but very reasonably priced) removal van and heading North!

We arrived in Glenridding in pouring rain on Saturday the 14th of March, and just three days later lockdown happened!

We'd been very busy in the 4 weeks preceding the move. Dwane had been offered a job as a bike technician in a store in Penrith, I had lined up work with a good variety of race organisers and outdoor event providers (my job at the hall is only 10 hours a week), and we were very excited about starting our new lives.

The next couple of days we saw our plans unravel very rapidly. All the races, recces and events I'd been booked to work on were cancelled, Dwane's job was put on hold and never really materialised again, and we were faced with very bleak prospects. That's when we realised what a wonderful community we had moved to...

The Public Hall committee gave us the contract to paint and decorate the hall inside and out, which has led to us starting a small property maintenance business, we were given a month's free rent and my wages in advance, and every week a mystery food parcel would arrive on our doorstep, complete with a couple of bottles of local beer and a cheery postcard! Dwane was invited to help with community flood prevention work shifting rocks in the beck, which was a fast track to getting to know loads of the local people, and throughout the summer, while all the pubs were closed there were regular Friday evening beers on the green, when the whole village got together for a drink and a chat.

As well as this, the weather was amazing. There was still a lot of snow on the high fells, but it was warm, sunny and blue skies for months. We did hill reps in the snow wearing shorts, we swam in the Lakes and Tarns, and wore sunglasses every day! When Mountain Rescue asked us politely to stay off the high fells while they were struggling with lockdown we were happy enough to oblige, as we had a whole area of low level routes to explore.

Once we were allowed to meet people from different households, I started running with my new friend Nicky. We ran the Ullswater Way quite a few times, and once we were allowed back in the mountains we ran the Patterdale Boundary.

Our little painting and decorating business just about keeps us ticking over, I'm working with Nicky at WALX Helvellyn Ullswater, offering guided walks and Nordic walking tuition, I've gained a walk leader qualification from Nordic Walking UK, and just completed my Mountain Leader Training, with the aim of doing my assessment in Spring 2021. I've provided support on various FKTs and incredible personal challenges and met some truly inspirational characters. My running has probably decreased slightly in overall mileage but increased hugely in elevation. I'm finding that 10k in the mountains takes a lot longer than 10k on the Wadsworth Moors!



We've even started a little Monday night running club, the Glenridding Goats, to encourage local people to come out for a fun, sociable 5k. I knew that FLiRF course would come in useful for something!

So here's the sad bit – we expected to be able to share all this with our friends from Tod Harriers. We were looking forward to the Coniston camping weekend, the Lakeland classic fell races, the Hodgson Relays, the Joss Naylor and Bob Graham rounds, and the weekend's meeting up in vans, in tents, or just round at our house.

We've seen a few of you and it's been wonderful. We just hope to stay in touch and assure you all of a warm welcome in Glenridding when the situation permits. In the meantime, we're proud to be repping the white red and blue here in the Lakes – Toddlies through and through!

Louise Greenwood

Untimely Meditations

“Long experience has shown that to critique the branch you are sitting on is the most exciting and often even the essential beginning.” Ken Knabb ‘Double Reflection’

The past few issues of the Torrier have carried articles focusing on the motivation of new runners and club members. This is all about an old one. Spoiler alert: there will be no mention of forgoing wine on a Friday night for a Park Run or a free tot of whisky during a race.

2020 is my 25th year with Tod Harriers. An ideal landmark to take stock of my running future. Should I hobble on for another 3 years to complete 20 GP Qualifications? Or scale back this commitment? Or give in to the inevitable and stop running?

And then things happened.... i) my partner Nina badly tore her ACL skiing; ii) Covid struck; iii) I was furloughed. Meaning i) I had less incentive to go running; ii) there was no racing or GP; iii) I had more time to go cycling.

So far, so simple. Decision made, switch to the bike. But it's not been that straightforward. After many years of not only racing but also contributing to the running of the club, I've been surprised that by intending to stand down, there was a realisation of how much it has become part of that which 'identifies me'. The dread was both a psychological and philosophical question - what would a 'non-running me' be? Only ever being an average runner, I've long been content simply to participate, and the past few seasons resigned to finish with the last few runners at the back with no problem. Would I now be content not to be a competitor? Or cope with no longer being a runner?

This, then, has been another 2020 crisis - the challenge to my perception of self as a runner. Interestingly, having a strong aversion to "identity" used in political diatribes, I've had to reflect on why I

have been so keen to see, as a badge of honour, myself as a fell runner and Tod Harrier. (Then again, not identifying so officiously as to deny points to anyone not racing in a club vest!). Over the years I've watched many others, many far better than I, stop running and drift away – would my 'ego' countenance such a drastic move myself?

This is probably the core of my worries and I've had plenty of time to think it through – or just done too much lock-down reading. Maybe the following, if read by older Toddies or those suffering long term medical/injury problems, will strike a chord – or given my style of writing, a free-jazz dissonance. Or it could be I'm just making a fuss (and writing an unnecessary article for the Torrier); it simply equates to any 'life changing' event such as retirement or redundancy – which in a sense is what I'm feeling, but as a runner not a wage-slave. If it is that simple you can ignore the rest of the article.

To put it in a more philosophical way, (and I hope you'll continue reading...) my "existential crisis" is freely finding oneself in a reality limited by circumstances (in this case my physical decline), yet trying to delude oneself with a contingency - it is not inevitable, it may happen or it may not. Life has had to become a compromise, and how to simply accept and/or deal simply with this compromise is what you come to terms with – not the circumstance. This outcome must neither be fought, nor made an overwhelming, overburdening significance.

For me I had in my psyche that ceasing to run/race is a "Question of Being" insofar as 'what I have been' has already, gradually and inevitably, become an easy-going 'what I am now' (carrying on as much as I can whilst restricted by knee injuries). But the next step into 'what I will become' is already apparent as a more abrupt and difficult disruption. Equally inevitable, but psychologically problematic, because it will happen through 'this is what I have done and decided' i.e. to give up running. Whilst there must be a complete acceptance of 'being yourself', by giving up (or even just less involved)

in both the sport and club may well be becoming 'a self that you never realised you were'. Very importantly this is not to live a life, or see a future, defined by absence – 'being' then becomes a negativity.

I've gone through something akin to this before. Then I switched to fell running from wilderness mountaineering, needing the physical and mental challenge, the need to push oneself, the affirmation of life through adversity. Initially I viewed it as a (poor) substitution, then I was able to appreciate it as a progression. The switch was not initially to 'being' a runner, but in order to still enjoy moving through the isolation of the hills. For quite a few years I was not motivated to compete in the GP as it involved road races. I've never been a Descartes "I [run], therefore I am", more a Sartre "I am nothing, therefore I am free [to run]." That is - you are nothing other than that which you decide to be, not defined by or viewed through outside criteria.

For example, what is a 'good' training run? Faster than before? More effortless? Overcoming greater or challenging elements? The aim being to make you a better runner for the next race – and therefore disappointment if it is not 'good'? If so, you are thus running with outside criteria, making a 'purpose' from material/measured goals. Or should your run be for, what we could call, inner sensations? The positive anticipation in the thought of running, the sensual joy of putting your kit on, to 'purpose' a feel of freedom in outdoor surroundings? Some will claim it's both, but there is a birth of tragedy when dominated by the twilight of Strava idols. I feel I've moved to higher ground by no longer training; there is an authenticity in doing an easy run, simply 'for itself' - not that I *must* get better - enjoying a slow, doubly reflective inward-looking outlook.

So, in order not to live a life in "bad faith", pretending to be that which I am not, I have to let go of my previous running/racing/club-person identity. It is in doing this that I realise to what extent my

relationship with running (and the Club) dominated the activity side of my recreational/social life and physical/mental well-being. As noted before, it had become an important part of my identity and perhaps existence. But now disengaging with this relationship has brought into focus the difference of what parts of one's life are an 'extension' of your existence and what are the more fundamental 'foundation' of existence. I have to face reality that running will definitely now become the former and no longer the latter.

It may be too grand to equate my feelings to Heidegger's "releasement" or 'calmly letting go' as a means to gain contentment and inner peace. A new self has emerged into the light, now more conscious of my previous identity as a runner/Toddie. There is a self-acknowledgement of how life is set to change, and no desire to force it back into what it has been.

Despite all this thinking and change of outlook, I have not found out what a non-running me is. I've not given up, just cut down. Nina is back jogging as part of her rehab and my preference is as a fair-weather cyclist, so it's back to the fells in the cold and wet. You may still be seeing me at pack runs when they return to normal, maybe at (not a) Park Run or even a race – probably with a watch to check my time! And I've not given up causing trouble at committee meetings. But it is a challenge to be loosening ties to an identity that I've relied on; accepted, strangely unquestioned, for many years.

Can or will I stop running? Kierkegaard observed life must be understood backwards but lived forwards. But it will never be fully appreciated because there is never a "right time" to stop progressing forward in order to look back to comprehend it. Despite the 25th anniversary opportunity and the chaos that 2020 has offered, it looks like that is true for me.

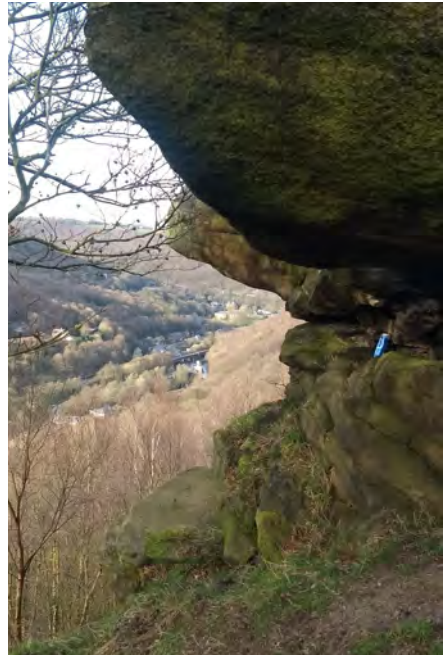
Dave O'Neill

Beer Over Here: the birth of Beerienteering

Rewind to March 2020. The skies might have been blue, but there was an all-pervading sense of impending doom. Everything was cancelled. We needed wholesome outdoor pastimes to occupy ourselves, but races and pack runs evaporated into thin air. What could you do for fun?

On a run up to Churn Milk Joan, I found myself thinking back to that other notable public health emergency, the Black Death. Villages couldn't come into contact with each other, so they'd leave food and supplies by a stone or a cross. Maybe we could do that, but make it a competition: fastest runner or rider to the landmark takes the spoils. But what to leave? While loo roll might have been in high demand at the start of lockdown, it isn't very fun, or very weatherproof. Luckily, there was one essential for coping with the crisis that was arguably even more vital than the means to wipe one's bum: alcohol.

So was born "beerienteering". A can or bottle hidden in a scenic location, some cryptic clues circulated via social media, and the thrill of running or riding up the hill in the hope that you'd beaten everyone else to it, and you wouldn't be returning home sad and thirsty. I left a tin of Life and





Death in one of the shooting butts near CMJ - it was snaffled within minutes. The idea caught on: more people started putting out beers, and then other prizes. Some were successful (Foraging for jam is a pleasing fast-forwarding of the whole gathering and preserving process), although an Easter weekend of hidden chocolate treats was a bit of a disaster, when it turned out that Cadbury's Mini Eggs are irresistible to squirrels.

The game evolved further. There were rumours of people arranging full-on orienteering competitions involving dozens of beers, all swept up in one frantic day. The composition of a short poem full of clues became part of the game (some choice examples are in the accompanying illustrations). Some of the staff at Vocation got involved, resulting in the distribution of 12% barrel aged imperial stouts and other hipster delights. At the other end of the scale, Phil Hodgson specialised in pairing terrible beers with spectacular locations: a can of Fosters at Foster's Stone, anyone?



As lockdown has eased (*at time of writing - stay tuned for another round! -Ed.*) and running together becomes less frowned upon, beerienteering has slipped down the agenda. Which is a shame: I've really enjoyed the thrill of the hunt, and still find myself impulsively scanning the bases of dry stone walls to see if there's a random tinnie in there. Perhaps beerienteering will make a comeback under happier circumstances, but it was the perfect diversion for the first few weeks of lockdown.



Liked by [rosemaryrosemary](#) and 29 others

getthysbearings Beers hidden far-flung are a pain in the bum, So here's one that's just about as local as they come. Near Fake Stoodley Pike, a pale ale awaits, Just don't hug any walkers, or lick any gates.



Liked by [grimythumbprint](#), [toni.fryer](#) and 52 others
getthysbearings If you've drunk your way through all your crates of Vocation

Then make your way up to this scenic location
Head for the stones, nip round the back
Find the rock like a bum and then go for the crack
A tasty pale ale will be yours in a tick
Just observe social distancing, and don't be a dick
[#beerienteering](#)

Limerick

There was a young man from Mytholmroyd
Who used to run across the moors
He tripped over a post
And now he's toast
But Mytholmroyd is better off without him.

Ted (Wide) Hughes

London Marathon 2020

Back in August 2020 I decided that I'd quite like to do something that didn't even exist in 2019, a virtual marathon!

The Virtual London Marathon to be precise. I'd run in the 2019 London Marathon and felt sure that I could improve on my time of 3.46,59 so I applied again. Like so many though I didn't get a place via the ballot and I found myself at our Christmas presentation evening, necking a pint in 7 seconds flat to beat my challenger Darren Tweed for the club's place.

Disappointment followed as the race was at first postponed, then eventually cancelled. The option to run virtually was there. At first I wasn't interested in the prospect of running virtually. There wouldn't be any of that legendary London Marathon atmosphere on the canal towpath (the flattest ground around here!) I'd be on my own in cold, rainy October pounding the tarmac with nothing but my own thoughts. However, I'd lost a lot of fitness and endurance over the lockdown period and needed a target to get me back to up to speed and as usual, the racing bug kept niggling away at the back of my mind. I entered 5 minutes before the deadline.

Now I'd entered I needed to get training as there was less than 6 weeks to go until race day. I was on holiday so I started straight away. I set off for a 10 miler along the Devon coastal path from Padstow. It was a nice warm day. 8 miles later and I'm completely knackered. Oh dear, not a great start. I'd picked "the improver" training plan from the London Marathon website, over the next few weeks I'd managed to make up a fair bit of lost time until week fourteen, the 20 miler! The day started cool and breezy, I set off out with Grohl (my dog). The plan was to run from my house in Sowerby Bridge to the great wall of Tod ten miles away and return. After a couple of steady warm up miles and lots of sniffing lamp-posts (Grohl – not me) my furry pal decided he'd had enough and refused to move. I got Joolz (my wife)

to collect him and set off again. What Grohl had noticed and I hadn't, was that the clouds had parted and the sun was now out. There was a strong headwind making my progress a fair bit slower than the similar, shorter run I'd done the week before. I reached the 10 mile point in Tod and turned around as planned. With a strong tailwind now, I was running in my own little bubble of air and I began to realise just how hot I actually was. With salty ribbons of dried sweat running down my t-shirt and shorts, I also realised that I'd drunk most of the litre and half of water I was carrying and there wasn't much left. Past Hebden now and the Camelback had long since dried up, it's hot and I'm struggling with wobbly legs. I called Joolz and arranged to meet at Luddenden Foot with some water. As I approached Luddenden I could see my daughter holding out a bottle. As I drank, I realised my legs were buckling underneath me...game over at only 18 miles. I'd learned a valuable lesson about hydration.

Two weeks on, it's race day and I'm not at all confident about 26.2 miles after my training 'fail'. But It's dry, cloudy and 12 degrees. Much cooler than in previous weeks – perfect weather. But 26.2 boring miles on my own still didn't fill me with excitement (not quite on my own – Joolz was following me with drinks/food). My route would be starting at Tuel Lane lock, run 13.1m up to the Summit and return. It felt great to be pulling on my Tod vest and race number after so long and I ventured out to get to the start. At the end of my driveway a car full of people stops and reverses back up the road towards me. Strange. Then the windows drop and out comes a load of cheering, "Good luck with your marathon Stu!" It's a car full of Stainland Lions. All of a sudden I've got the buzz! Arriving at Tuel Lane there are several other marathon runners there either starting, running through and some even finishing! I set up the marathon app and it's time to go. I depart to cheers from a crowd of at least 20. I'm proper fired up now and take off far too fast (as usual). Past Luddenden and The Snails have a cheering station! The race vibe is well and truly with me! Through Mytholmroyd with a cheer from Dave Collins. I check my watch, still too fast – I need to save something for

the last 8 miles. Through Hebden, cheers from Phil Hodgson and Richard Leonard keep my spirits up. The canal is closed so I have to take to the road. Coming my way are several marathon runners including Peter Kerridge and wife Tracey. Back on the canal just before Tod I am joined by Ambi Swindells and Dan Taylor. Some more Tod support after the great wall of Tod, from Simon Anderton and Suzanne Copley and before I know it we're at the halfway point and heading back. Back in Tod I wave goodbye to Ambi and Dan. It was great to have some company and some quality pacing from them. I'm back on my own but now I'm heading back I knew there were lots of other runners to try to catch and pass, motivation indeed. At Luddenden Foot I start to get a few sensations of cramp and my pace drops a little. Then I check my time. I hadn't looked at this once until now and got a bit of a surprise. 3k to go and I'm on target to get under four hours! Time to focus, block the pain out of my mind and keep up the pace for those last K's.

My finish line at the lock is almost in view when the app on my phone springs into life, "Congratulations - you've just completed the 40th London Marathon!" Did I just hear the voice of Steve Cram? The watch says there's 400m left so I'm not taking any chances. I keep going to the lock where Joolz is waiting. 3.57.33 - I'm well chuffed with that especially after my dodgy training.

So what's my verdict on virtual running? Well it can't be compared to a mass participation event. But it was a great event and one that maintains my experience of never running a race I didn't enjoy!

Stu Wolstenholme



Limerick

One morning, whilst running in Mytholmroyd,
I stepped off the trail so I could avoid,
A distance unsocial,
With a chap who was local,
But I fell in the nettles, so was annoyed

Hipster Flexor

Joss Naylor Challenge, 29th August 2020

Doing the Joss Naylor had been something I'd quite fancied trying for a couple of years without ever committing to it and in this strange year of Coronavirus after a bit of gentle encouragement from Simon & Phil things just seemed to conspire to lead me to saying "if not now then when?" I'd made up 60 in June so had a good time allowance of 18hrs to complete it, during lockdown I'd been running a lot more than usual so was feeling pretty fit and finally there were no fell races to distract or get in the way. I suspect I wasn't alone in coming to this conclusion with all the reports of people doing various FKTs on endurance events and a lot of BGRs ongoing.

The final thing that swung it was I was able to tag my attempt on the back of one being done by Rebekah Beadle who was being helped by some other Tod Harriers. Originally we were trying to do a mid week attempt but the weather led us to push back to Saturday 29th August which in the end also made the help from supporters easier. Hence after a pretty sleepless night there we were on the temporary Pooley Bridge footbridge at 4.30am ready to go. We set off to run a 16hr schedule which was what Rebekah needed for her attempt and it gave me plenty of leeway. Leg 1 was done with Phil Hodgson & Simon Anderton and even though the first 90mins or so were in the dark we had no navigation issues as Phil has covered this leg numerous times. The weather was forecast to be pretty cloud free,

dry but with a strong northerly wind and quite cold. It was true to this with us needing waterproof, hat & gloves to keep warm, although as it was a northerly wind it did help to blow us along the first leg and we came into Kirkstone Pass 20 mins up on schedule.



The mist came in briefly on High Street and Thornthwaite Beacon.

Simon was now supporting me at each checkpoint from here on and after helping with a quick 2nd breakfast of rice pudding and a Weetabix drink I was heading up Red Screes with Daz Graham who took over and totally looked after me for the next couple hours with food, drink and the navigation to bring us down to Dunmail Raise now nearly 40mins up on schedule. We had a momentary panic at Dumail as Jackie & Phil Scarf, my next pacers were nowhere to be seen! Anyway they arrived within a couple of minutes, a combination of us being ahead of schedule and bank holiday traffic in Ambleside had caused the panic.

Another quick refuel and we set off slowly up the very steep slope to Steel Fell but once over the summit were off back jogging again towards High Raise. Everyone had said that this is the crux leg and it does feel to go on a long way before you get over Rossett Pike and start heading up the steep slopes of Bowfell. We went up the slabs to Bowfell a bit too high but found a route onto the plateau without too much scrambling around. This was the leg I had done a reccie on

most recently so knew in my head what it involved. Phil Hodgson had intended to meet us again at Great End as he had a good route off but somehow we missed him and took our own route down without too much difficulty arriving safely at Sty Head. We'd still been keeping to a similar steady pace and were now over an hour up.



Handover & support at Sty Head

Neil was there to guide me on the final Leg 4 and after eating what I could get down we were off up Great Gable. By now I was getting fed up of gels or shot bloks and stuck to sandwiches, mainly of the marmite hummus variety. Neither of us had done this leg before so I was a bit more wary about the navigation but it was also probably the most straight forward leg and we still had good visibility. My main concern now was not tripping or doing anything silly with tired legs on what was a lot of very rocky ground, we knew time was not an issue. After Gable, Kirkfell & Pillar we picked up a good trod which bypasses Black Crag. It wasn't difficult to see this with the number of Bob Graham attempts coming the other way. We must have passed about 10 groups within half an hour. A quick out and back to Steeple and it felt we were on the home straight. We found a good grassy line down

Haycock through the boulder slopes and then a trot on over Seatallan & Middlefell to the final grassy decent down to Greendale Bridge to finish at 18:48 in a total time of 14 hrs 18mins



Greendale Bridge

It had been a fantastic day out and I was blown away by the support and help I'd received off everybody. Great thanks go to; Simon, Phil & Mandy, Rebekah, Daz & Jools, Jackie & Phil and Neil & Roz.

Bob Halstead

Little Victories of 2020

Paul Brannigan recently asked the following question in the Todmorden Harriers facebook group. The answers were lovely and heartening, so we've reproduced them here.

"What's your little victory/buzz in a year of restrictions? Our Chair Stuart Wolstenholme got his doing the virtual London along the canal, getting a toot from a car at the start and seeing 50 odd runners and lots of spectators on the canal doing the same. Mine was getting a Q next to my name." – Paul Brannigan

“Coming back to pack runs” – Heather Rostron

“Helping out Mandy Goth with the C25K group!” – Jan Fitzpatrick

“The Coast to coast in 6 days. Never thought I could run 30 miles day after day.” – Mandy Goth

“Being “elected” Club Secretary of the finest running club in the world.” – Duncan Cooke

“Completing my first marathon. the rain really added to the feel of the race. I loved it!” – Pete John

“Doing my first GNR, even if it was virtual, and taking 50mins off my first (and only!) half marathon time!” – Alison Edge

“Finally running the first part of the Pennine Way from Edale to Littleborough, accompanied by my bestie!” – Kim Ashworth

Australian Correspondent’s Words of Wisdom

Having been stuck in Australia for ‘a winter’ - and very cold at that! I really miss my times in Tod. However, it is now 32 weeks of lockdown and I have completed each week a “Freedom” parkrun on the Wimmera river course here in Horsham. Tis a 100 mile round trip (3000 miles to not even get the events officiated – “that’s for fun” but keeps me involved) some mornings it was -3 and fingers so cold to operate the stopwatch.

I did ‘attempt’ the Great North Run 1/2 at the same time as in Newky (6.30 evening here) I bought one of those bloody things to carry on your arm--listened to all the spiel afore the start and Brendan's dulcet tones – set off on the dot and nowt happened. So the Strava was a

waste of time and I got no feedback. Not to worry as I was crap and could only manage 2 laps and 10 k. The 1st 5 was great on the riverside course on which the council had recently installed super lighting every 50yds and the big river gums were floodlit (not all of em) It really was “very pleasant” but - I “failed” and do not like to give up on stuff. Not run more than 5k for 8 years so “what do you expect Stanners!!” However, ‘undeterred’ I am doing the Statue of Liberty 5k in NY on 1st Nov. (I did do the Durham City 5k Virtual t’other week and that were all reight) My titanium hips are playing up a bit – but quit? – no way.



Was due my 30 year Pier to Pub swim in Jan for the landmark medal but it is now ‘virtual’ BUT the 1200m swim won’t be the same doing it in Tod baths!!! So I will not degrade my resolve and integrity so intend to drive down to Lorne and do the actual course. Being a 30 year Shark Bait Club member it’s a must do job (like Mandy and her Ben Nevis challenges) FOLKS - TODDIES—“you just gotta get out there and DO IT” We should all follow Jim’s great example (pity the bench celebration at Heaton Park could not happen)

Onyroad seethee and keep well. Love you's all, Stanners (Ian Stansfield)

The Hebrides and a bit extra - October 2020

Due to Covid 19 our usual adventure trip abroad was out the window this year, so we decided to find something closer to home. I have always loved Scotland but very rarely seem to travel further north than the Lake District and when we do venture to Scotland we always seemed to base ourselves around Fort William. The western isles have always been tempting, but felt you needed more than a weekend to explore. So with Covid 19 and not being able to travel abroad, this was the ideal opportunity to go exploring the Outer and Inner Hebrides, starting with the Hebridean way, then onto Skye, Mallaig down to Kilchoan and then the Isle of Mull. A total of around 430 miles. 11 nights wild camping and 2 nights in a comfy bed (including the backpackers' hostel in Oban and B&B on Skye).

We set off from home on Saturday and stayed overnight in the backpackers' hostel, which I would highly recommend if you want somewhere cheap and don't mind sharing a dorm. (although we had a 10-bed dorm to ourselves due to Covid).

Sunday we caught the ferry from Oban over to Castlebay on Barra, which was the longest ferry of our trip and a choppy one, lucky

enough I remembered to take some travel sickness pills. The actual Hebridean Way states to be 185 miles, however we seemed to do a bit more than that with a few detours to do some site seeing. We took 5 days to complete the route,



wild camping every night. All the campsites on the islands were not accepting tents due to Covid 19 and hotels, B&Bs were either full or not open, although we had planned to wild camp anyway.

Although the ferry takes you to Barra, the Hebridean Way actually starts on Vatersay where we had our first camp. In the morning we headed back across the causeway to Barra and north to catch a ferry to tiny Eriskay and onwards to South Uist where the boggy moorland and spread out population made finding a spot to camp a tricky proposition. The route then passes through the watery landscapes of Benbecula and North Uist and briefly onto Berneray to catch the ferry to Harris where we cycled along beautiful wild coast then climbed up into the mountains, the highest point of the trip. With the mountains now behind us we headed across the undulating moorland of Lewis to its northern tip the Butt of Lewis. Wild and rocky with a feeling of being on the edge of the isles it was a fitting end to the Hebridean way.

We had been told that the Hebrides is known for its southerly wind, so it is recommended that you cycle the route south to north, but this is not a guarantee as we found out, which made the ride tough at times with the wind, rain and carrying so much gear.

It was a great feeling the day we arrived at the Butt of Lewis, the



weather was windy but sunny. I personally really felt like I had achieved something and felt quite emotional.

The next stage of the adventure was to cycle back to Tarbett (63 miles) covering some

of the same ground we had already cycled to get the ferry over to Skye the next day. We found out that you could catch a bus to Stornaway and then another one to Tarbett to save time. However, due to school holidays the bus from Stornaway to Tarbett had been changed to a minibus and they were unable to transport our bikes, so we had to cycle the 35 miles. Lucky enough at about 22 miles we were offered a lift by a local gardener (Malcolm) who kindly managed to fit our bikes in the back of his van and dropped us off at a nice camping spot in the middle of Tarbett. We were really grateful for this as it was really difficult to find a camping spot in the dark and we knew we had a long climb ahead.

Skye was only a two day cycle ride, we landed in Uig from Tarbett but had managed to book a hotel in Portree for the night, to dry out all our kit and have a shower.

Right: Nice peaceful wild camping spot next to the beach at Dail Mor, just off the Hebridean way with nice quiet neighbours.



Left: Kilt rock and Mealt Falls on Skye

We cycled from Uig up north to the Trotternish Peninsula and down to Portree. It felt so good to stay in Portree and have a comfy bed and shower, we certainly smelt better for it!

The following day feeling clean and refreshed we carried on south to Armadale and camped in some woods



just a few 100 yards from the ferry port.

Above: The Storr in the clouds unfortunately

We encountered all sorts of wildlife on the trip, different birds of prey, sea birds, a mother otter with her baby, deer and porpoise.

Mallaig to Kilchoan was a two day ride for us, around a 60 mile bike ride. Where we could, we managed to follow the quieter coastal roads and alongside the lochs, with some beautiful scenery and beaches. The weather had changed for our second part of the trip and we had full days and nights without any rain, meaning dry and lighter kit. Also it meant we could sit outside in the evenings a bit longer or until we got too cold.

We managed to find a nice camping spot next to Loch Sunart, leaving us just over 18 miles to cycle in the morning to Kilchoan for the ferry over to Tobermory.



Mull has got to be my favourite part of the whole trip, I loved it (maybe because it wasn't raining). We spent 3 days cycling around Mull, of which a majority of the ride was along coastal roads, with amazing views. Absolutely loads of wild camping spots along the coastline, until we got close to Craignure on the last day where we would catch the ferry back to Oban. However we did eventually find a gorgeous spot near a Mussel farm, with great views, bats flying and the sound of stags in the forest.

A perfect end to an amazing adventure!

Michelle Fuller



Limerick

A naive young fellow from Mytholmroyd,
Decided to run down in Betws-y-Coed.
He was chased by a goat,
And a horse ate his coat.
So he ended up totally paranoid.

Bryn Tyrch

The Tod Graham Round

"I was cursing you for devising that" – Holly Page, Calder Valley after setting the women's record on the Tod Graham Round.

At a distance of 17-18 miles and elevation profile of 1600 – 1700m , there is no doubt that there are tougher routes out there, but it's starting to feel as though the Tod Graham is becoming a bit of a local classic for fell runners in the South Pennines and the Calder Valley, with various runners now tackling the route, battling for records and enjoying a few hours out on the Todmorden Skyline, taking in some of the town's toughest hills.

The round was born out of my frustration with AL fell races. I started fell racing with Todmorden Harriers in summer 2018 and within a year I was trying my hand at my first ALs at Holme Moss and Borrowdale. Needless to say, both races absolutely kicked my head in. After bonking severely and stumbling over the finish line feeling very sorry for myself, I began to question why the hell I was doing this!

I dusted myself off and spent some time delving into maps and realised that you could link some really tough local hills to create a proper AL fell route within and on the fringes of the Calder Valley. Some sections of the route take in parts of the Turnslack, Bridestones and Flower Scar fell races, which all utilise some of Todmorden's toughest terrain. To add a navigational challenge, I have only designated checkpoints, so route choice, with Todmorden's myriad paths, green lanes, and sheep trods is an important consideration.

The route begins and ends at Todmorden Town Hall, an impressive building that I believe used to sit directly on the border between Yorkshire and Lancashire and creates a great 'Moot Hall' type focal point for the start and end of the round. After a quick run out of the town centre, the route takes you on a small climb below Dobroyd Castle and up to Stones Lane. It's a nice little warm up and I always

find it to be a great little pace setter as it's a quick, runnable section. After a short drop into Gauxholme, runners need to settle in for a fairly long climb up and across Inchfield Pasture, and beyond to Inchfield Moor, to the trig point at Trough Edge End. This section has caused many a debate over route choice, with some runners opting to take a straight line from the valley floor, up the steep slopes and straight across Inchfield Pasture, whereas others prefer the more runnable, but longer route up the track and around the edge of the moor. I guess it comes down to personal preference, but I tend to hedge my bets and take a mixture of both.

Trough Edge End is a steep pull, offering expansive views over Manchester and much of Lancashire and Cheshire from its summit. But there is no time for stopping and admiring the view. Following the same route as the Turnsack race, runners head down to the back end of the disused reservoir at Ramsden Clough, up over the plateau of Ramsden Hill before traversing down to Cranberry Dam. I still don't know if I've found the best line up to Noon Hill, but it seems that whichever line you take you are greeted with chest high tussocks (historically known as 'Clunters' in these parts) and deep bog on the side of a very steep climb. It may be a short climb, but it is certainly a challenging one. The focal point for the climb is the wind turbine sitting at the summit of Noon Hill.

From Noon Hill, the descenders have a chance to make up some time on a nice gradual descent towards Walsden. This is perhaps one of my favourite parts of the Round as it's one of the faster sections, although during wetter seasons runners will have to work on their front crawl during one particularly nasty section of bog, before taking a very steep and satisfying drop to the valley floor just south of Walsden.

The section from Walsden and over Gaddings Dam is where I find the challenge somewhat starts to kick up a notch. During that first section, there is quite a lot of rough ground so I tend to err on the side of caution and just pace myself steadily, but after Walsden the terrain

becomes much more runnable and it's time to get a move on. This starts with a short sharp climb up through Bottomley and up towards Cat Stones where runners are to aim for the northern tip of Warland Reservoir. The gradient at this stage is fairly gentle but constant and always ends up with a pick-up in pace, settling in before the flat section over to Gaddings Dam, another checkpoint on the round.

The descent from Gaddings Dam is always great fun. It's steep, technical and rocky, which is quite unusual for this area, but terrain I really enjoy. You can really slalom your way down the trail and back towards the valley floor yet again. The Shell garage at this stage is a good place to stock up on refreshments if you're taking it more leisurely. Otherwise, it's straight over the road and through the estates, trails and tracks up towards the trig point at Bridestones.

For me, this is where things get really tough. The climb to Bridestones from the valley floor feels as though it goes on forever. It's also paving, tracks and wooded trail for a lot of it, so I always feel a sense of guilt when I'm inevitably reduced to a bit of a walk by this point. The summit offers a complete panoramic view of the entire Round. It's well worth taking a pause to enjoy the view before your legs are inevitably chewed up and spat out on the descent down towards Lydgate, where there is no respite at all.

Instantly, it's straight up the steepest section of the day to the prominent lip of Flower Scar hill, which looks a horrendous proposition as you watch it charge towards you from the other side of the valley. From here, I always find it's an absolute grind and really tough going as I settle in for the 'death march' to the summit. This is another section where there is a lot of debate over the best route choice as you can take more direct lines but with much more quad bashing terrain, or opt to take a bit of a detour at a more runnable gradient. Interestingly, both the overall and MV40 records have been set taking the latter option.

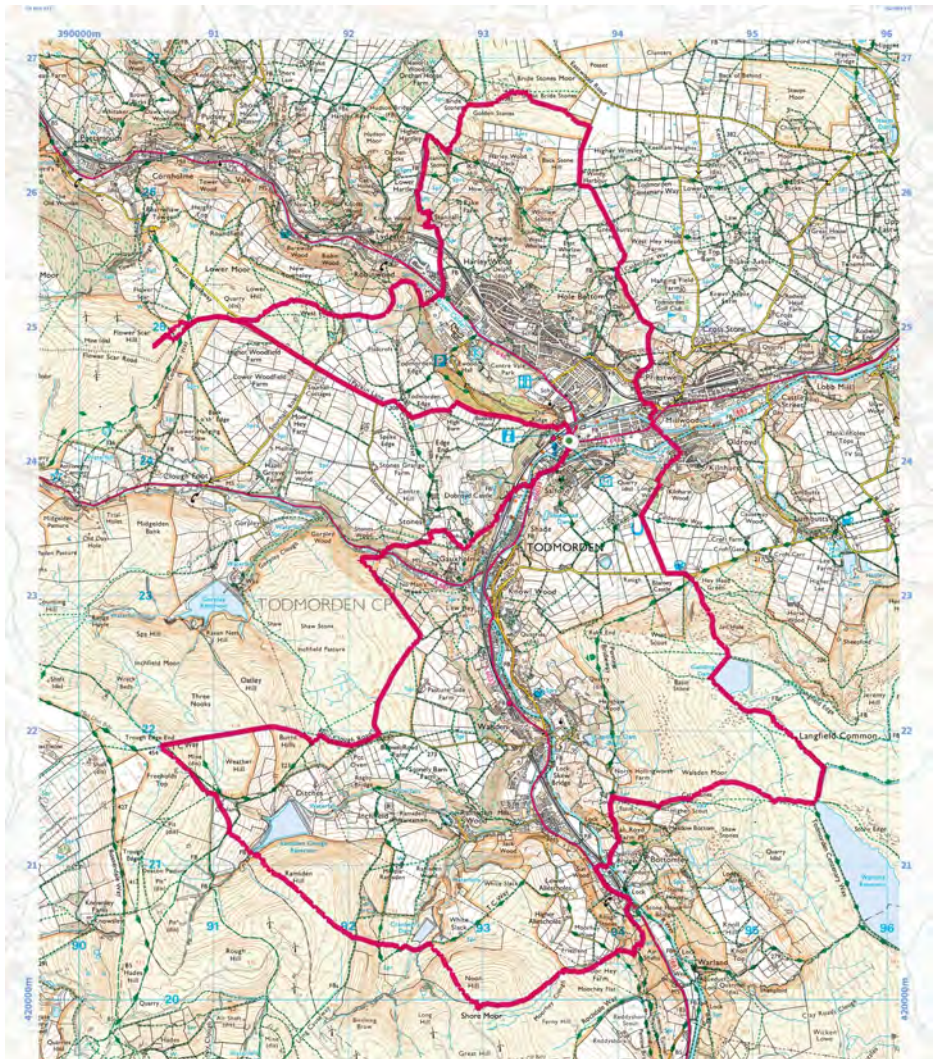


After Flower Scar, it's fast road legs for the descent through Sourhall and back into Todmorden. I always struggle on this as I don't spend any time running on roads. A great section for the road runners out there to really claw back some precious minutes towards the end.

Records & Notable Rounds (At the Time of Writing)

The first completion of the route, in August 2019, was by myself and Anthony Lee (Todmorden Harriers) in 5 hours 13 minutes. The route profile looked a lot different as we got our lines horribly wrong. I went back later and took over an hour off that time in 4:10. However, it wasn't long before word got out and the records started tumbling. Richard Adams (U/A), a local resident yet to join a club (hint hint...), was the first to drop below 4 hours in 3:40:24.

Local long distance specialist, Ian Symington (Todmorden Harriers) was next to take the overall and MV40 record in 3:31:16, before knocking that down again to 3:27:11, instigating an intense battle with



Anthony Lee over the succeeding months for both the overall and MV40 records. Anthony first responded with an overall record of 3:17:34 before local speedster Andrew Worster (Todmorden Harriers) took the overall crown in a superhuman 2:33:37. Ian and Anthony continue to battle for the MV40 record, with Ian putting in a time of 3:08 in June 2020. Anthony instantly responded with a sublime 2:59:58, coming in a desperate 2 seconds under the 3-hour mark that he had been targeting for some time. Back over to you Ian...

At the time of writing, the current MV50 record is held by Andrew Wrench (Todmorden Harriers) in 3:05:44, who claims he was “just out for a recce”. I suspect that record will go below 3 hours soon enough if that’s the case. Geoff Reade holds the MV60 crown in 5:15:44 and Nick Harris & Malc Bird hold the MV70 together in 6:39:39.

So far, Andy Ford (Todmorden Harriers) holds the record and only completion of the round in the opposite direction in 3:22:39. There is also talk of a double round by one or two people at some point, so watch this space.

Sadly, there don’t seem to have been many female attempts at the round. At the time of writing, I only know of Holly Page (Calder Valley), who holds the record at 3:16:33 and Ambi Swindells (Todmorden Harriers) who dragged me round hanging on to her heels before leaving me for dust on the road section to finish in 3:35:58.

End Notes

I’m pleased to see the route is becoming popular and we’re seeing some exciting performances on the route. I think it has really helped some of the locals stay a little competitive during the pandemic as well as providing a fantastic day out on some of my favourite hills. Of course, I urge runners to be responsible on the route and treat the landscape with care. Please get in touch to let me know your time if you’d like me to add it to the list of completions.

For more info:

Visit www.southpenninefellchallenges.co.uk

Email southpenninefellchallenges@gmail.com

Visit www.gofar.org.uk/sub-ultra-runs

Ricky Parrish



EPISODE 6
(AND THERE'S MORE
TO COME...)

Here is the latest batch of Tod Tips sent in by some increasingly unlikely Toddlies:

If, like me, the previous Chairman handed you something with no instructions then ran away laughing then this 'Tod-Tip' is guaranteed to solve the problem. Use Stormsure flexible tent repair adhesive to securely attach your Tod-Harriers patch to whatever garment you want - easy.

Stu W

Before the next lockdown, cut holes into your Tod Harriers race vest to fool the moths into thinking that all the best bits have been eaten.

Terry Dactyl

Getting a parkrun PB can be literally as easy as taking candy from a baby. Simply turn up at the parkrun, take some sweets from the nearest baby and the next 5K will be the fastest you will ever run while being chased by its angry parents and/or the Police.

Dane Jerous

They say that slow and steady wins the race - well that's a load of old cobblers! It's far better to run as fast as possible.

Justin Thyme

Don't throw away old running socks that have a hole in the toe. Simply cut off the whole toe, turn the sock around and sew up the other end - Hey-presto! a new sock!

Claire Voyant

Save hot water when taking your post-run bath by filling the empty spaces around you and between your legs with bricks.

Sydney Harbourbridge

Torrier Spring/Summer 2021: We need YOU!

Of course the Torrier wouldn't happen without club members sending in material. We want to hear from you, especially if you've not sent anything before! No need to be shy - if you have an idea but aren't sure about it, feel free to get in touch.

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

Send a run 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 view from a run. A bad view from a run. A picture of your dog. A haiku about foraging whilst running. An interview with your dog...

A mildly entertaining limerick about Todmorden. A picture of your dog. Front cover artwork (photo/painting/drawing/interpretive dance). A drawing by your 3 year old child. A quiz. A random stream of consciousness vaguely related to running/the Harriers. A photograph of a clay sculpture of Stoodley Pike. Time-of-life

musings, lockdown stories, tales of epics, vintage articles from the past... Even articles not related to running are permitted! 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

torriernewsletter@gmail.com

(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. If writing an article, aim for 500-1500 words (**absolute max limit 2000 words**). Deadlines will be announced on the Facebook page and forum.

-Ed.

Right: Grohl looking forward to the next Torrier already



Limerick

There was a young fellow from Mytholmroyd
Who had a most troublesome haemorrhoid
His doctor said, "Crikey,
I've ne'er seen the likey.
I'll show you a snap with my polaroid"

Parker Waterman

Spotted!

Local celebs Mandy, Jackie and Sue featured on a Red Bull article about mountain marathons... not sure what the comments about “all ages” or “weird” are about though!



Dogs of Tod Harriers

Excellent posing this issue from Pippa and Scout - can you name both of Pippa's yoga postures?

