



# HELM HILL NEWS

WINTER 2022



Pic: Tim Murray

**2022 English Fell Champion—  
Hannah Russell**





So, after three decades, a very successful 30th year for the club comes to an end. It has been a joy and an honour to see so many of you at training every week and at race finishes across the country. You are all superstars so keep it up!!

On the racing front...we've had lots of individuals and teams across the whole club winning races, trophies and medals. Some of our superstars have even been competing for Great Britain on the International stage (wow)!

We also hosted many great races: the Sedbergh junior FRA championship race, Reston Scar, Kentmere, Gummars How, Shipmans Knott, the entire Kendal Winter League and of course Helm Hill race night. I added it all up and think we had over 500 junior and 2000 senior finishers at these races...amazing!

On the social front we've had a fantastic relay and summer social for the 30th celebrations, monthly pub trips, the Ireland and British relays trips and....a Club Ceilidh!

Club training nights continue to thrive on Mondays and Wednesdays...an amazing total of 650 sessions delivered over the year by our hard-working coaches and helpers! Where would we be without them?

On club governance, the updated constitution, our relays policy and training of new coaches and leaders are all improvements building on the great base we already had. More still to come as we seek to lead the way! We continue to have a strong committee and my thanks go to everyone who has served on this in the last couple of years.

Personal highlights of 2022 for me included undertaking about a million recces of the Borrowdale skyline race route (it helped...honest!) and Barbon. I was busy overtaking someone by bum sliding only to find someone using faster tights was also overtaking me! Perhaps low friction shorts could be the Air Fryer of 2023?

After such a great year...what comes next?!

Couple of ideas for you...

- Race! The Winter League is muddy, cold, wet, social and brilliant! Whether you've raced it since the 1970's or never raced before this is for you...register via the website now!
- Volunteer! Every little bit of time you can spare adds up and...as we all know the sum of Helm Hill is even greater than all the parts. So do ask your coach/friend/committee members/me (I promise I won't give you the job of Winter League toilet roll supervisor!!)
- Improve! Whether its running uphill, downhill, your navigation, dealing with nerves or learning how to tie really good knots in your laces, set yourself some targets and we will do our best to help you. This time next year....

Wishing you all a peaceful Christmas and New Year...bring on 2023!

Michael





### Sharon writes:

As the year comes to an end and we start to reflect, it must begin with Hannah Russell. She joined Helm Hill as a junior and under the guidance of Billy Procter has improved year on year - earning her first England vest as an U18, crowned English U23 Champion from 2016-2019, British U23 Champion in 2019 and this year is the Senior Women's English Fell Running Champion. If that isn't enough, she also won the Snowdon International race and earned her first Great Britain vest at the European Mountain Running Championships. An amazing year and well deserved.

As a team the women won the English Fell Running team title for the 5th consecutive year and the British Fell Running team title for the 4th consecutive year. Our veteran women were up against a very competitive Calder Valley team but after an amazing turn out of women at Langdale Horseshoe, managed to secure a silver team medal in the English Championship. It would be great to see more Helm vests at the 2023 Championship races, more details to follow.

Our Helm women always enjoy the longer distances with this year being no different. Victoria Thompson started the year by winning the long British race in the Mourne Mountains (closely followed by Janie Oates in 2nd position) and completed the Lakeland Classics Trophy (LCT) to finish 3rd woman. Kelli Roberts continued her return to racing and finished just ahead of Victoria to take 2nd in the LCT. Victoria was joined by Janie Oates in the Elite OMM at Langdale and together they navigated their way over the hills to take the win.

As we move into 2023, I would encourage you to register for the Winter League races. If you haven't done these before they are a great way of meeting new people and the best way to get your legs racing fit!!

I hope you all have a lovely Christmas, keep up the running and I hope to see you on the fells and at some races in 2023!

### Craig writes:

For those that don't know me I took over one of the captains roles from Adam Perry in the summer. I have been a member at the club since 2009 and both my wife Amanda and daughter Imogen are members.

As another season draws to a close, 2022 has been another successful year for the club. We've had English champs race and series winners, Mountain running qualifiers representing GB, OMM elite and Mountain Trial winners and Lakeland classics race winners.

We fielded 3 strong teams at the HBMR and 8 at the British showing a strong depth of talent in the club. Chris Richards' leg 1 run at the British relays, was a stand out performance for me. Along with the strong ladies team performance in the HBMR.

We have had many individual successes as a club and it was great to see Sharon Taylor and Chris Richards representing Great Britain in Thailand at the World Mountain Running Championships.

It's good to see so many runners down at training on a Wednesday night, keep the enthusiasm up over winter as next season will soon be upon us. The first English championship race is Long Mynd valleys on February 11th!!

I would encourage everyone to keep enjoying their running. Hopefully see you at training or the Helm Hill Winter league.



## JUNIOR COORDINATORS BIT—LORNA ASKEW



I say it often ... what a wonderful group of Juniors we have in Helm Hill. It is particularly noticeable that a great many are strong, capable runners. Some juniors make their running easy for others to see because they race regularly, others are busy with improving their running in ways less visible to the whole club. I know for example that quite a number of juniors run nearly every day of the week, often before school.

The team around our juniors of parent, coach and club is incredibly important to their success. It is important to always remember success has many forms. The first success is to turn up to training regularly, or to make it to the start line of a race. From then on it is a case of working hard, and our juniors certainly have the ability to do that. A few more have moved into the Senior section now; Neve and Ruby, for example, and Dylan continues to run with the Seniors. It is a success for all involved that these youngsters have maintained their running for a number of years and are now training in various Senior groups.

Our coaches are obviously doing something right! Here is a round-up;

- ⇒ Toby Johnson, Sam Moon, Cathy Sanderson\* and Olly Waters coach level 1 groups. I am actively seeking two more coaches for this level.
- ⇒ James Mulvany will soon be stepping down from coaching in level 2, and will be missed. Many thanks indeed James for all your input, and the fun you have given to Helm youngsters. Justin Tancrel, Jo Haslett, Sarah Atkinson and Tim Roe coach level 2 groups too.
- ⇒ Maria Hearn and myself coach in level 3.
- ⇒ \*Cathy Sanderson will soon be leading a new level 3 group.
- ⇒ Kate Simpson, Jo Appleby and Jacob Dyer coach our level 4 juniors and support their transition to the Senior section.

Here are a few pictures of our juniors out and about this year. There have been some strong racing performances and lots of fun!



We have nearly 100 juniors training with Helm Hill. More pictures next time!

Lorna Askew





Thank you to Sedbergh School and Helm Hill committee for the financial support towards the Dean Macey summer athletics schools.



# ENGLISH WOMENS FELL CHAMPION 2022

HANNAH RUSSELL



Massive congratulations to Hannah on becoming the 2022 English Fell Champion. And what a year!! 2022 in her own words.....

After many years plodding away on the fells, I thoroughly enjoyed a few months of fitness this year, the highlights being the Snowdon Race, representing GB at the European Championships, and managing to win the English Championships.

Alongside the highs, there were some pretty low moments too - sitting on a duck board in the Dolomites with a dislocated patella and torn quad was probably not the highlight of the season, especially with only 5 weeks to go until Langdale Horseshoe; apologies to dad for ruining his summer holiday, which lasted a grand total of 48hrs...most of which was spent in Belluno hospital or the airport!

Without all the encouragement and support from the club over the years, I would never have been able to enjoy racing on the fells and mountains as much as I have this year, so a massive thank you to everyone who has dragged me through hill rep sessions, or around race routes over the years! It's great to be part of such a fantastic club, which now feels like a second family!

Hannah forgot to mention she also won the Snowdon International Mountain Race!





# English Championships 2022

By Caroline Holden

This year I was determined to support team Helm Hill ladies in the English Championships races as far as I was able to. If anyone knows me well enough, I do not enjoy running long and technical races - I leave those to the experts!

The first race in the calendar in late April was Guisborough. A 10 mile 2400ft race a lot of which is run over flagstone paths. A really hot, energy zapping run which saw Hannah coming home in first place and winning a very smart teapot! There were only three Helm

ladies entered but we finished second ladies team overall.



Pic: Rick Stuart



Pic: Tim Murray

The second race in the calendar was the Low Borrowdale skyline - almost the longest possible medium race under FRA rules at 12.5 miles and 3600ft. I had no excuse not to race this one - it is on my doorstep and on the date of my wedding anniversary.

I took advantage of a reccy offered by RO Ross Jenkin and donated to his charity. It was a good opportunity to get to know the opposition in the V55 categories from other clubs too!

Ross showed us the best lines, and then I went and reccy'd the course again on 3 more occasions just to make sure....

The race day saw a huge gathering of Helm Hill runners. The weather conditions were mixed - 10 degrees and raining but good for racing. Helm ladies had a great day, finishing 1st ladies open and 1st V40. Unfortunately Covid hit shortly afterwards, and Buckden Pike and the Old Crown Round had to be missed.

The next race was Bradwell short. A 2.5 hour drive to run 5 miles on a blisteringly hot day at 28 degrees. Very grateful for three water stations on route. Helm ladies were again 1st in both Senior and V40 categories. It was worth the effort!

Langdale Horseshoe was the final race of the series. Helm ladies once again secured victory with a remarkable and courageous comeback by Hannah from a serious injury which secured her English Ladies Champion 2022.

The series ended up with Helm Ladies team securing gold and the V40 team silver.

Next year we are determined to encourage greater participation by Helm Hill particularly in the vets categories. We have some really strong vet ladies in the club and we know that

we can build on the results of 2022 and achieve greater results in 2023 given the strength and depth of our members.

Reccy's of the 2023 championship races will be arranged over the coming months and will be posted on fb.

### **Women Open team gold medalists**

Hannah Russell Victoria Thompson

Janie Oates Sharon Taylor

Kelli Roberts Bianca Dyer

Caroline Holden

### **Women V40 Team Silver Medallists**

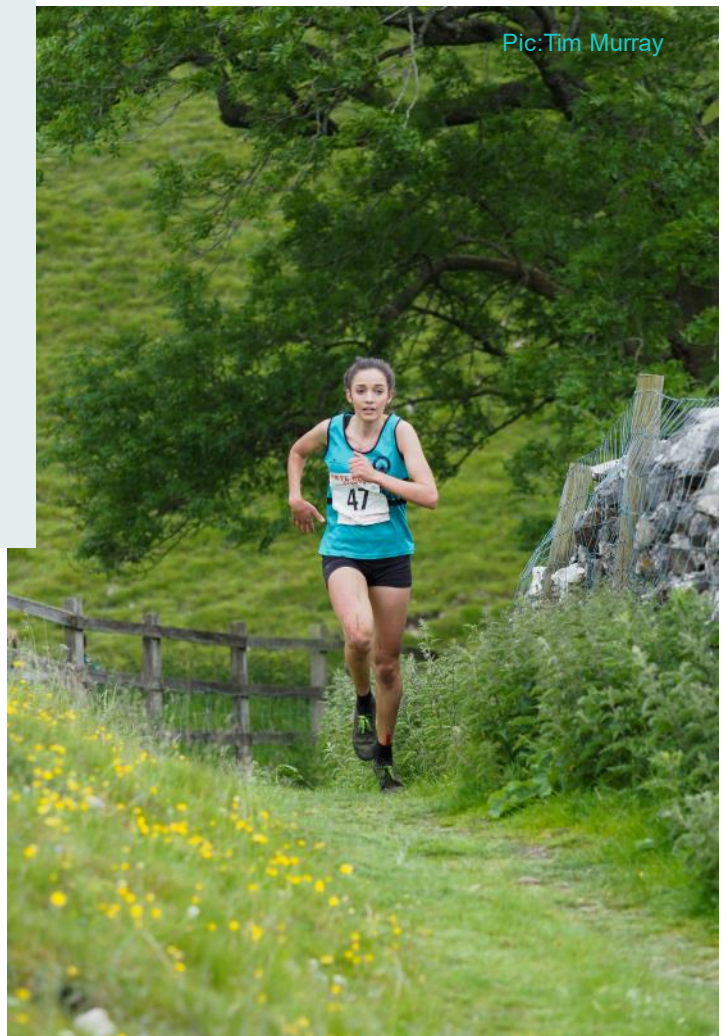
Bianca Dyer Marie Robson

Alison Richards Sharon Taylor

Caroline Holden



Pic:Rick Stuart



Pic:Tim Murray



# HELM PROFILES—VICTORIA THOMPSON

## When and why joined Helm?

I joined Helm just as the UK came out of lockdown and I now lead the Red group sessions along with another coach. I've always been very active with netball being my main sport growing up. More recently, I split my efforts between triathlon and fell running.

## Pairs of running shoes?

Mostly for environmental reasons, I try to limit the number of running shoes I have. I typically have a pair of racing shoes and then a pair of 'training' shoes (aka my old racing shoes). I extend the life of my shoes as much as possible using glue and stitching them up when the upper breaks.

## Greatest Achievements?

I think one of my favourite achievements this year has been partying at Eskfest on Friday night, going and winning Wasdale Horseshoe on the Saturday and then heading back to Eskfest for another evening of partying!

Being in the first female pair to finish the OMM elite course since 2016 is also up there!

## Embarrassing moments?

This has to be when I misplaced my map on the way to the first checkpoint of the Lake District Mountain Trial 2021. I decided to contour through a steep bracken jungle and must have dropped my map whilst grasping some stems for balance. I ran back to the start, got a new map and set off again but, sadly, didn't have enough time to make it round.

## Favourite races?

I enjoy longer distance races (think Wasdale, Ennerdale, Buttermere or half iron distance triathlons (1.9km swim, 90km cycle, 21km run)). I'm definitely more of an endurance athlete than a sprinter! It may be controversial to say this here, but one of my favourite races this year was Helvylln Triathlon. I was around 6th female after the bike but managed to put in a good performance on the run and took the win.

## Training week?

I like to bookend my workday with exercise. I keep it varied with swimming, cycling, running, climbing, yoga and strength & conditioning sessions.

## Future goals?

Dragon's Back Race 2023?? Although, I'm trying to find a way to do it without departing with too much money ... haha

## Running tips for youngsters?

This is a tough one. I know it's cliché but I think the most important thing is that you enjoy it. I really benefit from putting myself in different situations when running, be that running with different people, on different terrain, in a different country, at a different time of day

(sunset/sunrise), having different experiences keeps me motivated and makes me feel as though I'm progressing.



### When and why did I join Helm?

Mid-May 2021. My first session was two days after we moved here. I ran up to Scout Scar car park from home and was shagged before we started. Wanted to meet some fell running legends. Not been disappointed.

### How many pairs of running shoes do you have?

More than my wife and three kids put together. Still not found the right shoe.

### Greatest achievements so far?

I've done some ultra running stuff but no-one gives a toss about that. Beating our chairman in a KWL race?

### Any embarrassing running moments?

Every run is a race to the toilet. I mostly win but it's embarrassing when you lose. I should really get that looked at.

### Favourite races?

Kentmere Horseshoe. Dunnerdale. Anything where I get a prize for being older than the people in front of me.

### Typical training week?

Trying to do 10 hrs / 10,000ft per week as much as possible. Not that it's helping me run uphill any faster.

### Future Goals and ambitions?

Get better at running uphill. Have been put through the wringer by Keiran and Sam at the two relay events this year. Also, to strike the right balance with my kids so they want to spend time in the fells when they're old enough to make their own choices.

### Running tips for younger runners?

Don't wear a watch. Don't download Strava. Do it to feel and for the joy of it for as long possible.





## HELM PROFILES—NAOMI CARTER

**When and why did you start training with Helm Hill?**

I was 6 when i started running with Helm Hill. My older brother went and it sounded fun.

**What is your greatest running achievement so far?**

Winning my first race and enjoying it and continuing to train for over 8 years with Helm Hill. I'd like to race more but we are not usually free on Sundays.

**Do you do any other sports or physical activities at school, with other clubs or with your family?**

I'm a competitive barebow archer and am Under 16 National Champion. We do a lot of mountain biking as a family and recently biked in Morocco. I also enjoy indoor and outdoor climbing and am learning to lead climb outdoors. I run every morning before school.

**How old are you?**

14

**How long do you think you will continue to train with Helm Hill?**

I'd like to continue to train with Helm Hill in to the adult section.

**What is your favourite training activity?** I really enjoy long-distance runs. I think I'm more suited to these rather than shorter runs.

**Do you have a running ambition or goal for the future, even if it is when you are much older?** I'd like to start combining my running with competing in triathlons or duathlons or mountain biking and running. I think this type of races are quite rare.  
[Editors note - check out cyclocross! Might have to wait a few year to be old enough to enter the Yorkshire Three Peaks Cyclocross though]]



# HELM PROFILES—PHIL RUTTER

## When and why did I join Helm?

I joined Helm in 2019 straight after moving to Kendal. I had always done most of my running & training on my own and I thought it was about time I started getting to know these weird people at fell races. Kendal was the perfect spot to move to and I like the idea of being part of the run club named after the local hill!

## How many pairs of running shoes do you have?

I've actually just had a purge after moving house. I have a race pair that I reserve for the wettest and roughest routes and then usually about 6 others on the go. I get emotionally attached to shoes...

## Greatest achievements so far?

It's hard to say really. There are races I'm proud of winning like the Mountain Trial twice and the OMM this year but then I've also completed a few longer runs that were just incredible experiences. Last year I ran the Rigby Round in the Cairngorms that turned into a huge day out. I didn't run particularly fast but there was an incredible sunrise and cloud inversion. I got lost in the dark for a few hours and was totally spent at the end. I'm still not sure if I enjoyed it.

## Any embarrassing running moments?

The first time I did the OMM I left most of my food at home (apart from dinner for the evening) and only noticed at registration. I felt like a total potato but luckily I had a loaf of white bread and 4 tins of tuna in the car. I survived on that and a bit of my partner's food for the run. He wasn't happy.

## Favourite races?

My favourite races are actually the Kong Mini Mountain Marathon series. They are a series of 4-hour score courses set in the Lakes, Peaks and Snowdonia with the format of - get as many controls as you can in 4 hours. You get to explore somewhere new every time and they are a real test of route finding and navigation. The last one just gone was in Wales. I made loads of nav mistakes and came in 20mins over the allotted time. It doesn't matter though, weaving between deep mineshafts and mini-glaciated lakes was such a good way to spend a Sunday.

## Typical training week?

I usually aim for about 80km of distance & 3000m of climb per week with some form of strength training and yoga mixed in. Apart from that I try and maximise the amount of time I spend outdoors with climbing, cycling and the odd bit of swimming.

## Future Goals and ambitions?

Lots of options out there. I always feel slow at the medium to shorter distance fell races so I'd like to work on that next year. On the other end of the scale I couldn't help be inspired by some of the Bob Graham Round exploits this year. I reckon 12h30 is achievable...

## Running tips for younger runners?

I like using racing and training runs as a way of having an adventure somewhere new. Treating any race as a day out stops anyone from taking it too seriously. My most memorable days come from taking the time to stop, breathe and look at the view. In the end, it's all about getting out in the fresh air and doing something you enjoy!





## HELM PROFILES—GHYLL BAKER

**When and why did you start training with Helm Hill?**

I used to watch my mum, dad and sister run. This inspired me to start trying with Helm Hill. I did some fell races before I joined the club.

**What is your greatest running achievement so far?**

Doing well at Barbon winter League ( I like steep races best) and completing my 50 th Parkrun in Lancaster.

**Do you do any other sports or physical activities at school, with other clubs or with your family?**

I like BMXing. I walk and run with my family. I have done some snowboarding and am a member of Kendal Snowsports Club.

**How old are you?**

10 (nearly 11!)

**How long do you think you will continue to train with Helm Hill?**

A long time. I'd like to continue running as a senior.

**What is your favourite training activity?**

Hill reps.

**Do you have a running ambition or goal for the future, even if it is when you are much older ?**

To do a Mountain Marathon with my dad.



## HELM PROFILES—DOUGLAS HASTON

**When and why did you start training with Helm Hill?**

I started running with Helm Hill a year ago because I did well at running at school.

**What is your greatest running achievement so far?**

I was selected to represent Cumbria in the primary schools national cross country finals.

**Do you do any other sports or physical activities at school, with other clubs or with your family?**

Hockey, sailing, skiing, mountain biking

**How old are you?**

11

**How long do you think you will continue to train with Helm Hill?**

I think I will keep running when I am older.

**What is your favourite training activity?**

Not hill reps! I like getting muddy!

**Do you have a running ambition or goal for the future, even if it is when you are much older ?**

I would like to run for team GB.



## HELM PROFILES—SAM DIXON

### When and why did you join Helm?

In 2018 I think, after finishing university and moving back to Kendal. I did move again to Dark Peak for a couple of years for a job but re-joined Helm in 2021.

### How many pairs of running shoes do you have?

Maybe 8? But I only really use 3 of them.

### Greatest achievements?

It has to be winning the OMM with Phil this year!

### Any embarrassing running moments?

Not too many, thankfully. I once fell into a bog up to my chest near Outer Edge in the Peak District, I got pretty scared so decided to take an easier route home but this meant running past lots of people out for a Sunday stroll around Ladybower reservoir resulting in a lot of funny looks and comments!

### Favourite races?

The Lakeland classics are all great days out. My Mums side of the family are from Borrowdale so that is always a favourite as is Three Shires.

### Typical training week?

Between 5-8 hours running including a long run and usually a session during the summer. I also cycle a bit, probably 3 hours a week on average but a lot more if I've got a running niggle/injury.

### Future goals and ambitions?

Nothing specific, just enjoy being out in the hills. I'd love to win Borrowdale one day, but I'm not sure if I have the talent and/or the will to train properly for it.

### Running tips for younger runners?

Do what you enjoy and don't be afraid to venture into the bigger fells, they are much better than running around the Helm!





## HELM PROFILES—WILL BRAYSHAW

**When and why did you start training with Helm Hill?**

I started running for Helm Hill back in November 2017, when I was just eight years old. I started going out on runs with my mum when I was six, and after finding out how much I enjoyed it, my name was put down on the waiting list.

**What is your greatest running achievement so far?**

My proudest achievement has to be either qualifying to run for the Cumbria Cross Country team or coming third in my first ever fell race at Grasmere Sports.

**Do you do any other sports or physical activities at school, with other clubs or with your family?**

I enjoy playing cricket in the summer at Sedgwick.

**How old are you?**

13.

**How long do you think you will continue to train with Helm Hill?**

I will continue running for Helm Hill for as long as possible, hopefully progressing to the top adult groups.

**What is your favourite training activity?**

I like to race against my friends in little team relays in training sessions.

**Do you have a running ambition or goal for the future, even if it is when you are much older?**

I would love to run for my country at some point in the future, but I would also like to complete a Bob Graham or something similar.



## HELM PROFILES—MAY SONG

### When and why did I join Helm?

2017 (I think), to encourage my daughter and just loved the people I met in the club.

### How many pairs of running shoes do you have?

10 including 2 pairs are on their way out.

### Greatest achievements so far?

Was able to do 50 races in 2017, my first year running and continued another 36 before I was injured.

### Any embarrassing running moments?

Needed a toilet when I run 3 Peaks, luckily no-one saw me \*

### Favourite races?

I like all of them \* if I need to pick one, I would say Kentmere Horseshoe.

### Typical training week?

Get out as much as I can trying to juggle work and children.

### Future Goals and ambitions?

Would love to do more longer and harder races eg, isle of dura. Maybe have a go at BG before 50 \*

### Running tips for younger runners?

Just enjoy and keep smiling. It doesn't matter what position you finish at a race. Your hard work will pay off one day.





## HELM PROFILES—NIAMH MOON

**When and why did you start training with Helm Hill?**

2 and a half years ago, because my Dad is a junior coach and I wanted to do some fell-running!

**What is your greatest running achievement so far?**

Running in the junior FRA races and running for Milnthorpe school in Cross Country.

**Do you do any other sports or physical activities at school, with other clubs or with your family?**

I go running with my family and also go walking in the fells, I am trying to complete the wainwright's

(I have done 160 so far). At school I enjoy gymnastics and I like swimming and mountain biking.

**How old are you?**

10

**How long do you think you will continue to train with Helm Hill?**

For a long time! I want to join the seniors when I am old enough.

**What is your favourite training activity?**

I like doing relays, raid the castle and Cathy's circle of doom!

**Do you have a running ambition or goal for the future, even if it is when you are much older?**

I want to win a race and do the Bob Graham round



# HELM PROFILES—PHIL RILEY

## When and why did I join Helm?

I moved to Kendal from Leigh near Wigan two years ago and joined the club early 2021. Was in Astley & Tyldesley running club prior to the move and wanted to meet new Cumbrian's and embrace this thing called fell running!

## How many pairs of running shoes do you have?

I have about 4 pairs that I use regularly for training and racing but I must have about 8 other pairs lying about in bags in some form of disgusting smelly worn out state!

## Greatest achievements so far?

Ironman UK Bolton - 2016

Lakeland 50 Ultra - 2021

Lakes in a Day 50 Ultra - 2021

Seven Sevens British fell race - 2022

## Any embarrassing running moments?

Only regular face planting due to my clumsy clog feet!

## Favourite races?

All of the above. Amazing days when you are fit enough! I probably enjoyed Three Shires fell race best this year. Great route, atmosphere, race and pub!

## Typical training week?

Sometimes Monday track, Wednesday club session with the Blues or Reds, longer steady fell run Friday or weekend and hopefully a bike ride and some gym work thrown in if i can!

## Future Goals and ambitions?

Bob Graham

Lakeland Classics

100Km Ultra

Maybe other challenges and adventures like LMW (not in one run!), C2C and swimming in every Lake and Tarn, finishing the Wainwrights off and something else random i can think up!

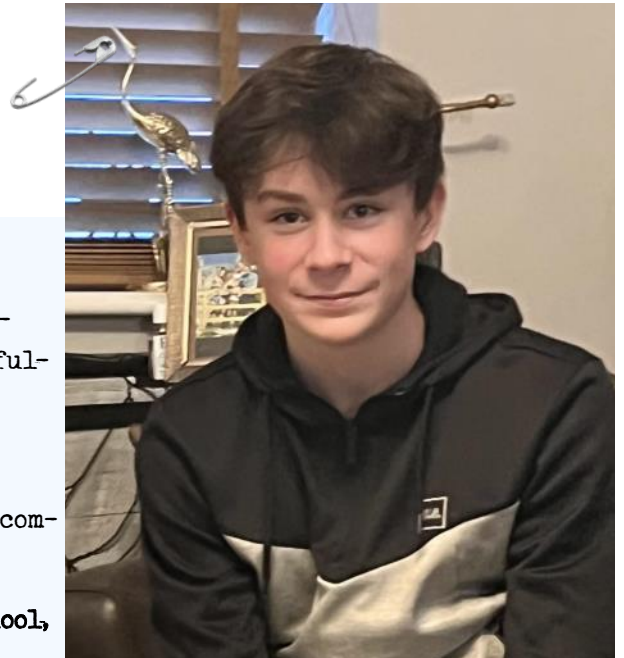
## Running tips for younger runners?

1. Enjoy the outdoors and its beauty
2. Appreciate we can and are able to run
3. Set goals, aspirations and challenges and enjoy the journey





## HELM PROFILES—Freddie Parslow



**When and why did you start training with Helm Hill?**

I started running with helm hill around 2 years ago because I wanted to become a stronger runner and to also fulfill my passion to run many distances.

**What is your greatest running achievement so far?**

My greatest running achievement will have been when I completed a 5K run in 19:32 minutes.

**Do you do any other sports or physical activities at school, with other clubs or with your family?**

I run by myself and on I weekend I take part in the park runs and the Lakeland trails. I also recently gave up football, so I did that while being a part of helm.

**How old are you?**

15

**How long do you think you will continue to train with Helm Hill?**

To be honest hopefully a long time as I really enjoy training and running with helm.

**What is your favourite training activity?** I enjoy hills but not like the really long sloped ones, rather the steeper ones instead.

**Do you have a running ambition or goal for the future, even if it is when you are much older ?**

I have already completed my goal which was to complete a 5K in under 20 minutes so now that I have done that, I wish to consistently do that and to also partake in a marathon as I have always wanted to do that.

## HELM PROFILES—ALICE REA

### When and why did you join Helm Hill?

I joined Helm in November 2021 so just over a year ago. I'd not long moved up here and had fallen out of love with running during covid. Got chatting to someone on a bike ride who encouraged me to join and here I am a year later more in love with running than ever.

### How many pairs of running shoes do you have?

Slightly boringly only 3 pairs of running shoes on the go at the moment but very much in need of a new pair.

### Greatest achievements so far?

Not sure of my greatest achievement but a couple that I'm proud of. I was really happy to come 3rd at the KMF 10k. It was my first race as a member of Helm in 2021 and my time this year was a nice marker of my progress in the last year. And secondly I was really happy to be asked to be part of the women's relay team for the British relays this year.

### Any embarrassing running moments?

Nothing super embarrassing but I did step into what I thought was a shallow bog at the Reston Scar Race and disappeared up to my waist. Emerged covered in mud and didn't have a change of clothes for the journey home.

### Favourite races?

I really enjoy the Hexhamshire Hobble race in the North East. 10 miles very runnable and a good winter race. I also enjoyed the High Cup Nick race this year and Hutton roof crags. Still many more races that I'd like to have a go at though.

### Typical training week?

I'm not great at training especially getting out on my own so Helm on a Monday and Helm on a Wednesday is my usual week. Maybe a race at the weekend.

### Future Goals and ambitions?

I'd like to enter some longer bigger races and am very keen to do a mountain marathon one day, that's always been a dream. And lately maybe been tempted to do a BG attempt, maybe.....

### Running tips for younger runners?

My advice would be to race against yourself and not against everyone else. It doesn't matter how fast you go as long as you work as hard as you can and try and be better than you were last week or last month or last year then you'll be progressing and getting better. And make sure you run because you enjoy it!





# Boxes of Hope

## Boxes of Hope (Cumbria) - David Ratcliffe

Last year at the presentation event at The Castle Green Hotel Helm Hill members donated over £200 to the above charity and it has been suggested that I should give a bit more information about the work of this local charity so here goes.

Basically the charity is a non-denominational one formed to try to help disadvantaged children of all races and beliefs in eastern Europe. It works with a partner charity in Romania called People to People whose aims are very similar to those of Boxes of Hope although their aims are more a desire to raise educational standards amongst disadvantage children.

The main project of Boxes of Hope is the annual shoe box appeal which aims to send out to Romania as many shoe boxes filled with soft toys, toiletries, tooth brushes and paste, sweets, pens, pencils and sharpeners, colouring books and exercise books as we can.

During November all the shoe boxes are collected from schools, churches and other organisations and taken to one of the three warehouses in Cumbria, one in Kendal, one in Barrow and one in Kirkby Stephen. Once at the warehouse every box is checked by a team of volunteers to ensure that no unsuitable item has been included, Whilst they are being checked other volunteers will be assembling cartons to transport the shoe boxes. The checked boxes are put in cartons with ten boxes per carton, sealed up and stacked to await collection. In the warehouses in Barrow and Kendal these volunteers will often work between seven and eight hours a day to make sure that we keep to a strict time table as everything has to be checked packed and the total number of cartons counted ready for collection on the day the wagon has been booked for.

It is usual to send out a team of volunteers every year to Romania who spend six days visiting deprived villages and areas in Romania to hand over some of the boxes to the children.

I have been on three of these trips and can only describe them as a real emotional roller-coaster. The joy and laughter on the children's faces when they open their box is wonderful to see. Quite often the parents will invite you into their homes and that is when the reality hits you, seeing the squalor that these people have to live in through no fault of their own. No running water, often three generations living in one room, no pavements or proper roads, just muddy tracks. The people that we see treat us with such respect and kindness that I have felt really humble on every trip I have done. We have been given lunches and only after we left the village did Nicu, our Romanian guide from People to People, tell us that the villagers would have missed a couple of meals to feed us.

I could go on but would just tell you of my abiding memory of my first trip in 2014. I was stood next to a little girl about two or three years old, she had a vest on and a pair of pink wellies on the wrong feet and this was in December, and she was stood in about an inch and a half of mud and this was the family living room.

If you want to know more just contact me and I am happy to talk to anybody about Boxes of Hope.

<http://www.boxesofhopecumbria.co.uk/>



# Lakeland Ridges—Emily Fitzherbert

## Running the Lakeland Ridges

In July this year, the day after school finished for the summer, I set off to run a 180mile route across all the major Lakeland Ridges. The route was described in a small paperback book I had bought for the sum of £1 at Patterdale Dog Show back in 2016. Designed by Cumbrian farmer Tom Calvert in the mid 1990's, this book sat on my desk for 5 years, as a little niggling idea until at the Kendal Mountain Festival in 2021 I heard Anna McNuff speak. At the end of her talk she introduced the 'Adventure Queen's' community and the 3 grants they award every year to women doing human powered adventures. So, 2 days before the December deadline I stayed up late, put my idea of running this route on paper and pressed 'submit'. In February an email showed up in amongst the endless junk of my inbox. I'd won! 'Oh Dear' I thought. Now I actually have to do it!



I fixed upon the first week of the summer holidays, mostly because this was literally the only clear 10 days I could see before the September term started. Knowing that it was now or never probably forced my hand in running in much worse weather than I ever thought I would, on consecutive days.

AS far as planning went, I tried to keep almost completely to his route. I did change the start location to a pub – mostly because I knew I would want to end in a pub, and condensed his 14 day route down into 8 running days.

When the day came, Kate dropped me at the Queen's Head. Here I found my first planning oversight, looking which way to go out of the pub car park, so I was very grateful for her not waiting to watch me set off – in the wrong direction. After that the first few days went well, I was on familiar fells and Andy was picking me up, taking me home and dropping me back out the next morning but the weather was getting increasingly poor.

By day Day 5 the weather was rain, low cloud and increasing winds. Even so it started well with Rachael and Hector the dog keeping me company up past Cat Bells, but from then on it was a pea-soup Sufferfest. By the



time I finally got through Buttermere to the top of Red Pike I was vocally questioning myself as to why I was spending day after day searching for piles of grey stones, in grey mist, in the rain, on my own and considered whether there would be any humour in starting a social media quiz of 'guess the cairn in the clag'. Conditions hadn't improved by the time I made it to the bottom of Kirk Fell's red gully and having now spent 10 hours in full waterproofs and with the mist down I bottled it. It was the sight of another lone runner, who turned out to be Ali running out from her van to find me, that made the day, especially as she had bought wine.





The next day was a bit better until I got an urgent call from home: my Mum had COVID, (she was looking after my daughter Lua as Andy was at work). She needed collecting. Game over I thought. Time to put an end to this selfish act. However, my sister scooped Lua up, I kept running and as I did it everything started to get better.

The sun came out as I arrived in Wasdale, where Ali met me again for the second half of day 6 around the Mosedale horse-shoe. The rest of the days that followed were the run I had been dreaming of! Just the joy of being out without time constraints, in the sunshine and crystal clear views. Dan surprised me on the day by meeting me at Cockley Beck and embarrassingly watched me make a total mess of getting off Hard Knott (the only truly questionable part of Tom's route). Kate L. and Rob came out to join me from Conistone on my way to Elter-

water. A really long day saved by the best beans on toast I have ever had cooked for me.

Lua, joined me on that final night at Elterwater youth hostel in order to run the last 22km from Elterwater back to Troutbeck the next day. It was shorts and Tea-shirt weather. We had ice cream in Ambleside (winner) and then ahead of schedule we arrived back at the Queen's Head and it was over. Just like that. All 190 miles and 20000+m of ascent of it and at that moment rather surprisingly I just wanted to keep going (after a pint in the pub).

Although this was in theory a solo adventure, it was made so much better by those that came and spent time in the hills with me. I couldn't have done it with the logistical, emotional and practical support at home and out on in the hills, provided by my amazing family and some lovely friends. Thank you all so much! Thank you also to the Adventure Queen's community for your support especially Harriet, Arc'teryx for a smart Jacket and Osprey for an awesome new pack.





## Sleeping in the crapper:

It was another lonely night during a 2020 lockdown that I first came across a post for the inaugural National Three Peaks Ultra. The three highest peaks in Scotland, England and Wales plus everything in between... on foot. I signed up quicker than you can say 'Buachaille Etive Mor'. It was just what was needed to spark a flame while being far enough away to not stress over.

*"I was feeling as ready as you could for a 430-mile race"*

Roll on a move to Kendal, a few fell races, and it's already 2022. Holy sh\*t, I've got less than six months to get ready for this thing. Not going to bore you with the details of training, but it involved recceing the full West Highland Way and the 190-mile Northern Traverse in April. Plus plenty of fell miles with new friends which was really the most enjoyable part.

Come the end of May I was feeling as ready as you could for a 430-mile race. Just one thing left to do – a little adventure with my daughter Silvie. We decided that it would be 'fun' to do the normal Three Peaks challenge the weekend before the race. You know, a final recce masquerading as precious father/daughter time. We set off from the Glen Nevis youth hostel early on the Saturday morning and finished 23 hours later in Llanberis. She was amazing and I'll cherish that experience for as long as I live. But enough of the mushy crap. On with the race.

## Scotland

5am start from the Ben Nevis visitor centre on 3 June. What an interesting bunch of oddballs. Have I really become an ultra running weirdo? Resoundingly yes. 40 people signed up and only 30 started. How many would finish? I was determined to be among them but was secretly happy if I made it as far as Kendal. Didn't want to ask Lena for another lift.

Up and down Ben Nevis and 'steady away' on the West Highland Way. 97 miles of undulation but not massive climbs or descents. Loch Lomond is a bloody long bit of water, uh? 20 miles of roots and rocks. The WHW is a popular route but is normally tackled from south to north. Definitely felt like we were running against an incoming tide of walkers on a warm bank holiday weekend.

After the WHW there was the small matter of Glasgow city centre on Sat night, Sun morn. Turned out to be good fun. Wasn't beaten up and the city was eerily peaceful. As Sunday progressed though, the novelty of running on tarmac most certainly wore thin. A bit like the soles of my shoes. 100 odd miles of B-road from Glasgow to Carlisle and plenty of road kill. Never went hungry in Scotland.

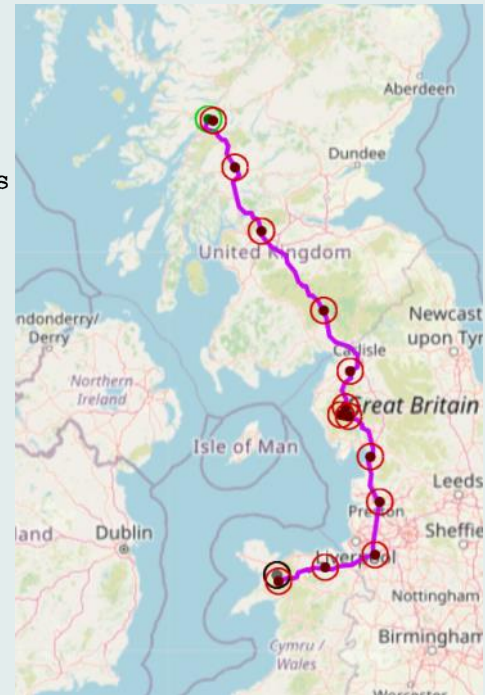
## England

It was good to cross the border. Felt like I was onto the next stage and homeward bound. The road from Gretna to Carlisle was pretty hairy but I'd stopped caring by this stage. Que sera que sera.

Was looking forward to getting back into the fells. The run from Rosley to Keswick flew by. And I was actually running and in good spirits. The B5289 next to Derwent Water without a car in sight was a novel experience and it felt great to be alive.

Had a rest and sausage sandwich at the Flock Inn Tearoom and off up the corridor route to Scafell Pike and down into Langdale. The run through the back roads of Crook, Underbarrow and Brigsteer felt a bit strange. So close to home but so far away from a shower and the loving embrace of my family.

At this point it's worth mentioning the checkpoints. Supposed safe spaces to replenish, relax and rejuvenate. In reality we were lucky to get a lukewarm pot noodle and some cramped floor space. In Bolton-Le-Sands we were in a football changing room. I'd decided to meet Pete German





for a quick pint of Guinness (or two) before arriving at the checkpoint, and the only space left was in the crapper. No idea where my fellow runners took a dump that night because the door was firmly locked. Over 40 years old and sleeping in a toilet just outside Carnforth. Living my best life.

The rest of England was a bit like a night in the toilet. Regretful and best forgotten. Mostly on the A6, sometimes with pavement, sometimes into oncoming traffic. I've never smelt somewhere so foul as Widnes. Crossing the Runcorn bridge and into Frodsham felt like we were into the home straight after 350 miles.

### Wales

In reality we had 80 miles left plus Snowdon. This is where things got interesting. Until now it had been like a stage race where no-one was keeping track of time. So, at 3am on a mild June morning, the remaining runners were set free from Frodsham community centre. The first one up and down Snowdon to be declared the ultimate champion and for everyone else it would have been a complete waste of time.

Five of us shot off into the darkness like it was Grasmere sports. I'd enjoyed running with my fellow 'Three Peakers' and would like to think I've made some lasting friendships. But for those 80 miles they could go f\*\*k themselves. I really wanted the win.

And I had a good day. One of my best days. Managed to get in front around Denbigh and stayed in front until the end. Once the summit of Snowdon was reached, I knew it was in the bag.

Saw the chaps in second and third place on the way down, so it was close. Gave them both a hug. Not sure how they felt about that but I was elated. Into the car park for the most low-key finish ever and a hug from Lena and Silvie. 17 finishers in total, with the two women who started the race among them.

Not many people have done the Three Peaks entirely on foot and for good reason. The tourist paths on the three mountains are over-used and the miles in between aren't particularly inspiring. And it's a chuffing long way. 430 miles. But I'll always say this was a 350-mile warm up to an 80-mile race.

It took me eight and a half days. There's a lot more time that could come off that if you were doing it solo with a dedicated support team. I could have a crack at seven days. Someone with proper talent under five.

I do fancy another go. Maybe when they've put a new toilet floor in at Bolton-Le-Sands.





## GB TEAM SELECTION -WORLD MOUNTAIN & TRAIL CHAMPS—THAILAND

### GB Selection : Sharon Taylor

When I received the phone call to say that I was selected to run for Great Britain in the short trail race (just 24 miles & 8000' ascent!) at the World Mountain & Trail Running Championships in Thailand, it took me a couple of days before saying yes. Not because it was a 24-mile race in 31-degree humidity or having to travel for 36 hours and deal with jet lag but being away for 10 days and leave Rob to solo parenting the 3 mini Jebb's.

We arrived in Thailand a week before the race and once leaving the airport, the humidity was unbelievable and something I had never experienced before. I can only describe it as the feeling of being at altitude where you couldn't take in a full breath and felt deprived of oxygen. It would be no surprise for me to tell you that the next couple of runs felt awful and I was questioning why I had travelled all this way but after a few days it did start to get easier.

My Thailand experience was what I imagine the life of a professional athlete is – sleep, eat, run, repeat – quite boring really and I did miss the chaos of home but did manage to get a daily fix of being mum by video calling home (at 2pm Thailand time which was 7am UK time) to check everyone was organised and ready for school (and work!).

Lots of the conversations revolved around running and although I have run for over 30 years, I am still learning and found it fascinating to hear about the lengths that some athletes go to (from blood monitoring glucose levels to sleeping in altitude tents). Rob gave me the best piece of advice before travelling and said do not get carried away by the training that other people are doing leading up to the race – I stuck to my plan and had a nice easy week of running which definitely paid off.



Race day came and after watching the uphill runners struggle in the heat the day before, the plan was not to get carried away on the first climb of just over



5 miles through the jungle. I enjoyed the first climb and felt strong, I had no idea what position I was in and just tried to keep hydrated. The next 6 miles was downhill on a wide track and I did question if I was running too fast averaging 6.30 min/mile, I was passed by 2 and I passed 2 women so was still in my unknown position going into the second climb. I hadn't looked at this climb but knew it was around 4 miles/3000' and re-joined the last mile of our first climb. I was climbing well and soon passed the 2 women that flew past me descending thinking I paced it right! I continued to pass more of the women and eventually came to a French team spectator and asked him what position I was which to my surprise he replied with 10th - I could see a team USA vest ahead and she was now my target.

When we re-joined the last mile of our first climb I was surprised that I was almost at the top and wished it kept going for longer. This soon changed once I started descending the last 5 miles of the race as the leg cramps started and jungle toilet stops were needed (sorry - too much information but the gels did not agree with my guts). There was a sting in the tail at 4 miles to go with a 1 mile climb and this was where I managed to pull away from the American to secure my 9th position. Together, with Elsey Davis finishing 8th and Nichola Jackson 18th, we secured a World team bronze medal.



# GB TEAM SELECTION -WORLD MOUNTAIN & TRAIL CHAMPS—THAILAND

GB Selection: Chris Richards— An insight into international racing

2021 was a pretty enjoyable year for me, and it ended on a quite a big high with a 65:32 half marathon, a 29:45 10k, which followed the British Fell Running title and a 5th place at the Nations Cup for England in Chiavenna Italy. For the most part that stroke of good form carried on into the beginning of 2022. I seemed to be building further fitness and I had potentially the best race of my life at the Cumbria Cross Country Champs in January winning by 80 seconds.



But the run of ridiculously good form came to an end after my Achilles began making a crunching sound and I was diagnosed with a mid-portion Achilles tendinopathy which was very sore and meant I was on and off running for the majority of January and February which meant I absolutely smashed the bike and the turbo and paid a visit to the highest road in England up Great Dunn Fell for some hill reps on the bike. This proved to be very good training as in March, once the Achilles had settled down and I'd done enough strength exercises prescribed to me by Christie the physio at Body Rehab in Staveley I ran a 14:26 5k in London, won a Vertical Kilometre race in Gran Canaria and further lowered my 5k personal best to 14:22 at the notorious Podium 5k in Barrowford and ran one of the fastest times at the Northern Road Relays in Liverpool.

I was ill for a lot of April and didn't help myself by doing some ridiculously big training sessions. I went after the strava segment on Helvellyn that goes from the car park at Thirlmere to the summit but went slightly off the strava route in the clag. Then two days later I went after the uphill segments on both sides of Grisedale Pike, the first from Braithwaite and second being the uphill segment of the Grisedale Grind race. Chris Arthur had both segments from when he was at the peak of his powers and I managed to get both with time to spare, and to this day I deem that to be the best/fastest/most impressive piece of uphill running I have ever done. The Inter-counties Fell Running Champs were not long after and I recovered from the bout of heavy illness just in time and managed to get away from Max Nicholls towards the top of Moel Eilio and stay ahead for win and take the inter-counties fell running title. I spent the rest of the year trying to return to that level of fitness but never quite getting there due to various bouts of illness and injury. At the GB trials for the European Champs at Ben Lomond, I scrapped into the uphill team in 3rd place. Two days later at Alva at the trial race for the up and down team, none of the guys who beat me were racing and it turned into a straight shootout between me and Andy Douglas for the win and the automatic selection place on the GB team. I sat in, managing to hold onto Andy for the first 10 miles and 3,300 feet of climbing before digging deep passing him on the final big climb up to the highest point and holding him off on the downhill to win the Senior Home Countries International Race by just 7 seconds, leading England to victory over Scotland and Wales.

The European Champs in La Palma went okay overall. I didn't have the top end racing fitness I had at the beginning or middle part of the year and I set off incredibly naively / ambitiously in 3rd place for the first 20 minutes or so before slowly fading to 17th place over the next 27 minutes. The up and down race was



two days later, I set off much more sensibly and worked my way through the field to finish 7th which was a great result considering the current level of fitness.

The end of July and the beginning of August brought on the plans I'd been making all year to spend a month abroad in Italy and Switzerland bouncing from race accommodation to race accommodation and staying with friends I'd met through racing. The first race was the Giir Di Mont uphill in Premana, a WMRA race and Italian National Champs race. The field was stacked, it was like the European Champs race but with athletes from East Africa which made it more like a world champs standard of competition. I wanted to ease into the month of travelling and back-to-back elite mountain races and so let the Africans and top Europeans go off at the start and worked my way through the field passing some Kenyans and battling with some of the big names in world of Italian mountain running and was content to start the trip off with an 11th place. The next day I supported Harry Bolton in the 32km race which is the main event of the weekend. The town and community in Premana really comes alive on race weekend and it's a place I'm keen to go back to. The next weekend brought Malonno the home of the Piz Tri Vertical Kilometre and the Fletta Trail Race. Me and Harry managed to successfully hitchhike across northern Italy to arrive at the accommodation made up of large bunkrooms situated next to a church where the Nuns usually live. The atmosphere and ambience at these Italian mountain races has to be experienced to be believed. The Italians go absolutely nuts for it. A large contingent of British athletes had travelled over and we were introduced onto a large stage in the middle of the piazza with pyrotechnics and there was a large media contingent keen to capture and broadcast the weekend to an avid Italian fan base. Many of the athletes who raced the previous weekend in Premana were racing in the VK race on the Saturday. I raced much more aggressively for 5th place in 34:49. A VK time of which I'm very proud and keen to better! The next day was the half marathon with 1100 meters of elevation made up of two main climbs and a very undulating hilly downhill. Again, I chose to go off hard but let the Kenyans and anyone who was ambitious enough to go with them, go off at suicide pace. It wasn't too long before I found myself running side by side with Kenyan athletes. On the steep rocky sections both uphill and downhill I found that I could stay with them and even go past them and I spent a little bit of time in 2nd place. On the more runnable sections though, it was no contest and they were away and gone but I managed to hold onto 3rd place... just! I'd had a 2-3 minute gap back to fourth place on the way down from the highest point but suffered big time in the last 5k in the heat and bonked with the effort I'd put in on the uphill. At the finish line I was just 7 seconds ahead of fourth place! Worth it though! I was able to cover the cost of the month-long trip with the prize money from that weekend as they had bonuses for going under 35 minutes in the VK and under 90 minutes in the half marathon and another prize for the fastest combined times from both days in which I was second.

The next week I stayed in Vecorin Switzerland with Maximilien Drion a friend I'd met racing as a junior at champs races. I was in a rough way after doing the double at Malonno and took a good week to recover. But I still managed to get up high and run a good portion of the Sierre Zinal course and spectate the race itself watching Kilian Jornet, Robbie Simpson, Remi Bonnet and the top African runners go head-to-head in what is dubbed to be the New York City Marathon of mountain running and an unofficial world champs. Massively inspired to get to a place in my training where I could be competitive in this race but that will take a lot of doing!

From Switzerland I took the train towards Venice to meet the British team that would be racing the 3 Rifugi relay. Another classic Italian race made up of three legs, an uphill leg, a via ferrata leg and a downhill leg. Our men's team was made up of me on the uphill leg, Dan Haworth on leg 2 and Ted Mason on leg 3. Our women's team was Holly Page on the uphill leg, Antonia Fan on the via ferrata leg and the mighty Hannah Russell on the downhill leg. On the uphill leg I battled with a Timotej Becan, a very strong runner from Slovenia who beat me by 4 seconds in the VK in Malonno. This time, I was able to finish ahead of him by 4 seconds. Dan held onto 2nd on his leg and Ted secured 2nd place with the 2nd fastest downhill of the day. The women's team also

got second with Holly 2nd in the uphill, Antonia and Hannah both running the fastest times of the day on their legs and Hannah running the third fastest time OF ALL TIME on the downhill leg! Putting three brits in the top 3 fastest times on the downhill leg in this Italian relay race with Charlotte Morgan and Hanna Horsburgh recording the top two fastest times.

The last race of the trip took place on the other side of Italy in Susa. Another race in the British vest at the Challenge Stellina, a 14km race with 1600 meters of climbing. The race takes place over the site of a battle from WW2 and commemorates those who fought in the mountains. The nations that were involved in battle in 1944 are invited to send a team of mountain runners to compete. I would say this was my best race of the trip and getting 3rd place to a multiple time world champion in Joe Gray was a fantastic result. We also got 2nd team ahead of the USA in but were beaten once again by the Italians.

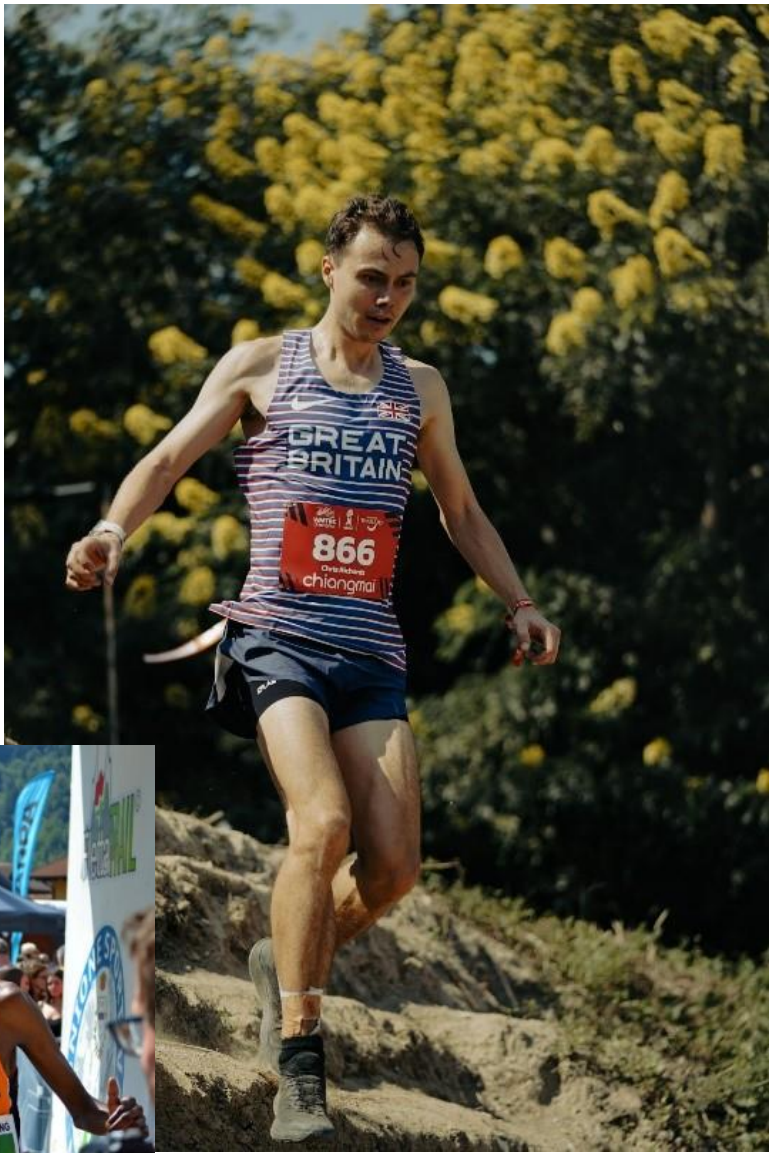
The trials for the world champs in Thailand were not long after and I incorrectly assumed I was back on top form after a string of big hard races that had gone pretty well. But in reality, I was actually quite tired and a lack of actual training sessions which had been swapped for mountain yomps and hard racing had left me aerobically very strong but without much ability to push to the high intensities needed to compete with the likes of Jacob Adkin and an in-form Joe Steward and Dan Haworth. Once again, I scrapped into the uphill team with 4th place in the Skiddaw trial. In the up and down two days later, 3rd place was the best I could do but it was enough to make the teams and qualify for my 5th and 6th races in a British vest this year!

I didn't really know what to expect in Thailand, I knew I was pretty fit after bettering my time at the national road relays by 25 seconds and winning the first leg of the British Fell relays by almost two minutes but I didn't know how those would fair against the worlds best. Two days before the uphill race I managed to go over on my ankle while recceing the course and it ballooned up and was very sore to touch. Far from ideal. For the races the physio strapped it up as tight as he could. In the uphill race I didn't actually feel any pain but I was aware that I couldn't quite push off as well as I would have liked. But I still managed to finish 15th and first brit which was a nice consolation after being 4th in the trial. The first race had really irritated the ankle and I didn't feel I was able to recover as well as I would have liked in-between the two races. In the up and down race I felt pretty tired but managed to stay with Andy Douglas all the way to the top but on the downhill I wasn't so strong and I kept going over on my ankles and lost a few places. I made a few places up on the flat mile towards the finish and came in 24th. A result I would usually be very disappointed with but considering the shape I was in I was quite proud of the effort I'd put in but was worried about the damage done to my ankle which is still something I'm having to manage now at the end of the year.

2022 was for the most part very good to me, but as always there were some absolute rollercoaster moments and silly mistakes which hopefully will help inform how go about managing myself and making decisions next year. I've got some cool goals but the execution of the 2023 race plan is totally dependent on how the body recovers from this pretty mega year of travelling and racing.









# THE OMM

For those not familiar with 2-day mountain marathon type events, the Original Mountain Marathon is the oldest and, due to being held at the end of October to guarantee bad weather, often the most challenging (some may say miserable). Based in a different mountain location every year, each team of 2 receives a map for their choice of course only on the startline. Each team then navigates round a course of up to 40km finding checkpoints (ideally) before finishing at the halfway overnight camp. Courses can be of the 'linear' variety (you must visit a defined set of checkpoints in a certain order) or 'score' (visit as many checkpoints as you like in a fixed amount of time - each checkpoint gains a certain amount of points but points deducted for finishing over the time limit. Teams need to be self reliant & carry everything needed for the 2 days including for the overnight camp. Day 2 adds a bit of excitement and stress as has a 'chasing start' i.e. the fastest Day 1 team goes off first with teams following based on relative deficit of Day 1 time. Day 2 brings new checkpoints to visit, traditionally has less distance but trickier navigation for the 'linear' course before finishing back at the event centre.

This year it was based in Great Langdale so at least fairly familiar ground! Will local knowledge help? Will teams entering the 'Blisco Triangle' ever find their way out? Will they find unretrieved, hidden stashes of mars bars and Cola on the Lakeland Classics race lines?

To cut a long story short, there were some superb performances with **3 winning teams from Helm Hill!** On the most arduous linear course, the Elite class, not only did Phil & Sam WIN (improving from 3rd overnight), but not to be outdone Victoria & Janie were the female pair **WINNERS** coming 6th overall. In many years there are no womens pairs in the Elite class! In the equally arduous Long Score Megan Fitzpatrick & Bodil Oudshoorn were the 1st female pair! Impressive stuff!

Victoria Thompson & Janie Oates **1st female pair Elite**

Phil Rutter & Sam Dixon - **1st Mens pair Elite**

Megan Fitzpatrick & Bodil Oudshoorn **1st female pair Long Score**

Chloe Lumsden & Ross Spalding 2nd mixed and 6th overall A class

Andy Thomson & Aled Edwards 41st B class

Paul Aitken & Charlotte Murray 45th Short Score

See all the courses here  
<https://theomm.com/live-tracking>

## Victoria (& Janie) 1st female pair Elite course

This is how I remember it- basically a summary of the thoughts that were going through my head during the OMM.

**Saturday - Day 1** - see the Route tracker:

Early rise. Nervous during the car journey. Can we really do the elite?! Okay, here we go!

Get map. Langdale Horseshoe-esque start. Checkpoint 1.

Contour, drop, **STEEP** climb up Cat Gills. Checkpoint 2.

Over Ullscarf. Remember to eat. Checkpoint 3.

Contour. Is that a sheep or a checkpoint control? Definitely a sheep. Contour even more. Checkpoint 4.

Steep downhill, rocky and slow. River crossing in Langstrath. Follow the Woof Gill up. Checkpoint 5.

Guess what? More contouring! Steep climb up the east side of Seathwaite Fell. Where did all this clag come





from? Okay, stick to the bearing ... oh no, where's checkpoint 6? Cold, hungry, lost? Relocate. Found it!

Steep down. Climb up to the col between Base Brown and Green Gable. Nice running down to checkpoint 7.

Yum, cold pizza. Trudge up to Checkpoint 8.

Let's try contour around Green Gable? Yes, what a great idea ... ! oh no, where are we? Let's get back to the path, it must be somewhere around here ... yay we've found the path! Down the path. Over to Eskhause, Wasdale Horseshoe style. Dropping down the River Esk. Wet. Checkpoint 9.

Skirt around Great Moss (out of bounds). Keep taking on sugar. Checkpoint 10.

2 more checkpoints to go before camp. Plenty of time to make the cut off! Nice downhill to Checkpoint 11.

Steep up. Contour. Checkpoint 12.

Down to the road. Run in to camp at Cockley Beck. Friends. Congratulations. Oh no, rain is coming - quick get the tent up!

Refuel with warm food. Bubble wrap groundsheet. Uncomfortable sleep!

## Sunday - Day 2

<https://theomm.com/live-tracking-2/>

5.45am alarm. Bagpipes at 6am. Pack up, eat breakfast, 7am set off.

Reverse yesterday's route. Checkpoint 1.

Drop to road (too soon). Climb, bog, crag. Checkpoint 2.

Overshot the path. Slow progress down over coppiced trees. Finally a path (but not for long). Steep climb. Checkpoint 3.

Time for cold pizza with a side of clag. No visibility. Just stick to the bearing! Nailed it. Checkpoint 4.

Re-arrange weight between bags. Look over Great How Crag. That looks too steep. Learn from yesterday - stick to the path. Down to Levers water and a bit of a view. Checkpoint 5.

Realise there's a 2.30pm cut off at checkpoint 8. We better go! Over the col. Checkpoint 6.

Steep up, steep down. If only we knew the Duddon route. Contour around Cold Pike. Getting colder by the second. Checkpoint 7.

Like Langdale Horseshoe in reverse but let's stick to the path. Over the Crinkles. Cold. Cold. Cold. Are these hailstones? Fingers not working, need food and more layers. Let's stop and get sorted. Contour round Bowfell. We've made the cut off! Checkpoint 8.

Scenic route round Angle Tarn. Drop down to Rossett Gill. Contour. Slight climb. Checkpoint 9.

The final contour of the event? Checkpoint 10.

Down to flat ground. It's raining again. Let's run it in! Checkpoint 11.

The end is in sight! Finished.

Sit down. Dry layers on. Hot tea. Good company.



## Phil Rutter ( & Sam Dixon) 1st overall, Elite Class,

I consider the Langdales the classic training ground for mountain navigation: boulder fields, slimy rock and even the odd bit of runnable terrain around. I've got lost in Langdale more times than I can count but I'm starting to reach the point where I'm getting to know the place. There's lots of long and technical fell racing to be done in those hills and some of the lines are slowly becoming familiar, but it becomes a completely different game when navigating between checkpoints (CPs) with a map and compass. Another round of the Original Mountain Marathon (OMM) based in the valley definitely got me nervous.

This year was a third 'first' attempt for Sam Dixon and me to get around the Elite OMM course. 2020 was a write off for many reasons; in 2021 the organisers struggled to put their own tent up and had to cancel but this year, it was finally time for us to get out and get lost!

Generally, Sam was much more meticulous with preparation compared to me. Previously, I haven't paid much attention to getting the lightest gear, the most efficient stove system, etc. However, this time, we were prepping for the OMM Elite. There was a spreadsheet, everything was weighed and my favourite 880g sleeping bag was looking hefty next to Sam's lightweight setup. It wasn't worth chopping my toothbrush in half though, that was just for show.

Startline check: compass, laces, dibber, cup. Good to go. Everything seemed to be going well with the exception of a slight distraction at CP3. I was almost put out by how visible the CP was from so far away. Cruising down the hillside, we were barely paying attention to the map only to see the shape of an orange painted sheep materialise instead of a control... but 50m back-up the hillside and we were on track again. Things got a little more competitive heading to CP5. I snuck in a few backward glances on the steep climb up to Glaramara and I could see Ali Masson & Dan Ashwood (Carnethy) and Phil Vokes & Ali Thornton catching up. Topping out on the hillside was like hitting a wall of wind and rain. Thoughts of other pairs vanished. In the scramble for waterproof jackets, I bashed my knee on a rock and with

the cold, wet and rain, I very briefly decided I hated mountain marathons. I stuck close to Sam while he confidently followed the Borrowdale traverse until we dropped out of the mist and life was good again.

The Carnethy pair caught us up around CP7 at a sheepfold under Base Brown but we got back ahead of them on a hard push over to Esk Hause. I always feel on the verge of a bonk running up the track from Styhead tarn (particularly during the Wasdale Horseshoe) and this time wasn't any different. Sam remained strong and the Dark Peak pair (Tom Saville & Oli Johnson) were in sight so I had a snack and pushed on hard. Out of the mist on the tops and into the golden views of upper Eskdale, we managed to get past Dark Peak in a wet and rocky gully before Sam got cramp. I was also starting to flag slightly. My bag was heavier than planned (I brought far too much food) and my legs were feeling the run. Despite

our best efforts Carnethy came storming past us on the final climb up Hard Knott and Dark Peak snuck ahead too. At the end of Day 1, we were in second place by 13mins with Dark Peak just behind. All to play for on day 2!

The overnight camp was perfect. Just what everyone goes to the OMM for: a choice between a bog and rocky hillside. We opted for the rocks and got to work making our bags as light as possible for the next day.

Day 2 was a 07:03 AM chasing start. Sam was up early (I think it might have even been 5AM...) drinking coffee and preparing. I was only just out of bed at 06:15 and spent far too long munching my porridge before I real-





ised I was in a rush. I stood in the toilet queue at 6:55 deciding whether I had time to go to the loo, change out of my fuzzy long johns and put on some socks (or none of the above) – not a position you want to be in at the OMM.

At 07:04, we were off. After a poor route choice to start, an out and back around Harter Fell told us that Dark Peak were very close behind. We pushed on during the rough descent to gain some time in the woods. I haven't really spent that much time in the Duddon Valley and the forests were amazing colours of orange and red. My favourite days are those that leave an imprint of the season and the OMM Day 2 was a good run for autumn.

Carnethy came into view on the misty slog up towards Grey Friar. Given they started 4mins in front of us this was good news– only 9 mins left to catch-up! I'd like to say it was strategic but it was more just luck that we hung back until we were in the mist. We hit CP4 dead on, thanks to some great team work with nav styles (Sam's got a nack for contouring and altitude whereas I'm quite keen on pace counting and using the contour features). Carenthy on the other hand were nowhere to be seen...

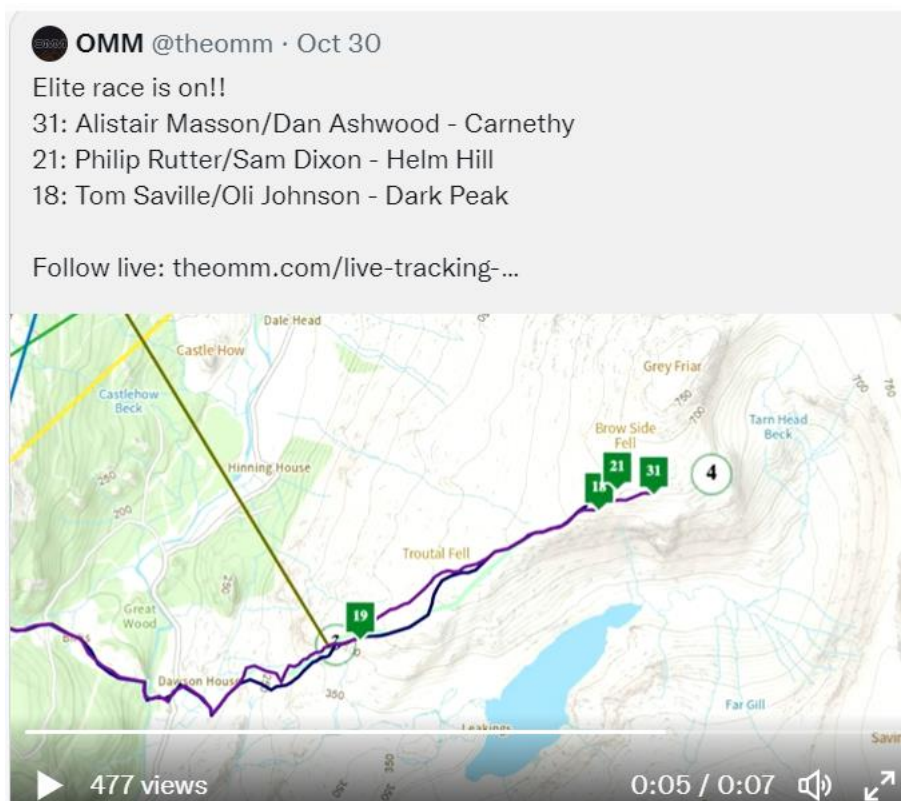
Later in the day, with a clear view, we couldn't see anyone in front or behind. Maybe we were in the lead; and maybe it was quite a big lead.

Little did we know the Dark Peak pair had been right behind us most of the way but they'd had some bad luck – Oli Johnston had taken a fall, dislocated a shoulder and had to walk back to Langdale.

Between Cold Pike and the Gerry Carnley cairn we had another decision to make. Crinkle Craggs and Bowfell were in the way, do we go over or under? Initially, we opted for a bouldery traverse. There was bit of sunshine and a view around Crinkle Craggs but the wind and rain rolled in on Bowfell and we took the tourist path rather than a slimy shortcut. Throughout the weekend, I would shout to Sam "How you getting on Sam?" and come to learn that a "Yep!" meant good, not cold, keep pushing.

The final descent off Bowfell was straight down the east side into what appeared to be an easy control at a small stream bend. We got there, two CPs from the end, and no control. We faffed around for 5 minutes, relocated, took new compass bearings. Panic. The control was absolutely in the wrong place there was no way we could be wrong. In true Sam style, he kept contouring and eventually found the CP at a huge stream bend.

There was one more control and then a mad dash to the finish in the rain. A sprint for the finish line and it sounded like we had done it. There were a few pictures and people were saying well done. It turns out Carnethy had lost 15 minutes in the mist and we had managed to finish 25 minutes ahead of them on Day 2. We'd won the OMM!



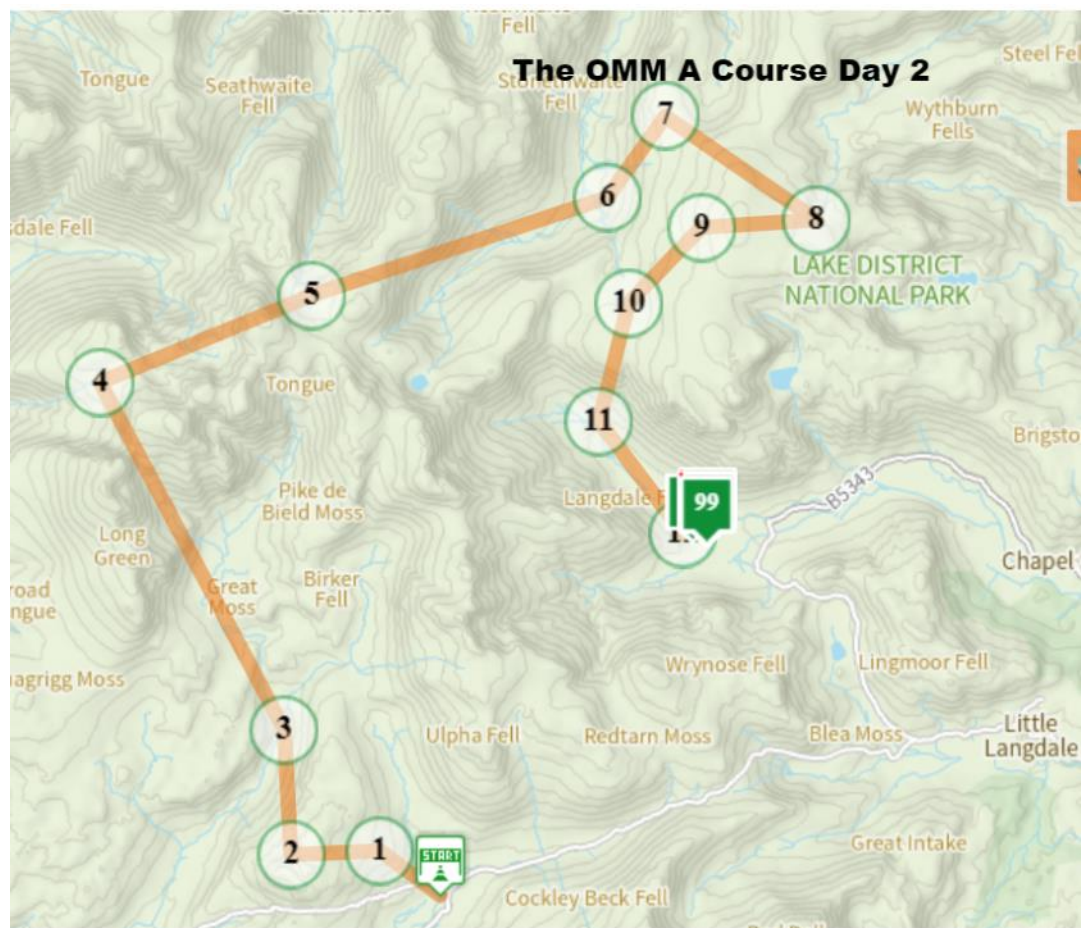
## The OMM 2022 – An A Class Experience

The next 4 checkpoints we nail the navigation and start feeling good although, Ross tells me to stop hesitating (that is me checking the map) and trust him so we can run faster. To checkpoint 6, I trust Ross and we find the checkpoint successfully, but again I've worked so hard to get up the hill that I can't think straight. Ross starts asking me lots of questions about how we should get to CP7, this was the long one from a knoll near Cold Pike to the south-eastern side of Wetherlam. I tell Ross that I trust him to make a good decision on the route choice and follow him blindly through the rain and clag but before I realise where we were heading it was too late. Ross had decided to simply follow the straight-line route marked on the map!! This involved dropping off Cold Pike to the bottom of Wrynose Pass, up Wet Side Edge, down into Greenburn and up and over Wetherlam. Not my line of choice but certainly character building and we did nail the navigation landing right where the checkpoint was placed. The rest of day 1 went well and we made it to camp in good time, sitting in 3rd for the mixed pairs.

Day 2 was less navigationally challenging to begin with but after a big first day the weather and tiredness were taking their toll. About halfway through the day it started raining, and we made the silly mistake of not putting our waterproofs on straight away. The previous day it had rained, and I had not got cold so I just assumed it would pass over and we would be fine, but it's surprising how much colder you can get when you're tired!



The next few hours we suffered on in the cold (now with rain jackets on) but I had to stop again to put another layer on to make up for my initial mistake. When you get cold, you start making silly errors, eating gets harder, your brain stops working. All of this was happening. I asked Ross to check the description of a checkpoint and he shouted 'stream junction'...we arrived at the location, exactly where we thought the checkpoint should be and it wasn't anywhere to be seen. We must have wasted at least 10 minutes fumbling around before we realised that it was on the knoll in between the stream junction!



I really struggled to recover from being cold and Ross was getting very frustrated by my lack communication and ability to make decisions (sorry!) but he did a grand job of navigating us to the end of day 2. Although much slower than planned due to me stumbling around, we managed to stay in 3rd Place.

Doing well at a mountain marathon requires way more skills than simply being fit and fast (although that does help) and I think Ross and I learnt many important lessons over the course of the weekend. We know we can keep going when times get tough but top tips for next time:

- 1- Eat more
- 2- Put layers on before getting cold
- 3- Take more time to check the map/contribute to route choices even if you think you're slowing the team down!



### Caption Competition Time!

We'll add the pic to the fb site and enter there

# Boxes of Hope

## Boxes of Hope (Cumbria) - David Ratcliffe

Last year at the presentation event at The Castle Green Hotel Helm Hill members donated over £200 to the above charity and it has been suggested that I should give a bit more information about the work of this local charity so here goes.

Basically the charity is a non-denominational one formed to try to help disadvantaged children of all races and beliefs in eastern Europe. It works with a partner charity in Romania called People to People whose aims are very similar to those of Boxes of Hope although their aims are more a desire to raise educational standards amongst disadvantage children.

The main project of Boxes of Hope is the annual shoe box appeal which aims to send out to Romania as many shoe boxes filled with soft toys, toiletries, tooth brushes and paste, sweets, pens, pencils and sharpeners, colouring books and exercise books as we can.

During November all the shoe boxes are collected from schools, churches and other organisations and taken to one of the three warehouses in Cumbria, one in Kendal, one in Barrow and one in Kirkby Stephen. Once at the warehouse every box is checked by a team of volunteers to ensure that no unsuitable item has been included, Whilst they are being checked other volunteers will be assembling cartons to transport the shoe boxes. The checked boxes are put in cartons with ten boxes per carton, sealed up and stacked to await collection. In the warehouses in Barrow and Kendal these volunteers will often work between seven and eight hours a day to make sure that we keep to a strict time table as everything has to be checked packed and the total number of cartons counted ready for collection on the day the wagon has been booked for.

It is usual to send out a team of volunteers every year to Romania who spend six days visiting deprived villages and areas in Romania to hand over some of the boxes to the children.

I have been on three of these trips and can only describe them as a real emotional roller-coaster. The joy and laughter on the children's faces when they open their box is wonderful to see. Quite often the parents will invite you into their homes and that is when the reality hits you, seeing the squalor that these people have to live in through no fault of their own. No running water, often three generations living in one room, no pavements or proper roads, just muddy tracks. The people that we see treat us with such respect and kindness that I have felt really humble on every trip I have done. We have been given lunches and only after we left the village did Nicu, our Romanian guide from People to People, tell us that the villagers would have missed a couple of meals to feed us.

I could go on but would just tell you of my abiding memory of my first trip in 2014. I was stood next to a little girl about two or three years old, she had a vest on and a pair of pink wellies on the wrong feet and this was in December, and she was stood in about an inch and a half of mud and this was the family living room.

If you want to know more just contact me and I am happy to talk to anybody about Boxes of Hope.

<http://www.boxesofhopecumbria.co.uk/>





Free  
Family  
Fun

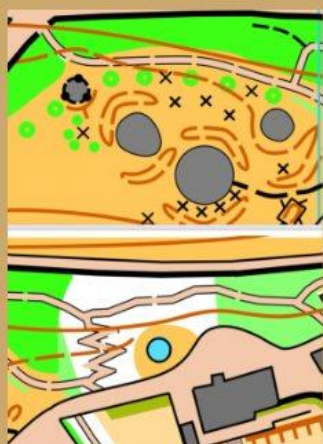
# NAUGHTY REINDEER TRAIL!

December  
17th -  
30th

Santa has been working hard getting ready to deliver presents but now his reindeer have run have run off and hidden in Ford Park.

Can you help to find them?

FOLLOW THE TRAIL USING OUR SPECIAL MAP AND FIND THE NAUGHTY REINDEER HIDING IN AROUND FORD PARK SO THAT SANTA CAN RIDE HOME FOR HIS CHRISTMAS FEAST.



Find all of the naughty reindeer and post your answer sheet at the Park Office to receive a little reward for your help.

Trails and treats  
available 10am - 4pm  
(excluding 25th and 26th)



Print the map and answer sheet  
from our website:

[lakeland-orienteering.org.uk](http://lakeland-orienteering.org.uk)

If you don't have access to a printer, it is possible to follow the trail on the screen of your phone/device.

Just write your answers on any piece of paper. Laminated maps are also available at the Park Office - please return after use.



# Here's to 2023!!

## ~~KENDAL~~ HELM HILL WINTER LEAGUE 2023



### Dates for 2023

8th Jan Scout Scar

15th Jan Giggleswick

22 Jan Whitestones

29 Jan Birkrigg

12 Feb Barbondale

19 Feb Sallows

26 Feb Sedbergh

5 Mar Cunswick

12 Mar Cautley

19 Mar Helm

26 Mar Elterwater

2 Apr Arant Haw - (not a points race)

**NOTE:** The online registration for Scout Scar will close at **midnight on the 4th of Jan 2023** to allow us time to prepare the race numbers. There will be no paper Entry on the Day at any race - you must sign up online the day before the race.

**Sign up [here](#)** - it is free to do so, once registered pay on the day for the races you do.

For more detail see the website page at <https://www.helmhill.co.uk/index.php/races/kendal-winter-league> or scan the QR code.....



**W**hether you're a seasoned fell racer or compete beginner, the Helm Hill Winter League series of races have something for everyone!

The varied series of short races ranging from fast & furious gnarly cross-country to full on steep fells are open to all.

Want to try racing? These friendly races are a great way to start racing with support from friends in the club.

Want to experiment with racing? A great opportunity to try out different approaches to racing ahead of the main season. Is it best to go off fast and give it everything (they're short races after all!) and see how far you can hang on and maybe surprise yourself that you can keep going when you thought you couldn't? Or set off comfortably, then speed up and pass club-mates, who have gone off like lunatics and are now paying the price, with a smug grin and fast finish ...only to then wonder in the finish funnel if you left it too late and could have gone faster?! See what works best for you.



## ENGLISH CHAMPIONSHIP RACES FOR 2023

The English Senior Fell Running Championships are organised by the Fell Runners Association and sponsored by Pete Bland Sports and Inov-8.



February 11th - Long Mynd Valleys - AM 18.5km/11.5miles; 1372m/4501'. Church Stretton, Shropshire.

May 13th - Fairfield Horseshoe - AM 14.5km/9 miles; 914m/1999'. Rydal Hall, Cumbria.

June 3rd - Duddon Valley - AL 29km/18 miles; 1830m/6004'. Newfield Inn, Seathwaite, Cumbria.

July 23rd - Chapelfell Top - AS 7km/4.4 miles; 400m/1312' - St. John's Chapel, Weardale.

20th August - Sedbergh Hills - AL 22.5k/14miles; 1830m/6004' - Sedbergh, Cumbria (British Counter)

23rd September - John Hewitt Shelf Moor - AS 9.1km/5.7miles; 457m/1499' - Old Glossop, Derbyshire.



## BRITISH FELL RUNNING CHAMPIONSHIP RACES, 2023

The British Hill and Fell Running Championships is organised on behalf of British Athletics by the Mountain Running Advisory Group Sub-Committee for domestic Fell Running Championships under UK Athletics Rules. It is sponsored by Pete Bland Sports.

March 25th - Mourne Mourauder AM 16.0km/10 miles; 1200m/3940' - Newcastle, Co. Down. (see below)

July 1st - Meall an t-Suide Graham Brooks Memorial - AS 5.6km/3.5 miles; 460m/1510' - Fort William.

5th August - Maesgwm Detour AM 18.9km/11.7 miles 1060m/3480' - Llanberis, Gwynedd.

20th August - Sedbergh Hills - AL 22.5k/14 miles; 1830m/6004' - Sedbergh, Cumbria.

*Helm Hill Tours* Is proud to present our annual trip to the British Championship Race in Northern Ireland.

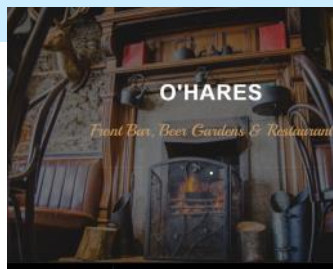
Next years race will take place on Saturday 25th March and is a spectacular 16km route around the beautiful Mourne Mountains (full details on the NIWRA website).

The Helm Hill coach will leave Kendal at around 6.30am on Friday 24th March and travel to Ireland via the Cairnryan/Belfast ferry. Overnight accommodation will be provided at the YMCA in Newcastle....around 10minutes walk from the start. After our traditional night out at O'Hares we'll leave on Sunday morning and return to Kendal at around 6pm in the evening

The cost will be around £150 per person for all coach/ferry travel, accommodation and meals at the YMCA.

There are forty places for Helm Hill Runners and supporters....look out on the Facebook page for more details!!

Tim 07774970663







Your  
guide to  
*fashionable*  
2023



# HELM & Home



*Travel*



# Home & Garden



GET 20% OFF X



# Leisure



