HELM HILL RUNNERS



Autumn 2018

Medal bonanza

Front cover pics- Thanks to: N.Berry (Kelli, Sharon), ?(Rob), D.Woodhead (Hannah) B.Kent (Josh, Bianca) T.Murray (women)

CHAIRMAN'S BIT—TIM MURRAY



This year has been another great one for the Club…..we aim to get a bit better each year and 2018 has delivered in spades.

The Relays are always an exciting end to the season and the Hodgson Brothers event is a real highlight. Every year we sit down to look at the teams on paper and think this year is the one for us. This is the year where everything comes good and we lift the trophies! But, as we all know, fell running isn't like that….a missed checkpoint, a wrong turn in the clag, following the runner who's also lost, the trod to nowhere…….there are lots of different ways for a fast runner to lose time to a slower one and over the years Helm Hill has experienced most of them. So, when I set off to watch the HBMR this year it was with fingers well and truly crossed.

It's a great race to watch….cycle over Kirkstone Pass to Patterdale in the early morning sunshine to catch (almost) the start. I just made it time to see the runners cross the road. Bacon sarnie in the start/finish field and then a short cycle over to Hartsop to see the leaders come through. All three HH teams well placed at the end of the first leg. Back up Kirkstone Pass (a small peloton had now formed) to see the Leg 2 finishers appear though the mist and the Leg 3 runners head up Red Screes….Men's open in a solid 4th, Mixed and the Women's team neck and neck…. Ambleside Women led though, with a comfortable 10 mins lead over HH in 2nd place.

Back down Kirkstone to a breezy Sykeside and we'd consolidated our positions in all three categories…..Men safe in 4th, Mixed in the mix, Women still in 2nd but a chunky 8 minutes or so behind Ambleside. Another nearly year maybe?

A fast sprint to Patterdale on the bike to watch the finishers come in…….a record equalling 4th for the Men….and then an anxious wait to see who would appear first in the Women's race…..unbelievably Sharon and Kelli had clawed back 8 mins and then put in another 3 to take victory and the bobble hats went mad!! The Mixed team then stormed to third to complete a stunning day out on the fells. What a day! The (third) ride up Kirkstone on the way home was a doddle….even though the wind and (now) rain were against me. There's nothing like seeing the #greenmachine in full flow and challenging (and beating) the best fell runners in the country to make the mountains seem flatter and smaller!



2018 has a been a belter (with the British Relays still to come) so 2019 is going to have to be REALLY good to beat this. Hold on to your Bobble Hats, it's going to be an exciting ride!!

HELM HILL AGM

Thanks to the 60 or so members who attended the AGM ....a great turnout!

Your committee for 2018/19 is confirmed as follows...

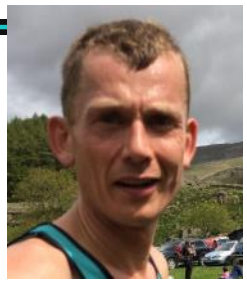
President - Billy P
Chairman - Tim Murray
Deputy Chairman - John Bagge
Treasurer - Jo Grisedale
Junior Coordinator - Lorna Askew
Team Captain - Sharon Taylor
Team Captain - Kieran Hodgson
Welfare Officer - vacancy
Club Secretary - Bill Coupe
Membership Secretary - Marie R
Committee Members - Chris Schofield, Yvonne P, Kath Aubrey, Amanda Burrow

It's a been a brilliant year for the Club and we want to keep getting better.....your committee will be working hard during 2018/19 to make this happen and your support is greatly appreciated. Members feedback and input is really important so keep it coming!



JUNIOR COORDINATORS BIT

OVER PAGE



KIERAN: Well another hard fought season draws to a close and it is a time for reflection. Our ladies continue to go from strength to strength. Both individually and as a team. I must congratulate Kelli on her first English Championship crown. As this goes to press we are celebrating our very first Hodgson Relay victory with the ladies rounding off an impressive year as a team with what can only be described as one of the most exciting and best comebacks ever! This rounded off a clean sweep of titles in both the English and British championships. What would they do in the coming FRA relays???

For the men there has been some great individual success. However it has been an interesting year team wise. We narrowly missed out on lots of team success in the championships but were always competitive along the way. We finished 4th at the Hodgson equalling our best ever performance. We continue to move forward and get a little stronger every year. We have an ever growing and strengthening squad. I believe we are improving our training all the time and not afraid to experiment with it. A big thank you to all the coaches who are taking the time to plan and publish training schedules for us all. We appreciate it! I think the thing we really need to focus on in 2019 is consistency as a group. I am really looking forward to be fully fit again and joining you all on that journey. I will be asking people for commitment to races next year so we can ensure we are strong at each event. Of course any season would not be complete without the FRA relays. As ever we showed our strength and depth being the only club to be represented in all categories. Add to that our results in all those categories and we have certainly had a fantastic curtain closer. Hopefully this inspires everyone to train hard over the winter for next season. I know it has me!

Always proud to be Helm



CAPTAIN'S BITs—KIERAN HODGSON & SHARON TAYLOR

SHARON: My first year as ladies captain and what a year…..**GOLD, GOLD and more GOLD!**

We started 2018 by becoming **Cumbria Cross Country Champions** and this team success has continued throughout the year with the senior ladies and V40 ladies becoming **English & British Team Champions**, **winning** the **Hodgson Brothers Relays** and to top it all off **winning** the **British Fell Relays** for the first time....well done everyone.

I am so impressed with the number of women who have represented Helm in at least 1 British or English Championship race…..28 women in total. These team medals really are because of these 28 women who pushed our competitors further down the field (not literally).

On an individual basis we had medal winners across all categories;

Kelli Roberts – 2018 English Fell Running CHAMPION
Hannah – 1st U23 English, 2nd U23 British
Sharon – 3rd English
Bianca – 2nd V45 English, 3rd V40 English & 3rd V40 British
Marie – 3rd V50 British

Outside of the Championship races we have had great representation at longer distance events with Emma Jennings & Caroline Wade winning the OMM long score, Kate Simpson 2nd in the Lakes Sky Ultra, Cat Slater 3rd in the Scafell Sky Race. Carrie Gibson & Emma obviously thought these races were too short and over the summer Carrie completed the Ultra Trail Monte Rosa (170km/11,000m) in 56hrs and Emma the Traces des Ducs de Savoie (123km/7,000m) in 26hrs.

Jenny Rice continues to dominate the run swim events and this summer recorded the fastest ladies time for the Frog Graham, teamed up with Cat Slater to win the Rockman in Norway, Claire Wilson to win the womens pairs of the Buttermere SwimRun and with Rick Stuart to win the mixed pairs of the Coniston SwimRun.

A highlight of the season was taking part in the Billy Bland Challenge, 3 teams, 30 runners, fantastic team support (thanks to Jo Wilcox & Paul Scully) scorching weather and post run fish, chips & beers in Keswick to rehydrate!

Thank you for a great year and I look forward to another year of running, racing and defending our many titles in 2019!

JUNIOR COORDINATORS BIT





Helm Hill Junior Coaches

Spencer Samson, having led a coaching group of his own for several years, has stepped back a little to cover wife Helen's group on any Wednesday nights she cannot get to Helm training. Meanwhile, Justin Tancrel and Maria Hearn have come forward as coaches and will soon be taking their level 1 coaching qualification. Our Junior coaching team now looks like this;

Level 1 group leaders; Anna Stevens, Sam Gibbs
Level 2 group leaders; Helen Samson, Chris Schofield and Justin Tancrel
Level 3 group leaders; Maria Hearn, myself
Level 4 group leaders; Tim Murray, Kate Simpson
Level 5 group leaders; Jon Deegan

Justin Tancrel



Billy's Junior group is now disbanded because its members transitioned successfully to Senior training groups.



Maria Hearn

Simon Martindale – will be co-ordinating Helm Hill Junior club championship 2019. Thank you Simon!

Many thanks to Helen Samson, who co-ordinated the last three club Junior championships.

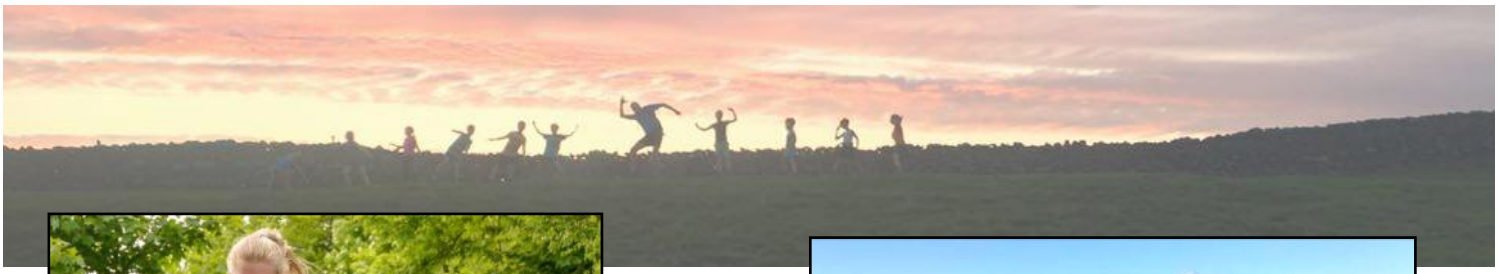
FRA Junior Championship 2018 Sarah Smith silver medallist, U13 Girls



Well done Sarah! And well done to all Juniors who donned their Helm Hill vest and raced in the FRA National championships. As a club, Helm Juniors finished in 7th place overall, out of a total of 35 clubs who had runners in 4 races. 49 clubs participated in total in the series but not all of them had runners in the minimum required number of races to count in the championship ie 4 races.

Helm Hill of course had runners in all 6 races, and runners of all ages. I have been to Junior FRA championship races this year and seen our youngsters, both male and female, in all age categories.

Also we had strong representation in the FRA Junior challenge; U9s and U11s. Anyone who hasn't yet claimed their Junior challenge certificate for 2018 can download it at http://www.felljunior.org.uk/FRAJunior/Archive/2018/certificateinfant.php





Ella Beardwood, West Nab FRA Junior champs race



Lottie Beardwood and Maia Doherty, two-thirds of the bronze medal Cumbria U17 girls Inter-County Fell Running Junior Championship team.



Alfie Addison, U11 at Clougha Pike FRA Junior champs race.

Breaking News … **Helm Hill is talking with the FRA about organising one of the 2019 Junior Championship races. Sharpen your studs Juniors – we need you there!**

Parent Helpers

Junior coaches cannot operate by themselves with a group on a Wednesday night, so huge thanks go to those who turn out to assist. A special mention to Andy Conner who has been part of Junior training for approx. ten years, helping with various groups during that time. He has now hung up his "helper shoes" and is taking a well-deserved "break" – running on a Wednesday night with the Seniors.

Navigation I was very lucky this year to secure the help of Annie Owen, an ace navigator herself, with delivering navigation sessions to Juniors. Every junior group was treated to a Wednesday night orienteering-type activity on the Helm, culminating in a full-on whole-club nav night.





WOMENS BRITISH OPEN TEAM CHAMPIONS 2018!

WOMENS BRITISH v40 TEAM CHAMPIONS 2018!







MENS BRITISH V40 CHAMPION 2018 - ROB JEBB!

3RD, WOMENS V50 - MARIE ROBSON





2018 ENGLISH CHAMPIONSHIP ROUNDUP



WOMENS ENGLISH OPEN TEAM CHAMPIONS 2018!

WOMENS ENGLISH v40 TEAM CHAMPIONS 2018!



WOMENS ENGLISH CHAMPION 2018 - KELLI ROBERTS!

WOMENS ENGLISH U23 CHAMPION 2018 - HANNAH RUSSELL!



MENS ENGLISH V40 CHAMPION 2018 - ROB JEBB!

2ND, MENS v40 ENGLISH TEAM



2ND, WOMENS v45 ENGLISH & 3RD V40—BIANCA DYER



3RD, WOMENS ENGLISH - SHARON TAYLOR



3RD, MENS ENGLISH - ROB JEBB

3RD, U23 MENS ENGLISH - JOSH JARDINE

How I won the FRA English Champs! - Kelli Roberts



Edale Skyline

First of the Championship races, I recced it when there was still snow on it and had no idea how I would get around the whole thing on race day! This would be my 3rd race over 20miles and I had no idea how it was going to pan out. It seemed fast with not many opportunities to walk! I had been at a Hen do up in Edinburgh on the Friday and had to cut the weekend short to get back and race (It is a good job my friends like me as this was to be a recurring theme throughout the year!). Pete drove us down late on Saturday night and we kipped in the car park. Set off and my legs felt horrendous! I knew I had to get out fast but after about a mile and a half I had to have a word with myself - I was never going to get around if I pushed myself now, so I just sat back and chilled a bit. It felt really slow but I knew I needed to warm into the race otherwise it was going to be hell! About mile 8 I started to feel good. From then on I just kept the pace steady and began feeling better and better. By the time we reached Loose hill I was having a fabulous time and began picking of the ones who had burnt out. I put everything in over the last few miles and my legs began to feel like they didn't really belong to me, they just kept going. Loved the final descent and tried to pick off a few more men before the finish line. Finished in 5th but got points for 4th as Tessa is Scottish - winner! I was totally stoked to get around and finish feeling so strong - That was me hooked for the season!

Clough Head

OMG its Hot, OMG its hot, OMG its HOT!!! It's a short fast one so I need to make sure I run it as fast as I can. OMG its Hot! Sprinted up the track, hit the hill and my legs were shot…Oops! Now I just need to grin and bare it. It will be all over soon and if I don't try now I will regret it later. I tried to run a bit along the top but didn't manage more than a few steps. Brilliant, it's the down hill now. Started off well - just going for it on the down. Legs hurting but not long left… I started to feel a rolling sensation in my shoe… its OK it will just be my sock. Feet feel pretty hot… Its OK we are nearly done just keep going… oooooh that really doesn't feel right…. Ignore it the finish is close. Done. Shoes off. Heels sheared off. 2hrs in minor injury ward with the biggest heel flappers ever. Note to self -do not wear new shoes on a hot day when there is a steep fast descent involved. Finished 5th - couldn't quite catch Nichola even though she had done the 3Peaks the week before!!!

Buttermere Horseshoe

Totally psyched for this one! Had a look around it and it is a BEAST of a route! Loads of route choice so had a good chat with the old man and picked up some sneaky lines (I knew he would come in useful for something!) Going in with a totally open mind - just remember not to set off too fast and once you have made a choice stick with it. GAME ON. Set off pretty steady as I knew that the first half had the most climbing in but the second half was much faster (if you still had enough in the legs!) Whiteside was tough going and I found it hard to pace myself going up the first steep climb. Settled into it over the ridge at the back and found myself chatting away to our Carl Hanaghan. Up and over Grasmoor then down the steep thigh burning slopes of Whiteless pike. Passed a lass in the bottom of that valley and powered up through to Newlands Pass. AMAZING… loads of Helm support here (almost forgot to dib I was so excited to see everyone!). After scoping the line out the night before and telling him I didn't think it was great ?? I decided I would definitely take my Dad's line up on the right then through the bracken and up at the mouth of the waterfall. I could see loads of women heading left of the waterfall and suddenly became dubious of my line choice but stuck at it and headed straight to the right under Robinson. I was having a fabulous time, and just stuck in plodding away then suddenly I was descending Dale head. Right that's it then best start digging in! Felt good on the long fast section up the old tramlines. First saw Sharon heading up and over the hill after Haystacks where I went under. Then again going up High Crag (where I made a poor route choice)… Ooooh I might just get her! Its basically all downhill from here (apart from Mealbreak) so just go for it. Passed Sharon at High Stile…. Yes! Just keep going- Massive tussocky rough descent coming up. GO GO GO! Now not sure about this bit… ooh there's Jim Davies! "Jim, Jim do you know where you are going?" "Not really- but I am crossing here and looking for a path" - Brill! - loads of skanky bracken then break through! On that fabulous little trod leading me all the way to Mealbreak climb. This is

it - absolutely go for it. DO NOT SLOW DOWN…. Last push and it is all downhill. Defo going to see if I can find that high trod... Where is it??? Where is it???… Stop -look- found it! Go Go Go! Not many people around me think I'm second Lady….. Oh my… this tarmac hill is the worst! Best race ever… love these long ones! Not too far behind Jasmine (or my Dad!)- Next time!

Sea to Summit

Uphill??! The worst thing ever, I'm never going to manage this! Oh wait look, there is some downhill in it after all. Scoped out the track/road start…it is looooong! Steady up here for sure. Can't really recce it as its late now and the race is tomorrow. Well most people are in the same boat! Will just have to go for it. Absolute panic…. There is a load of sea mist! Will it clear? Women's only race so I might get lost. Mike Ainsworth has had a good look at the route last night so over to him for a quick chat - "make sure you take the trod that trends left after Clagh Ouyr" Fab- OK got it! Steady up the road as planned. Actually these are more like walking climbs than runnable ones - winner. Hmmm… I wonder if that was the trod that Mike was on about? Oh… I'm not sure! Everyone else has gone much more right… hmmm OK stick to the middle. Making loads of ground on the leaders - Get in. Passed Mel on the way up to the tram crossing. Nic and Hannah in sight. Can I get them? - Only one way to find out- Dig deep. Actually gaining on Nicola… Get in. Keep at it… not sure of the way! Is this where we have to climb a fence? Left Nic at the last check point (I actually passed Nichola Jackson!!!!)… This is it, push like hell down this hill and give it everything until the top, absolute jelly legs… oooh Milk that's a good idea… Maybe not (Vomits).

Turner Landscape

Pretty sure I can't do Cautley as I have bridesmaid duties down in Edale on the same day. This will be the last English champs race for me then! Another medium so no idea how it will go (I think medium races are the hardest as I find them difficult to judge in terms of effort!). Recced it in the mist just before heading out to the Pyrenees for a few weeks, had no idea where I was but at least I had been around it. Was very excited about the race as I had realised I was in with a good chance of medalling in the English (my personal goal this year was to get in the top 5) so was pretty stoked. Nicola is here… could well have been a fluke last time - (but at least I know it is possible now!). Set off up the track expecting to feel horrendous but actually felt great. Decided to just go with it and push whilst I could and passed Nic on the track. I don't think I have ever been so focussed in a race. Suddenly I realised that I was on my way up Coniston Old Man…How did that happen? Had I missed a check point? The course seemed to be flying by…. Wait that means it is mostly downhill now, time to dig deep- No sign of Nichola either! Finished 2nd again - YES!

Cautley Horseshoe

Ah bummer… Tough decision. Points say I should race Cautley as I need to improve on my position at Clough head to secure the title! Wedding is at 3pm in Edale. I am a Bridesmaid and Pete is the best man (very good friends!). But I could be English Champion!... never thought this would be possible at the start of the year! Wedding…. English Champion… Wedding… English Champion…. Wedding…. ENGLISH CHAMPION. Luckily my friend is a fabulous human being and basically insisted I ran (I don't think she was keen on being responsible for the outcome of my championship - or have a moody bridesmaid at the wedding! So the decision was made - I would run Cautley after all. Recced it five times in total, in all kinds of weather, absolutely no way I could get lost. Nicola had to win to take the title and I had to come in the top four to stop this happening. Set off and felt strong going up Yarlside but this soon disappeared as I tried to run after the first steep climb- absolute jelly legs! How am I ever going to get around? Everyone is feeling the same! Just keep going. Those steps by the waterfall nearly killed me. Nic was about 30 secs behind but not sure that was going to be enough, seriously failing now. This race is the toughest little thing going! No negative thoughts just pretend you feel fine and are having a glorious time! Last check point coming up, remember this section is not as steep as it looks just go for it! Now where is that little trod… no worries, I've got this… Its roughly this direction. Just keep going Nichola is right behind you!... Oh My #@&#ing life! Where the @#*& am I? This is definitely NOT right. I cannot see the farm or the finishing field in fact I do not recognise that place down there at all!!! Damn!! I only had to try and finish fourth. Think….Think… CONTOUR- Just contour like a mad woman and hopefully I will start to recognise something…. Ah! The finishing field…. Oh thank goodness! I know where I am. Back on track. Has Nichola passed me? I can't see anyone? Just leg it! Through the river, legs utterly gone feels like running through treacle, no one around me though so can chill through the field at least, Oh the field has turned to treacle as well! 2nd - Great work Hannah! (New target for next year! ??)



Pic:Holmfirth Harriers

SHORT SHORTS





Coniston Gullies - Josh J wins in record time….with some bad blisters. Rod Scott's heart rate monitor shows his heart rate higher on way down that on the way up! Not surprising if you look at the pic left<<<<<



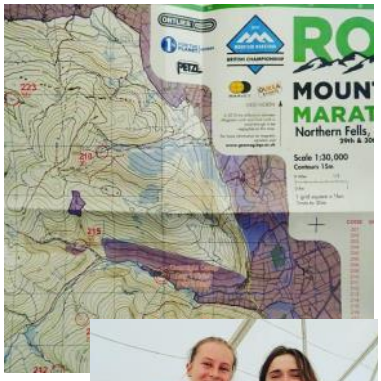
Langdale Horseshoe: Kelli wins a rather wet Langdale Horseshoe! Full praise to Ambleside AC for going ahead with the race



<<< **A great start** to the IOM Sea to Summit race.

>>> **A great finish** at the Buttermere Horseshoe race





Old County Tops - Jebby breaks the 29year old record for this 37 mile lakeland classic! 6hrs21 with Ricky Lightfoot.







Lakes in a Day - Sarah Gerrish has a fab day out coming 8th. 50 miles, 4000m ascent from the Caldbeck to the Cartmel via Helvelyn



ROC MM -Janie Oates and partner are first ladies team while Anthony Emmet / Chloe Lumsdon are the first Mixed on Short Score class. Sam Dixon is 5th on Solo Elite

Scafell Sky Race - Cat Slater races in the UK Sky Race Team at Scafell Sky Race.



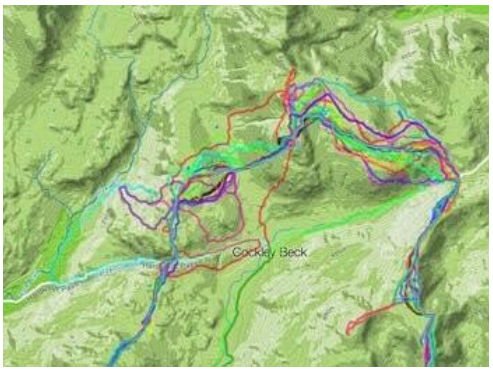
3 Peaks CX - Adam P survives his first 3 peaks Cyclocross race with bike intact!





Duddon fell race

The 21 mile Duddon race turned out to be a bit further for quite a few (*see right*). Not our Kelli, (*seen here in good company with an ori-enteer in really short shorts*) who went on to win.





Helm women at Tal y Migniet British champs race

British champs: Ben Nevis

Women's team winners! Rob Jebb 1st v40 and gets the Cochrane trophy for 21 completions of the race. Russ C (>>> pictured at finish) hot on his heels with 17 races

Josh limps off mountain getting down 4hrs later, goes to A&E then goes clubbing till 02:30am and walks 45 mins back to campsite.



Jenny Rice double win at Arnison Crag - storms to 800m win! And the fell race.



L-R: Claire Wilson, Cat Slater & Jenny Rice completed the Ring of Steall Skyrace. "A variation of the classic 'Ring of Steall' ridge route this 29km / 2,500m mountain race has spectacular views of Ben Nevis from the Mamores and includes short sections of easy scrambling."





BOB GRAHAM ROUND

Kilian Jornet's record breaking Bob Graham Round

The big stir in the UK fellrunning world this year was Kilian Jornet's long anticipated attempt to break Billy Bland's 36yr old Bob Graham Round record of 13hrs51. Helm Hill's runners were drafted in as 'super-pacers': Rob Jebb and Josh Jardine on Leg3, Paul Aitken paced on Leg 4. 12hrs 52 is now the time to beat of you fancy having a go.



UK ATHLETICS FELL& HILL RELAY





This years UK Athletics Hill & Fell Relays, the premier event in the fell runners calendar and the traditional season closer, were hosted by Ambleside and held at Grasmere. We had a team of 6 in every category of the event: Mens open, womens open, mixed (3m&3w), male v40, womens v40, mens v50, womens v50 and open (any combination). A total of 48 Helm runners took in the great atmosphere, meeting old friends from racing over the years and anticipating the challenges of the day ahead—not least because of the thick clag on the fells and the steady drizzle making conditions slippy underfoot. Pre-race nerves!

200+ teams of 6 from around the UK are crammed into the changing marquee in the drizzle eagerly awaiting the day ahead.

Fast forward 4.5hrs and Helm Hill women win the relay to become 2018 UK Athletics British Fell & Hill Relay Womens Team Champions!!!!



In another brilliant day for Helm other results were: Male open 6th, MV40 2nd, FV40 4th (by 2 seconds!!) FV50 2nd (by 8 seconds!) , MV50 2nd, Mixed team 2nd!

Here's how the Women's Open team became 2018 UK Fell Relay Champions!:

Leg 1(solo): Hannah gets the team off to a great start coming in 3rd even after a heavy fall on the greasy, steep descent…..
Leg 2 (pairs): Sharon and Kelli set off in hot pursuit and overhaul the first 3 teams on the long ascent up to Fairfield, successful skip across the greasy scree & boulder fields around Cofa Pike and the long descent back down to put Helm in the driving seat!
Leg 3 (pairs/navigation leg): The pressure builds! Lucy & Jenny set off on the 6.5 mile navigation leg with all the pressure on them to not go astray in the mist! (Little beknown to all at this point but the leading men's team from Keswick go from a comfortable 1st to 15th place on this leg!) Massive relief from everyone when Lucy & Jenny emerge out of the mist still in first place! Game On!
Leg4 (solo/death or glory): Cat Slater sets off in the unenvious position of maintain the lead with some very, very fast runners chasing her down. Cat has a belting run, storming up then flying down the steep, treacherous descent and staying on her feet to enter the finish field maintaining a clear lead for a superb win!



Action shot from Leg 3





In full colour coordination, Helm Women receive the 2018 Champions shield

Here's some memories from the day:

Lucy Spain - The View from the Nav Leg: Waking up to a view of no hills in the lake district was definitely the best thing for our nav leg chances. This weekend marked the anniversary of me getting pneumonia and with a year in the helm hill sick/ recovery bay anything over 40 minutes was going to involve some suffering (thanks to Jenny for setting the pace up the climbs this time round!), so if everyone else had to slow down to find their way through the clag, all the better.
Tactics: maintain position, nothing like being handed over to in 1st to put the pressure on!

Execution: Set off like its a 100m race, the quicker we're out of sight the better!

Learn from Luss, if it's not on the map, ignore it! (unfortunately this time, the path not on the map did in fact go where we wanted it to, around a 6 minute loss from ignoring it - unashamed orienteering splits geeking may have occurred....).

Some highlights from the leg include:

- The conversation between control one and two:

Lucy "Jenny, is your map out?", Jenny "Yes", Lucy "Well put it away, mine is getting soggy, and I might need to use yours".

- Arriving at checkpoint 2 (there's always some relief when you nail the first control to be obscured by thick clag) to see several male teams who will remain anonymous leaving said checkpoint. Under normal circumstances I don't think I've ever seen any of them for more than the first 50m of a race...
- Heading up the never ending climb out of control 3, which if you refer to the prediction competition I predicted as too far away to be on the course, and being able to hear but not see Ambleside ladies! I suspect they knew where that path went as we never did see them... Score one for the clag, nothing like out of sight out of mind.





Lots of speculation before Leg 3 navigation leg.

Adam reveals the excellently devised Leg 3 on finishing

- Reaching the finish line still in first!! My heart sank as we reached the ridge of great tongue on our way to CP 4 and I glanced back to see Anna and Hollie of Black Combe just starting the climb to the ridge. At this point we'd been running for considerably longer than 40 minutes. Cue trying to run like I'm the fittest I've ever been whilst not being able to take deep breathes as to do so hurt.....So pleased to keep to the original tactic!

What an amazing day out, pre-race nerves are not the norm for me but I've also never worried I would struggle with the length of a nav leg before. To be able to contribute to a win at the FRA relays is something I couldn't have dreamed possible a couple of months ago, I don't think it's quite sunk in yet. Thank you to the Helm ladies for trusting I would be the right person for the job and Jenny for keeping one eye on the shot blocks! The aim of the Hodgsons and FRAs has got me through the horrendously steady return to running, once we started running, I loved every minute of it, even the moments when we had no idea if we were still in first or not!

Jo Wilcox - After practically a year injured out of doing what I love I was beside myself with nerves before the British Fell Relays. So super happy to be able to have done the nav leg with Rachel Slattery. I love running with someone who whoops as we slog through tussocks, bracken & rocks. The route and event was great - we managed a competitive time and after 6 hrs our team of 6 was 8 seconds off winning Vet 50s. Thanks to Ambleside AC & all the Helm Hill support.

Cat Slater: What a day that was! I don't think I've been so nervous before a race ever...waiting in that pen for the leg 3 runners!

Helm Ladies..you guys are amazing and I'm super proud to have been able to be apart of today. Helm Hill fell runners...just a really flipping awesome club! Helm Ladies Thank you Ambleside for a great day!

Leg 5' (Food Queue):

Kate Simpson - '- - 'I would say the keys to my success were keeping focused on the main goal (cheese burger) whilst also been able to take it one check point at a time (have I made it round the first bend, now level with the toilets and so in) . Also maintaining a consistent pace and once had picked which route (food van) to go for not revising the route ('hang on that queue is moving faster than this one!') or following others as they headed off for beer / vegan alternatives.'

Lindsay Harrod - 'It certainly required mental resilience: from time to time I looked up to see the line of runners ahead of me and it seemed that I hadn't made any forward progress at all. It was tempting to give up - and several people did - but we Helmites are made of stern stuff and I remembered all those training sessions and other races where the climb seems to go on forever. I knew that if I just stuck with it long enough I'd reach the finish line eventually.

And so it proved, my reward being a cup of tea and some chips (they'd long since sold out of any other veggie fare) - both were most welcome!'

David Griffin - Leg 2 The Queen's Leg and first race as part of a team for Helm Hill.

Well, after missing some valuable training for the relays and other races, due to an injured foot! (Still not 100%) I was a little worried about my fitness for the race but, I was going to keep this quite, as I felt a mixture of pride and excitement about being in the relays. It's nice to think that being a relative newcomer to the club, I was deemed good enough for the V50 team, a privilege never to be taken for granted. I was also looking forward to meeting my partner for the race, Jim Andrews, yes, we'd never met before! Although we had spoken over the phone, as I was walking to the pub in Penistone, how



bizarre, what amazing times we live in! (remember; I'm now a V50 OK!, I can remember, just, red telephone boxes with A&B buttons!!)



Saturday Morning, the sun was shining, the birds were singing…… then I woke up, to, clag and rain. Oh well, at least I was confident of the route, I had reccied it twice, which is 2 times more than I usually would! I now reccie using maps and google earth, much to my shame, but, it has served me well up to now. Finally I meet up with Jim. One thing all fell runners (?) have in common is the ability to get on with fellow fell runners, I think it's fair to say we hit it off more or less straight away, phew!

The start, followed by the wait. How would Billy fair? I guessed at 50-55 mins, as it turned out I wasn't far out. Then it was our turn. With what seemed like a blink of an eye we were out of the field and going up to Stone Arthur. Desperately trying to catch my breath and keep up with Jim, my lack of training was kicking in, then as Kelli and Sharon eased past I felt my breathing and legs start to come together in a more paced rhythm, I was starting to feel optimistic.

We started pulling back` places after CP1, it felt good I managed to take the lead and was feeling good, Jim wasn't. One thing about running as a pair is to remember that both runners are not equal, everyone has their stronger points and everyone has their weaker points and, if one of you is going through an awkward patch, the last thing the weaker runner wants to hear from the stronger runner is "great, well done you're doing great, Fantastic" etc. from 200m further up the hill! So we agreed that staying close to each other and respecting our strengths and weaknesses was the way to go, and it paid off.

Working together we reached CP2, we were passed by 2 Carnethy runners who looked like a V50 team, damn, we kept with them to CP3 and let them stay in front to Cofa Pike, tactics hey? We went down and contoured round under Cofa thinking this would be waaay quicker. We scurried over the boulder field and hit the path in exactly the same position as before the 'shortcut!', just behind Carnethy, so much for that then. We then passed and pulled away from them before CP4, thankfully! CP4 to CP5, on my training runs this is the point I felt weary but not today, I felt great, Jim felt good and we ran hell for leather down the path, only being held up by slower runners, I was feeling good, even my Salomons seemed to be gripping on the wet path! through the clag and rain and in an instant there was CP5, I was still feeling good and Jim was flying.

From CP5 the majority of runners followed the path, we went over a slight mound and down a grassy bank skirted the waterfall and on to the path. Through the clag I could make out runners stumbling down the path, at last a shortcut that worked! On to the path, it felt like running down a flat road going at full speed, but then, suddenly hitting a stream crossing and having to brake hard avoiding rocks and boulders made it a 'little bit more interesting'. Everyone was flat out, each team vying to beat the other in a game of cat and mouse, team racing at its best.

Upon entering the finishing fields I decided that a spectacular slip and somersault was called for, Jim, who was in front, missed it, that was a waste of time then. I dutifully bounced back onto my feet and picked up speed again chasing Jim to the final CP and on to the changeover point where Rick and James were waiting ready to smash (as it turns out) the Nav. leg.

WOW! What can I say about the event, other than this was the best British relays event I have ever taken part in. Fantastic support from Helm Hill juniors and seniors and a superb event laid on by Ambleside, what more could you ask for? 2nd team place in the V50's? Only until next year though, when it will be a win!!! I'm booking my place now, please?

SUPERMARSHALL

Finally, a big thank you to Dave Ratcliffe for helping direct the car parking for TEN HOURS!!! All that time on his feet in the mist and mud and he didn't get to see a single person run. What commitment and support!







HODGSON BROTHERS MOUNTAN RELAY

Helm Hill History was made in Patterdale on a Sunday in October in what was to turn out to be a dramatic day at the iconic Lake District mountain relay!





Helm Hill had Mens, Womens and Mixed teams racing in pairs on the four, tough mountain relay legs.

Leg 2 is the first real test of navigation and stamina and the changeover to Leg 3 at Kirkstone Pass is where everyone gets to see who is in contention in the top places. The mens team passed through in 4th place! The womens team in 2nd!...but 12 minutes adrift of Ambleside. The mixed team in 3rd! The race was on!
Jo and Janie had a great run for the womens team (fastest women on leg 3) and pulled back 3 minutes on Ambleside leaving Kelli & Sharon a fighting chance of pulling back the 9 minutes deficit to catch the leading women's team.

The last leg is about 8 miles and climbs from the valley up over Hart Crag, Fairfield, Cofa Pike and St Sunday with a final fast but steep and treacherous run off down to Patterdale.

The finish field crowd anticipated a nail-biting finish…



Kelli & Sharon had a storming run and came into the finish field over 3 minutes ahead of Ambleside!



HELM HILL
WOMEN WIN THE HODGSON RELAY FOR FIRST TIME!!

A great day for Helm was capped off by the mens team in 4th and the mixed team 3rd in their categories.

BILLY BLAND CHALLENGE

Helm Hill had three teams complete the Billy Bland Challenge on Sunday 10th June: Mens, Womens and Mixed.

The Billy Bland Challenge relay is based on the five legs of the 24 Hour Bob Graham round, starting and finishing at the Moot Hall in Keswick. It covers about 66 miles, 28,000 feet of climbing and 42 peaks. The challenge is open to all teams of 10, split into five pairs.

- Helm's men beat Keswick's time by just three minutes to set a **new record time of 12hrs 21mins**.
- The club fielded the first true mixed team (one man and one woman on every leg) in the challenge's history, clocking 19hrs 33mins—**a new mixed team record!.**
- Helm's women completed the round in 16hrs 20mins and have vowed to return for another crack!





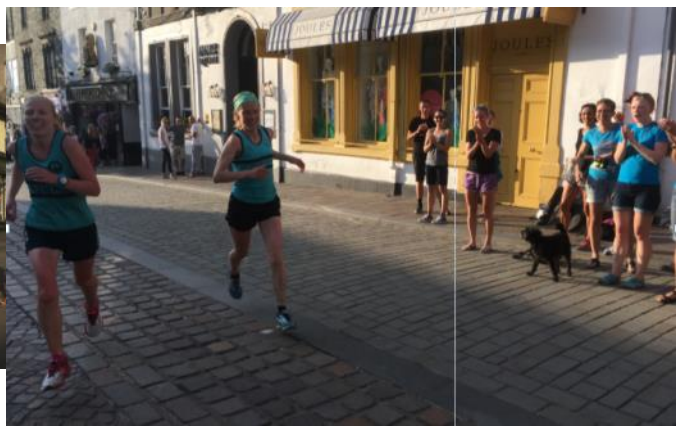














SUPER SUPPORTERS



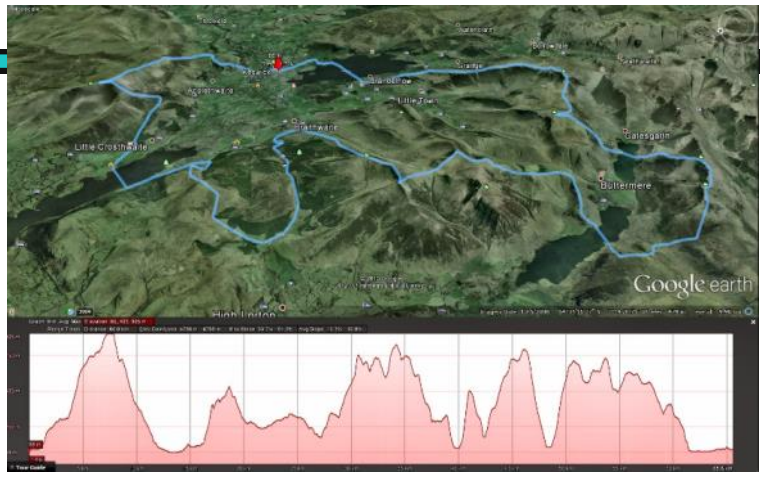
Helm have some great support out on the hills!!

Here's some hardy supporters handing out water, jelly babies and encouragement half way up Ben Nevis and at the British relays





FROG GRAHAM ROUND—Jenny Rice



[*Yep you guessed it, like the Bob Graham Round only a bit shorter and with added swims!*]

If someone could create my perfect endurance challenge, it would involve lots of fell running, and some beautiful open water swimming. So when I first heard about the Frog Graham Round, I knew I wanted to do it! The challenge was created by Peter Hayes (author of the awesome book 'Swimhiking in the Lake District and North East England') and is a 40 mile fell run with 4 swims across Bassenthwaite, Crummock Water, Buttermere and Derwent Water).

I started recce'ing the route in 2016 with the aim to do it that summer, but before I knew it, that summer had passed, and then the next, and I'd not managed to fit it in amongst various swim runs, fell races and family weekends.

I finally found a potential weekend that could work and the amazing run of beautiful summer weather helped me make the decision to go non-wetsuit, aiming to save time, weight and faff! I was a bit scared to let people know what I was planning - I've only ever done races and events where I'm one of many taking part. But the idea of being the only person doing something, with people giving their time and energy to support, was really nerve-wracking. I pretty much spent most of my week at work planning the time schedule, and quietly recruiting support runners. Dan Duxbury was super helpful, having recently set the fastest time (11:52). I looked at all of his summit times on Strava, and added a few minutes to each one, coming up with my own schedule of 13:30.



I started at Moot Hall at 4.30am with Carrie joining me on leg 1. The day started perfectly with the sun coming up as we climbed up Skiddaw. Once on the summit, we dropped down to Carlside, through Dodd Wood and Mirehouse & Gardens to the small church by Bassenthwaite where we met the support duo of Scully and Jo Wilcox. It felt really weird arriving at the lake, getting changed and leaving Carrie, Jo and Scully, as I waded into the lake and swam across to meet Lee at Beck Wythop. I disappeared into the bushes when I got to the other side, to change into a new (Helm Hill!!) swim bikini - it's important to change whatever you swim in after Bassenthwaite to try and prevent the contamination of other lakes with invasive species. Lee had been a star that week, I'd asked him last minute to support me on the first part of leg 2 over Barf, Lords Seat and Ullister Hill, as I'd not managed to fit in a recce. He'd gone out the previous evening to check he knew where Ullister Hill was - as he'd never heard of it - taking a photo of it and sending it to Dan Duxbury to check it was the right hill! (it's a very insignificant summit!). I loved these three hills, climbing up through the woodland to Barf was beautiful, and the next two hills went swiftly by (with Lee reminding me not to go too quickly!). I really appreciated Lee's local knowledge through the tracks of Whinlatter Forest, and through the playground (taking in the slide!) to meet Scully, Jo W and Jo R at Whinlatter Visitor Centre. Jo R joined me on the next part of leg 2, which I felt like I knew like the back of my hand, having run the summits many times on recess and races. We ticked off Grisedale Pike, Hopegill Head, Eel Crag, Wandope, Whiteless Pike and Rannerdale Knotts, chatting most of the way, stopping for lots of photos, and generally having a blast. I got a little excited as we hit 20 miles in less than 6 hours, I optimistically thought I might be able to get round in 12 hours. Little did I know how much slower I'd get!





By this point the weather was baking, and I couldn't wait for the next swim. We got to the edge of Crummock Water, I topped up my sandwiches and swam over some scuba divers heading into the depths! Clive Allen (new Helm Hill recruit & work colleague) was waiting for me on the other side at Low Ling Crag. He'd drawn the short straw - leg 3 was just 5 miles but would take us 3 hours. As I swam to the shore, I could see him staring at Mellbreak with a look of confusion on his head. "You're wondering which way we go up right?" I said, he said he was expecting to see a trod or something to suggest the way up! But no, it was straight up the steep, grassy climb to the left of the rocks (I'd tried the rocky gulley on a recce and decided it definitely wasn't the best option!). 45 minutes of climbing in the baking heat, we made it to the top of Mellbreak. From there, it was the reverse of the Buttermere Horseshoe to Red Pike. I tried to use it as a reverse recce, we may have picked up a trod but I'm not sure I'd find it again! Onwards to High Stile, and then I totally messed up the descent. There is a path somewhere, but we didn't find it, instead we slipped, tripped and fell over lumpy scree and boulders, tussocks and hidden rocks.

On arriving at Buttermere, non swimmer Clive ran straight into the water in his running stuff! I got changed and swam across to meet Jo W and Scully and leg 4 support runners Janie Oates and Ed Newcombe. Next up was the climb I was dreading - straight up the fence line from Hassness to Robinson. I've done it a few times in Breca Buttermere, but it was so much worse after 30 miles over the fells! From Robinson it's pretty much the Anni Waltz route to Catbells, I stumbled and swore my way across the tops (sorry Janie and Ed!), and not quite able to enjoy the descents, I actually preferred the climbs! We dropped off a deserted Catbells (it was the world cup quarter final, hence on a beautiful Saturday afternoon, we saw no one on the summit!) and down to Derwent Water. I wasn't quite on track for a 13:30 round, and was slightly grumpy on meeting everyone at Hawes End. But they told me to get a move on, otherwise I might not break 14 hours. Rick was joining me on this swim, although he insisted he wouldn't go in front as for me to draft him would be cheating. I left my shoes on for this swim as we had to cross three islands, Otterbield, St Herberts and Rampsholme. I felt dreadful at the start of the swim, but was like a new person on the other side. Although I did need help standing up. But once I was upright, Rick led the way and we stormed it back into Keswick in 13 hours 47 minutes. I so enjoyed that post Frog beer!





I absolutely loved the whole experience of doing a challenge like this. I wish I'd been less worried about asking people for support. Everyone I asked just jumped at the chance to help. Extra special thank you to Jo W and Scully for their support all day, driving round runners and supplying me with food. I can't wait to have another go in 2019 - as my time was matched (well, beaten by a few seconds!) a week later, by Kate Charles. Oh, and the weekend was topped off on Sunday by heading back to Keswick to see Kilian Jornet's Bob Graham finish.

Anyone who fancies doing their FGR - just let me know, happy to chat through what I did, and share my schedule if it's useful.

RED4GREG - Autumn update—Simon Blunden

It's hard to believe that I'm now nearly at the 300th consecutive day of running to raise funds for Muscular Dystrophy UK, as the first 50 seemed to crawl past. Having passed the halfway mark, the year (as it always does) has just started to accelerate towards Christmas, and the end of the challenge is approaching. Rather than a huge sense of relief, it is giving me pause for thought and reflect over the incredible experiences I've been lucky to have this year. Most of the events below have been blogged on the R4G Facebook page (www.facebook.com/RED4GREG), but I'll give a brief round up of the year's highlights below:

K2K

Following weeks of wall to wall sunshine and the blistering heatwave that diminished Thirlmere and Haweswater to mere puddles, the weather had to break on the day of my longest (and highest) ever run, a small event where the aim is to get from the Moot Hall in Keswick to the castle in Kendal in as straight a line as possible.

Joined by three mates (including Greg's dad Martin), we set out at dawn after a hearty breakfast and it wasn't long before we hit horizontal hail near the top of Helvellyn. Hail-blind and clag-bound we became disoriented and started off down the wrong path, Grasmere bound rather than heading for Grizedale Tarn, but quickly realised and contoured our way to correction. Skipping down Dollywagon Pass was a personal highlight of the day for me, dropping below clouds so the view opened up either side of the Helvellyn ridge spectacularly.

Climbing Fairfield and then bog-hopping our way up the shoulder of Red Screes before picking our way down the south face, we were pleased to be met by family and friends at the Kirkstone Inn for a much needed cup of tea and some world class flapjackery. The last major climb to Sallows was a challenge, completely off-grid and with 22-odd miles in our legs, so it was a relief to let gravity take some of the strain for the descent into Staveley for a pit-stop pint at the Hawkshead Brewery (cheers!). Heading into Kendal we met our supporters again to walk the last mile with Greg up to the castle to complete a cracking day out in the Lakes in less than perfect conditions!



Ilkley to Leeds - Location, Location, Location

I had the idea (during a run of course) earlier in the year that it might be good to capture some of the year's challenge in a film that we could submit to the Kendal Mountain Festival to screen as part of the Family Adventure sessions. As well as a record, the film could potentially do a lot of promotional heavy lifting and raise awareness of the campaign.

With this in mind, I suggested that we film a run from Ilkley to Leeds, a twenty-something mile route that Martin planned that took in some great locations, such as the Cow & Calf rock formation, Otley Chevin Forest (taking time to muck about on swings) and Golden Acre Park. Under the skilful direction of Stu from Muscular Dystrophy UK, we variously ran, scampered, slipped and sprinted, pursued at times by an alarmingly noisy drone. While mainly about filming to begin with, the weather quickly deteriorated, so by the end, filming was not really possible so we concentrated on getting to the end without freezing or drowning!



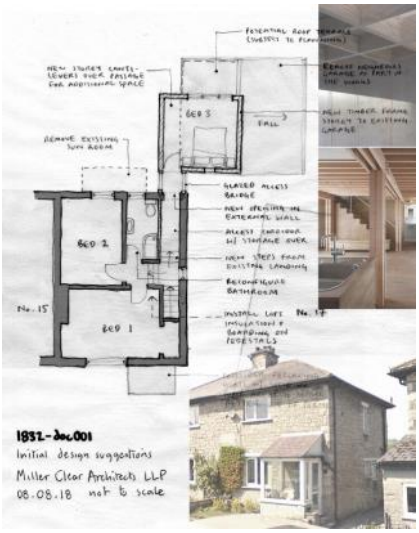
Filming on the Kendal Round

Plans for the film have now evolved to bring the focus more local, with an emphasis on a route that I have come to love called the Kendal Round. Clocking in at around 18 miles, the loop takes in Benson Knott, The Helm (shout out), Natland / Prizet, Scout and Cunswick Scars. Aiming at an elu-

sive weather window, we planned a couple of days filming at various key locations, the highlight being the penultimate session on the Helm. Fantastic support came in the form of David Ratcliffe, veteran runner and Olympic Torchbearer, who offered to be interviewed before Billy's shout-up. His life-long enthusiasm for running and the benefits it brings shone through in his eloquent words, almost as brightly as the setting sun on his Olympic torch!



It then meant a lot when a good group of Helm folk set aside their plans to take part in the orienteering challenge and agreed to join me on a run around the Hill to be filmed for the movie. All went well until the drone ploughed into a tree (that Stu couldn't see from where he was controlling the device) - while still able to fly, the camera was damaged, so not much more of the evening made it onto film. I'm hopeful however that there will be some good footage of the early part of the run, as well as the group listening to Billy before everyone hared off in different directions in search of those precious checkpoints.



Architecture Workshops

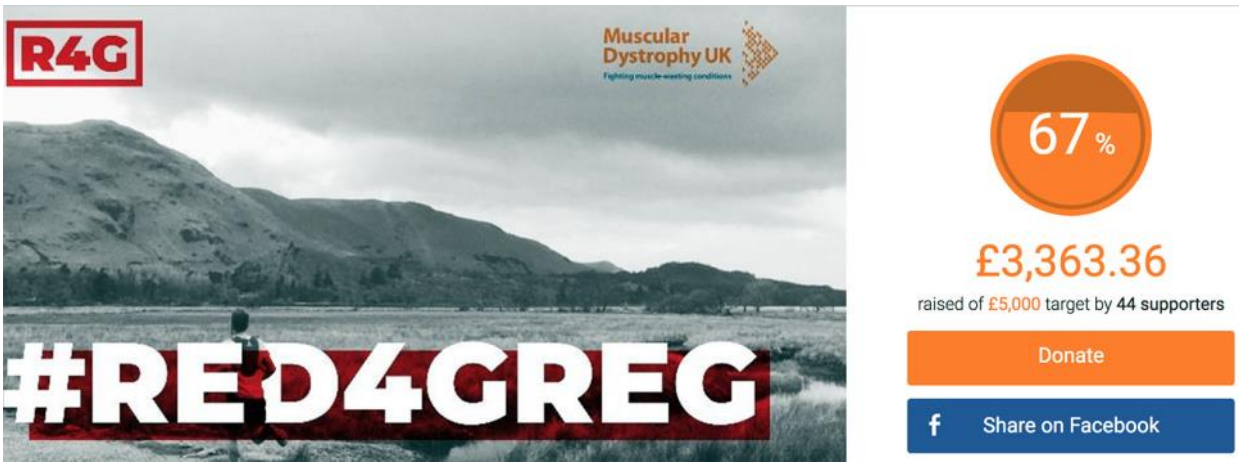
I've been offering "architecture workshops" this year, where I can visit your home and give a "free" hour's design consultation in return for a donation to the campaign. I was delighted when Pete at the club took me up on the offer and we had a really interesting discussion about the best way to solve the tricky problem of adding a bedroom to his home. I have a few more workshops lined up, but still have plenty of availability to take on more if you are interested. There is no time limit on this part of the campaign either, so I would be happy to visit projects in 2019.

300th run...

I'm pleased to be nearing the 300th run milestone which happens to fall on a Saturday this year (27th October). I'm planning to get a few folk together for a run in / around Kendal to celebrate before heading to a suitable venue for a brew, cake and a chat. I'm considering wearing a Spartan costume (in homage to Zak Snyder's ridiculous swords 'n' sandals 2006 film "300")

Fundraising

Finally, after a slow start to the fundraising (as could be expected), things have really kicked off in the last few weeks, and I'm currently two-thirds of the way towards the £5,000 target. (Picture 5) A huge thank you to everyone that has donated so far, and if you are able to donate, anything you can afford would be hugely appreciated at: **https://www.justgiving.com/campaigns/charity/muscular-dystrophy/red4greg** !



JOINING HELM—Jo Rycroft



Jo winning BOFRA Malham

It's safe to say that joining Helm in May definitely set me up for a super fun and memorable summer. After several weeks of pondering the idea, I finally turned up to Wednesday night training on the Helm. Not only was I looking to get back into some 'proper' training, but most of all I was keen to get to know some more like-minded people. Right from that first session, everyone made me feel incredibly welcome (thank you!) and my inability to walk downstairs the following day confirmed that my competitive streak was very much still alive and kicking.

I thought the best tactic to fully immerse myself in the club was to get involved in as much as possible from the off and I was soon signed up to do Leg 3 of the Billy Bland Challenge relay and Buttermere Horseshoe. In hindsight, it might have been a good idea to Google routes before agreeing to things, but that wouldn't have been half as exciting. Particular highlights from the relay include going up Broadstand and getting dragged down a scree by my relay buddy, Ant. Nothing like a bit of adrenaline to liven up a Sunday morning!

'...my green vest seemed to be a ticket to all the jelly babies and Haribo a runner could wish for ....'

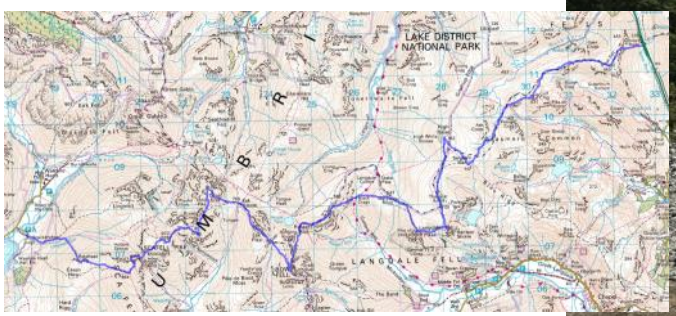
Buttermere Horseshoe was definitely the toughest, but most spectacular day out in the Lakes I've ever had. Again, I was slightly unprepared having never stepped foot on any of the summits, let alone recce'd the route. I did however have Rick's trusty navigation advice and the weather on my side. I couldn't believe the support I received out on the course; my green vest seemed to be a ticket to all the jelly babies and Haribo a runner could wish for and just confirmed I had joined a club full of lovely people.



Next up was Isle of Man. I arrived in Douglas with a rucksack the size of a small child, panniers and a rickety old steel bike - everything you could possibly need for a great weekend. Shout out to another kind Helm'er, David G, who transported my rucksack to camp after seeing me swerving my way down the promenade. I had perhaps over packed slightly, but at least I was warm in my tent, unlike Pete German, who got the 'Rick treatment' and was only allowed onto the ferry with little more than his vest, shorts and toothbrush. Fuelled on Isle of Man's best pizza, the race itself went well and Helm put on a strong show.

From training and mid-week races, to local shows and champs races, it's been a great few months. I am really looking forward to running in the Hodgson and FRA relays and can't wait to see what next season holds. My aims for next year are to get as fast as I can without injuring myself and to keep exploring new routes around the lakes. The talent and team spirit in this club is inspiring and I can't really imagine life without Helm now - GO TEAM GREEN!

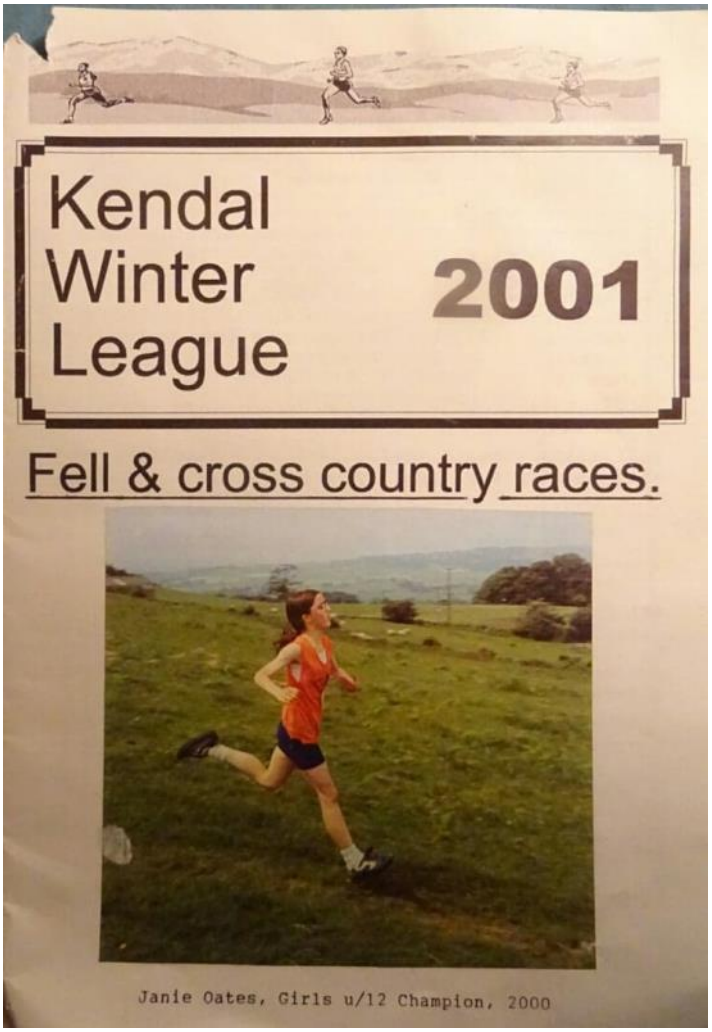

Baptism by fire , Leg3 BBC



STOP PRESS: Jo was in the successful Helm women's team winning the HBMR and a fortnight later 2nd mixed team at the British Hill & Fell Relay.

RETURNING TO HELM—Janie Oates

My first fell race was Elterwater in the Kendal Winter League when I was about 11 years old. Fell running and Helm Hill ended up being a huge part of my childhood and I really enjoyed racing as much as possible. However, at about 17 I got distracted and I lost interest in being competitive. I had other interests to pursue and eventually moved away to university.



Janie Oates, Girls u/12 Champion, 2000

10 years later, after many travels, living abroad, and moving about a lot, I eventually found myself drawn back to the Lake District last Christmas, with a keen desire to run as much as possible in the mountains.

I was persuaded to run my first senior race at Coniston in May. I knew these hills well but I was definitely still nervous, and I had no idea what to expect. The idea of only having to visit checkpoints seemed a bit daunting! All races as a junior had been flagged. I thought everyone looked very serious and tough, way more hard-core then me! Looking at the race map before the start, the idea of running the "racing line" straight down the side of the Old Man of Coniston seemed totally crazy! And I was genuinely worried that I would be last. That of course did not happen and I had the feeling that even if it did no one would really care. The day turned out to be a lot of fun and I really enjoyed the laid back and friendly atmosphere. I started to realise that my early experience was worth a lot and this was something I could definitely do and enjoy!

I started doing more and more races, slowly gaining confidence. I really liked the super chilled and low-key evening races like the Blisco Dash. It was fun to push myself on the hill and enjoy a bit of friendly rivalry, while also feeling part of a bigger community of runners from across the Lake District.


At brutal Borrowdale

For some reason, I had set my sights on Borrowdale for my first long fell race. Again, I was really nervous, thinking that I would not make the cut offs, but in reality I had absolutely nothing to worry about. I had enjoyed many long days out in the hills either alone or with friends and without even realising it, I was more then capable of getting around the course in a reasonable time and enjoying it along the way. The day was a success for me as I felt good, I had fun with friends, and I got to run about in some beautiful mountains with a friendly bunch of fellow runners. For me, returning to racing as a senior has been less about the competition and way more about enjoying myself doing something I love and being part of a great club and community full of like-minded people.

BIG DAY OUT—Sarah Gerrish



Back in June, Sarah Gerrish and two friends realised their plan of a 36 hr "challenge" involving a relay around the Lakes - her two friends on mountain bike & Sarah on foot, running a 36 mile route through the night, with a night swim thrown in.

36miles running 12,000ft of climbing & a 3/4mile swim in a grand total of 12 hours 45 mins.



Leg 1. Threkeld to Bassenthwaite. After getting off a little later than planned we hit twilight on possibly the worst section of the Fell! The cloud then came in and wind picked up for a pretty scary summit of Skiddaw. Finding the trig point helped to enable a retrace of steps to find the right cairn to take our decent down to Ullock Pike. Georgia Stevens you were a total hero. Cool calm and collected while I was stressing and swearing, finding my husband & Joshua Jardine on Ullock was also a lovely mood lifter - especially after our disappointment that two guys coming out of the mist on Skiddaw were in fact BG attemptees and NOT the boys we hoped they were!



Ullock Pike as ever a really fun decent!

Leg 2. Bassenthwaite to Buttermere. Swim across Bassenthwaite. After dreading a choppy windy cold swim (from the weather on skiddaw) it was a relief to find a perfect still and calm lake! The swim was a definite highlight! Time to collect myself! In total darkness with glow sticks to help us see and be seen myself, Lauren (Munro-Bennett) and Fay headed for the fire on the opposite side where Jenny Rice waited. If anyone is ever looking for a swim run partner I'm always keen... But

I promise to practice getting in and out of the lake more efficiently.



Run: after the swim there was then a road/trail run up to Whinlatter forest which I was really glad Jenny took control over nav! Then from there up Grisedale Pike for sunrise. Truly special moments on the fells at those times of day we then did the fun scramble up to Crag Hill and descended Whiteless Pike into Buttermere where Fay and Lauren were waiting... asleep in their car.

Jenny thank you for the most relaxed of the three legs! So relaxed I kept nearly dropping off.

Leg 3. Buttermere to Keswick.



After waking Lauren up she was up and ready to go in time for me finishing my boiled egg & milkshake!!!

I was very sleepy at this point and in quite a bit of pain (knee & ankle). From Buttermere, Robinson was the first summit on the list. Fairly slow steady going with Lauren being her amazing encouraging self & getting not much back from me but once we had hit Robinson I found a real shift in my energy & mood! We then picked up Rich Jo Caterr). I was so excited to see his silhouette waiting just down from Hindscarth. From then on in it was a lot of fun. With Dale Head in the bag it was all downhill from there (kinda!) - High Spy, Maiden Moor & Catbells then back to Keswick.



Amazing time. Full of highs and lows but 100% worth it!!!

A huge thanks to the Helm crew that offered their support, top tips & encouragement. To those who came and recced the route with me (Charlotte Milligan & Jayne Rigby) and to the coaches who helped to prep me for a night on the fells in their training sessions (Shaun Addison, Bill Coupe & Andy Bennet)

HELM PROFILES—PAUL REILLY



Q: 1 When did you join Helm Hill and why did you join? I just wanted to get faster & already had a good crac with lots of the lads.

2. What do you consider to be your greatest running achievements so far? (Big and/or small!) being part of the HH vet 40 team to set the Billy Bland relay record , getting round the Coniston 14 road race in 1:27 , & my bronze & silver v40 HH team medals

3. What have been your favourite races and why? it's got to Ben Nevis because when u turn at the top you know you're about to race down the biggest mountain we have.

4. What is a typical training week for you? about 30 miles & 8,000 feet & has to include a mad dash up Coniston old man one lunch hour & at least one race.

5. What are your future running goals/ambitions? to get PB's at my favourite races, finish higher than 65th in a champs race & get a team v40 gold medal

6. Name a person/people in the club that you admire . Tim - cause so many people benefit from the time he puts into the club. Billy - because he's billy. Shaun - because when I started we were the same speed & I'd always ask him about races. Rick - first person I spoke to at my first training & my relay partner for the hodgson & Billy Bland

7. Any top running tips that you would give to a younger runner in the club? just enjoy it.

8. Any racing advice you would give? recce recce recce as knowing what's coming next in a race makes such a difference

9. How would you describe Helm Hill in a few words? a group of great people who share a love of racing on the fells.

10. Anything else you would like to add? thank you to Ben.P & Buzzer for all the training runs & recces.





HELM PROFILES—MARIE 'MADGE' ROBSON


Pic:Stephen Wilson

When and why did I join Helm? Before moving to Kendal I lived in Keswick and, as my best friend ran for Borrowdale, I decided to join that club but did not race or train with them.

When I moved to Kendal I decided that I really did want to try fell running and join a local club so that I could benefit from some training with like minded people.

Dave Banks (a friend at work and Kendal AC member) took me to my first fell race which was Shipman Knotts and he ran with me at a very slow pace. I loved the race and after that I remember John bought me some kit which included a bumbag and some La Sportiva fell shoes !

It took me a while to pluck up the courage to come down to my first session at Helm one Wednesday evening in 2012 and I have never looked back. The first time I came down I met Jo Wilcox,who had also recently joined, and the rest is history !

Greatest achievements so far? When I joined Helm I was a V40 and somehow I got involved with racing. I think Ali was captain at the time and I remember that there was always a concerted effort by the ladies to make sure that there was a team at the races, particularly the Championship events.

I have been a counter for the V40 team on a number of occasions and this year in particular has been a great year for the Ladies of Helm Hill. I am proud to have contributed towards the Gold medals for the V40 team both in the English and British Championships. I am also chuffed to have won an individual Bronze medal in the British Championships this year.

I also remember entering the Old County Tops Race in 2016 with Carrie. The race is around 37 miles and that was furthest distance that I had ever run by a long way! I found it tough but thanks to Carrie and her obvious experience in longer distance she got me round and I was just so elated to get complete the race and receive my T - shirt at the end !

Last year I was so proud (and surprised!) to win the 'Queen of the Mountains' award for combined times/ placings over the Snowden, Ben Nevis and Scafell races. The trophy was presented by Joss Naylor, an amazing honour for me.

Favourite races? Oooh - Favourite races.... I have many but here is a short and a long:

Carnethy is a short race with a lot packed into it - a challenging course and a great last descent . It is always well attended by Helm and our club is well known there for a strong turnout. There is great food afterwards with tea and biscuits - well worth the distance to travel for a short race.

Borrowdale is another favourite of mine and a classic fell race - lots of different terrain and great run out. I love it when I get to Honister having made the final cut off and then look forward to a lovely cup of tea at the finish ! It is lovely at the end chatting to folk about the race and sharing general fell running craic. Scoffer, the RO, is great too - no airs and graces and he just says it as it is !

Typical training week-? I try to do track on Monday evenings with Shaun and then after this I do a one hour Pilates session with Tracy Dixon. On Wednesday I train with the club and I have just decided to move to Bill's group to improve my pace and stamina. I started to do Pilates about two years ago and I religiously attend a classes on Monday and Thursday evenings. I believe that Pilates has helped my running through core strength and have felt real improvements over the last year . At weekends I normally race but, if I am not racing I try to get a longer run in or go and do a recce for a forthcoming race. In the New Year Billy starts to do what has been described as 'Carnethy' training in the Howgills which I have always found really beneficial as there are very steep ups and downs ! Now that I have little more free time I hope to get a couple more runs and miles in during the week .

Future Goals and ambitions? One day I would like to do my Bob Graham Round and the Joss Naylor Challenge (now that I am over 50 !)

Persons/ People I admire in the club-? There are lots of people in the club doing lots of different things and achieving amazing results. I really admire Carrie as she is always off doing something different on her own and always does well. She is always able to turn a negative in to a positive and nothing is a problem to her. She is great to have around either running with you or just providing support. Her attributes are typical of the 'no messing Scots woman' in her !

Billy is an amazing source of fell running knowledge - like an encyclopaedia ! His enthusiasm is obvious, and boundless! You can ask Billy anything and he is always happy to give you advice and share his experiences: What would we do without him !

Running tips for younger runners? Enjoy it , do your best and remember that it is the taking part that counts and if you win a prize that is always a bonus. You WILL be surprised how just turning up or 'making up the numbers' can result in a little glory!

Racing Advice? If possible recce the route before the race if you have not run it before and try to hydrate and eat well beforehand. Everyone has their own routine before a race but it is important to be organised and make sure you have all your kit with you! I know we all do a lot of 'faffing' before a race and if you ask anyone I am probably there about an hour before anyone else as I hate rushing .

I recall travelling to Wales for a Championship race last year on the bus. We arrived with an hour to spare and we had to walk to register, walk back to the minibus to get changed and then walk to the start. I found this extremely stressful as I felt short of time and unprepared so now you know why I mostly travel on my own !!

Describe Helm Hill in a few words [*editors note, that's not possible*]*?* From the time I joined I have always found it to be a very welcoming and inclusive club. I have made some wonderful friends. This has been important to me as when I came to Kendal to live with John I did not really know anyone. This certainly changed when I joined Helm Hill!

I feel that it is the taking part that counts. If you have a bad day then remember that the race will be there again next year and you will be able to have another go ..... If you want to.

Enjoy your running and give your best. It is all that you can do!



Snowdon Twilight



Buttermere H'shoe—Pic:Russ

KINDER TRIAL—Sam Gibbs

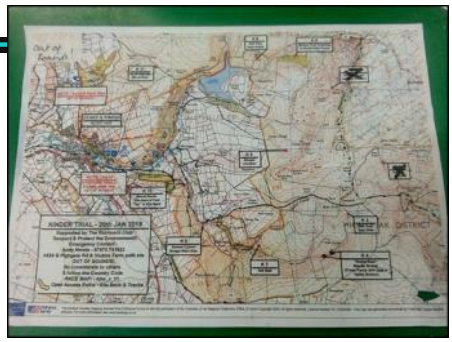
As part of our early Old County Tops training (let's not talk about the actual OCT race!), I suggested to Steve Baker that we go and do the Kinder Trial. The event is held each year in late January in Hayfield, Derbyshire. Although it is somewhat less committing than the Lake District Mountain Trial, due to the time of year it mustn't be underestimated. As I used to live in the area I've competed in 4 or 5 Trials and have experienced wildly different conditions - waist deep snow, waist deep mud, -15°C wind chill (including seeing a standard sized control flag completely encased in a block of ice!), an 'end-of-the-world' thunder and lightning storm (last year), but also mild temperatures and blue skies - I only mentioned the latter to Steve.

The format is essentially a long orienteering event - all controls must be visited in any order, the main decision usually being whether to go clockwise or anti-clockwise around Kinder reservoir. Although the event is held from the same start point each year, local fell running celebrity Andy Howie always ensures that even Trial regulars end up visiting the more obscure parts of the area. The bowl around Kinder reservoir is an interesting mix of terrain - stony bridleways, muddy trods, incised gullies, boulder fields, a patchwork of heather, rocky outcrops, steep woodland and several areas of complex contour detail. Most of it is navigationally straightforward, but when the clag is down many a fell runner has gone wandering, particularly on the desolate, featureless plain that is Kinder Plateau. Add to that a few intimidatingly-named features (e.g. Mount Famine, Kinder Downfall and Swine's Back) and you have all the ingredients for a grand day out.



The event starts and finishes out of the door of Hayfield scout hut. Before you start there is the usual sea of runners faffing with kit and deciding what to wear/carry. Conditions in Hayfield were relatively mild and dry with a light breeze but there was plenty of nervous chatter about the snowy conditions higher up. The race is normally done individually, but I'd asked if we could pair up for a more social experience, and the plan was 'steady away, perfect nav'. We were last to start and seemed to be grouped with people 20 years our junior, a foot taller and 20kg lighter. Our time slot came around and we were off. I reckoned clockwise was easier - a long, steady ascent to a relatively easy first control, as opposed to a balls-out, near-vertical ascent up the boulder and bramble-strewn nightmare that is Elle Bank - it'd be easier to crash down through that in a few hours time.





As we approached the first control, a couple of the tall, skinny types who'd sailed past us earlier took a longer route sticking to the paths, but I'd remembered this area of moor was relatively easy going underfoot and opted for the direct line. There really is nothing like that slightly smug feeling when navigational superiority outsmarts athletic ability! The next few controls took us higher and higher through progressively harder terrain. This year the race avoided the plateau itself, but it didn't matter as the thick clouds were descending to get us. By control 5 it had started snowing heavily and the bonus of a late start paid dividends as we had a variety of tracks to follow. The decent to control 6 was pure joy. Bounding down through knee-deep snow on a bearing and hitting it perfectly.

Steve is definitely a 'purist' and, like me, has an aversion to the whole gel/protein shake school of race nutrition. I'd noticed at the start his pack looked like a shelf in Greggs, and this was confirmed when he revealed he'd brought 10 (TEN!) sausage rolls with him. As we were stuffing our faces with these pastry/reconstituted meat-based products, we discussed how many people we seemed to have overtaken over the last few kilometres…and then it dawned on us that we might actually be doing quite well (something neither of us are very accustomed to). We decided to try and hammer the next few controls and picked off a few more, before the final climb up the back of Elle Bank to a very tricky control hidden behind a boulder (it turned out loads of people messed this up). All that remained was a descent of Elle Bank. Jogging along the top and merely looking down it makes your ankles wince…so we just dived in and hoped. Gravity is your friend here and after a few minutes thrashing about we popped out at the bottom unscathed and started the final ½ mile run back to the



scout hut.

And now the best bit of the Trial…the scout hut is transformed into a pop-up café with trestle tables full of homemade cakes, freshly-baked bread, and an orderly queue for runners to get their well-deserved tea and soup. No protein bars and recovery shakes here - just proper food for a proper fell race.

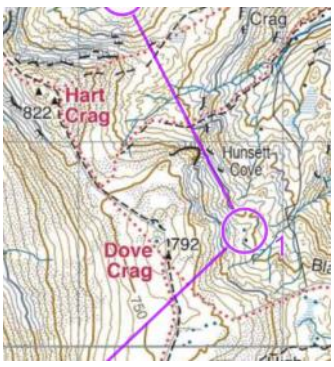
The next Kinder Trial is in late January 2019, is pre-entry only (150 limit), costs a mere £7 and is only 2 hours drive away. Also, it has the added bonus of being on a Saturday which means you can still get the KWL in on the Sunday - though my legs did hurt a little at Giggleswick this year!

LAKE DISTRICT MOUNTAIN TRIAL —Rick Stuart

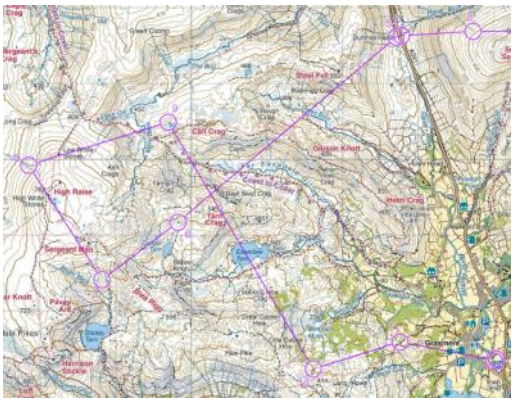
The 'Trial' held every mid-September since the 1950's, is a mountain navigation event held at a different Lake District venue each year. It's (almost) a unique event in the fell-runner's calendar and is a fantastic way of getting to know the lesser known trods, gullies, spurs, bogs, steep grass and scree of the Lakes. 'All courses will be severe tests of route choice, navigational skill and stamina in difficult mountain country.' so you certainly get your moneys worth for a day out on the fells.

Myself, Sam Dixon, Sam Gibbs, Garry Beardwood, Steve Baker and Paul MacFarlane tackled this years course from Grasmere setting off in thick clag, drizzle and a strong westerly.

The Classic route headed E-N-E up, down, up and back down to the first control lower down to the south east of Dove Crag. The long climbs gave an opportunity for working out route choices between all the controls on the route, while trying to keep heading in the right direction for the control you are actually heading for. I mentally ticked off the first of the classic Mountain Trial Experiences of the day - the initial wide-eyed, brain-fog incomprehension for an obvious route on one of the long legs between controls and a sinking feeling that this is going to be a lonnnnggg and tiring day on the fells. I don't know if this threw me but have to admit to a bit of dithering in the mist whilst locating the first control, but dithering seemed preferable to charging off down and finding yourself the wrong side of a mountain spur. The route I took to the next control ticked off the second of the classic Mountain Trial Experiences - finding yourself in thick clag, taking the direct line contouring across steep, wet grass and rocky ledges below and above a crag hoping it doesn't get any steeper round the corner. The route choice was then either over Fairfield or north and west around it, before crossing Dunmail Raise. Heading off up Steel Fell gave another chance to try and work out a good route on the long penultimate leg between Brownrigg Moss near Calf Crag and Swinescar Pike west of Silver Howe. Actually now that



I'd covered almost half the course my brain now had a bit of space and it wasn't really that hard to work out there were two route choices - but oh which one?! I'll think about that later I decided as the way to the next control now involved the next classic Mountain Trial Experience - diverting off familiar ground (in this case the BG route across from Steel Fell towards Stg Man) and into 'ooh I've never been down/across/up here before...ah ok we're here, hmm I recognise this, we're crossing the [insert fell race/OMM/SLMM] route.'



The route took us on a sort of figure of eight loop around Raise before returning SW of Easdale Tarn and losing the will to live. On the long penultimate leg I had the fourth Classic Mountain Trail Experience - inexplicably deciding to explore a short-cut off my logically planned route, some time later regretting the short-cut, whilst ploughing on painfully slowly through waist-high dead bracken shredding my shins and wrapping itself around my ankles before finally bringing me down in a crumpled heap, narrowly missing head-butting a boulder and lying looking up at the sky/bracken too exhausted to move thinking 'if I'd have hit that boulder no-one would've ever found me. 'He died doing what he loved''.

The Classic route has a straight line distance of 25 miles /8000 ft ascent, the Medium route is about three quarters of the Classic distance while the Short Trial is about half the length of the Classic and caters principally for novices over 18 years old and veterans over 60.

There is a Pairs category on the Short course. For all courses there is a minimum age of 18 for single runners. Over 14's may compete as part of a pair on the Short course if the other runner is their parent or legal guardian.

It's a great adventure out on the hills - you should do it next year.

SAUNDERS MM—Sam Gibbs

Prologue – June 2012



My wife, Becky, and I had trained reasonably hard for our first mountain marathon together – regular runs, the odd orienteering event, and the occasional trip up to the Lakes to run in some 'real' hills (at the time we lived in Buxton). We had even invested in some decent lightweight kit, including 'the coffin' as my claustrophobic wife preferred to call our tent.

Disaster struck a week before when a virus reduced me to a sweating, delirious mess during a school trip to the Ardeche (officially the worst 4 days of my teaching career). Then, inexplicably, on the Friday night before the event I made the frankly ridiculous decision that as I felt OK (laying on the sofa), I'd be fine to do the event (50km running around Wasdale), so we duly ditched the kids with grandparents and headed up to the Lakes.

Having arrived late to the start, we were flapping from the off. The first control was up Black Sail Pass…and within 15 minutes Becky was carrying my pack. This didn't bode well. A sneaky route choice to Green Gable avoiding the ridge path lifted our spirits, but by Lingmell I knew it was game over as I had zero in my legs (except for enough energy to repeatedly boot my rucksack in frustration). The Saunders, it seemed, was a step too far.

December 31st, 2017 - Our wedding anniversary



Romantically reminiscing about 17 years of being together, over a glass of wine we started to chat about our 100% failure rate at mountain marathons (who said romance was dead?) and we vowed to change this sorry statistic. A few clicks later and we were entered on the Carrock Fell course of the Saunders. Winning times were estimated to be 8½ hours over two days, but what if Rob Jebb and Ricky Lightfoot fancied another jog out together? Would that mean our time would be at least double that?

The weather leading up to the event was warm and dry. The weekend before we went for a jog/walk from Grasmere up to Sergeant Man, High Raise and back via Helm Crag. The going was good underfoot and there was (just) enough water in the streams – so long as it didn't stay warm for the next week. It didn't. It got hotter and hotter. On race day itself we were well prepared – mainly with electrolyte and sun cream. It was so hot by 9am that the organisers were allowing people to start straight away as opposed to standing about melting in the heat. Our course was a cracker – a tricky first control up Allan Bank, then a tour of Codale Tarn, Sergeant Man, Esk Pike, Sprinkling Tarn, Glaramara and Bessy Boot before an evil final descent into Stonethwaite via the endless Stanger Gill. Once we arrived at the overnight camp, it took a while to gather oursleves – both of us were pretty dehydrated and burnt.



The next few hours were spent having a beer whilst lying in a stream, chatting to the smattering of Helm Hillers who'd also braved the heat, and cooking an evening meal of egg noodles, cup-a-soup and pepperami, before falling into a deep, deep sleep.

I awoke to the hum of excited runners and tents being dismantled. We ate and realised you could mark up the courses well before your start – I think the organisers were keen to get everyone off before the mercury began to rise. Control one was an easy leg-stretch up a bridleway, followed by the most cunning route choice of the day – cutting a significant corner up Greenup Gill and avoiding the single-track march of 300 runners ascending the valley whilst jogging up our own personal trod. Then a short tour of one of the more obscure corners of the Lakes north-east of Ullscarf towards Harrop Tarn, followed by an unpleasant crossing of the hideous Wythburn (the worst valley in the Lake District) towards a tarn west of Calf Crag. Then the big decision – to get to Easedale Tarn go high over Tarn Crag, go middle below Tarn Crag, or a looooooong path run down,

round and back up. We opted for the latter, just so it felt like we were getting somewhere quickly. As we approached Easedale Tarn, the cool, glistening water was just too tempting and without a word we ditched our packs and dived in. Race times became an irrelevance – completion was the only goal. Refreshed, we finished over Silver Howe and then slowly ambled back to Grasmere for a post-race meal and the prize giving. We didn't speak much as we were both pretty frazzled, but there was a feeling of deep contentment at (a) finishing in such hot/dry conditions, and (b) laying the demons of 2012 to rest.



And no, it won't be another 6 years until we do our next one – within a week we had entered this Septembers' ROC in the North Lakes…I just hope it's slightly cooler

SAUNDERS MM—Ali Richards



When my children were babies and toddlers in those long often housebound days I used to dream about future days when they would be old enough for big days out in the hills, mountain adventures, all the amazing times we would have……..I did not account for the fact that as they grow their personalities do too, and funnily enough days out on the fells with mum are not currently featuring at the top of their list - football matches, phones, x-boxes and hanging out with their mates; the mere mention of a walk or fell run appears to make even the notion of piles of homework become a more attractive proposition.

So I decided that the trick into getting Daniel to do the Saunders mountain marathon with me was to not mention too much of what it was about - "Look, we can do this now you're 14!" a few months before (a lifetime in teenage terms) was about the sum of it. Fast forward to Grasmere in July - Dan's eyes widening at the sheer number of people milling about with super small rucksacks with lots of chat about routes/checkpoints/which class/category etc etc. I think he probably wanted to run a mile in the opposite direction but thankfully he decided to humour his mum and sufficed with a "Mum, I hope you know what you're doing because I haven't got a clue". Gulp. I tried to put on my most confident air through the kit check and on the walk up to the start, compass at the ready, telling Dan the worst thing to do is to follow other people, and that "slowly in the right direction" is always the way to go at the start. Ahem, true to form as soon as I crossed that line all that advice went out of the window: adrenaline pumping, I grabbed the map, eyes darting about watching where everyone else was heading (why oh why does that always happen?) glanced at the map, declared "this way" and yomped off up the hill and after a few minutes started to say "we're almost there!" Thankfully Daniel was far more calm and measured and was able to read from the map that we had gone nowhere near far enough and put me right. After that I think he realised he'd better keep an eye on the map to keep his mum in check! It was a sweltering hot day in the middle of the summer heatwave and it was a far harder course than expected heading over as far as Allen Crags before dropping into Borrowdale. We were out for 5 hours on the first day, and Dan was really flagging towards the end, having never been out running on the fells for so long. He also ate far more than I had anticipated leaving me slightly concerned about our food supply! We had no idea how we were doing, Dan in particular imagined that everyone must be faster than us having seen all that expensive kit and fit looking people at the start,, so we were both very chuffed to find out that we were 11th out of about 30 teams in Beda fell class at the end of the first day. Dan's competitive streak kicked in big time the next and I was hanging on to his heels - even with a slight nav error we moved up to 8th place. However, aside from any results and the reason I am writing this is that this was the event that I loved and will remember the most from all the races this year - helped by amazing weather, a couple of wonderful cooling wild swims in Stickle and Easedale tarns, brilliant banter at the campsite with the Helm crew and my old Toddie friends, but most of all spending time with my 14 year old son on a fabulous adventure in the fells - some dreams do come true after all. Just don't tell him I've entered us for next year!





2018 ROCKMAN SWIMRUN—Jenny Rice & Cat Slater

After our experience in 2017 at the OTILLO Swim-run World Championships, in gale force winds, huge waves and cold water, I wasn't expecting Cat to jump at the chance to do another swimrun. But once the trauma of the race had faded (slightly), I told her about the Rockman race in Norway which I did in 2016 with Claire Wilson.



It started in a fjord, then climbed up to the famous 'Pulpit Rock' or Priekestolen - as featured in Mission Impossible Fallout. It then traverse the mountains and drops down to Lysefjord for a 1 mile swim across to Florli - where you climb the longest wooden staircase in the world. 4444 steps, 750m vert in 1km. That was all I had to tell her, she was in!



Despite having done the race before, I was still super nervous the night before and hardly slept. We were up at 4.30am ready for the ferry to the start, and we joined the 70 teams dressed in neoprene on the tourist boat to the start. From Stavanger, the scale of the mountains isn't clear, but as we entered Lysefjord on the boat, the giant granite walls loomed above us, disappearing into the clouds. The weather didn't look set to change so we'd definitely be missing out on the views. At 7am, the boat arrived at a rocky inlet, we moved outside and after the start horn went, pair by pair jumped into the water off the boat. We had to swim into the narrow inlet, touch the boulder, and then swim back out, following the rock wall for 900m. The water was much colder than we expected - the rainfall must have lowered the water temperature. The climb out of the fjord started as it would carry on for the rest of the day - scrambly, technical, tree roots, boulders. We got stuck in a bit of a queue on the climb up to the mountain lodge - where most tourists start the popular walk to Preikestolen. The trail





was broken with two short swims, and then we hit the main trail, joining the many tourists on their way to the famous rock. By this point the rain was torrential, but given we'd been swimming, we couldn't really get much wetter. There's a great out and back bit along the cliff edge where you can get an idea of your position, we were told we were 5th womens team, but then over the technical rocky sections, caught up 3 teams before arriving at Preikestolen. Cat and I knew the terrain suited us and there was a long descent coming up so we pushed on, catching the leading women - two young girls on the Swedish national triathlon team. We'd spend the rest of the day with them catching us on the swims, and us overtaking them on the runs. The trail over the mountains was white with water pouring everywhere, it felt totally wild and remote, and we had to keep our eyes peeled for the red painted rocks that marked the trail. It just felt like a proper adventure - crossing huge rocky plateaus, beautiful forest trails, overflowing rivers, and not seeing a single other person.



The next swim was one mile following the cliff edge, and once again, it was surprisingly cold. It felt a long way, and when we climbed out of the water my teeth were chattering, and Cat was freezing too. She thought she might have hypothermia, but I said that if she thought she had it she probably didn't! We got moving to warm up, and I tried to convince her that the next swim coming up - 1 mile across the fjord - wouldn't be so cold as we'd not be near the rainfall water.

The race organisers clearly like to have a bit of fun with the route, and the next section was called the "Seaside Sprint" - it was pretty much like trying to race along the Wasdale screes path. We made our way over these huge awkward boulders, trying not to slip and twist or break an ankle! Eventually arriving at the check point and a horribly long road climb, we saw the Swedish girls ahead so aimed to catch them - knowing we'd soon see them again when they would overtake us across the fjord. The highlight of the race was the next feed station in a farmers field, where we were served hot waffles and jam.

We came to the fjord crossing, and I was right about the water

temperature - as soon as we were 200m away from the edge, the water temperature immediately warmed up, as we swam through leaves and other debris that had been washed into the fjord with the rain. The swim seemed to go on forever, and as the Swedish girls stormed past us, I just felt like we were going backwards, I couldn't wait to get out on the other side and start the climb up the steps.

The steps were just as hard as I remembered, feeling dizzy from the swim, we started the climb up the narrow and steep wooden staircase. Seeing teams ahead gave us something to aim for and we gradually picked teams off, including the Swedish girls. The stairs are marked every 500, which to start with is pretty demoralising when you feel shattered at 500! As we neared the top, they flattened out and become runnable and we could see Scully and Jon waiting for us at the top.

There was a small lake where we had our next short but freezing swim, and then had to follow a really vague route across rough terrain, marked with the odd red painted rock. Hoping we were going the right way, we tried to keep the mens team in front of us in our sight. There was one more swim to come, but suddenly we were on the main track leading us to the final descent. We'd not seen any markers pointing use elsewhere, or any marshalls directing us differently, so we couldn't have gone wrong. But there was definitely meant to be one more swim! We caught the guys in front and they had the same worry. We spent the entire descent, another awesome section of technical downhill, worrying that we were going to be disqualified for not completing the full course.

As we came down the final descent to the finish we overtook one more mens team, and crossed the finish line in 11th place overall, and in a time of 9:04. We were totally thrilled, but first needed to know we'd not gone wrong. The race director explained that due to fog on the summit they'd had to cancel the final swim. We were so relieved that our race counted, and we'd actually won the womens race. Scully and Jon handed Cat and I two cans of the finest Norwegian lager to celebrate our victory! If there's a way to celebrate a race win, it's with £9 cans of lager!



Pic: Scully

2018 SWIMRUN WASH-UP





BUTTERMERE SWIMRUN—August 13th:

Jenny teams up with Claire Wilson long event to do battle with the other 150-odd teams but mainly with Rick & Garry. It was a re-run of 2017 for the first 6 hours with the two Helm teams leap frogging each other and at times running (never swimming!) along together. Jenny & Claire pull away by half way but after the big run over Robinson, Dale Head and Maiden Moor our two teams were once again neck and neck, ready for a final battle across Derwent Water, 2 islands, a shore run up to Keswick, back cross two more swims including a gloopy swamp and up the lawn of an outdoor centre. Jenny & Claire used their superior swimming power to gain distance on the swims across Derwent Water while, in a role reversal from 2017, Garry drags Rick from the water suffering leg cramps. Jenny & Claire increase their lead over Rick & Garry and come in 8th overall and Womens Champions!


Pic: Scully

CONISTON SWIMRUN—7th October

Jenny teams up with Rick for the somewhat colder Coniston to Grasmere race. With an air temp 3 degrees it seemed warm wading into Coniston Water at 8am. Not so warm getting out on the other side but a run over the hills to Windermere warmed us. First mixed team and 5th overall.

2019—Chloe, Jo R, John Bagge & Russ C all were marshalling an earning free entry for next year so lots of Helm swimrunners!

HELM ON HOLS ABROAD



Tim & Eva Roe: Ultraks, Zermatt Switzerland





My name is Eva and I am 6 years old. I just joined Helm Hill Runners earlier this year. On my holiday I did a race in Zermatt and it was called the Wolli Course. My Daddy cheered me on and I ran fast and I crossed the finish line and I felt good and I did it in my Helm vest and I won a big medal with the Matterhorn on it and in the race there was some steep steps and I got a stitch but I carried on running. The End.



In September 2017 I entered the Ultraks Sky Race (49km, 3600m ascent and an average altitude of around 1800m), with the hope being that this would motivate me through the year to train hard. Unfortunately, 2018 wasn't my year for running and as always life got in the way. With only Edale and Buttermere under my belt as far as races went, and a hand full of additional days on the fells I found myself in the Ultraks registration tent in August 2018 with a choice to make. It took all of 2 minutes to come to a decision and downgrade my entry to the Mountain race (32km, 2000m ascent and an average altitude of around 1800m). Usually going for the easier option wouldn't sit well with me, but in this instance, I was ecstatic.

The race started with a quick lap of Zermatt, then headed up through forest tracks and soon hit the mountainside trails. The first climb up to Sunnegga was through plush alpine forests, and most of my time was occupied being entertained by the guy in front of me trying to get his sticks from his quick-draw rucksack. After all his fumbling, he finally freed his poles only to realise he no longer needed them.

As we popped out of the top of the tree line the weather cleared enough to look up the valley at the glacier and also allowed for a great official photo opportunity of runners in the gaze of the Matterhorn. I filled my boots with raisins and bananas from the extensive spread and then ran through a series of picturesque alpine hamlets to the next check point Riffelalp. Here 2 paths converged and we the mountain runners were joined by the sky runners heading down from Gornergrat. I'd like to say that I felt fresh at this point and therefore smug at my wise decision to switch courses but the reality was the sky runners looked like spring daisy's and I… well… didn't!

However, I cracked on and kept eating, drinking and running and after going through an amazing rocky mountainous section I started to pick up and finally managed to settle into a steady pace. A long run down the valley back towards Zermatt was confusing me. I knew I still had the largest climb to come (some 1000m up to Schwarzee), but there was only 10k of the race left. I started to kid myself I must have done the ascent without knowing it. I crossed an amazing rope bridge across a gorge I couldn't see the bottom of, which brought a moment of clarity and at the same time despair. "S***"!! I realized I was just heading into the hamlet of Furi which meant the climb was about to hit. I started the dreaded switchback climb back up through the trees, which compared to some of the climbs here in Cumbria, was a walk in the park. Before I knew it, I was at the top and ready for the long downhill back to Zermatt.

On this occasion I went out primarily to enjoy myself, not to race others (although I kind of did anyway). I wanted to experience parts of the Alps I had never visited before (which I did). The organization of the event was amazing and for the family it was phenomenal. There was something for all age groups and abilities and the Event Organisers seemed to have everything covered. Oh! And it is in one of the coolest resorts overlooked by arguably the most iconic mountain in Europe. What more do you want.

Paul Turner TDS 2018 – 120km 7000m+



The wild alternative...My experience of the 50k from somewhere near La Gittaz to the finish in Chamonix

Somewhere beyond the Cormet de Roseland....70 to 80 km

Why am I here? why am I doing this to myself? why am I doing this for a gilet? who really cares? I can just stop...keep going

Keep going…I need to eat…I've got no energy….bit of energy gel…salted caramel with caffeine…sounds good…that'll do me…I squeeze the gel…I try to chew…my mouth is so dry….I hate it…I spit it out…I squeeze the rest away…no point carrying it…there's nothing in my bag I want to eat…keep going

Keep going… I need a drink... just water…just a sip… stomach's going to churn... hope it doesn't... here it comes...my stomach heaves... it hurts...but nothing…just the reflex…but I want something to show…something on the floor…something to prove the discomfort…keep going

How far to the checkpoint? My brother will be there… I can just stop… Phil won't mind…I can get a bus…I can go back to Les Houches…I can have a shower…I can go to bed...I can have some real food to eat...keep going



The checkpoint! La Gittaz…Am here, where's my brother? Phil's not here!...why's he not here?...where is he?...he's got to be at the next one... the actual assistance aid station… where he can actually help me… How far is that?...another 20k...more hours like this… keep going

Ok... sit...I need to drink….I'll try some tea...it's warm and familiar…bit of sugar…it stays down... sip some more...I need to eat…bit of real food…no more energy bars…I sip soup… some banana…some bread…bit of cheese…I've eaten…right… I can't stop here...I best carry on...keep going

100ks…La Contamines...I'm all over the place…I can't walk straight…who's painted a cartoon on that rock?…I'm seeing things…it's just damp stone…I didn't sleep enough…I didn't drink enough... I've had enough…I don't care it's not that far…I can stop…

Phil's here! We could just go back to Les Houches… all this for a gilet…

Shall I stop?

Phil: It's up to you....

Ok… I'll sit...I'll change my clothes... I'll just have a sleep...on a wooden bench…my head on a stuff sack of clothes…I could sleep anywhere...I'm gone

20mins…I wake... I'm back…I need some tea...I need some cake...

It's just 20k to go...one big climb…only 10k to top of Col de Tricot, then all downhill…10k is nothing…I can do this...let's get it done...keep going

See you in Les Houches!

Les Houches...it's light again....7k to go...all flat to Chamonix...there's people I know… people I don't...I've done it...I smile...I laugh...I nearly cry...keep going

Chamonix...Phil's with me...I'm going to finish in style...I run...people cheer…I keep running...allez allez...bravo...keep going

The finish...I've done it...the suffering is gone…the pain is gone…I celebrate...I've got the gilet...I have the satisfaction...it's amazing…I've done it…I kept going

…next one

*turned out Phil and all the supporters on the bus were taken past the checkpoint by the driver. Everyone else voted to carry on to Les Contamines.

Would I have stopped if Phil had been there…we'll never know.



The Ultra Tour Monte Rosa - Carrie Gibson



Rick asked me to write a race report but you know how most races go, run up, run down, run up again Ok, repeat a few times, this time for just over 56 hours in fact. A wee bit longer than any run I've done before at 170km's, the main difference with this race was the people (things) I met along the way, my 'sleep monsters' or hallucinations. So, what I thought was, if I tell you the fun bits first then if you've time you can read the race report as it was truly a great race. If you read it with a wee beverage maybe you'll get to see some of my new friends too! I'm saying some of them weren't real but I searched the internet and after a long search I've found each of their pictures so maybe, just maybe they were there. I'll let you decide.

I guess I was about 42 hours and 135 kilometres in, I know folk will have went longer with no sleep but I really like my sleep, I fall asleep really quickly and I can sleep anywhere, up until now I thought this was a skill, now I'm not so sure.





After leaving the checkpoint at Monte Moro a couple of guys went past then I spent a long time on my own, hours in fact, well not quite on my own, I met a polar bear, big but friendly thankfully, then shortly after a porcupine. I kind of knew they weren't real, but certainly not immediately, especially the porcupine, I manage to get right up beside him, which I thought was pretty cool before he turned into a tuft of grass.I passed cows that had furry slippers for ears, and super fluffy sheep, the jury is still out if they were real or not? I think the ibex was real, but he stood very still, so perhaps he was a statue? I think he blinked though or maybe he winked. He probably wondered if I was real, as I was doing my best statue impersonation so that I would not scare him. Next up 6 guys lined up pulled down their trousers and bared their bottoms at me, well you would have thought that might shock me but I'm Scottish and I've seen what's worn under the kilt! Sadly they weren't real either!





Then came the most intricately decorated rock with Jesus and his disciples, I was amazed someone had climbed up here to paint it, I'd earlier passed the statue at Monte Moro pass so it wasn't so silly a thought but as I got closer I realised that the disciples were moving on the rock, an animation rock. Now I knew this couldn't be happening, but it was right in front of my eyes, the colours were so vivid, and their movements so fluid, so I actually took myself right over to the rock to blink a few times, shake my brain and rub my eyes, then, and only then, did I realise it was lichen.





Then came the tap tapping of someone's sticks it had been 5 hours since I'd seen a real person but as I turned round to chat there was no one there, no torch light between me and the last check point, this happened a lot, I'd hear them come close, I'd spin round to catch them out, but they were invisible, and each time I stopped so did they. My best guess now would be that the sticks I could hear were actually mine!

What makes me want to do this to myself? Well, there is something that happens in me as a direct result of seeing words to the effect of tough, difficult, hard; I usually react by thinking that sounds fun! The Ultra Tour Monte Rosa falls, without doubt in the tough category. You can do 100km (tough) or a 4 day stage race of 170km (equally tough) or just go all out tough on the 170km and 11,300meters of height gain, this year with added kilometres due to rock fall, (bonus tough). So I went for 170km. Starting in Switzerland and running a loop round into Italy and back this course is designed by 5 times UTMB winner Lizzy Hawker. (Think Adam Perry's Howgill's race or Howtown designed by Kim Collison, they like to design a tough race, then they make it that little bit harder, this was the same idea, but a wee bit longer).

Lizzy Hawker described the race as a "serious challenge – brutal, beautiful and brilliant" well that was me sold, "brutal" that sounded amazing to me and that was my entry posted. That was pretty much it, I mainly just did my usual training and maybe added a wee Wansfell or two, I don't really get a fear of races especially big ones (maybe I should but it's just a bit of fun!) I'm just trying to see what I can do and I like an element of will I make it round?

This was to be my first 100 miles, I guess a bit of a step up from my Bob Graham, which was my longest race to date, especially as I'd be without my fantastic support team! I was however lucky enough to have tea with Nicky Spinks and the Inov8 team in Chamonix the week before the race and got lots of great advice, I also got some great runs in with fellow Helm'rs Caroline and Marcia, in total 73 miles probably my biggest training week so I felt like I was ready. Then I had a



couple of days back home to nurse a wee bump on my knee and then off to Switzerland.

The scenery was stunning, the race itself is very much still a wee hidden gem, no ballot to get in and a lot less of the razzmatazz of the UTMB! The course has steep climbs, long technical descents, narrow exposed paths and you even go out onto a glacier. What can I say, I loved the climbs. Starting at 4.00 am in Grachen we waited for the clock to chime, it didn't so they just said go, that made me smile as no one bothered and we set out on a fairly relaxed pace. I ran with a fellow Scot, chatting as we ran. I thought this would keep me running at a steady pace, I also had the basic rule as long as I wasn't ahead of Nicky I wasn't running too fast! This worked well until Nicky came past me, as it turned out Nicky had been on a wee detour but pulled away again quickly. Phew! Daylight came and we crossed the Randa suspension bridge. This is said to be the longest suspension footbridge in the world at 494 meters long with fantastic views all round. The weather was great and the time and miles went past fairly quickly. Lots of up lots of down, met Digby from Pennine fell runners manning a checkpoint we were heading up to the highest point of the route, the Theodul pass which is at 3301 meters. Soon after I was out onto the glacier where I was glad I'd put full kit on as it was pretty blustery. Blustery turned into hailstones then a torrential downpour that seemed to last a very long time. I was glad I'd put a primaloft layer under my full waterproofs and had primaloft mitts under my waterproof mitts but I was still cold, so much so I couldn't hold my poles! Eventually the rain stopped and I was happy knowing I'd have a full dry set of clothes at my drop bag at Gressoney at 80km it was also a wee boost seeing Ant Emmet of Helm Hill manning the checkpoint. He had quite a lot of people who had already dropped out at his checkpoint, having fell foul of the bad weather, minimum kit would certainly not have been enough for me. I felt fine at this point but wondered if I should try to sleep, I tried but was too excited so I had some pasta and just headed off.



Leaving Gressoney another steep climb which was good until near the top when I kept finding myself veering off the path as I was dozing off whilst still moving. I put my head down for 10 mins at the next checkpoint and it took the edge off it ready for the long descent down into Alagna. Another quick nap in Alagna and it was daylight again also the added bonus that soon the stage racers would start to pass me and as they did each one gave words of encouragement up the steep climb trying each time to tag onto them even just for a couple of steps. Arriving at Macunaga 125km was very exciting as it was the finish for the day for the stage racers, funny to think they would go to bed before the next stage, while I just kept running. I felt good, ate pasta from the check point and pringles from my drop bag and was over the mood to hear Nicky had just finished the race 1st lady 7th overall amazing! I headed off up the hill trying not to guess which of the ski huts I was aiming for as I always got it wrong and didn't want to get disappointed, the wind had picked up and I once more donned the waterproof trousers, hat and mitts, and got the torch out ready for my 2nd night. The weather had really turned as down at the last checkpoint it was T-shirt and shorts weather. It got dark really quickly and I didn't need to play guess the check point anymore as there in front of me lit up like a gingerbread house was the checkpoint. This was the checkpoint manned by the sponsors ON running and just so you couldn't go wrong the route was marked like a runway with little Swiss flags red white red all the way in to the toasty ski hut with big roaring fire. I had some soup and pulled on more layers ready to head out into the dark. I could quite easily have stayed for the party. The descent was quite slippery as the earlier snow had now turned to ice. There were a few tricky step downs, it was a long drop off if I did slip so this kept me awake! Then came the hallucinating 6 hours hours down into Sass Fae at 149km before finally I curled up under a bush. Eventually I got going again I had got a bit cold but pushed up the hill to try and warm up and started chatting with a couple of German guys surprisingly after my hallucinating I could actually still translate a little of what the two Germans were saying.



Pic: Digby Harris

The last section was quite long on a balcony the route seemed never ending each corner you were sure was the last but there was always at least one more. But I was happily chatting with one of the German guys. Finally when I felt I was back in the game I told him how amazing it was to finally see something that I knew was real, I was so impressed by the giant eagle carved into the huge rock face in front of me, I'd checked a couple of times it was there to be sure. He just laughed and said nothing was there, the hallucinations continue..... Great to see Caroline from Helm at the Finish along with Nicky Spinks to cheer me in, can't wait for the next 100!

Running the GR20, CORSICA - Cat Slater



132 miles, 13112m Ascent in 55 hours and 5 mins (Over 9 Days!)….we all love a stat!

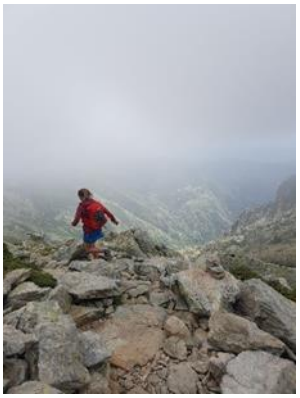
I was introduced to the GR20 by a friend and the moment I started to read about it I instantly wanted to run it. The record for the route being 31 hours and 6 minutes….having now run it, a flipping amazing achievement.

For those unfamiliar with the GR20, it is a long-distance trail across the mountains of Corsica, mostly completed by walkers over anything between 14 days to 3 weeks depending how long they wanted to be out for each day. The route is generally split into 2 sections, the northern being rockier, slightly more technical and generally has more ascent and the southern section is just overall much easier. Historically going north to south was the way to go however there seems to be more and more people opting to go the other way.

Following an 'incident' this year where quite frankly I am glad to be alive…I know that sounds dramatic but this really was one of those life changing experiences, I decided that life really is to short. Corsica got booked.

We had 9 days to complete the GR20 and instead of thinking lets have some relaxing days at the end of the trip I utilised everyday so we could experience as much as possible out in the mountains. Plus, neither myself or John had ever ran that long, that far, over so many consecutive days. In hindsight however, as much as this was lovely, I found 9 days quite a lot, 7 would have been ideal and given we finished most days by midday, something that would not have been wholly unachievable.

I could go into the stats for each day, where we went, how hard it was, but quite frankly this would probably make for quite boring reading. If anyone does however want a copy of our itinery, kit list etc. (it really did surprise how much some people carried!) I am happy to share however for the purpose of this article a few key points for each day!



Day 1 – Calenzana to Refuge de Carrozzu - The introduction to 'Rainbow hills' …when you think you are at the top, you really need to think again. Not only that, you most probably have the most epic of descents coming up…steep lessons for day 1. To top it off, those blogs you read beforehand that warn you of beg bugs. They really weren't making that up. A night of terrible sleep and dreaming of creepy crawlies…I am not staying in a refuge again!!

Day 2 – Carrozzu to Refuge de Tighjetti - Day 2 was a bonus day, not one VK but 2! with a little stop in-between for chocolate crepes and coffee. It was claggy, windy and had an epic amount of scree, chains and scrambling for the day to summit Corsica's highest mountain, Monte Cinca.

All Pic: Cat Slater



We couldn't see a thing, typical!

We stayed in a refuge called Tighuetti with one of the coldest showers I have ever had in my life, the only silver lining was the view across the valley, it really was something else.

Something that really amazed me throughout this trip was the cooking in such remote places. Here we had cured meat…they love cured meat and spaghetti which was then followed by a dessert of what I can only describe as apple sauce. It was however home made and simply delicious.



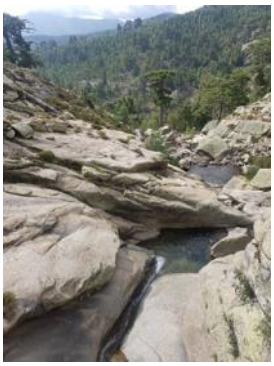
Some of the guide books miss out this hut in their itinery but when we were planning our trip this one fitted better. It was such a fab hut, slightly different to the others, made of wood and slightly suspended meaning it swayed if it was windy. The hosts were also bonkers. At the end of our meal, they brought out a cleaning bottle, I presumed to wipe down the tables until he demanded you opened your mouth in which he then squirted grappa! It was quite hilarious, I am sure he probably does it every evening but it made for a lot of fun and there was no point in trying to avoid it, you would either end up having a face full or simply just be covered in grappa!

Day 3 – Tighjetti to Castellu di Vergio - A fab start to today,

beautiful woodland trails and the sun had made another appearance. The terrain up until this point had all been really rocky and really quite challenging so as we headed in to woodland we really stretched out our legs and ran. It doesn't really matter what environment I am in, it always pleases me to pass people and we passed a lot of people today, it was so much fun. John constantly having to remind me that we still had a long way to go.



After the runnable section the climbing started again to reach a col. We arrived to be greeted by some pretty strong winds so layered up and took shelter to get some food in. It was at this point we discovered our kitten that I had rescued had teethed on John's waterproof!! Less than ideal, the zip at the bottom was unusable and so John spent the rest of the trip marginally concerned that if the weather really did get bad… the cause of his demise would have been a kitten!

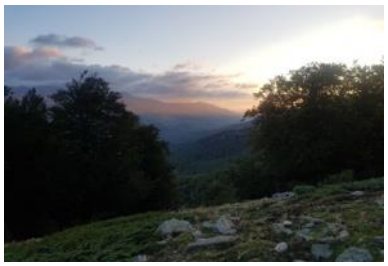


During this section we came across beautiful clear rock pools to cool down in and crazy mountain cows randomly roaming around... they would just suddenly appear on the side of a mountain that you would never once think possible for a cow to be standing. We never quite understood how those cows were there.

We arrived at our destination in good spirits and enjoyed our first beer.

Day 4 – Castellu di Vergio to Refuge de Petra Piana - I woke up tired on day 4. I think we had completed something like 6,000m by this point and my body was telling me about it. I reckon it took me about an hour to get going but once we were off we were off. It probably hadn't helped that we set off super early and both thought we would be ok on a cereal bar and a banana… this was most definitely not the case.

We were both pretty silent for that 17km and as we arrived at refuge de Manganu decided that we really needed to sort out our nutritional strategy…basically we needed to eat more! The host at Manganu made us probably the best omelette and cup of coffee I have ever tasted and we were fortunate to have made it there just as we had our first proper storm. We took shelter for an hour with a guy in a straw hat before starting off on the rockiest of ascents out of the valley…just another standard VK. The guy in the straw hat slowly disappeared, we never did see him again, we presume he turned around and went back… failing that, he may still be out there!



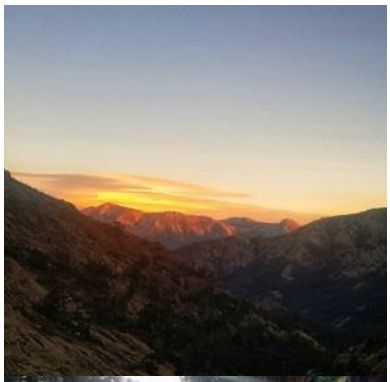
We appeared at the col and then contoured around a basin with beautiful lakes far down below.

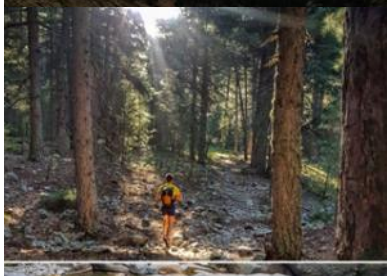


As per most days we though we would just pop over another col and be at Pietra Piana but this would not be the case and bonus scrambling was done. Here it amazed me to pass a lady having a real epic on some of the terrain. There were huge boulders to hop along, I guess there was some exposure, but she was having real trouble and considering all that she had done before they must have had some really long days.



It was at this point we looked back and could see the clag coming towards us. We made a swift move and carried on quickly to the refuge. Pietra Piana was the first refuge we came across that had actually shut due to the bed bugs. We did however note that later that day when all the tents had gone, people were then going into the refuge which I thought was pretty bad…no wonder they were spreading to all the huts!







Day 5 - Petra Piano to Vizzavona - This was probably my most favourite of days. I woke up snug in my tent, I opened the tent door and looked out to a stunning sunrise. We were pretty high up at Pietra Piana (1842m), and as I sat there looking out across the mountains with a coffee I felt pretty content with life.

That day we were off to Vizzavona, the half way point. There was a lot of rocky climbing again but as ever, this was awarded with stun-

ning vistas and although the descent was definitely a joint breaker, we took some recovery in some of the rock pools.

We treated ourselves to a hotel and paid to get all our clothes washed. Its funny how happy this made me, a whole rucksack of clean clothes…bliss!

Day 6 – Vizzavona to Refuge de Prati - This was a funny day, as I sat there at breakfast and looked around at the room of fellow GR20ers, everyone looked utterly dazed, I guess for some of them they had been on the go for significantly longer than we had. We watched a guy put his arms through the straps of his rucksack, sigh, before hauling his bag back up on to his back. Poor guy, he was clearly having a rough time. I also noted everyone with knee supports on too or simply stuck together by tape… I guess the relentless rocky terrain was starting to take its toll.

We stopped off at the first hut we came across, ate possibly the biggest salami sandwich I have ever eaten, before heading off again to the final hut of the day, Pratti.

On route we had a few rain drops which got heavier and heavier. We decided it best take some shelter before we got utterly drenched. We found shelter under a derelict hut with a few others to wait out the storm. It was here we came across what we now know was a Salamader. I was convinced it was out to eat me, black and yellow it looked like danger and as I kicked dirt at it to scare it and hope it moved, all it did was turn its head and then slowly returned it to look back at me, I was getting ready to run. To put in to context this creature was only about 4 inches long!

Eventually we made it to Pratti, there was a standard lovely climb to get to it, and we were greeted by the host. I could have been in the depths of Salford. A Chelsea smile, tattoos on his hands and a T-shirt saying 'f**k off'….I most definitely made sure I ate all my dinner that evening!

Day 7 – Refuge de Prati to Refuge de Matalza -After spending most of the night trying desperately not to slide away…it appeared our tent was on a bit of a slant…we started the day some what tired but were met with another sunrise and the standard breakfast of dry bread, jam and the most unspreadable butter you could ever find making the use of a spork very difficult since I had snapped the knife bit off!

The run started with some scrambling and of course, climbing before opening up into some small, rocky, runnable sections. We came across a small hut in the woods which we thought was the next stop but on closer observation wasn't the hut at all and looking at the map noted we probably had a few more kilometres to run. I was quite hungry at this stage but as we weren't so far away I didn't really think much of it. Those kilometres however were steep…I had the worse bonk I have ever experienced half way up. We had to stop so I could eat a load of nuts and sweets in the hope it brought me out of it and on top of this it was an absolute scorcher of a day… progress was slow! John got me moving again referring to the group up ahead as another 'rucksack train' and off we plodded... we needed to pass them. On arriving at the hut we ate an almighty amount of bread… a whole loaf in fact, a huge block of cheese and some cured meat… for dessert a huge block of chocolate! I was ready to go! The rest of the trail was beautiful, a bit more scrambling, a traverse and then a lovely forest trail. We had a swim in some rock pools then headed off to Refuge de Matalzza. Warm showers, a beer and a chill out in a deck chair…amazing! What made me laugh was that we were actually fenced in and the cows and horses around us were roaming free. A cow did break in and was very insistent he joined us despite being run out numerous times by the host, it was quite entertaining. We also stopped to chat to a German guy in Matalzza who was walking the trail at the age of 69 having previously completed it 30 years earlier. He was an absolute legend, not a dry bag or waterproof in site just plastic carrier bags and his things were just randomly stuffed in a rucksack that had definitely seen better days. When we asked how long he had been walking for he absolutely no idea, what a guy!





Day 8 – Matalza to Village de Bavella – It is funny the GR20, you look at the map before setting off and note that the second half definitely has less ascent and in my head was clearly going to be much easier and therefore mean much quicker days. How very wrong I was, day 8 was just more



undulations, more scrambling and had a bonus hill at the end! It was a good job it was stunning.

We arrived at our final destination for that day in Col de Bavella. Bavella is a tourist hot spot and it was strange to all of a sudden be surrounded by people… All of a sudden became acutely aware that we probably looked and smelt pretty bad! I had booked us a hotel for this evening and we treated ourselves to a lovely 3 course meal and had an amazing storm to watch….I was glad we were in a hotel that night!



Day 9 – Bavella to Conca - The penultimate day – Another gorgeous sunrise to start the day. My knees had started to ache a little but that was ok, I had prepared for some aching given the challenge and was quite happy that I had got that far before having any issues. I was pretty disappointed this was the last day, I was tired and the climbing was becoming a little relentless but it was amazing and everyday really felt like an adventure.



A forest trail started the day before opening up on to more rocky terrain. This however was very runnable and we loved rock hoping and watching the kilometres pass. Out of all our days in Corsica this was probably the most actual running we had done since we started. We arrived in Conca and had a massive beer…we had made it! Conca is a little unassuming village and as the guide book said, locals really were not that interested, they had seen and heard it all before!

This type of trip, running between huts and travelling light was amazing. As I said at the start, 7 days would probably be sufficient but the whole challenge was so much fun. The biggest thing I would change if we did it again but to take our own tent…I really hadn't appreciated how bad the bed bug situation would be and I would definitely factor in more food stops!

POSTCARD FROM LIMONE



Wish you were here in Italy on the sunny mountain tops around lake Garda.

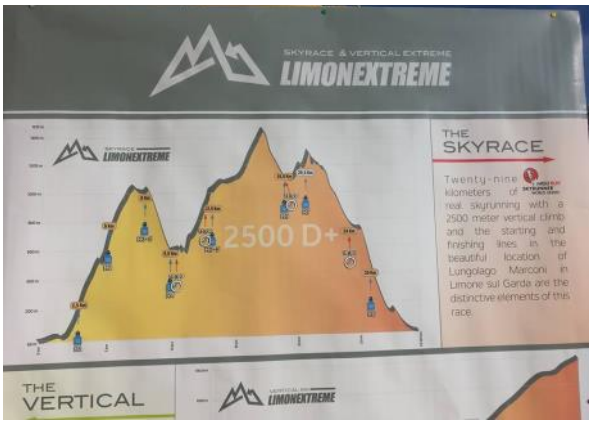
Vertical km Friday night got us off to a fab start,it was like Steel Fell on steroids .

Still buzzing from last night we lined up on the start line of the sky race 29 km of amazing running with an 8km 1st hill.

Amazing race, get it booked!

Love Carrie & Catherine

Helm Hill on tour!





Looking forward to 2019

Not long to wait now till the start of the winter fun for juniors and seniors! Every Sunday from noon. 1st Sunday in January till April. See website for race calendar and details.



If you never done any do them. If you have, do some more!

"Just follow the white flags, Go!'



Pic:AMeanwell



Artwork:JimTyson

Carnethy 5 Sat 09/02/19



Calling Helm men & women! Keep an eye out for entries opening & Helm winter training sessions. There's two broadswords to be won!



FRA CHAMPS 2019

Country	category	Race
17-03-19 E	AS	Stretton Hills
06-04-19 E	AL	Howgills race
27-04-19 B	*AM*	*The Mourn Highline Ireland*
25-05-19 B	*AM*	*Ras Y Meolwyn. Wales*
15-06-19 B & E	AL	Great Lakes Race.
06-07-19 E	AM	Black Fell
01-08-19 B	*AS*	*Creag Dhubh Scotland*
07-09-19 E	AM	Grisedale Horseshoe
21-09-19 E	AS	Ilum

FRA Junior Championships 2019

These are competitive (as a national championship series) only for the U13, U15, U17, U19 age categories. An athlete's best 4 performances from any of the 6 races will determine their championship score.

No details as yet of races so check https://fellrunner.org.uk/juniors.php

FRA Senior Championships 2019

Full details in FRA Handbook and www.fellrunner.org.uk.

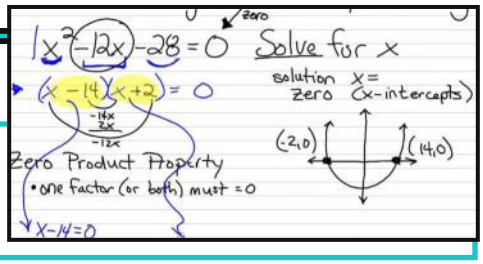




BOFRA CHAMPS 2019

The 2019 races will be on the bofra website usually in April

TRAINING FOCUS —Sam Gibbs



Following on from his popular and much used 'How to fall over' expert technical training material (see Spring 2014 newsletter) Sam presents an in-depth, illuminating anatomy of the process of overtaking.

Anatomy of an overtaking manoeuvre -

Unless your name is Carl Bell and can comfortably lead a race from start to finish, it's likely that you are going to have to overtake someone during a race. Most runners simply think it's a case of stepping off the path and going around the runner in front, however, following recent research, it transpires that it is in fact far more complex than that. In their seminal paper '*Overtaking in fell running: a systematic approach*', Jebb, R. and Jardine, J. shed light on this little known technique. Using the latest satellite technology, they painstakingly analysed the footprints and Strava traces of over 10,000 overtaking manoeuvres and identified 6 main types;

Downhill overtaking – my personal favourite, mainly because it suits the more robust runner. Gravity is your friend here – simply let it pull you and your hulking frame down the hill faster. Newton's 3rd law states that for every action (force) in nature there is an equal and opposite reaction, in other words, the more post-race pies you have consumed, the faster you will go down a hill.

Uphill overtaking - my least favourite. Gravity is also your friend, if you are of a more race-like build. A common myth is that gravity acts equally amongst all objects – it doesn't. Gravity acts stronger on substances such as visceral fat and weaker on things such as muscle. This is precisely why thinner runners overtake larger runners on uphill sections.

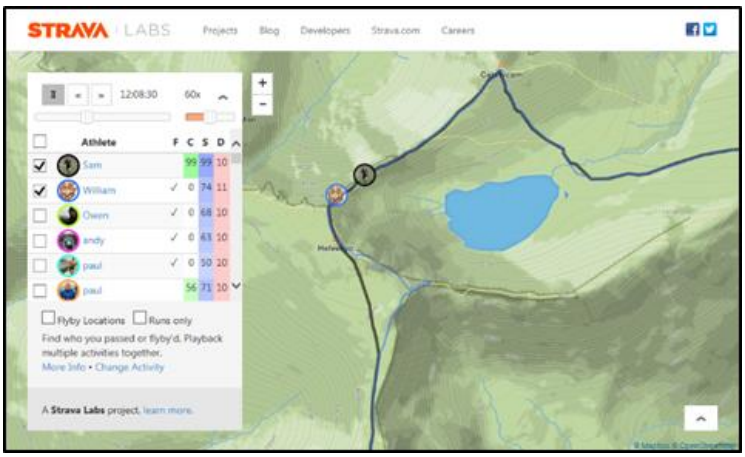
Flat overtaking – We refer back to Newton. He stated that every object (*a fell runner*) will remain in a uniform motion (*jogging*) in a straight line (*usually along a narrow trod*) unless compelled to change its state (*getting out of the bloody way*) by the action of an external force (*an elbow to the kidneys*).

Dishonest overtaking – we've all been there. That time in a race when you have zero left to give yet the same irritating runner from some really obscure club like 'Milnthorpe Bridleway Runners' has been stubbornly sitting just in front of you for the last 45 minutes….every time you attempt to speed up, so do they…..every time they cough or spit, you get the spray…..and that weird breathing noise they are doing is making YOU ACTUALLY WANT TO KILL THEM. And then they start *trying to make conversation with you…* You will try literally *anything* to get past - the 'accidental' heel clip, queue-jumping at the next stile, going through out of bounds, or the classic - 'Mate, your shoe-lace is undone'.

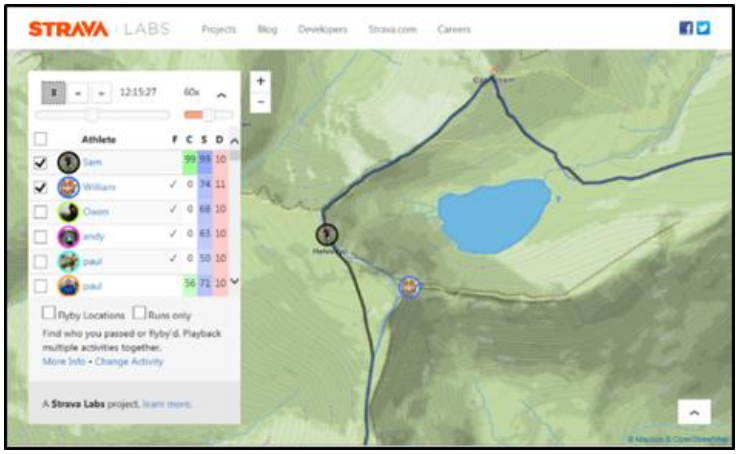
Secret Trods – everyone claims to know a 'secret' trod that only they know about. The reality is that it's no longer 1970 and every single line has been run a thousand times. The other reality proven by Jebb and Jardine was that having analysed every single trod in Cumbria, there is no discernible difference between them and the main paths full of tourists. So stop pretending there is, don't bother recceing anything, go with the herd and accept your final placing.

Incompetence of fellow runners – Perhaps ***THE*** most important overtaking manoeuvre in modern fell running. Let's take a look at an actual example, delightfully captured using Strava's flyby feature. Let's call these two runners Billy Couper and Sammy Gibbs. And let's also pretend it was at a race called the Grisethwaite Horseshoe. See how the utter incompetence of one runner is a blessing for the other…

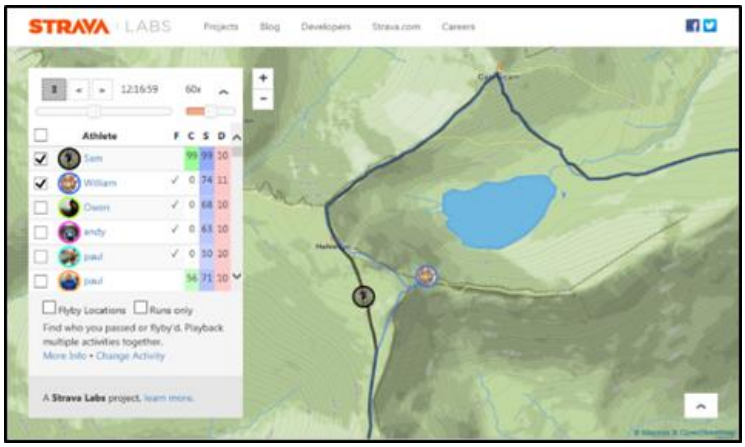
1: Couper comfortably ahead of Gibbs on ascent of Swirral Edge



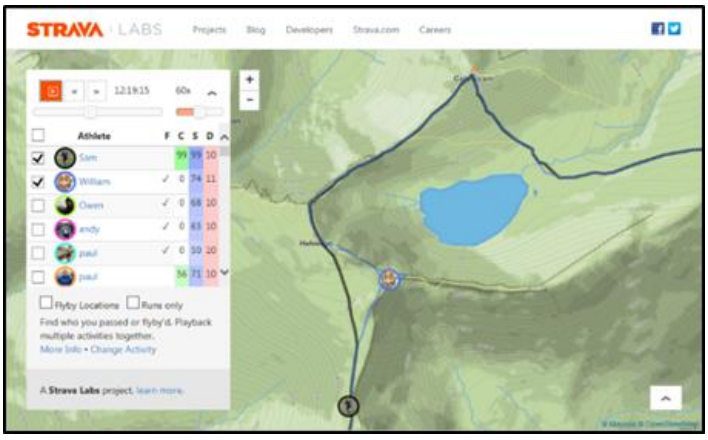
2. Couper decides to pay Striding Edge a visit



3: Gibbs seizes opportunity and overtakes Couper



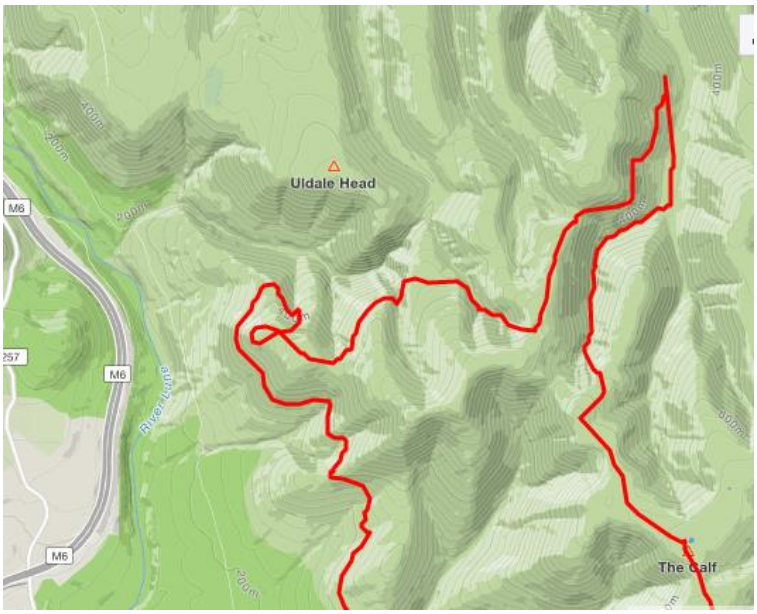
4: Gibbs comfortably in lead. Couper still floundering on Striding Edge



Long Distance Challenges:

New Extension to Classic Sedbergh Hills Race Discovered!! - 'The Thomson Scary Monster Variation'

In the summer of 2018 a Helm Hill Runner (who humbly asked to remain anonymous) made the breakthrough discovery of two previously unknown and possibly untrod extensions to the already arduous 16 mile Sedbergh Hills fell race. What's even more amazing is that Andy made this discovery in thick clag! He said it was like travelling through a lost world where up was down, north was south and nothing corresponded to anything on his map. But luckily he recorded it all on Strava so it wasn't lost to the fellrunning world!



Andy may lead an attempt to try and find the mysterious hills again in August if you fancy joining him.

HHR Innovations

This month: bum protection, anti -sinking and foot-infusion

Kit on test

HHR Proctor Posterior Protector™ : £45.50 Cat No. HHR00BUM





Never get a bruised, lacerated or gravel-rashed sore bum again with this state-of-the-art bum protector. Designed and tested by HHR Ben Proctor.

Made out of lightweight, shock absorbing material that is highly breathable (no-one likes a sweaty bum right?!). Shaped 'left buttock' and 'right-buttock' although can be sold separately if a previous fall has left you with a particularly odd shaped bum.

HHR Bog-hydrofoil fellshoe: £66.34+vat Cat No. HHR00BOG

Aquaplane across the bog with this ground-breaking hydrofoil fell shoe! Incorporating Never-Sink-Again ™ technology. Aimed at the faster runner who can get it up to aquaplaning speed, you'll feel like you're riding the surf, the sea breeze in your tousled hair, tanned legs glissening in the spray. Basically not falling headfirst into the peaty gloop.







HHR Reflxology Alcohol Infuser ™ :

£47.50 **Cat No. HHR00BOOZE**

Never get a hangover & dicky tummy again with this re-usable state-of-the-art alcohol infuser. Designed and tested by HHR Johnny Grisedale.

Based on decades old gullability that there are reflex points on the feet that correspond with your tummy this foot infuser gives the user (hey that rhymes!) the effects of alcohol through non-intrusive complimentary therapy. Excellent for when you've crocked your ankle and what's more can be used again and again!

(Product does not include contents. We're not a charity)

Double-Deal:
Combine this product with the Proctor Posterior Protector for only £128.40!

REASONS TO JOIN HELM

Number 24(i): Celebration.

THE HELM HILL WAY:

✓



"Helm women's team won the British Relays. I got in at 5am. I wasn't even in the team."

FELL FASHION

'LET'S TALK ABOUT SOCKS,'
Salt 'n Pepa 1991





Carrie Gibson, our style editor writes:
Rick already has one warning from club captain Sharon at Cautley for his shorts and arm warmer combo lacking the all-important matching socks so lets look at what the latest style-gurus are wearing out on the fells on their shinnies.





Editors pick







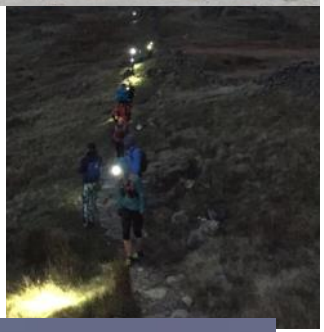
STOP PRESS!

Hannah's 21st Birthday Run

A large contingent of helm runners were more than happy to set off at 7am in freezing conditions and a strong northerly, but an otherwise stunning clear day to help Hannah Russell celebrate her 21st birthday and accompany here around 21 Wainwrights.



The route was anti-clockwise from Kirkstone Pass, across to High St, along to Angle Tarn area, down to Glenridding for tea, samosas and cake courtesy of Hannah's parents and grandparents before setting off up Helvelyn, along to Fairfield and finally to Red Screes before plunging down the scree to finish at Kirkstone Pass pub. It was a fantastic day!





CLUB KIT

Last minute xmas shopping panic?

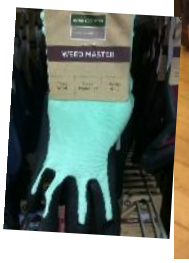




Club vests, HH buffs, crop tops —available from Pete Bland Sports

HH cycling / running gilets—We have custom made HH cycling gilets. Although designed for cycling these gilets are equally useful for running, keeping your core warm. They are quality garments, shaped for a snug fit . There are a number of spares in adult sizes. Cost £45. See Ali or Rick

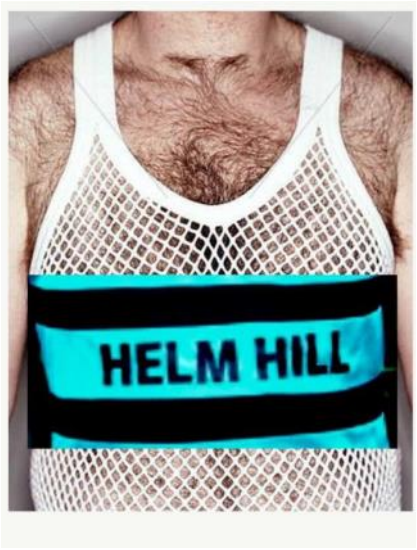




Gardening/wet weather gloves (?): Hayes Gdn World

Bobble Hats—
bigbobblehats.co.uk





Olly Waters models the new Helm Hill 'Stay-Cool Vest' for summer night-wear or hospital wardwear



New In!

HHR Monarch Outfit—for those important occasions where more formal attire is appropriate

NEWS from HH RACING SICKBAY



We're not really sure which bit of Michael Ainsworth this is….but he did this falling off his bike in the pub car park after training! And he swears he never touched a drop. Actually, really what bit is this?



Some people will do anything to get out of a road run



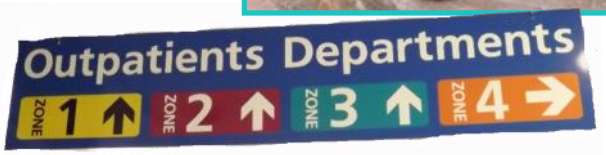


Jack: So Doc, ….Josh's incapacitating thigh 'heamatoma', which resulted in Georgia and Ali spending 4 hours chaperoning him off Ben Nevis after his fall while everyone else was hanging out in the sunshine drinking cold lager…. is just really just fancy medical talk for 'a bruise' and shouldn't stop him clubbing till 2:30am and walking 3 miles back to the campsite?

Doc: ..hmm...yup



Bianca took a proper tumble amongst the rocks while descending Ben Nevis. Luckily her Helm vest was unscathed apart from a bit of mud...and...er blood stains.



Lucy Spain has been allowed back on the fells after a bout of pneumonia!

Pathetic excuses!

"I can't come out running on the fells because…

'My kitten Tigger, is having the snip and I'll need to keep an eye on him to make sure he's ok.'

'I've cracked my ribs' (Adam P)

'It's too hot, I'm going climbing.'

I'VE RECCE'D IT—FOLLOW ME!

Our yearly points competition for less-than-perfect efforts.

Cockley Beck Surprise - Admittedly this years Duddon race was a pea-souper. However Cockly Beck is way way way lower than Wrynose Sharon! **5 pts Sharon Taylor**



Striding Descent - Grisedale HS where both Brian and Bill C decided to combat Striding Edge instead of heading to Nethermost Pike, from the top of Helvellyn - thereby adding 1 mile and another 10 minutes to an already hard enough race! Bill did get a beer for this at prize giving though. **5 pts each Bill Coupe & Brian Thomson**

Hodgson Relay Car-Key Fiasco: The relay season is always a great opportunity for incompetence with a large audience. Mike ainsworth gains major points for not only locking his own car keys in car but Adam Perry's too along with Adam and Pauls Aitken stuff. Mike A being a trustworthy soul then leaves Carrie's car unlocked with all their kit in it and hides the keys so no one can actually steal the car - just all the kit inside that is worth about twice as much as the car. **5 pts + 5 pts Mike A**

Kentmere Sort-of Horseshoe. Running confidently from the trig on High Street down towards the path on Mardale Ill Bell. Passed a group of 5 people looking at a map. I shouted out the compass bearing I was following and thought nothing more of it. Picked up the tourist path and then dived off on the runners trod to avoid the rocky stepped descent. I had gained some company all was going well until we dropped out of the cloud and I saw a body of water... Haweswater? Too small for that... Kentmere Reservoir! Arrrgh I had picked up a sheep trod. Nothing for it but to climb back up, find the original trod and press on!!! Happy days 5 pts Liz Berry

180! Orienteering Nunwick Hall, Liz and Wendy S selected the long course even though the lady tried hard to get them to do the short one. "We were doing really well up until control 9. Control 10 proved elusive and we kept returning back to control 9 to start again. We liberated some lambs that appeared to be separated from the flock and after discovering we were still going the wrong way we back tracked, said lambs were now on one side of the fence and the rest of their family appeared to be on the other! (you just can't help some animals!) On returning to control 9 once more I suddenly realised that although I was lining my North lines on my compass with those on the map I was turning the bevel so that the N was in fact facing South... heyho! **5 pts each Liz Berry & Wendy Smith**

Get off my land! Sam Gibbs was escorted off a live firing range in Devon. In typical fell runner fashion he'd left his map/compass at home so decided to just 'freestyle' a route...then wondered what the red flags meant...and the sound of gunfire...and the rambo-like dude speeding towards him on a quad bike. Sam commented "B*****d wouldn't give me a lift...made me run up the hill smelling his fumes." **5 pts Sam Gibbs**

New race line at Dungeon Ghyll Race: Lizzie received a DQ for following Martin Mickleson-Baron on the descent [Editors note: yes we can all spot the flaw in this story too]; ended up rock climbing down the most horrible route with some Ambleside runners; missing the checkpoint by Stickle Tarn and only realising I had done so when Rich Smith asked me if I had seen the dead sheep on the path! I went and confessed my sins immediately and received my DQ which means I couldn't even complete the Helm Championship **5 pts LizBerry**

JACKPOT DOUBLE POINTS as Will Acland and Paul Reilly re-enact the classic 2010 HBMR get-lost-in-the-mist-while-following-a-wall-line from Threshwaite Mouth on the HBMR 2018, the exact location from which "Ive Reccied It, Follow Me!" was first confidently, but ultimately embarrassingly shouted, to be followed sometime later with 'Er….hang on'. **10 pts each Will Acland & Paul Reilly**

CAPTION COMPETITION





SENIOR TRAINING GROUPS

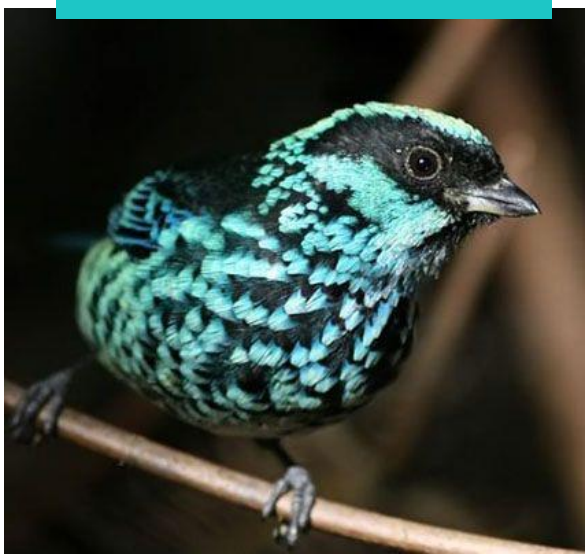
Wed night training: Senior groups are now identified by colour system akin to ski/mtb runs: ranging from White-Green-Blue-Red-Black (black being the one generating the most sweat relatively)

Feel free to go in a different group depending on your training / racing. If you're finding it too easy, move up a group. It's also a good way to meet everyone.





WILDLIFE CORNER



Next bumper edition Deadline: end of April 2019

Favourite races send us an article—as short / long as you like!

Race reports—send us an article, as short / long as you like!

Want to see something / contribute something?

Recipes/Misendeavours/Poetry……..

All suggestions / contributions welcome.

Send to: newsletter@helmhill.co.uk

Pics

We're always grateful for pics from the fells. Check out the following for excellent race pics:

James Kirby Photography

Dobo: Fellrunner.net

Woodentops: Woodentops.org

Steve Wilson Photography