HELM HILL NEWS

COVID-19 LOCKDOWN EDITION
SPRING 2020



CHAIRMANS' BIT—TIM MURRAY



What a strange few weeks. Everybody has been affected in some way or another and people will have been experiencing a whole mixture of emotions as they come to terms with recent events. As a running club our weekly routine came to an abrupt end at the end of March and we've had to get used to a whole new way of enjoying our sport but, true to the spirit of Helm Hill there have been loads of creative ideas from our fantastic members to inspire us and keep us active.

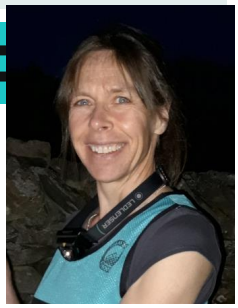
Big thanks to all those who have helped to keep us motivated and active by setting virtual and real challenges...special mentions to Ben Procter for keeping the Black Group sweating , David Griffin for his mind bending distance verses height challenges, Sam and Marvin Gibbs for setting some orienteering challenges, John Bagge for giving us a reason to combine strength and conditioning with rearranging our book shelves, all the coaches who have been keeping in touch with their groups, David Ratcliffe for his daily musings, Janie Oates for reminding us what we used to be able to do via the Club Instagram page, Pete Bland Sports for keeping the kit discounts coming our way, and to the many others who have been encouraging, giving kudos, keeping in touch and helping us to keep functioning as a club.

There have also been some astonishing individual performances.....Jonah's Kendal Green marathon and Becky's 26.2 mile garden run to name but two. We've also tried to keep the normal Club activities functioning as best we can.....a quick update on a few things

- The planning for the 2020 British Relays is still in full swing. The Team is working on the basis that the event will go ahead on the **17th of October** but are fully prepared if Government advice means that we have to rearrange. Thanks to the many people who have volunteered to help across the weekend.....we'll keep you up to date with developments as they happen.
- The Club Colours Challenge 2020 has been launched in new and exciting format.....big thanks to Mike A, Lorna A, and the Coaching team for helping to pull this together.....and to Billy P for the shout out!
- Big thanks to Rick for this Newsletter.....it will take more than a global pandemic to stop publication!
- Committee Meetings have now joined the Zoom revolution.....if there are issues you think we should be discussing or you have ideas you want to put forward just let us know!
- **Date for your Diary** - we are still planning to have our annual Awards event if guidance at the time allows. It's been provisionally booked for Saturday **5th December** at the Castle Green Hotel. It will be a daytime event so keep it free!

I'm not sure when we will back racing or meeting up again as a Club.....but when we do it's going to be great!
In the meantime, look after yourselves, keep active and hope to see you on a fell somewhere soon.
Tim

JUNIOR COORDINATORS BIT—LORNA ASKEW



Although it seems a long time ago, we had some great racing in the Kendal Winter League at the start of this year. As always, juniors turned out in all weathers to give gutsy performances.



Who would have won which categories in the Winter League? ... we will never know.

The point is that runners took the opportunity to enter races and have a go. It is so important to be brave and enter a race; to have a try at something whenever the opportunity is available, because you simply don't know when you'll get the chance again. You never know what is going to happen that might stop you going to the next race...

If you took part in some races before lockdown began, make sure you list them on a club colours sheet;

You can add to your club colours list 2020 by completing challenges from the 2020 Club Colours Challenge sheet. This is for Seniors as well as Juniors.

The idea of the club colours 2020 challenge card came out of a discussion when Helm Hill Junior and Senior coaches got together via Zoom. When I arranged the meeting, I really didn't know what we could do – I knew that some coaches are having to work very hard at the moment as they are keyworkers, some are working in the evening and looking after their families in the daytimes, others are maybe not well, others are maybe struggling because of life's present restrictions, so perhaps between us we didn't have any capacity to arrange anything for our members. However, as a team, we began to generate some ideas by simply talking with each other. The discussion gained momentum and an idea began to take shape. After the meeting our Coaches' Whatsapp group was pinging regularly with ideas firing into it, then Tim Murray and Mike Ainsworth collated these and gave them written form, Billy Procter made a launch video, Dave Appleyard made a Club Colours Challenge Helm Hill website page and created the email address to receive the photos. Coaches contacted their groups to tell them about the challenge and, hey presto, before the end of that week decorated pebble art started appearing on summits, children are studying maps, others are searching for the flattest place possible in which to run 1km as fast as they can … it's all happening.

Please take the opportunity to be a part of this – you may not get the chance again!, Lorna.

CAPTAIN'S BITs—MIKE AINSWORTH & SHARON TAYLOR





Well that was unexpected! It goes without saying that I hope you are all well and thanks to all those who are working hard to keep those services going that we all rely on. No doubt everyone's experience of this situation will be different and it is going to be a long haul getting out of this but we will do it....and running should help!

I've been really pleased to see lots of you (from a distance!) out and about when I'm out running or cycling. Do say hi if you see me as it's always good to chat.

I've also seen from strava some inspiring self challenges; a vertical k on the helm from Adam O, the fastest (to date!) 18 holes of Kendal golf course from Mark A, a 100 brunt knotts in one year from Sharon T and a new route to scout scar from Janie O! My own personal favourite challenge so far (thanks Ben P for setting this) resulted in me managing 28 continuous reps of Kendal castle in a 50 minute absolute pain cave! I'm not sure if anything other than a global pandemic could have provided such levels of motivation!

With this in mind I'm really pleased to have worked with the coaches to come up with a club colours challenge bingo card for us all to try. It's open to everyone in the club to complete as many or few as they wish with each counting as one 'race' towards your club colours. It would be really positive to hear your stories and see pictures and videos of how you are completing (and adapting) these so make sure you send us your successes and failures (I might try baking a cake)! My thanks to all those who helped pull this together.

Finally....racing! I said last time in the newsletter that I really wanted to see you all racing and enjoying this. It's fair to say I've not yet achieved this!! I enjoyed a chat with Billy P yesterday and couldn't agree more with him that I really miss this...even the pre race nerves and hypochondria! I know that some of you have been challenging each other to virtual races and I fully support this. Good news for those who need a fix is that I'm hoping we can get together a format for a club virtual race series soon and so watch this space! Nothing hurts more than racing your club mates right?!

Look forward to seeing you all soon. , Michael

Usually my bit focuses on summarising what the ladies have been up to on the racing scene.....not much to report as we only got to the beginning of March but I recon it would have been another great one as we started with a team win in the first (and probably last) British Champs race of 2020 in Wales for both the open and V40 ladies.....roll on 2021!

I am loving the new club colours challenge that the coaches have devised for us all, I have made a start with another Brunt Knott run to the trig which I never realised coordinates with the Helm Hill vest!

After a day of trying (and failing) at being a teacher it is now time to get back to my day job which has now become an evening with the laptop.....keep sharing all your running adventures to keep me sane and all of us inspired. Sharon

IT'S HERE!!! The Helm Hill Club Colours Challenge 2020!!

We know that you want to earn your Club Colours in 2020....but with all racing cancelled how are you going to do it??

**Well, linked here are details of the 2020 Club Colours Challenge.....25 Challenges to get your creative juices flowing and your heart rate up! Each completed challenge is equal to a completed race. So, if you've done 5 races this year you need 7 challenges to get your half colours....and 19 challenges for your Full Colours. **

All Helm Hill Juniors and Seniors members are eligible to have a go!

Just complete the Challenge, add it to your Club Colours sheet and let your coach know when you've done 12 or 24!

We'd also love to see how you are getting on so send any photos to the email on the attached sheet.

A Big thanks to Michael Ainsworth, Lorna Askew and all the coaches who helped to pull this together....what a team!

**Everything you need to know is on the grid but if you have any questions just ask....and most importantly....Have fun!! **

Club Colours Challenge 2020!

1. Pick a challenge
2. Just do it! ……make a record of how and take a photo/video which you can send to photochallenge@helmhill.co.uk
3. Record it on your club colours sheet https://www.helmhill.co.uk/pdfs/Helm%20documents/HHR_race_colours.pdf
4. Earn your club colours by sending it to your coach once you've done 12/24 challenges **or** races (remember those!) in 202(

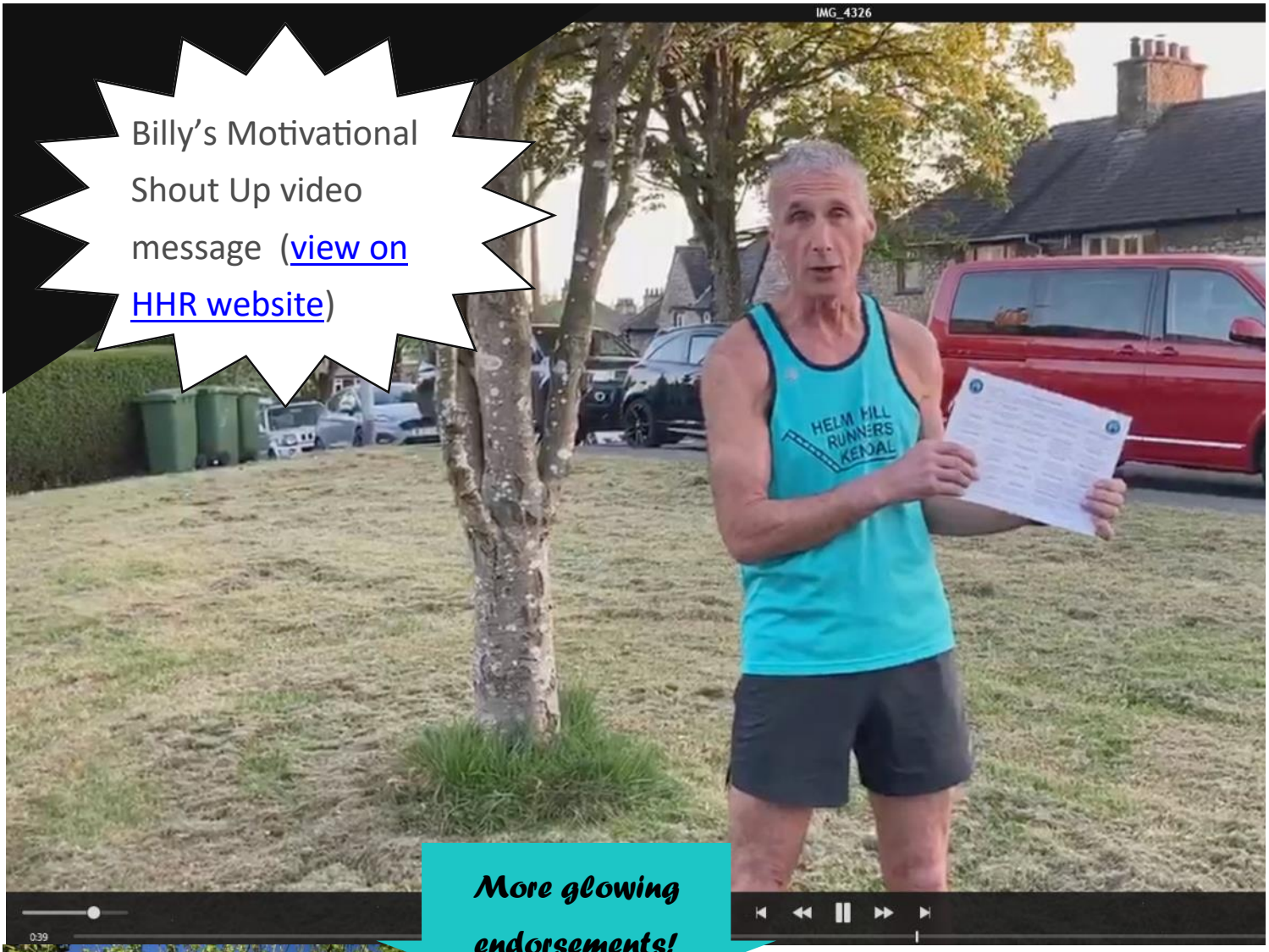
DOWNLOAD

Trip to a Trig *Visit any trig point and take a photo*	**River runner** *How many different named rivers or streams can you cross in one run?*	**Joe Wicks** *Do Joe Wicks' PE lesson....every day for a full week! Find him on YouTube at 9am.*	**Race day** *Organise a race day for everyone in your house*	**Sports Journalist** *Write an article for the Helm Hill newsletter. Pick your favourite running subject and away you go!*
GPS(peller) *Write something on your run using your GPS trace – bonus points for font style!*	**Headtorch heaven** *Go for a run in the dark!*	**Kilometre record** *Run your fastest ever Kilometre*	**Route planner** *Pick 4 landmarks near your house, plan the best route between them and run it! It could include a church, a bridge, a statue…you decide!*	**Pebble Art** *Decorate a pebble/stone with your own Helm Hill design and leave it at a summit*
Summit Selfie *Take a run to the Helm and photograph yourself at the trig point*	**Bleep test** *Set up a Bleep Test at home (there's a free App for this)….challenge your parents or someone else in your household!*	**Running gamer** *Create a new running game for your group and test it with your household*	**Team chef** *Pick a team GB athlete, your coach or another runner from Helm Hill then design a full day's menu to help them stay fit*	**Map Explorer** *Find each of a church, some water, a bridge, wood and wall corner on a map then link them on a run.*
Which way now? *Complete an orienteering course e.g. Scout Scar lockdown O course (link below) or your own!* https://www.facebook.com/groups/2555675201312743/	**Advertiser** *Create an advert for the best running club in the world to encourage people to join.*	**Home Mile** *Measure out a mile in your house/garden and then run it!*	**Only way is up** *Run uphill for a total of 300m in one run by doing reps on the same hill. That's 10 times up the side of Kendal Castle!*	**Trigtastic** *Visit all three trig points around Kendal in 1, 2 or 3 runs! That's Benson Knott, Scout Scar and The Helm*
Warm up & down *Design a 5 min warm up and warm down session for your running group. Take a video of you testing it out at home.*	**Flying Postman** *Do a run that visits 5 or more Post Boxes…. draw a map of your route at the end and post it back to yourself!*	**Cake Bake** *Bake and decorate a 'Helm Hill' Cake. Make sure you take a photo of it before you eat it!*	**Twenties plenty!** *Run as far as you possibly can in 20 minutes. Why not compare distances with your friends and family?*	**Tour de Kendal** *Organise, plan and complete a one hour bike ride*

How to complete the challenges Each completed challenge is worth ONE RACE on your Club Colours sheet….**download colours sheet** Races (remember those?!) still count towards club colours so record those too! You can choose to do as many or as few of the challenges as you wish in the remainder of 2020. Take pictures, videos, write up your achievements and send these to photochallenge@helmhill.co.uk Complete a Club Colours sheet as normal for your coach to sign off All welcome so come on seniors lets at least have some funky cakes!!

Rules Please follow all relevant guidance on social distancing etc. from the Government at the time you are undertaking any challenge Don't put yourself or anyone else at unnecessary risk ….stay safe! All challenges should be completed from your front door (not the cake bake?!) or in your house (yes…the cake bake)! Make sure you tell your Parents/ Guardian which challenges you are doing and maybe take them along! Follow 'The Countryside Code' (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code) **And most importantly…..Have Fun and Enjoy!! We look forward to hearing about how you are doing!**

Billy's Motivational Shout Up video message (view on HHR website)



More glowing endorsements!

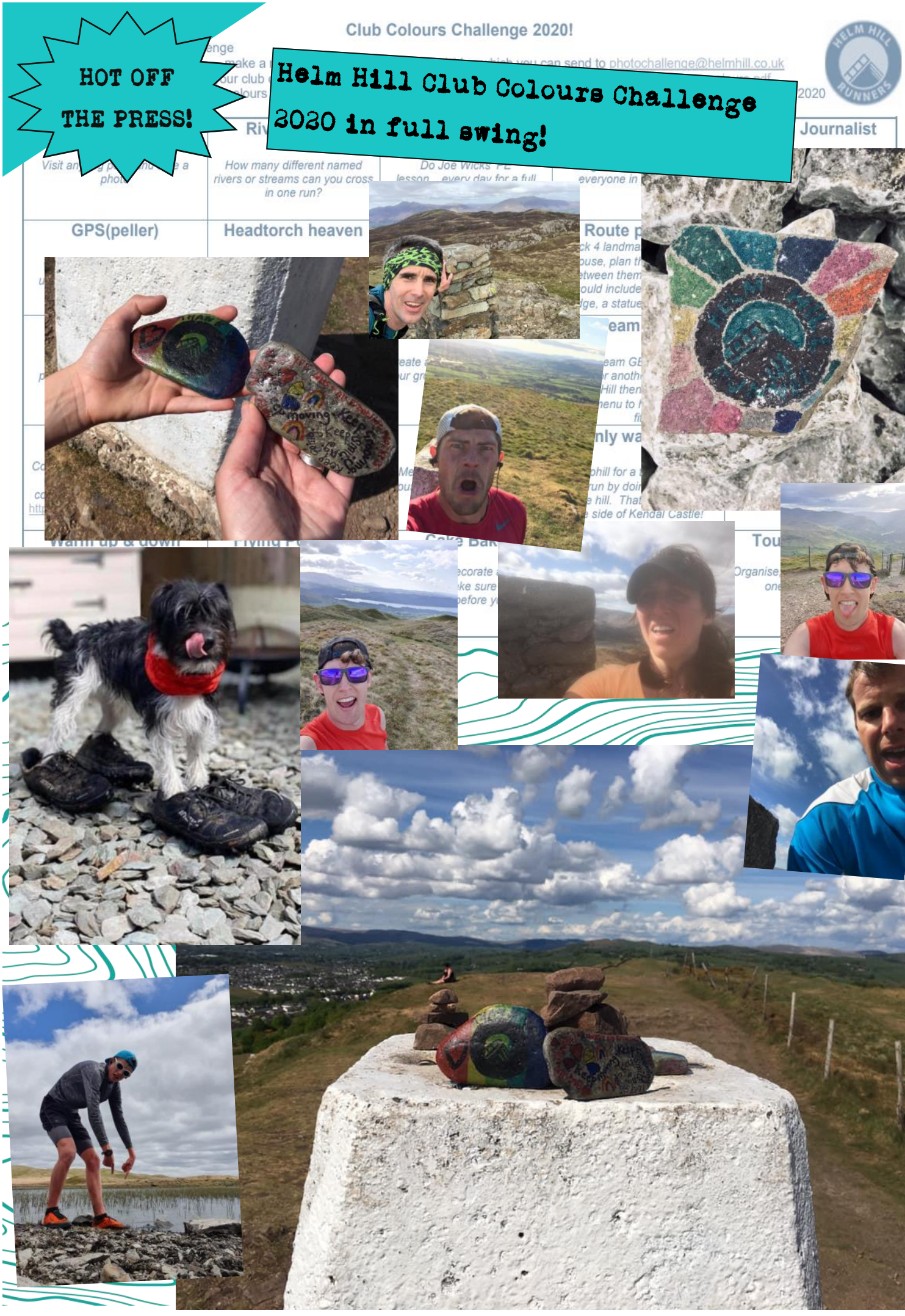






HOT OFF THE PRESS!

Helm Hill Club Colours Challenge 2020 in full swing!







POST OFFICE
4.30pm
11.00am

POST OFFICE
HELM HILL


AN BANKS




British Champs, race 1 (well, the only one!) : Ras yr Aran,

The 2020 British Champs got off to a cold, wet and wild start in North Wales at a cracker of a race....before the whole series was called off due to Coronavirus.

The weather forecast was a tad grim and runners and marshals had to contend with poor visibility, driving rain and 40+ mph winds. Its always very wet underfoot so no real change there! It was cold—so cold that Adam Perry was wearing 3/4 tights, a long-sleeved thermal top AND a buff/wrag thing round his neck.

Thanks to Stephen Wilson for the pics. Grand Day Out Photography here





The (Continuing) Great Carnethy Battles: Helm Hill Women Do It Again in 2020



The Carnethy Five Hill Race, held in the Pentland hills just south of Edinburgh, always attracts a top class field tackling a gruelling 10km course that involves 760m of ascent over five heather-clad summits, in February when the weather is usually arctic. Bagpipes, a pistol, snow, wind, school dinners, the chance to win swords ⚔ and best of all a night on the pop in K town afterwards make it a must do!!

The race perhaps acts as a mirror of the clubs development and ascendency from the early days when a car-full of short-race specialist guys made the annual trip, to a minibus load of men & women with the mens team mixing it with the best and in good years winning, to 2 whole minibus loads and the womens team becoming a dominating force.



Dave Appleyard's account of the wild and windy 2020 race:



'It is difficult to explain the appeal of this event at times, after all it's a long drive for a short race and the weather is usually grim. However as an early season measure, the coolest prize in fell running, and the now long tradition the club has of making the trip, means the day never disappoints. 2020 was no different with storm Dennis gathering strength throughout the day, the knowledge that it would probably go ahead (after all 2016 was a blizzard), all adding to the apprehension and excitement. After the initial climb to Scald Law we were in the full blast of the storm making our way to the turn at West Kip and at times it seemed faster progress could be made on all fours. The ladies of course were defending their title and with an amazing run Hannah came home first, Sharon second and Kelli fourth. The men managed second team with Rob 8th Mike A 10th, Adam P, and Josh J. Rob was 2nd v40, Sharon 1st v40 and Bianca 3rd v40. Results. Thanks to CarnethyHRC and their marshals whose ability to stand upright is remarkable.'

Helm Hill were instrumental in pushing for a Womens trophy to match the means and in 2017 to their lasting credit, Carnethy commissioned one. 2019 Helm women won the women's team trophy and returned it to the place of it's inception. In 2020 Helm women laid further claim to it by winning it again!! Raaaaggggghhh!!!







Pics: Carnethy HRC

Slow train coming - David Griffin

The Silverdale Circuit is a race that takes place in England's smallest AONB, as it is run in February it is subject to some really awful weather and, 2020 was no exception. The previous year was a mini heat wave, 2020 was the polar opposite. The race was run between two storms, Ciara and Dennis, it was actually held on the day Dennis was due to make land, so as a safety precaution, the race was shortened to 17 miles. Ciara's floods left a feeling of foreboding as to what Dennis could bring.
One of the nice features of this race is there is a walking class for those who don't want to run or feel the need to start their fitness regime for the year. My partner Stephanie, son Michael partner Victoria and one of Stephanie's sisters made it a family day out, plus a good friend Lorraine, all set off in the walking class. With an hour to kill, I took our dog, Flo, for a little walk, she was running the course with me, yes a race with a dog! What could possibly go wrong?

9:00 am, the race brief, then off we go! Flo was so excited as I went forwards, she went backwards to join my friend Paul!! A portent of things to come? We corrected our trajectory towards the exit of the cricket field and made it into the deer park, we had caught up with the leading bunch, are we going too fast? Yes, according to Flo, no according to me. Flaming dog was still looking for Paul, it felt like I was running dragging an anchor!



Through Beecham village and into the fields. Great no sheep, dog off lead, mistake! Flo went to round up the runner behind me, which was a tad annoying as we were in the lead!!! I slowed for them to catch up and apologised to the runner, he took the lead for about 200 meters, then I thought, Sod this we need to get away
A plan. As soon as I caught up with Stephanie I was going to ditch my running partner as I was in danger of winning this race. Eventually I caught up with Stephanie and shouted….

"will you take the dog"

"What are you doing in the lead?" She replied

"Thanks for the encouragement " said I

Ten seconds later I'm off, dogless, a quick look behind and feeling "lighter" I sped up a notch.

Down through Leighton Hall and then through the bird sanctuary, I started to think this could be my day, finally. I had opened up a fair gap, about 40-50 seconds and I was feeling good!
From here on in it is easy fast running but easy to go wrong. I kept thinking about my pace, not too fast, remembering, it's the pace that kills, not the distance.
I flew through the only check point at the Gaskell Hall in Silverdale, taking everyone by surprise, I entered and threw down my tag and was off, no cake and drink for me, I'm in a hurry and besides I'd pre stashed a drink a bit further on in the route.



It's funny, you can't go anywhere without bumping into Helm Hill runners. On the way up to the fairy steps I was greeted by big smiling faces, Ali being one, sorry I didn't stop I'm on a mission.
The weather was being kind(ish) as I reached the fairy steps, legend has it if you don't touch the sides when you climb through the cleft in the rock, the fairies will grant you a wish! Sod that I thought, I have to make my own destiny come true. About 4 miles to go, no one behind, concentrate, pace, pace, check your pace.

Back into the deer park for the final mile, OMG! I think I'm going to do it!

Concentrate, pace, run like hell its not far to the finish, through the deer park and back into the cricket field, a furtive look back, no one in sight! Great, look towards the finish, no ones there except the RO!! Where is everyone! There's always people at the finish! Oh yes, I'm going to be home first. My first first.

OK it's a low key run but, it is a race with some decent runners taking part but a race non the less. The best part was that I was also the first vet 60!

A slow train coming.



SHORT RACING SHORTS



Hannah starts the year on top form! - Hannah had great wins at Stybarrow Dodd & Carnethy

Helm women retain Carnethy trophy—see article

KWL! - Thanks to all those who organised races, helped marshal and turned up to race at this years decimated KWL race series. We had difficult conditions and who'd have thought Cautley would be one of the few races that took place! Roll on 2021. First Sunday in Jan. Put the date in your diary.



KWL Shoe donations!

Ben Proctor had a great idea to help rid our understairs cupboards of all those unused fell-shoes. At Birkrigg KWL on 26th Jan he organised a 2nd hand shoe sale with all proceeds going to Kendal Mountain Rescue

Ben's great idea raised over £450 which was donated to Kendal Mountain Rescue.

In addition they helped get two local lads out running on the fells who loved it.....



Thanks to Ben for organising and all those who donated or purchased.



The Trigger Race—Sam Gibbs

The Trigger. *The. Trigger.* That sounds intimidating, I thought. Fast forward a few years and as I was perusing the FRA handbook it caught my eye again. 36km + 1400m climb. Sounds do-able, particularly as I'd done quite a bit further in recent races. But in January? Here lay the real unknown.

The first problem with The Trigger is the logistical nightmare. It's a point-to-point race which means that you either need to be super-organised and prepared for a VERY long day out, or you have an incredibly understanding person to do all the driving…cue a 'quiet drink' with my (retired) father. 4 pints in and BOOM – I drop the bombshell. Some crap about 'Quality time together'. He takes the bait. Better get entered.



12th January 2020. It's 5.30am and pissing down. I'm at some godforsaken service station somewhere north-east of Manchester on the M60. Drunks, dealers, fighting couples and me in tight lycra buying a lukewarm coffee for my dad. He's starting to regret his decision to drive me… As we close in on Marsden, we ascend into thick, thick clag – the stuff of 10mph nightmares. I'm really beginning to regret entering this race. The fabled 'bad patch' had already started – 2 hours before we even set off. I'm sure Marsden Rugby Club is a stunning venue on a summer's evening but now it's looking like the entrance to Hades. But worse.

Having had my kit checked by the legendary Nicky Spinks (she didn't recognise me), I retreat to the climate-controlled comfort of my dad's retired-persons car, which he has inadvertently parked ON the actual start line. The rain is now bouncing off the roof so hard it renders normal speech pointless. 'I'M GOING FOR A WAZ', I yell at my dad, at precisely 7.58 and 30 seconds. Don't want to be late for the pre-race talk at 7.59. With my hat on and hood up I don't hear a word of it, but clap half-heartedly for something or other.

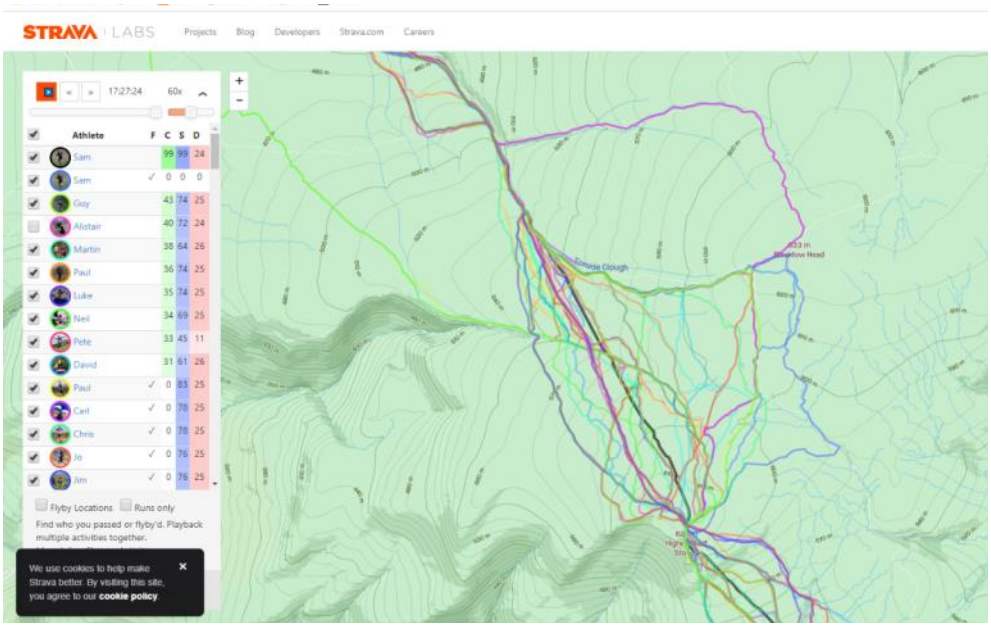
Off we set into a howling, freezing wind and driving rain. A mindless 5km up a bridleway passing 4 reservoirs. The bridleway resembles a river most of the way. The wind is funnelled down the valley compounding the misery. It's like Satan has designed an uphill parkrun, then had a pee on it for a laugh. And added gale force winds.



Eventually we top out at a random road adorned with Mountain Rescue types (My only thoughts are 'Who actually uses this road? It comes from nowhere and goes nowhere'). My second celebrity spot of the day is Jasmin Paris. She smiles and says something to me as she glides past. I fix her with my best smile, but she is probably still haunted by my frozen-faced, furrowed brow as I try, unsuccessfully, to accept her motivational small-talk.

Then we start on the slabs towards Black Hill. For some reason, whoever laid these did so at 30° - the precise angle a Mudclaw will no longer grip in wet conditions. After ice dancing most of the way, we reach the summit and the wind suddenly makes its presence known. My hood is up and the rain is now permeating every fibre of my being. Semi-frozen, the nav now kicks in. We descend through a haze towards Crowden Little Brook and as we approach the river I notice a queue of runners. Crowden 'Little' Brook is now Crowden 'Brown, Churning Freight Train' Brook. The chap ahead leaps and is swallowed whole, re-appearing several metres downstream (he retires with hypothermia 20 minutes later). This is the precise point I start to think 'this is actually quite dangerous'. The lady behind me looks worried. I suggest we go upstream 30 yards. I leap across to a boulder and beckon her over. She just reaches my outstretched arms. She doesn't thank me, but fixes me with a stare, then turns to assist the next runner. As I continue my race, I glance back to see the same favour reciprocated over and over. Those moments define fell running. Human need trumps overall place.

Crowden comes and goes with a weirdly serene run through conifers alongside the A57 Woodhead road. Then comes the ascent to Bleaklow…the most feared summit in the Dark Peak. The main issues are the crazily vague trig compounded with the maze of peat groughs heading in virtually every direction except the one you want to go. The map and compass were out here, and as I reached the last semi-credible feature it became the only way to get to the top. The major issue is running nearly 2km across featureless moor. 20 minutes into the clag I saw a group who asked me 'Are you lost too?' 'No.', I reply…'We just aren't there yet'. Sure



enough, we eventually hit the sketchy summit trig. (Pic – I'm the black line heading SW. The point most of us split is about 2km from the top).

After a tricky section to Snake Pass I see my smiling father. He offers me some motivational advice – 'Well done, it looks bloody horrible further on'. I pass the ever-present Mountain Rescue and continue along the completely submerged Pennine Way slabs. We are required to head off down Within Clough at a certain point to minimise the environmental impact of the race, but judging by the Strava trace, some competitors really struggled with this advice!

Having passed a grave of a random crashed plane on the hillside, I began the ascent to Kinder Scout. Like a massive vee that funnels wind up its slopes, Kinder is a deeply unpleasant place to be on a day like today. I am by no means the most experienced runner in the world but I have never EVER had to wear all my kit... but today was the day. Waterproofs over winter tights. Mitts over sodden gloves. Two hats. As I hobbled past Kinder Downfall I became aware of how cold I was.... This was getting serious. KEEP MOVING, GIBBS. The clag had made me feel like I'd been running in isolation pretty much since Crowden. I stumbled over Kinder Downfall and caught two runners ahead...who started to head down to Hayfield...should I have called them back? As I reached the tricky Kinder trig they appeared out of nowhere...relief – perhaps mine more than theirs.

The final choice – quickly descend into the valley at the expense of a few hundred feet of climb and a kilometre or two, or stay high and chance the Edale bogs... Sod it. How deep can they be? Waist deep it turned out.

[pic4] Nearly there, then every runner's nightmare kicks in...that slow, bloody grind of thigh on thigh... 'It's OK, I'll run like John Wayne for the last 5km'... No chance. If only...YES, I'd brought a fun-size pot of vas with me...oh shit, my hand are like claws...can't open it...if only...and then, as if by magic, a young couple appeared out of the gloom.



Me - 'Please can you help me?' <face of utter DESPAIR>

Young man – 'Yeah, you need that opening?' <Why is this fell runner doing his lips?>

Young woman – 'Are you cold? You look freezing?'

Me – 'Y-y-y-eee—s-s-s-s. O-o-on-n-n-l-l-y-y 5-k—k-m to go'.

Young Man – <sudden realisation it's for my nether regions, not lips> – 'Do I need to wash my hands?'

Me – 'Iii havennnntt d-d-doubled d-dippped'.

Young Woman – <wtf?!>

I left the bemused (slightly disgusted) couple and continued to a safe distance before application of said lubricant.

The final few kilometres were done in an odd euphoric shuffle. As I descended the final hill, even the sun made appearance, but the wind ensured I stayed cold inside. A couple of hundred yards down the road and I'd done it. No fanfare, just a few spectators who politely, if wearily, clapped me in, and a friendly Mountain Rescue type patted me on the back and said 'Well done, mate'. I could have kissed him. And then the best bit...getting into the hot showers with ALL my kit on. I spent at least 20 minutes slowly undressing and feeling the warmth returning to my extremities, whilst contemplating what a great day out it had been.

Things I learned...

1. Don't underestimate the weather – I would have ended up in a world of poo if I'd tried to 'travel light'.

2. Don't underestimate the Peak District – maybe the hills aren't as big as up here, but believe me, they are more than a match underfoot – heather, mud and tussocky-bogs are definitely an acquired taste!

3. Don't be afraid. There is proper HARDCORE running outside Cumbria. If you do this and say 'It's easy', you are a better human being than me.

4. Get someone to do logistics. Massive kudos to my dad, Bob Gibbs. I would not be writing this if he hadn't been my taxi.

5. Last but not least, support Mountain Rescue. They were there every step of the way and deserve every penny raised by this race.

John Jones' Mountain Journey



Road to Mountain project - my first British Championship race

I started fell racing back in 1986 .. 34 years ago! In 2001 foot and mouth disease hit us. We couldn't run on the hills. I naturally started running on the roads. But always felt something was missing.

I started back on the trails again about 3 years ago. I found what was missing. The joy and freedom of running in a natural environment. I've always enjoyed challenges and like to set myself projects to help achieve my goals.

In 2017 my project was titled " Road to mountain ". Road racing to fell racing with the ultimate goal of running in a British Championship race. A key part of the project was always involving the family to make special memories.

Over the next few years many changes where made and goals set. Eventually in February 2020 I entered my first British Championship race in Wales. I was excited about the idea but also felt very dubious. I hadn't raced on the hills since the previous November and was just back from an extended holiday.

I hadn't attempted to run 10 miles and 3000ft for over 25 years. Could I get fit for this in 6 weeks? I drew up a training plan. It simply involved hills and more hills. Runs up to 10 miles and weekly speed sessions all on the local hills. Most of the runs were done with a headtorch in wet and windy conditions.

I organised a family weekend in Wales. My fell racing isn't just about me, but about going to new places with the family. They support me in everything I do. Family first and fell racing second.

The six weeks of training passed quickly and went well. I didn't step foot on the big fells. Only the local hills behind the house. It's really helped my confidence running faster now than I did all those years ago. It's true to say that age is only a number!

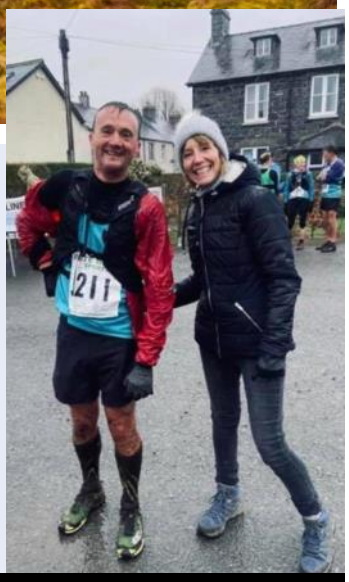


The day we travelled to Wales was bright and sunny. Although I knew the weather for race day was due to be poor. The day came and I was nervous but really excited. Susan helped with her calming influence. I made my way towards the start and could see the mist hanging on Yr Aron.

Surprisingly, I'd never raced in mist before and never raced on a mountain I'd never seen before. I warmed up with my Helm friends and enjoyed the chat about their race experiences. They reassured me that I would do great and enjoy it.

Luckily, just before we set off the rain stopped and there was a small window in the weather. The first mile was a steep climb on road. I should have taken advantage of this but instead sat back with the thought of nine hard miles ahead. Leaving the road and onto a muddy track which set the tone for the next four miles. Three hard miles followed into squally showers and gusty winds. I kept focused on the job in hand.





Finally , feeling very cold I was relieved to see the trig point on the top appear out of the mist. I felt elated.

From the top I turned as quickly as I could and suddenly found myself alone. This made me uneasy until I spotted a few other runners appear out of the mist.

The mist cleared gradually as I descended. I began to run faster and was filled with confidence once again. Suddenly , I caught my foot on a rock and unable to save myself , I fell forward into a pile of rocks. I picked myself up and looked down only to see a large gash pouring with blood under my knee. I got over the initial shock and set off again fairly quickly.



I got back into the flow again only to plunge knee deep into a bog. I carefully pulled myself out making sure I didn't leave my shoes behind. I was still focused but starting to feel a bit battle torn.

Thankfully the last few miles where incident free. I hit the grassy trails with relief and I started to run fast again. Coming down the road into the finish I could see Susan Laura , Stephen and my grandkids and all standing in the wind and rain cheering for me. They'd all stood there for over 90 minutes shouting hopefully " here's grandad ".



At the finish, I felt exhausted but elated. I've done what I'd set out to do. Completed my first British Championship race after 35 years of running. My Road to Mountain project was complete.

It's not the end .... it's the beginning.

The Rice Family do High Cup Nick

"Why can't you have a hobby like tapestry?"

Words: Jenny & family. All pics: Joe Rice



When my family mentioned at Christmas they'd like to come and visit on the weekend of 22 February, the first thing I did (obviously) was check which fell race we'd have to miss out on… Ah, High Cup Nick… hang on a moment, that's pretty much a trail run, it's well marked, simply goes up the valley, back the bridleway, and of course the weather will be like the previous year (when it was a Helm Hill club champs race) – unseasonably warm and sunny. So, I excitedly googled images of HCN, and showed off the amazing valley and escarpment to my mum (Susie), dad (Merv), brother (Joe) and sister in law (Ellodie). I raved about the soup, cake, general atmosphere, and it seems I sold it to them as a few weeks later they told me they'd entered – excellent news.

A few days (well, maybe a couple of weeks) later, I finally got round to logging into SI Entries to enter myself and Scully. What? It's totally full, but there were 500 places! And there's already 90 people on the waiting list. Oh shit. I told Scully the situation and we discussed our options…

1. Tell my family (who were all now in full training for their first Cumbrian fell race) and forget about doing it.
2. Don't tell them, enter and join the waiting list and hope for the best...
3. Don't tell them, enter and join the waiting list and hope for the best, whilst also sending a grovelling email to the RO Morgan Donnelly

We went with C.

Sent 21st January…

Hi Morgan,

My apologies for being a total pain - but my family (my parents, and my brother and sister in law) are visiting from Devon on the weekend of High Cup Nick. I had finally persuaded them all to do it, and they've all entered, and excitedly upped their training. The slight problem is that my husband and I just went to enter ourselves, and it's full!

We're on the waiting list... and I understand there's not much you can really do, but I wondered if there's any chance at all of bumping us up the list...?!

Sorry again... and great work on organising a fab race - I did it for the first time last year and loved it!

Many thanks,

Jenny

He kindly replied that same day:

Hi Jenny,

I'll see what I can do, but suspect you will not find out until much nearer race day.

Cheers,

Morgz

We decided to stick to the plan and keep our fingers crossed.

A couple of weeks later Morgan lets me know he's going to send out an email to all those entered asking them to consider if they are still able to run, and if not, he would allocate places to people on the waiting list. That same evening, I'm on the phone to my mum, and she let's me know that she's had an email asking if she can still do the run, she's a bit concerned about the distance and her training anyway, so she let's me know she's thinking of not doing it… No – that's not my plan! "Ah, yes, I got that email too." (I lie) "Don't be silly, you've done 10+ mile runs on Dartmoor, you're well prepared, you'll be fine…"

A few days before the race, and my families impending visit – still no news. I message my family to remind them of all the

kit requirements – Ellodie buys a new waterproof running jacket, everyone's a little nervous about needing to carry a map and compass - 'the course is flagged", I reassure them, "but you still need to bring one..."

It's the week of the race and finally an email arrives from SI entries inviting myself and Scully to enter – I email Morgan, "We've entered, thank you so much".

Phew, now we can relax. I check the weather forecast for the weekend… Oh.
It's not quite as bad as the Carnethy weather forecast (when I decided a weekend in the galleries and cafes of Edinburgh was a far better idea than attempting to crawl around the Pentland hills in 70mph winds), but it's not good - especially when your 60 year old mum is planning on taking part. High winds, chance of sleet/snow, feels like -8°C. I hope my family aren't looking at the weather. They are, but thankfully, they are only looking at the forecast for Dufton and not Cross Fell. I decide not to say anything and agree that the forecast looks reasonable.

The night before the race, the forecast worsens again, and there's also parking to consider, in a sloping field after weeks of rain. Although an email from the RO confirms that the parking field will be usable apparently… so the race is still on. We debate the merits of taking part in the race, especially when there's a lovely sunny morning forecast for Staveley - my brother pipes up, "Why don't we just go for a run in the morning from Staveley, and enjoy the sun - rather than drive for and hour to go and do a race in bad weather..." I've run out of arguments by then so decide to own up and explain why we can't just not do it. "Er, so we didn't enter the race in time, and were on the waiting list, but we didn't want to tell you. So we sent a pleading email to the race organiser and we got sent invites to enter earlier this week. So we really can't decide not to turn up because of the weather"...
Ah - looks like we're committed then.

The morning of the race Scully and I share a lift with Dave Griffin and Janie whilst my family travel in their car. We join the queue of vehicles trying to get into the field, and the visibly stressed parking attendants trying to get stuck vans out of the way. Dave drives over the matting into the field and gets stuck exactly where the parking attendant didn't want us… we get out and push as more and more cars arrive on the road and wait to enter the field.

I look up at the fells, except they're shrouded in dark, menacing clouds – it makes me shiver. I grab my stuff and head to registration, passing my family in their car. They wind down the windows - "I'm sorry!" I say, "Why can't you have a different hobby, tapestry or something," Susie says. I'm feeling sick with guilt that I've dragged them across Cumbria to do their first fell race in terrible weather.

We all register, but I decide to say to Susie, that she doesn't need to do the race - she could walk up part way to watch us come down, or to turn back if she gets cold in the valley. I'm getting worried that it's going to be like a blizzard up there, and I know she'll be out for 2 1/2+ hours… she's adamant she'll do it though. She's an adult, I reason, she's capable of making the right decisions.

Suddenly, more drama - Merv left his waterproof jacket in his room. We try to find someone with a spare, but Susie gives him hers and she wears her walking waterproof jacket (in hindsight it was probably good that she wore something a bit more substantial). The jacket is pink and turquoise and is quite snug, but he can get it on (but just not off again so easily!).


"...pretty much a trail run, it's well marked, simply goes up the valley, back the bridleway..."

We gather at the race start and get a quick family photo, and before I know it, we're off - and the weather is still holding off. I've never started a race thinking so little about how I'm feeling/running – I've just got worried thoughts running through my head – I hope they don't hate me, I hope Susie turns around if the weather turns, I hope her knee is ok (she tore her cruciate ligaments playing netball over 25 years ago, and has to be really careful on rough ground). As we turn off the lane and start running through the fields, the race suddenly seems a lot tougher than I remember, it's slippery, muddy and rough underfoot. The moment you turn the corner and the valley reveals itself is pretty special - thankfully there was a view of the whole valley at that point, and I just hoped they'd appreciate the views despite the horribly long, rocky, boggy slog up





the valley. As I got higher up the valley the wind whipped up, and I put my jacket on, then the hail started… uh oh. I pushed on, as the wind got stronger and funnelled up the valley, battering everyone, but at least pushing us in the right direction. At the top of the Nick, it was blowing the water backwards off the crag. Past the checkpoint, and now it was time for that long descent back to Dufton on the runnable (or so I'd told my family) bridleway. Surprisingly there wasn't the ferocious headwind you'd have expected, but… where was that lovely bridleway, this path was rocky, awkward and technical… Ooops, once again, all I could think of was how my mum would find this - she's not one for swearing, but I imagined her cursing me all the way down -– waiting for this promised path.

My mind had been so consumed by imagining my family's experiences, that I'd not quite realised how hard I'd been running, but as I came out of the clouds, I began to relax a little, and really enjoy the descent. A marshall shouted that I was 4th female, and I could see a runner ahead of me, so I pushed on to try and overtake, enjoying a brief moment of overtaking Sally Fawcett, before she pushed on again and dropped me! Then I saw a figure I recognised, Dave Griffin - so obviously I had to try and beat him – sorry coach! I held on to 4th female position, and finished 68th overall.



Soon after Janie finished, which meant Helm women had the first team prize with 1st (Sharon), 4th and 10th. Next up, Scully and then it was a tense wait for the first Rice family runner back… I walked out the lane to cheer on runners, and before I knew it, there was Merv - storming down the lane with a smile on his face. Phew! 1 down, 3 to go.

Just a few minutes behind Merv came Joe and Ellodie, also with huge smiles on their faces. I walked back to the race area to see them and they were all totally elated and buzzing. Just Susie left to finish. I walked back down the lane to

the last marshalls waiting at the bottom of the field. They couldn't give me an update on how many runners were left, but these last few runners coming through were pretty spread out. I realised she'd have had a lonely few hours out there. Chatting to the marshalls, they told me that they loved this race, they lived in the village and really enjoyed helping out each year. Three figures appeared at the top of the field, and I soon picked out which one was Susie, with her black jacket and green race pack, as she reached the bottom of the field we whooped and cheered, she was smiling, yes! What a relief! I ran with her along the lane towards the finish, where the rest of my family were shouting and cheering, Susie finished in 2 hours 46, and she was so happy not to be last!



Back in Staveley, we headed straight to the Hawkshead Brewery for celebratory beers before home to enjoy the wine and prosecco I'd won for 4th female and team prize (very useful!). It was the best evening – everyone was on a high from the race. We'd all had different experiences with the weather – the hailstorm Scully and I had been in on the way up the Nick, had thankfully moved on by the time the others started the steep climb. It was such a memorable day, I'm so glad we had this amazing shared experience, and they all had a new understanding of what Scully and I do most weekends when we say we're doing a fell race!



Here's what they had to say for themselves…

"I signed up for this race after Jen showing me photos from the previous year.. beautiful scenery, blue skies and sunshine! Also I do love a Rice Family Day Out! However it was not to be for us this year! Despite Jen worrying about me & suggesting I opt out I was determined to give it a go and once I'd started I was even more determined to finish. I can say I almost enjoyed it and was proud to have finished despite being almost last!"

Susie

"Queuing to park and seeing the cars slipping around in the field I remember thinking we have a strange way of spending a family weekend together! I would say I found the race a mix of Fun, Fear and Fatigue! Oh and the most stunning valley. "

Ellodie

"The idea of a February family trip to the Lake District to see Jenny and Scully was a great idea. Until I heard the idea of a forced family fell race. I like running, but not with a race number and several hundred runners... So I had this strange number pinned to my top, my first race in over 10 years and the Rice family competitive streak came

through. I immediately set my sights on beating Jenny (this is the only thing worse for her than being beaten by Scully), but I quickly realise that a weekend in Jenny's home, after she is beaten by her brother, who does not train for races, would not be enjoyable for anyone. So I opted to hang back, finishing about an hour behind just to make sure I don't upset her...

The route was stunning, on a nice day, it would have been a lovely day out."

Joe

HIGH CUP NICK

Driving 400 miles to a fell race is loopy if not mad.
Never been to the Northern Pennines, can it really be that bad.
The weather was atrocious, flooding after the torrential rain.
Where on earth will we park the car, this really is a pain.

Pre-race warm up completed, Ibuprofen had done the trick.
And lucky Dufton had a window for the start of High Cup Nick,
Head out the village and on to the hills, now this is my terrain
Slippy, sliding, squishy mud – and a view words can't explain

There in the distance, there it is, an impressive High Cup Nick.
From nowhere came the snowstorm, what a time to pick.
A long scramble to the summit – biting headwind on the journey home.
This really is a special place – on a nice day to come and roam.

In conclusion – it was a fab day, doing all the things I like.
On reflection – remind me – next year, I will go out on my bike!



Mervsworth, May 2020

KONG WINTER SERIES 2019/20—LINDSAY HARROD

Why I decided to sign up

I like doing races I haven't done before – partly because it's interesting and I might discover a new 'favourite' race, but also because it means I can't compare my time with that of previous years and – invariably – rue my increasing 'slowness'.

But there was one other important motivating factor that caused me to sign up to the Kong Winter Series: the first race (Two Riggs) happened to be on the same day as the Kendal Mountain Festival 10K so gave me the perfect excuse not to pay £10 to run on tarmac up Beast Banks and Brigsteer Road, then slither down the steep cobbles on the return. I like the idea of a race series, particularly when entering the whole lot in advance meant reduces the entry cost to about £5 a race. :-)

So, on to the races themselves:

Two Riggs 5.6 miles 945 ft on 16th November 2019

This one starts and finishes at a barn in St John's in the Vale and goes in a clockwise direction over High and Low Rigg, giving fantastic views of a snowy Blencathra. A couple of flat but very boggy fields at the end used up any remaining energy and I had that worrying thought of "Is this what dying feels like?!" as I tried to keep pushing to the finish without letting anyone overtake. Tea and biscuits in the barn.

S.O.B. (short for Stile, Outerside and Barrow) 5 miles 1640ft on 14th December 2019

It was blowing a gale and as I crested the summit of Stile, I was hit by the full force of the wind, accompanied by a painful hail shower. Fortunatetly, though, much of the route was on the sheltered side of the hills. Tea and biscuits in another barn, but they'd run out of hot water by the time I got there!

Clough Head 4.5 miles / 1870ft on 11th January 2020

The weather was really wild so a shortened course was used. It was as much as we could do to run and stagger to the top of the shortened course before being blown back down again. It wouldn't have been possible to stand had we gone all the way up Clough Head. Oh, and it poured with rain, too, so we got soaked, but that was nothing compared to the wind. Again, they'd run out of hot water for drinks by the time I got back to the barn, so I was glad I'd taken a flask of coffee with me to have whilst I got changed. The wind was blowing the coffee from my cup as I walked back to the car!

STybarrow Dodd 4 miles 2297 ft on 1st February 2020

As with Clough Head, the course had to be shortened due to the storm-force gales. We had the wind behind us on the way up to the turning point (the top of Sticks Pass) where the marshals were crouched down and leaning into the wind in order to stay on their feet. The roaring wind drowned our shouts of thanks. As soon as we turned back, we were straight into the wind and even though it was now downhill, it was hard to make forward progress at first, but it improved as we lost height. This time, race HQ was in the village hall instead of a barn – luxury – there were even toilets! And this time I got a hot cup of tea with my post-race biscuit. :-) (I'm easily pleased.)

Looppy Latrigg 5 miles 1598ft on 29th February 2020

There is a prize giving after each race in the series, but there are extra prizes for those who have done best in the series as a whole. To qualify, you have to complete at least four of the five races, but that must include this final one up, over and round Latrigg. Unlike in the previous races, I managed to run all of this one and whilst breezy, conditions were generally good for running and even the hailstorm that hit as I began my final descent wasn't painful and lasted only a few minutes. Race HQ this time was in the small balcony cafe of the Kong shop and climbing wall. Although somewhat crowded, it was the best post-race facility because it was warm, provided hot drinks AND there was cake!!

I can recommend them – something to keep your racing legs ticking over during the winter months and even the January and February races don't clash with Kendal Winter League because Kong races are on Saturdays, so you've no reason not to give them a try. Particularly if you like getting changed in draughty barns!

HELM PROFILES—RUSS CANNON



When and why I joined Helm Hill Runners.
I first came to training and joined in 1996 because a friend I'd done a few runs with encouraged me to come along. Then spent the next year or so hanging on to the back of Billy's group. Hard work but taught me a lot.

Favourite races.
Ben Nevis, 3 Shires (pictured), Buttermere Sailbeck - a fantastic final descent if you know the line and really commit. Strangely Whitestones KWL.

Greatest achievement(s) so for.
Has to be my BG, 20 years ago. Also some minor success on mountain marathons with David White. No wins but places and category prizes. Always satisfying to navigate well, it didn't always happen.
Organising Shipman Knotts race for the last few years and keeping it low key, friendly and with tea and cake.
Being the first Cragrat.

Typical training week.
Used to train a couple of times in the week with a longer run or race or both at the weekend. Now I tend to race less but target my training to the main event (s) I have coming up. I used to suffer if I tried to do to much.

Future goals and ambitions.
It's no secret I am trying to do 21 consecutive Ben Nevis races, this year would be number 20 but that is obviously in doubt. To do more swimruns and swimrun events. I have a few other plans but like to keep those close to my chest until I am ready to go for it.

People in the the club I admire.
Billy for his dedication to the club, to juniors and his own training and racing. Similarly Shaun for the 'all or nothing at all attitude'. Adam, just being prepared to attempt the 24 hour record is massive.
Dave Richardson, who used to coach my group, for all his encouragement and support when I was getting into the sport.

Running tips for younger members.
There is always a positive to take from every run, race or training session even if you feel it has gone badly. You always learn something.



Russ on Robinson, the final summit of his BG

HELM PROFILES—LINDSAY HARROD



When and why did I join Helm? May (or thereabouts) 2007. I'd been a keen runner for many years, so it was only natural that I should look for a club to join, having recently moved to Kendal. However, when I researched Kendal AC, I was disappointed to find that they didn't train locally. Fortunately, when I mentioned this during a visit to Pete Bland's, the assistant said "You could always try Helm Hill." I was most surprised to learn that Kendal had Two running clubs! Looking at the Helm website showed me that the club was clearly biased towards fell running; training was Kendal-based; and the club kit was turquoise and black - far more my colour than the bright green and red of Kendal AC. (What? Doesn't everyone choose running club according to the kit colour?!) My decision was made and I've never regretted it.

Greatest achievements so far? Completing the Bob Graham Round in under 24 hours. This was the realisation of a long-held dream and nine months of focused training.

Favourite races? Cautley KWL because it's so steep that my climbing ability enables me to beat some people who are faster runners than me. (i e Races that don't actually require much running!) Carnethy for the atmosphere and post-race meal and showers. Blisco Dash for the entertaining prize giving and the pleasure of running in the fells on a midweek evening. Two Oceans - a 56K road race in South Africa, which has a fantastic atmosphere and the most stunning scenery.

Typical training week? My covid lock down training cannot include my usual swimming, Pilates, strength training or Ballet Fit classes at the Leisure Centre. I'm also really missing my weekly parkrun, not to mention races or Helm training sessions. However, I am still doing what I can to maintain some level of fitness with a mixture of steady runs over Scout Scar and Cunswick Scar, hill reps on the castle and golf course, some fartlek and a weekly bike and walk so that I can swim in Gurnal Dubbs, which I love. I'm also careful with my diet and very rarely drink any alcohol.

Future Goals and ambitions? Stay fit and uninjured enough to continue enjoying long runs in the hills with friends. Complete the Corbetts (I'm over half way). Set a new parkrun PB! Complete the Darren Holloway memorial race at Buttermere.

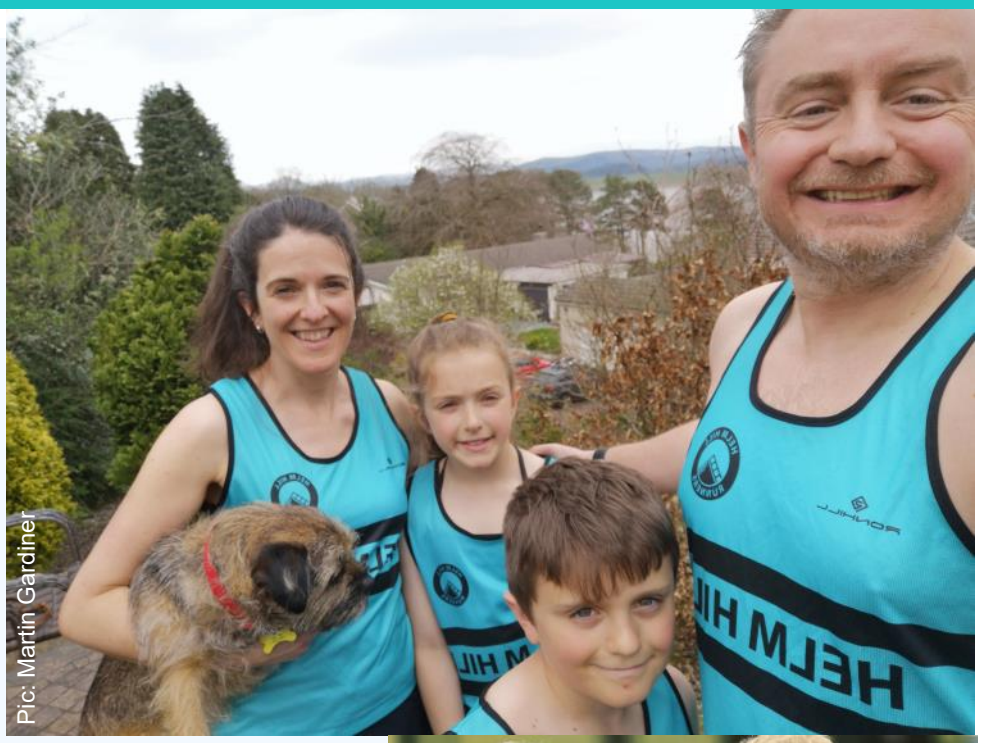
Persons/ People I admire in the club? Do you mean "Besides Billy?" Every Helm member who turns up to train and/or race, particularly when the weather is awful. Those who are always winning things (you know who you are!). Those who train and race even though they know they'll never win anything. Most of all, those who are kind, friendly and encouraging to others.

Running tips for younger runners? It's surprising how much your body can do if you can get your head round it. Training the way you think is just as important as physical training when tackling the really hard stuff. Most of all, though, run because you love being able to run, not just to win or set PBs.

Anything else? Thanks for having me in the club!

Lindsay is far too modest to tell you that she has completed all 282 Munros (a mountain in Scotland with a height over 3,000ft / 914.4 m). For many, a lifetimes achievement! Not only that, she is aiming to do them all again!

Life in Lockdown as a Sporty Family - Martin Gardner



Pic: Martin Gardiner

We have always enjoyed running and sports together as a family and Helm Hill members, myself, Ariane and 2 children Carla 11 and George 10.

Whilst we enjoy running and playing football, this year our daughter Carla was probably aiming for more milestones than the rest of us put together, so was particularly affected by Lockdown.

Carla aged 11 was 1 week away from National schools X-country trials for Cumbria at Loughborough, 2 weeks away from sitting her Black Belt grading in Taekwondo in Doncaster and 6 weeks away from finishing the football season with Blackburn Rovers (training 3 times a week at Blackburn) and was just beginning to hit a rich veign of form scoring twice away to Manchester Utd as Lockdown struck and all sports gatherings and events were cancelled.



Pic:kipax photography

Helm Hill was cancelled, football cancelled, races and matches all cancelled. Events we had been training and preparing for months and months for all cancelled! We were left wondering what now?

A palpable sense of disappointment and loss, and a feeling of months of training now gone to waste. We had to sit down and re assess the situation together, attempt to get some perspective and then come up with a positive plan of action to move forward together.

My sports background in the last 10 years had mainly been Ultra Running, having completed my Bob Graham Round in 2011, I then went on to do longer races including UTMB, Lakeland 100 twice, West Highland Way Race, Hardmoors 110, Lakeland 50 twice in a team with my wife Ariane, and Old County Tops fell race 6 times to name a few great events. In recent years I found myself mostly working long hours as a GP, Ariane also works long hours as a GP, and in my spare time coaching my sons football team and driving Carla around to compete in her various sports. Life was very hectic with little spare energy left except for some light running with Pedro our Dog. Miles were racking up on the car instead of my fell shoes and as a family our Carbon footprint was growing week by week!



Although Ariane and I have both still been busy at work, life in lockdown has enabled us as family to have more time together in a more meaningful way. Whereas before lockdown we would pass each other in the corridor on our return from work to jump in the car and rush kids off to various activities, whole weeks seeming to fly by without having chance to catch breath.

Within a week or two we had come up with ways to adapt to lockdown restrictions and put the luxury of extra time as a family together to good use. We have done a lot of longer dog walks

together, set up several new family running routes which we all do together, some timed challenges, others just for fun. We have started cycling again as a family and have been out a couple of times a week in the lovely weather and quiet country lanes with little traffic, we had not cycled together for 2 years! We have done quite a lot of online fitness as a family which seems to be the new norm following Joe Wicks and various HIT circuits done by different athletes. For her Taekwondo Carla has enjoyed doing the workouts with Jade Jones and Bianca Walkden, for football both kids have been following beastmode soccer on Instagram to practice their cone drills and close control tricks. They have been doing Zoom classes with their clubs, including strength and conditioning sessions with Blackburn Rovers first team fitness coach and regular Zoom Taekwondo classes. We have also had a lot more time to cook healthy meals and be more creative , a whole wall in the house now dedicated to kids art, the piano has been played more and the karaoke mic used to its full potential!

I haven't filled the car up with petrol for weeks now, we all have had a lot more energy to devote to quality family time, and I have sneaked in a few longer runs again, and even started to think about another long running challenge, would a 50 at 50 be possible??

We are now more comfortable with Lockdown and are thankful for the extra time and energy it has given us together as a family. Although we are all itching to get back to training with Helm Hill and getting back up into the Lakes, our next challenge will be when lockdown eases to see if we can manage to hold onto the positives it has given us as a family.









All Pics on page: Martin Gardiner

Being a Runner in Isolation—Cat Slater



This article first appeared in Cat's blog at https://up-and-running.org/

Pic: Cat Slater



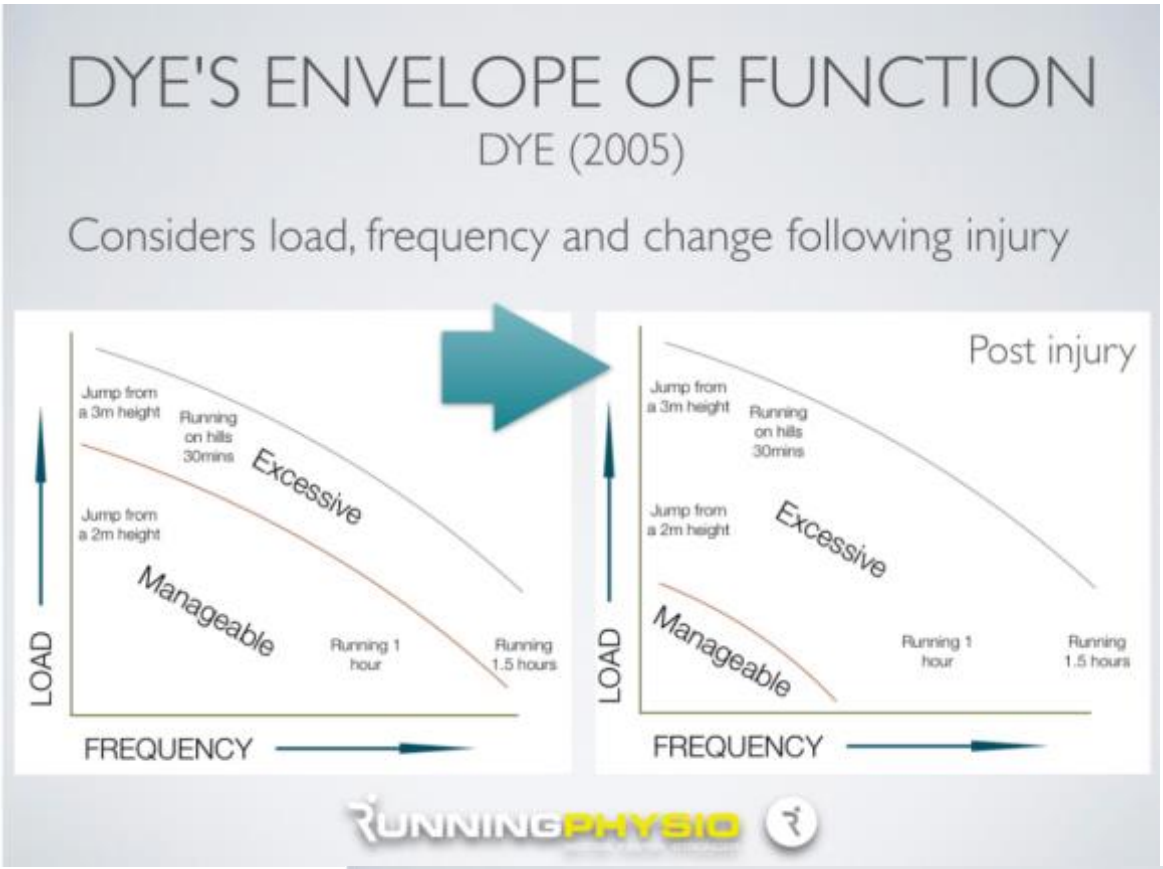
As a Physiotherapist observing the world right now I have decided to write down some thoughts with regards to the life of a runner during these times of restriction. The uncertainty of when these restrictions will lift and when races will resume are all questions no one has exact answers for but, regardless of this, I see runners pushing boundaries in the confines of their gardens, pushing the limits of that savored once a day exercise and racing themselves for that Strava segment or 10 km PB. I would be lying if I said I hadn't done this. One session I went out with the sole purpose of trying to get some segments but later questioned what I was doing. I am returning from injury, stuck in a period of isolation with no immediate races and goals so why am I doing this?

The mentality and mindset of a runner is one that is only understood by a runner and, as a Physiotherapist who treats a lot of runners, this is a fact that always needs careful consideration, especially when trying to rehab!

I've taken a step back these last few weeks to review my own training and consider right now, what is it that is important? I know my injuries are probably 95% better now so why am I not striving to gain that last 5%, work on some form and build up that base level of fitness back to where it was ready to peak at the point I will need it, that point when I know that races are back on?! I'm not saying I'm not going to chase Strava segments, who am I kidding, but perhaps I am going to do this in a more structured and meaningful manner.

A great resource in understanding your aerobic base is the book 'Training for the Uphill Athlete' by House, Johnston and Jornet (https://www.uphillathlete.com/ their website also has some free training resources) who explain in great detail, in a way that is easy to understand, how important it is to have a great aerobic base as this will provide a huge amount of capacity then to get fitter and stronger in the long term. Personally this is most definitely something I have overlooked since returning from injury, sometimes my Physio brain and runner brain do not collaborate and my running brain is far more powerful, why can't I just return to what I was doing before?

If we also consider the following 2 images which were taken from research by Dye in 2005. He describes tissue capacity as having an 'Envelope of Function', there is a fine balance between load and capacity and if we do too much too soon the result often presents as injury. Considering the current climate and not in terms of being injured, our tissues still have a capacity and, perhaps due to this extra time and being at home we all of a sudden are teetering on that fine line of overload. It is a genuine concern of mine what the levels of overload induced injury we might see as Physiotherapists post isolation. Tom Goom is an Physiotherapist and works primarily with runners and his website https://www.running-physio.com/ is a great resource. The following images are taken from an article in relation to load and capacity:





So my thoughts on how we might manage our time training to reach the best outcome over all. These are simply my views guided by my career as a Physiotherapist but also as a runner myself.

1. The first step for me was **understanding what it is I want to achieve** during this time?

All of a sudden we have time, this is something we should be embracing as for a lot of people having time to sit back and think is a rarity. For me, I need that base back and with the few races left in my calendar that are the most likely to still go ahead I have about 2 months to work on this and then 2 months to get ready to peak and build in race specific training.

2. What could be or is potentially **stopping progress** at the moment?

This is going to be individual for everyone. Here are few considerations:

Are you recovering from illness? This is probably the most important point right now. If you have had Covid 19 you need to be extremely careful in your return to running. Return too soon and you will prolong the illness further. Equally we don't fully understand this virus so even more care is required than perhaps if it had been flu as we know it. It is also important to remember the effect of a hard session on your immune system and the risks therefore associated with this.

Think about about any niggles you have had or are noticing at present. Now is the time to address these and get on top of them once and for all. If you are not sure how to manage them, most physios are running remote sessions and will be happy to talk this through with you. Also stop that foam roller from being an ornament and get it used!

Consider other 'stresses' at the moment be them financial, work, home these are important to consider and a hard session is probably not going to help your immune system during a time when stress levels have peaked. A nice steady session however will probably be quite therapeutic. I, like a lot of others run to manage stress. It is important to be aware of this as this is when it can become tricky to manage load.

3. You feel at a loss about what to do?

This is quite normal and probably on a personal note along side managing any stresses I have had, why I started going out running too far and too fast (for me) each day, everyday. Look back over your last months training and compare it to the previous months training. Then consider point 1 and work back from that end point. Remember, every goal should have some sort of time associated with it (long term and short term goals for example) and be appropriate and realistic for it to be effective and achievable.

4. You keep checking Strava and see what everyone else is doing

This goes without saying isolation aside, never compare yourself to anyone else. You are you and have your own body that will respond to everyday stresses and training stresses in an individual way. Everyone has a different beginning in their development into becoming a runner. They may have done it since they could walk or they could have come to it at a later stage in life. These factors play a huge part on their tissues ability to cope with different stresses placed upon them. Equally, it is too easy now to see what the elite are doing through social media, remember they are elite and again their tissues will work differently and recover differently.

Equally, you don't know what others plans are, you don't know what they might be going through and you don't know if they have niggles that they just keep pushing on through which could ultimately lead to a period off the running. This leads me on to any social network platform…remember, no one ever/rarely posts about how 'rubbish that run was' because they were tired or all their niggles were presenting themselves or 'how hard work it was and they might as well have been going backwards'!

Last but not least….

Lastly in my thoughts about running during this isolation phase, strength training is a factor a lot of times missed. Runners don't want a huge amount of muscle mass but they do need to be strong and powerful which will help with injury prevention and make you an overall better athlete. In my opinion the areas that should be worked on as a minimum are:

Powerful arms – you will be surprised how important your arms are in driving you forward. Think about that race finish and there are seconds between you and the next place, you drive forward with those arms to push yourself that little bit more. You need that endurance and power in these especially for these moments. Equally try running with your arms by your side, it suddenly becomes a lot harder!

Trunk rotation – this will help with point 1.

An awareness and strength in those pelvic floor muscles to work with the outer pelvic muscles in which we rely heavily upon when running.

Good Gluteal (bum muscles) strength especially in Glute Medius (bottom muscles on the side) which can help with knee control but also eccentric Hamstring (back of thigh) strength and Quads (thigh).

Calf Strength made up from Soleus and Gastrocnemius (muscle with 2 heads you can see). An aside here about Soleus as it is quite an amazing muscle. Soleus is often the key in development of Achilles injuries that runners are well aware of. Soleus, on average generates 50% of your peak vertical movement to elevate your center of mass upwards (Dorn et al. 2012 and Hamner et al. 2013) and generates approximately 30% of your forward propulsion force (Hamner et al. 2012). Now think about running and how hard this muscle has to work! As I am mainly a fell runner, fell runners now think about those forces in running up and down hills…it is huge. Soleus is primarily made of slow twitch fibers so it is that repeated load, doing too much too soon which is likely to affect it.

Lastly, all of the above need to be able to be used effectively when running so running specific drills are critically important

for that carry over.

This is not an extensive list but I have tried to keep it to a minimum focusing on key groups. There isn't much evidence to say you should be doing some sort of running specific strength session more than 2-3 times a week and I personally would pick 3-4 things to focus on each time. Consider in this session some plyometric and dynamic work that will help improve running form such as the use of ladder drills, mini hurdles, hill repeats, bounding, strides etc you get the idea.

I do hope you find this a useful read and if you have any questions please do feel free to contact me. Like I said at the start, these are simply my thoughts and if it helps reduce just one incidence of a potential overuse injury I'd be happy.

Use this time wisely, go explore new paths and trails from home you never knew existed and go and enjoy your running.



My Helm Experience

Helm Hill encouraged me to do more running and has shown me how to enjoy it as well. I like the fact that all the coaches in Helm try and make it the best experience they can for the juniors (and seniors). They put in hours of hard work and planning so that we can have a good time. At Helm races I think the best bit is when you get a nice warm feeling at the end of the race when everyone's cheering you in. Thank you everyone who set up the races I really enjoyed them, except the ones that were cancelled and am really looking forward to next year's races (if Covid 19 is over by then). My personal favourite race is Barbondale, unfortunately it was cancelled which is really annoying. In the future, when I grow up, I want to run all the munros within one or two months. I think one of the main things about running is the social side of it and the fact that your meeting new people and going new places.

By Thomas Hearn.



David Ratcliffe's Lockdown Thought of the Day

A collection of daily fb posts from David which kept us pondering our running journey...



Good Morning Readers. Todays quote comes from a little known philosopher, writer and scholar who lived round about the middle of the 2nd century BC. His name was Patanjali and his most famous work is the text on the theory and practise of Yoga. he said -

The longest journey starts with a single step.

For my journey that first step was when I put on a pair of running shoes one Saturday morning in January 1980. The journey that followed has had its ups and downs and highs and lows. It has taken me to places I never dreamt of going to before, from the Alps and Dolomites to the jungles of Thailand to the snows of Lapland, the height of Kilimanjaro to the high mountains of Nepal. Along the way I have met some super stars (Dr. Ron Hill & Steve Cram), carried the Olympic Torch, raised money for charities, been lucky enough to have trained with some wonderful people who share my love of running and so it goes on. The journey hasn't ended yet, slowed down a bit but not stopped. I don't know when it will end - if it ever does. Where will your journey take you ?

Good morning readers. Todays quote comes from a poem written by a Scotsman by the name of Robert Burns. The poem is entitled 'Ode to a Mouse' and was written in 1786. [Editor's note: this was before even David was born]

The quote - ***The best laid schemes o' mice an' men gang aft a-gley.'*** (often go awry). I chose this because it shows how what appears to be a big set-back can have a surprising ending. In February 2005 I was training with Peter Ion who runs for Kendal AC for the London Marathon. My 5th grandchild Gwyneth was due in March and as all the other 4 had a London Marathon medal from the year of their birth I wanted one for her. In February on one of our runs I broke a bone in my foot, finished up in plaster with no chance of doing London. Gwyneth was born on the 3rd March and at the end April our daughter and family all came up from Bridgend in S. Wales for the weekend. On the Sunday the door bell rang and it Peter and his wife. His first words were ' I have brought your granddaughter a present'. He had brought his London medal for her !! What a lovely ending to a bad situation and also a demonstration of the camaraderie that is found amongst runners. Stay safe and wash your hands.

Good morning readers. Thankfully I got back from yesterdays run in time to post todays quote which comes from a Japanese author called Haruki Murakami. He was born in 1949 and his novels, of which there are many, have been best sellers all over the world and have been translated into over 50 languages.

The quote for today - '***I will be happy if running and I can grow old together.***'

This is a quote I can whole-heartedly agree with. No mention of struggles, PB's, injuries, races or achievements but what does come through from that statement, for me, is his absolute love of running. As I approach old age (not too quickly, happily) I have that same love of running. Not worried about performances, times or distances just running for the love of it.

I hope anyone who reads this can find this love because it is such a wonderful thing to have.

Stay safe, wash your hands and love running.

Good morning readers. Hope all is well with you and yours. Todays quote is from an American ultra-runner called Dean Karnazes. He was born in 1962 and one of his achievements was to run 50 marathons in 50 days in 50 states. He said :-

'*Some seek the comfort of their therapists couch, others the local pub and dive into a pint but I chose running to be my therapy.*'

Over the years I have found that running is indeed very therapeutic. I started running long before it was fashionable to listen to music as you run and I must confess that I have never found the need to start listening now. When I run off road I prefer to listen to the sounds of the countryside or just the silence if out on the fells. When I do this many is the time I have found an inner peace and this has helped me through the bad times of my life. Does anyone else find this inner peace ? I hope so !

Good morning readers. Sorry for the lateness of this posting. I had to get the washing done and out on the line. Todays quote is from an American lady called Katherine Switzer famous for becoming the first lady to obtain an official number for the Boston Marathon. She did this by entering as K. V. Switzer. In 1972 women were officially allowed to run marathons and she went on to win New York in 1974. Her PB was set in Boston in 1975 - 2h. 51m 37s.

She said - *If you are ever losing faith in human nature go out and watch a marathon.*

Anybody who has run a marathon or watched one on TV will have seen what she is referring to. Runners almost abandoning their own run to help another runner who is in a bad way. Sharing drinks etc and generally being good human beings. Thankfully that doesn't just happen in marathons. I have seen numerous examples of this during fell races all over the country as I am sure we all have. Indeed at some stage we have probably been the one giving help and at other times being the one needing help. Keep on giving and receiving because we are runners and that is what we do !

Stay safe

Good morning readers, hope you are well and managing to stay active. Todays quote comes from a little known American lady runner, Julie Isphording, whose only real claim to fame is that she won the LA Marathon 1n 1990. She said :-

Run often, run long, but never outrun your love of running.

I think we can all agree with those sentiments but I must confess that there have been times over the years when I have thought that I had lost my love of running. Because life, at times, can be hard and seem unfair, it is easy to think " Why bother with running at all. What good is doing me ?` My worst time was round about 2010/2011 when I had illness and injury after injury and I was really close to packing it all in. I am sure I would have done had it not been for the unflagging encouragement from two ladies at HH Runners. Thanks to them I rediscovered my love of running which had been buried under other things in my life. Do you know anyone who may be struggling with running because of other pressures ? Never under estimate the power of a word of encouragement. It can work wonders.

Good morning readers. Todays quote comes from an Austrian born Jewish man called Alfred Polgar who worked in Berlin as a drama critic from 1925 to 1933. In 1938 he (wisely) moved to the USA where he carried on his work as a drama critic. He said :-

Too often Man handles life as he does bad weather. He whiles away his time as he waits for it to stop.

Do we do that ? I know over the years there have been times when I have done that. I know I should be going out

for that much needed long run, I know I should be tidying the garage, I could go on but hopefully you get the picture.

In the present circumstances it would be easy to while away your time waiting for Codiv.19 to pass but I know of a few members of our club that have put the time to good use, shopping for people classed as vulnerable, volunteering at Asda, for the NHS and at the Leisure Centre if and when it is needed. I am sure there are others that I don't know about. Much respect to you all.

I think the idea from this quote is that we shouldn't waste time because no-one knows how much we have left as has been proved over the last few weeks. Make the most of what you have whilst you can. Stay safe one and all.

_____-

Right, washing done and pegged out so - Good morning readers. Todays quote comes from the well known Chinese philosopher and teacher Confucius who said :-

It does not matter how slowly you go as long as you do not stop.

In a running sense this has become my mantra over the last few years. To love and enjoy running is not just about speed. It is about the sense of freedom, the sense of doing something that is a great part of you and your life. No matter what other people think of me I am out there doing it and reaping the benefits. In a wider sense it can be related to learning about work, about friends, about changes in our lives etc. Sometimes it takes time to adjust to other people, other methods and also changes in other peoples lives that affect us. Basically never stop learning no matter how slowly you learn. Going for a quick brew now before the ironing needs doing (believe that and you will believe anything). Stay safe and see if you can learn something today.

_____-

Good morning readers, hope you are all well with lovely clean hands. Todays quote is one I came across about 16 years after I had started running and I was told it came from Midge Ure but a bit of investigation indicates that it has ben ascribed to many more people over the years.

The only limits are the limits of your own imagination.

I can see that in the arts world of music, painting and writing etc that could well be true but in a running context ? I am not sure because no matter how hard and often I imagined myself winning the London Marathon and/the Coniston 14 neither events happened. However, passing this quote on to a runner just starting out on their running journey may well have surprising results. For example our very own Keli Roberts and Tom Addison. Did they or any one else imagine at the start of their running the heights they would reach ? I suggest we each interpret this quote in our own way. Stay save !!

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Good afternoon readers. I hope you weren't thinking that you could have a day off. I haven't been furloughed so am still working at finding quotes. To make up for my tardiness I have two quotes for you today. The first from an American, Peter A. Cohen, a Motivational Speaker who said

There is not one giant step that does it. It's a lot of little steps.

I don't know who said this next one :-

1 mile in 12 minutes is just as far as 1 mile in 6 minutes.

I think we can all agree with the first one because, as far as I aware, because most of us have to work hard and on a regular basis to try to be the runner we want to be.

I saw the 2nd quote and immediately thought of Becky who replied to a comment on her achievement that ' she had set the bar low for her first one'. That, Becky, does not detract from what you did. Some people run that distance in 2 hours, some in 3 hours and so on. The result is that they all ran the same distance. Well done and keep up the good work.

_____

Good morning readers, hope you are well and enjoying the good weather as best you can. Todays quote comes from an American author of children's books who was also a cartoonist, wrote screenplays for films and other things as well. His name was Theodore S. Geisel - better known as Dr. Seuss. He said :-

You are off to great places ! Today is your day !

Your mountain is waiting so - get on your way!!

Of course at the moment we cannot take this too literally. What we can do is try to deal with our own mountain, whatever it may be, on a daily basis. For some unfortunate people their mountain to climb is a lot higher than mine. I am one of the lucky ones in so far as all my children & grandchildren are fine. No signs of illness. Is your mountain The Helm or is it Kilimanjaro ? Whatever it is I hope you make it to the summit and enjoy the view when you get there. Stay safe everybody

_____

Good morning readers - did you think I had emigrated ? I have just found this quote from an unknown runner but I have an idea that it could be from any one of us :-

Runners with bad shoes will suffer the agony of de feet !!

It would be interesting if anyone who has run in 'bad' shoes and suffered for it admit to it on this post. I have and can still remember it - one Sunday morning on a long 18 mile run round the hills of Rossendale !! Fell shoes too tight !! Finished in agony (a little place not shown on any map) and swore I would never run again. That didn't last long though.

_____

Good morning readers. Todays quote again comes from an American. Kristin Armstrong was born in 1973 and after competing in triathlons became a very successful professional cyclist. She won 3 Olympic time trials gold medals, 2008, 2012 and 2016. In winning the 2016 gold she became the oldest female cyclist to win a gold medal. She also won 2 World Championship gold medals. She said

Whatever you may be missing right now - a person, a place, a feeling, maybe you are injured and missing running - have peace and take heart. Remember that any goodbye makes room for a hello.

In todays situation I have nothing more to add.

JONAH'S MARATHON EFFORT



Jonah's Five day Marathon for Growing well

Over 5 days I ran a marathon. I ran just over 5 miles a day around Kendal Green – over all 50 laps that's 10 a day. I didn't feel like I was getting much exercise in lockdown and I wanted a physical challenge that was doable but hard. And mum said it had to be something I could do on my own.

I decided to try and collect some sponsorship. We picked Growing Well because it's a local charity, and it felt like donations would have a real impact. My aim was £153 but I ended up raising £1,207 – which I was pretty shocked by.

Thursday was the hardest day. I felt tired and it was raining – but the knowledge of all the people who had sponsored me made me keep going.

Finishing felt exhilarating. The best bit was on the last lap when mum and dad were holding a toilet paper finish line and mum had spelt finish wrong – (finnish). When I broke the line I thought "well that's was a waste of toilet paper". The best bit of the whole thing has been all the cakes people baked for me.

Thankyou to everyone who sponsored me.

From Kate

Thanks to everyone who sent messages of support and sponsored Jonah – there was loads of Helm support which he really appreciated – just another example of what a special club this is.

https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/kate-simpson27

RUNNING (VERY) LOCAL

If 37 miles over the rough fells on the Old County Tops race phases you, just think how much harder 26.2 miles around your own garden or very local area would be! Not one but 2 hardy HH runners completed this mind-boggling effort recently completed marathons in their garden and surrounding local area.





Becky Willoughby completed hers to fund raise for the young lives vs cancer charity CLIC Sargent. Becky's JustGiving page is open for donation

Paul Turner 'On Saturday I ran a marathon. I just got it in my head as it was London Marathon weekend. It was on the flattest road route I've ever run, in some of the best conditions!

The reason I mention it, well, it was the toughest one I've done. I felt rubbish from the start and it didn't get better. My legs were heavy, my stomach churned. I had to convince myself to head for particular points and keep going. No other runners around me, no crowds cheering me on, just me and the road.

Why was I doing this? What would it matter, no one else would know. At one point I was thinking 15miles would do, then I decided I would definitely stop at 20miles, I even got within 400m of home.

Then my stubbornness kicked in, why are you going to quit? if you quit now, when else might you quit? So what that it's tough? You set out to do it, don't pack it in just because it's hard.

So I swerved away from home and carried on. Those final 6 miles dragged, but they slowly ticked away. My time was my slowest marathon ever, but that didn't really matter. I hadn't given up, I'd done what I set out to do and that felt great.

And with what's going on now, that's what we need to try and do. Even though it's hard, we can get to the end. And unlike me on my marathon, we're toughing this one out together.

Stay safe and take care everyone.'

BRITISH FELL RELAYS 2020


Pic: Rick S

Volunteers needed!!!

Helm Hill will host the 2020 British Relays on 17th October 2020!

***COVID-19 Update**: We are still planning for this date BUT we will be following government guidelines very closely and the event will only go ahead when we have final permission from the FRA/UKA. As soon as we have more information we'll let you know! In the meantime….Read on!*

The British Relays are one of the highlights of the Fell Running Season and it is an enormous accolade for the club to host the premier national event in the fell-running calendar. This will be the biggest event in our club's history and will be an enormous challenge but one we know we can meet if the whole club pulls together.

Featuring 250 teams and1500 runners, clubs from all over the country meet up in a different muddy field somewhere each year and compete against each other over 4 varied race routes. It's an exciting, gruelling, fun packed day full of thrills and we're very excited with the potential of this years venue (near Tebay).

Organisation is going on apace! It goes without saying that we will need a huge number of people to help us put on the event. Dark Peak, who hosted 2019 and Ambleside AC in 2018, both needed around 150 volunteers so we know the size of the task. We also want to be competitive on the day so with enough volunteers this should enable folk to race as well as volunteer.

Below is a flavour of the volunteer help we'll need so please put the dates in your diary and let the Volunteer Coordinator Ali Richards or your coach or any committee member know if you can help in any way even if it's just for the morning or afternoon or evening and if you hope to race as well.

Fri 16th Oct: main set up of: race arena, registration, race start/ finish/changeover areas, litterbins, controls on fells, flag/tape obligatory race route sections, arena signage, car parking signage, camping area taping off, direct delivery vehicles etc

Sat 17th Oct: car parking, registration, Kit check, fell marshals x 18, finish/changeover marshals x 6, arena,

Sun 18th Oct: Clear up of site, remove controls off the fells etc



Pic: Tim Murray

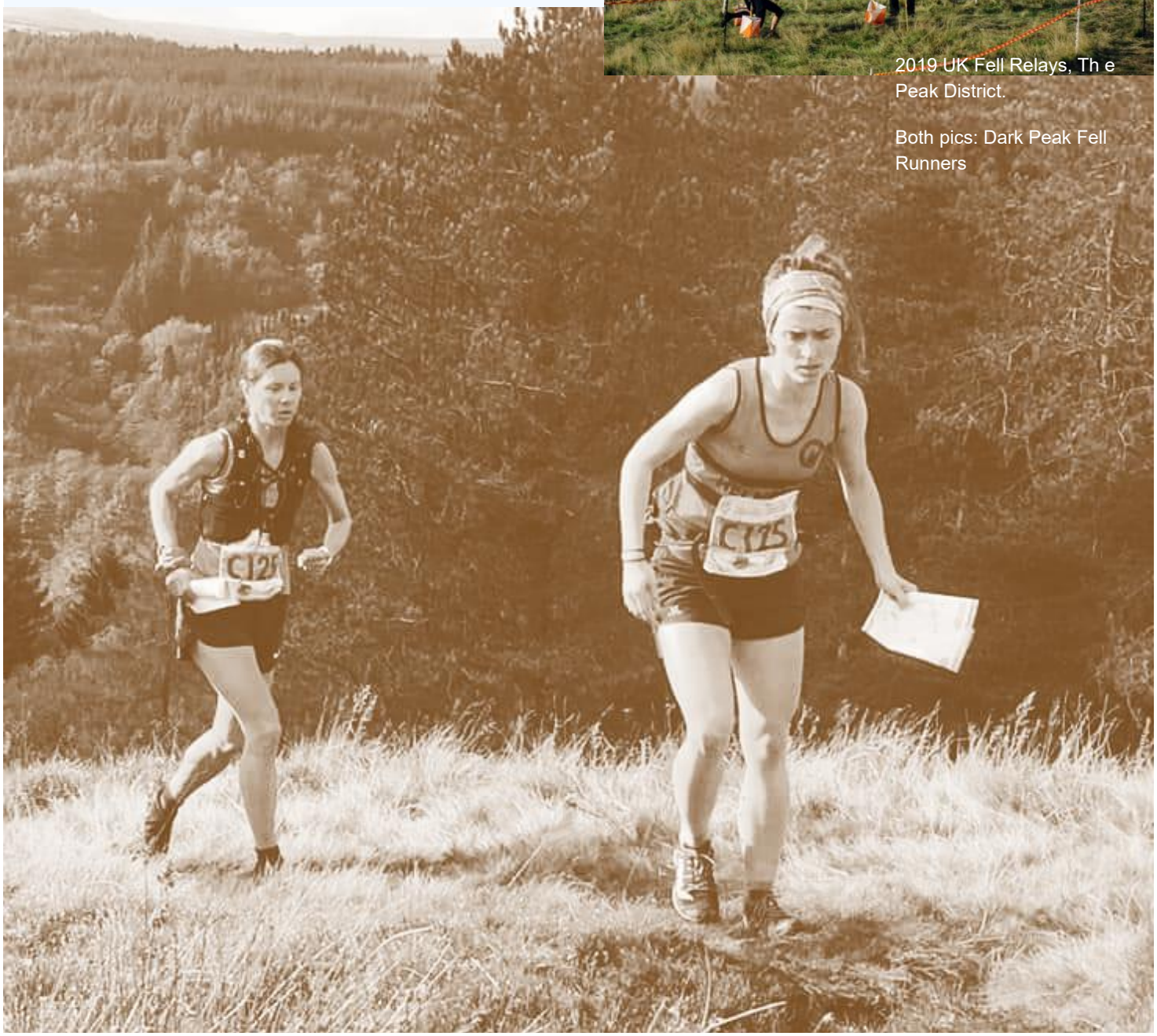
As an incentive, there will be a bit of an afterparty on Saturday eve for all those involved in making the event happen. We have an enormous marquee after all!

So, put the date in the diary and if you are interested in helping, running, organising……watch out for further information. A dedicated website will be on its way shortly. Let's make it a great day!!



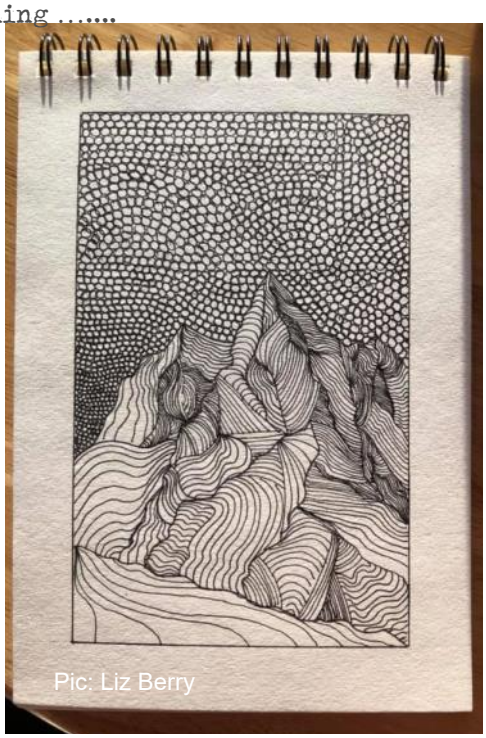
2019 UK Fell Relays, Th e Peak District.

Both pics: Dark Peak Fell Runners



LOCKDOWN PASTIMES

Being creative when not out locally running …….



Being creative while out locally running …….



Knitting a Helm coloured Wad Band!



Some have enjoyed resting in the sunshine…..



House maintenance! Yes really!



While many have even taken up road running…..



Paul Turner's Confessions of a lockdown Helm Hill runner:

#1 I've been road running so much I'm seriously contemplating getting some Nike Vaporfly

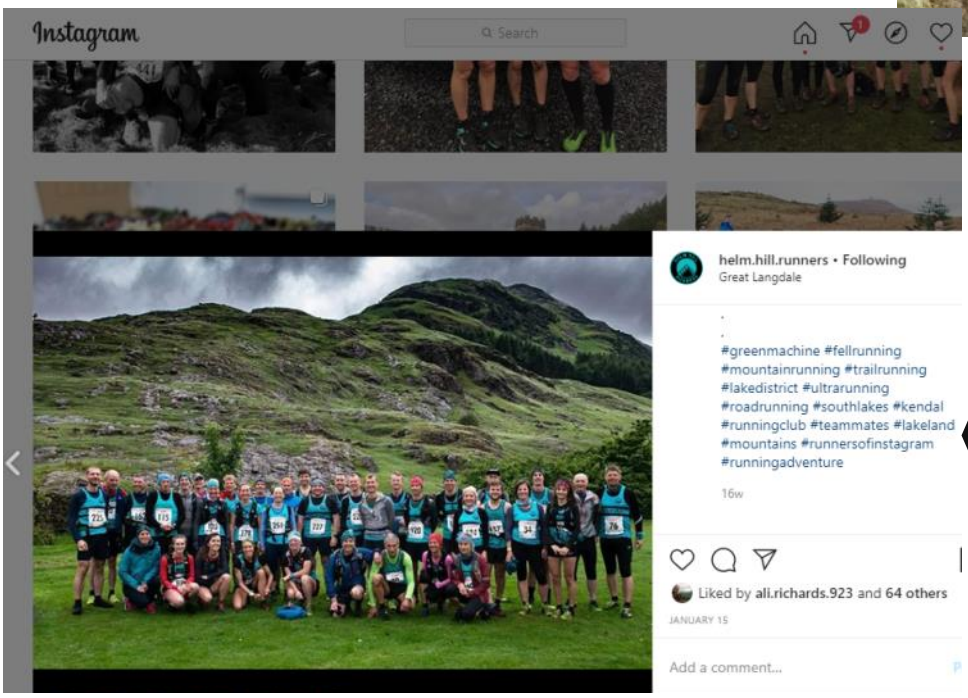
#2 Am actually quite enjoying running on the flat #dontsayanythingtoBilly

#3 Last night in my dreams Wendy Dodds appeared!! I've never ever spoken to her!!...maybe this relates to #1 and #2...#haveIbeenDodded?



IRISH DANCING





We're now on Instagram

I'VE RECCE'D IT—FOLLOW ME!

Our yearly points competition for less-than-perfe



2019 'I've Reccied It, Follow Me!'

Defending Champion :

Paul Reilly



Keep those misendeavours rolling in in 2020!

2020 Off to an exciting start:

Uphill Only senior club champs time-trial, in the dark, in January, up Arant Haw: Rowan in the car halfway to Sedbergh 'Ah I've forgotten my shoes!' Rick (not wanting to drive back to Kendal): 'Don't worry we can message someone to bring a spare pair .'….5 mins later Rowan: 'Argh I've forgotten my bumbag'…..15 mins later Rowan: 'Erm do you think someone will have a spare headtorch as well?' : **Rowan R , 5 points**

Car Keys Classics 1: Every runner aspires to tick this one off in their running career bucketlist of incompetence at some point. Sharon chose the muddy, dark slopes of Kendal Castle on a cold Wednesday night hill rep session to lose her car keys. Extra training trying to find them so always a silver lining. **Sharon 5 points**

Car Keys Classics 2 with bonus points: Following Sharon's perfectly executed lost car keys example Cat Slater went the extra mile and lost hers in the considerably larger, more wild and varied terrain of Whitbarrow Scar or possibly the neighbouring maze of Witherslack Woods. Extra bonus points for the fact that she never found them and shelled out £400 for replacements!! **Cat S , 5 points + 5 bonus points**

'As long as I don't come last...' by Ali Richards

How many times have you heard this being said at races? I imagine quite a few. Perhaps you've said it yourself or heard a parent say it about their child who is running. It used to be a common phrase of mine.....

Deep down I am a super competitive person - I like to push myself, I love to win at things, even if it's just a game of dobble, or beating Dave A in a race (see previous newsletter for article on our rivalry!) When I was growing up, I think my much less competitive sisters would just let me win everything to avoid me having a strop. When we were older I couldn't understand why they would laugh at me for 'losing it' if I lost, when I would do what they would call a 'John McEnroe'. Even today, I can still feel the same competitive emotion come over me in a race just trying to beat the person in front, or even when watching my children doing competitive sport - wanting them to 'win' at whatever they are doing is my natural instinct. If you are a competitive person losing can feel traumatic, and coming last can feel like the humiliation of losing to everyone.

Now here's the thing - just like anything else you have a fear of, facing and experiencing your fears can be a life-affirming lesson.
One of my life experiences that I am truly grateful for is coming last in a race. Not from being lost or injured, or any other excuse; but being properly last for being the slowest runner, even when I tried my hardest. It was a brutal 3 lap x-country course, so I had the 'indignity' of running past the crowd at the finish not just the once, but 3 times. Each time I felt the sympathetic looks and the earnest clapping even more as I got further and further behind. But it was like each lap was a learning process for facing my fear of coming last....first lap: 'oh god this is bloody awful,I'm going to die of embarrassment, shall I just stop and drop out, say I had a stitch/felt sick/injured myself.....second lap: 'thank goodness I'm away from that crowd, might as well keep running as I've travelled a way to get to this race, I can remember this bit now, just keep going'.....third lap: 'actually quite enjoying this now, no pressure, got into a good pace, who cares about anyone else' and I finished (last) with a big smile on my face, and probably the biggest cheer from the people watching. OK so I felt slightly embarrassed, but really that was it. And truly, no-one else would have given it a thought beyond their fleeting sympathetic yet heartfelt cheer at the end. If they say, people don't remember second place then they're certainly not going to dwell on who was last.

And afterwards it really made me think - what was I so worried about?!! Coming last is not a big deal - in fact it's liberating - you will lose the fear! You will now never hear me say those words "as long as I don't come last" and if my children say it to me now I say "well so what if you do?! Someone has to be last and it doesn't matter one bit if that is you"

Put it on that bucket list of things to do - I promise you it is not as bad as you fear.

<<<<< **NEXT NEWSLETTER—NOVEMBER 2020. Start thinking of ideas.....**

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

Deadline: end of October 2020

Pics

As well as the Helm Hill Gallery check out the following for excellent race pics:

James Kirby Photography

Dobo: Fellrunner.net

Woodentops: Woodentops.org

Steve Wilson: www.granddayoutphotography.co.uk