



Paul Armitage

From The Chair

Ramblings from our Chair for 2024.

Debbie Grunhut-Hinds

Race Reports

A summary of race reports from March 2024.

Various

Contributors

Maria - Ladies Update; Mark - Men's Update; Coaching with Colin; In the Lion's Den with Gav.

From the Chair

Paul Armitage



Well hello again everyone, it is that time again. The bank holidays are starting and spring is here, it might even stop raining soon. As we move into spring and the clocks “spring” forward this will start to give us lighter evenings, we will no longer see those awful words of Hi Viz and Headtorches for a while. This may also bring some of you out of your winter hibernation and I look forward to seeing you at our club runs.

We have been trialling a shorter run, pace adjustable, on a Monday and Thursday evenings, suitable for those who have not run for a while due to that well known bug “cannot be bothered” or those afflicted by an injury and needing to start back slowly. This is open to anyone, and while numbers have been small up to press, I think it has been appreciated. We have had a potential new member trying us out using it, a couple of established members regaining their fitness, a marathon trainer who needed a short steady one, and pleasingly one of our quicker runners who came to the away run and took advantage of it while coming back from injury. It is something we will try to keep going but it is dependent on availability. If anyone out there would like to offer to help leading this, please contact me as all help is gratefully accepted. We are of course always looking for members to lead a run or two to share the load so the same applies if you would like to lead any of the paces we offer or start a new one.

As I write this, we are also having our first member presentation with Kevin Robinson talking about High Performing Communities, I hope that we will have a good turnout for Kevin and that we can raise some funds for the Holme Valley Mountain Rescue for who Kevin volunteers. We already have another similar evening lined up and are hoping to bring more to you through the summer. On that note, should any of you out there have a particular skill or interesting hobby that you would like to share with us, again please let me know. Possible topics could be nutrition, workouts for runners, off road techniques or mad adventures running, maybe the CWR twice in 24 hours! Non-running topics are also gratefully accepted.

This month sees the start of the YVAA Grand Prix series, with the first race being at Honley on the 28th April. These are events open to all runners over 35, most of us; and it is an opportunity to represent the Club in a series of races, gaining points dependent on the position that you finish, every runner counts. There are three trophies up for grabs in each gender – First Four to Count, Rest to Count and All to Count. In the ladies’ section we have been very successful in the last few years, winning the First Four for several years, and the All to Count. Recently we have not been quite as successful in the men’s side with Gavin Mulholland carrying the flat for us at the top end of the race – let’s try to give Gavin some support. There are also individual trophies in the age categories, so there is a lot to run for. You will need to register for the series and then enter the races. The link is here: [Grand Prix Series - Yorkshire Veterans' Athletics Association \(yvaa.org\)](http://yvaa.org).

Finally from me our Blue Riband event – The Bluebell, is fast approaching. This is our opportunity to showcase what a fantastic club we are. We always get a lot of praise for all of the races we hold, fantastic organisation, enthusiastic marshals, and just generally a good atmosphere, but this does not happen on its own. Clayton Cutter, our Race Director, has been working really hard in the background applying for permits, negotiating deals with local authorities and sorting out the T-Shirts. Helen Armitage has been gathering together our members to marshal to ensure that the runners are kept on track on the day. However, we still need a few more marshals to complete the set and we will need support over the weekend to set up in readiness for the race. Tents and marquees to put up, Race Registration, T-shirt handlers and the like, so please if you are available let Helen or Clayton know.

Have a great April and look forward to seeing you all soon.



2024 Championship Races:

- Sunday 28th April: Willow Valley Flyer. Race HQ: Brighthouse Sports Club. Start Time: 10.00am.
- Wednesday 22nd May: Blackstone Edge Fell Race.
- Thursday 6th June: The Full Bronte (Bronte 5).
- Sunday 23rd June: Norman Cole Penistone 10k.
- Tuesday 2nd July: Stoodley Pike Fell Race.
- Sunday 7th July: Eccup 10 mile.
- Wednesday 17th July: Hepworth Trail Race.
- Wednesday 7th August: Hopwood Trot.
- Sunday 18th August: Piethorne 10k.
- Saturday 28th September: Meanwood Valley Trail Race.
- October (TBC): Holmfirth 10k.
- Sunday 27th October: Macclesfield Half Marathon.
- Sunday 3rd November: Guy Fawkes 10.
- December (TBC): Coley Canter.

- Halifax & Huddersfield Parkruns – Every Saturday.

2024 Fell Running Championship Races:

- Monday 1st April: Trunce 1 (4 miles, 558ft) BS
- Tuesday 2nd April: Bunny Run 1 (3 miles, 328ft) CS
- Tuesday 9th April: Bunny Run 2 (3 miles, 328ft) CS
- Tuesday 16th April: Bunny Run 3 (3 miles, 328ft) CS
- Monday 22nd April: Trunce 2 (4 miles, 558ft) BS
- Monday 6th May: Coiners (6.7 miles, 968ft) BM
- Monday 13th May: Trunce 3 (4 miles, 558ft) BS
- Wednesday 22nd May: Blackstone Edge (3.5 miles, 1201ft) AS
- Thursday 23rd May: That's So Hebden Bridge (6.5 miles, 1150ft) BM
- Monday 3rd June: Trunce 4 (4 miles, 558ft) BS
- Monday 24th June: Trunce 5 (4 miles, 558ft) BS
- Sunday 30th June: Kinder Trog (16 miles, 3500ft) BL
- Tuesday 2nd July: Stoodley Pike (3.1 miles, 700ft) BS
- Monday 15th July: Trunce 6 (4 miles, 558ft) BS
- Monday 5th August: Trunce 7 (4 miles, 558ft) BS
- Sunday 18th August: Piethorne (6.2 miles, 900ft) BS
- Monday 19th August: Trunce 8 (4 miles, 558ft) BS
- Monday 9th September: Trunce 9 (4 miles, 558ft) BS
- Saturday 28th September: Five Trigs (18.6 miles, 2953ft) BL
- Sunday 6th October: Castle C'Alf (7.5 miles, 1600ft) BM
- Saturday 2nd November: Shepherd's Skyline (6.2 miles, 1148ft) BS
- Sunday 1st December: Mytholmroyd (6.2 miles, 1640ft) BM

- Saturday 14th December: Moors the Merrier (21.1 miles, 4000ft) BL

YVAA – Grand Prix Series (Vets):

- 28th April: Race 1 @ Honley (Holmfirth Harriers). Race HQ: Neiley Pavilion, New Mill Road, Honley, HD9 6QE. Start Time: 10.30am (registration from 9.00am)
- 28th May: Race 2 @ Kirkstall Abbey (Kirkstall Harriers)
- 11th June: Race 3 @ Morley
- 19th June: Race 4 @ Middleton Clearings (South Leeds Lakers)
- 30th June: Race 5 @ Post Hill (Pudsey Pacers)
- 11th July: Race 6 @ Northowram (Northowram Pumas)
- 21st July: Race 7 @ West Vale (Stainland Lions)
- 11th August: Race 8 @ Slaithwaite Cricket & Bowling Club (Slaithwaite Striders)
- 6th October: Race 9 @ Fitzwilliam Country Park (Ackworth RR)
- Race 10 – date and venue to be confirmed.

Club Away Runs:

- 11th April: Ripponden – **The Club, Ripponden**
- 9th May: Orienteering with Jim Harris (venue to be confirmed)
- 13th June: Stump Cross (to be confirmed)
- 25th July: Will O Nats (to be confirmed)
- 8th August: Lord Nelson, Luddenden Village (to be confirmed)
- 12th September
- 10th October
- 14th November
- 12 December: New Inn, Sowood (Xmas Tree Run) (to be confirmed).

Club Events:

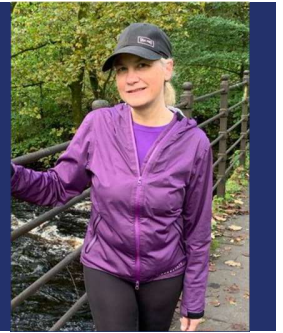
- May 5th 2024 – Bluebell Trail.

Other Races:

- Sunday 19th May: Calderdale Way Relay

Lions Publicity Officer

Debbie Grunhut-Hinds



Race Report for End of March 2024

Liversedge Half Marathon (3rd):

Tim Walker led the Lions home at the Liversedge Half Marathon; the race organised by Roberttown Road Runners is a favourite amongst the running community and famed for its challenging hilly Course. Peter Cawdron ran both a course & half marathon PB time of 2:39:28, knocking 3 mins 2 seconds off his previous course best and 3 minutes off his half marathon time.

Results: Tim Walker 2:13:18, Anne Cawdron 2:34:26, Carol Heptonstall 2:34:26, Alex Whyte 2:38:36 and Peter Cawdron 2:39:28.



[Pictures by Melvin Thompson]

Red Hot Toddy 10k (3rd):

The Lions were out in force at race three of this year's Club Championship. Starting at Centre Vale Park, the hilly course climbs to Sourhill before going down Bacup Road, through Todmorden Town Centre to the finish back at the park. David Farrar led the Lions home finishing 3rd M60, Helen Rees produced a 10k PB; and there were multiple category winners including the Ladies Team Prize with Helen Armitage, Michelle Rogerson and Louise Williamson. Steve Hallam came 1st M65, Dick Spendlove 1st M75, Judith Greenwood 1st F75 and Helen Armitage 1st F55.



Results: David Farrar 48:13 (3rd M60), Andy Baird 48:53, Steve Hallam 50:36 (1st M65), Helen Armitage 51:20 (1st F55), Michelle Rogerson 51:41 (2nd F45), Ian Hoskins 51:59 (2nd M55), Richard Spendlove 52:37 (1st M75), Ray Mooney 53:33, Louise Williamson 53:39, Maria Harron 55:03, John Bassinder 55:52 (2nd M70), John Ingles 56:22, Anne-Marie Ulllyott 57:26, Amjid Khan 58:20, Rebecca Gvozdenko 59:05, Paula Pickersgill 1:01:07 (3rd F55), Heather Anderson 1:01:49, Helen Rees 1:07:11, Phil Richards 1:09:03, Rosaline Sykes 1:11:20, Anne-Marie Killeen 1:12:06, Jackie Barker 1:14:40 (2nd F65), Judith Greenwood 1:20:14 (1st F75).



Haworth Hobble (9th):

Aileen Baldwin, Lance Parker and Kevin Robinson took on this year's Haworth Hobble, a gruelling 32 mile route that follows gritstone tracks from Haworth main street over the moors to Calderdale, up Stoodley Pike and back to Haworth via Hardcastle Craggs and Crimsworth Dean. The total climb is a mammoth 6,500 feet! Kevin Robinson completed the race in 4:42:12, with Lance Parker in 7:11:18, and Aileen finishing in 8:05:50 (1st FV70).

Dentdale Run (9th):

Two Lions headed to the Yorkshire Dales to compete in the Dentdale run, where runners chose either the 14.2 mile or 7.9 mile course around the lanes of Dentdale. The route is an undulating one, billed as "the most scenic race you will do!". Both runners opted for the 7.9 mile route, with Carol Lord finishing in 1:28:59 and Alan Gibson in 1:42:22.



[Picture by Philip Bland]

West Yorkshire Winter League – Race 8: Crossgates (10th):

Sunday saw the final cross country race of the season at Crossgates. A massive well done to all the Lions for even contemplating turning up in such cold and wet conditions! We won't mention the mid bit! On the day Gavin Mulholland finished in 3rd place, winning the battle with a fellow Baildon runner; a strong Mark Pottinger came 2nd Lion followed by Bill Johnson doing the Supervets proud. Other men to score included Andrew Earnshaw, Jim Harris, Paul Corns and Paul Patrick. Mags Beever was first lady back; Danielle Hirst had a good strong run, coming 2nd Lion for the ladies, followed by Anne Johnson, Lorraine Naylor and Clare Smith. A massive well done to Aileen Baldwin for having a brilliant run, despite doing a 32 mile off road race the day before.

**Flower Scar Fell Race (16th):**

Three Lions took part in the Flower Scar Fell Race, event three of the Club's Fell Racing Championship. This year the race was also a counter in the English Fell Running Championships. With 660m of ascent over 13.3km, this gem of a race had steep climbs, rough moor, fast paths – all that's best about South Pennine fell running. Gavin Mulholland finished 2nd M50 in 1:08:39 (CVFR), followed by Paul Patrick in 1:46:04 and Dick Spendlove in 1:46:35.

Liverpool Half Marathon (17th):

The Liverpool Half Marathon saw 7,350 runners taking part, 16 of which were Stainland Lions. The half marathon is a firm favourite in the lead up to the London Marathon with many using the race as a test of their progress as they head towards the tail end of their marathon training. Mags Beever led the Lions home in 1:23:06 finishing 5th female overall and 2nd in the F45 age category. There were PB times for Clare Thomas, Lindsay Upton, John Carless, Karen Carless, Susan Wade and Kate Wilson.

Results: Mags Beever 1:23:06, Clare Thomas 1:45:57, Lindsay Upton 1:45:57, Steve Crowther 1:50:19, John Carless 1:51:36, Wayne Underwood 1:55:08, Karen Carless 1:56:29, Maria Chandler 1:58:33, Susan Wade 2:01:15, Hayley Kelly 2:01:37, Kate Wilson 2:02:26, Zoe Russell 2:06:43, John Rushworth 2:10:10, Manjit Ahir 2:19:00, Alan Whiteley 2:27:25 & Gail Fawcett 3:23:48.



Vale of York 10 Mile & 5 Mile (17th):

Eddie Martin finished 5th out of a field of over 300 runners at the Vale of York 10 Mile, and Gail Schofield clocked up a PB time of 1:24:38. The race takes off from the runway of Rufforth Airfield to glide around the fast, flat, traffic-free roads, west of York.

Results: Eddie Martin 58:55, Paul Corns 1:15:11, Michelle Rogerson 1:21:46, Gail Schofield 1:24:38. Ian Hoskins took on the 5 mile race, coming 2nd M55 with a PB time of 37:42.

Boulsworth Bog Fell Race (23rd):

Helen Hudson finished 1st W50 in 1:19:20 and Ray Mooney in 1:23:23 at Saturday's Boulsworth Bog Fell Race, a counter in this year's Club Fell Running Championship. The 7.2 mile race has 1280ft of climb with the route passing through farmland on the way to and from the foot of Boulsworth, with the middle section consisting of a clockwise loop over a wide and boggy plateau.



Wilmslow Half Marathon (24th):

Wilmslow was the destination for 4 Lions on Sunday for the annual running festival, which sees both the Half Marathon and 10k races setting off together then branching out along the route. Gavin Foster led the Lions home in 74th place with a half marathon PB of 1:16:53. Becky Hill ran her first race at half marathon distance with a time of 2:12:16 easily smashing her training run times. Mark Pigford completed the half line up in 1:31:12. Gavin Dodd ran the 10k in a time of 47:57.

**Brentwood Half Marathon (24th):**

Helen Armitage finished 3rd F55 with a time of 1:47:37 at the Brentwood Half Marathon.

**YVAA XC Championships – Race 1: Penistone (24th):**

Anne Johnson came 1st F55 with a time of 24:26, and Dick Spendlove 1st M75 in 26:04 at Race 1 of the Yorkshire Veterans Athletics Association Cross Country Championship held at Penistone.



Cheshire Elite 10k (24th):

The Cheshire Elite 10k takes place on the legendary Pulford loop in Cheshire; known in running folklore as ‘The Magic Triangle’. This is one of the fastest routes in the UK. Due to strict limitations on the road closures the race can only accommodate women capable of running 44 mins and below and men 38 mins and below. Eddie Martin took on the challenge and easily whizzed round the course in 36:54.

[Picture by Mick Hall Photograph]

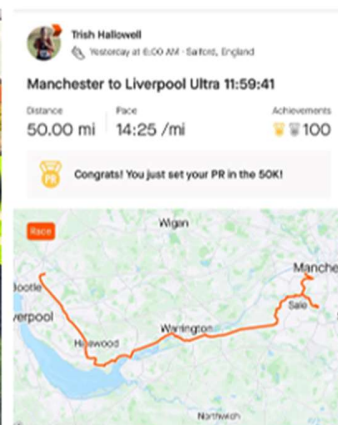
Heptonstall Fell Race (24th):

Aileen Baldwin, James Penson and Daniel Stafford completed the 25k, category BL, fell race in the upper Calder Valley. The route is a mixture of steep-sided wooded valleys, upland pastures and pathless moorland. Runners tackled grassy slopes, stretches of bog, thick heather, dense woodland. Daniel finished in 3:06:48, James in 3:08:43 and Aileen in 3:39:56.



Manchester to Liverpool Ultra 50 (29th):

Trish Hallowell took on her first Ultra race on Good Friday – the Manchester to Liverpool Ultra – a unique 50 mile race following the Trans-Pennine Trail, the Manchester Ship Canal and the River Mersey from Manchester to Liverpool. Trish completed the race in 11:59:19.



**Salford 10k (29th):**

Salford Harriers maintained their decades old tradition of hosting their 10k race on Good Friday. The flat two lap course attracted a field of over 600 from all parts of the North of England and beyond. Eddie Martin finished in 42nd place with a time of 35:16, with Phil Tucker in 130th place with a time of 39:28.

Guiseley Gallop (31st):

Ian Hoskins & Martin O'Brien tackled the Guiseley Gallop on Easter Sunday. The course is two laps mostly on trails through the woods near Guiseley. Ian finished in 55:11 and Martin in 57:06.

Parkrun PB Corner

Parkrun PB's

2nd March:

Huddersfield: **John Carless** ran a PB of 23:58, taking 1 minute off his previous best.

9th March:

Halifax: **Vinny Atkins** finished in 4th place with a PB time of 19:21, taking 5 seconds off his previous best.

Bracknell: **John Bassinder** took 28 seconds off his time giving him a PB of 26:08.

16th March:

Halifax: **Steve Crowther** ran a PB of 23:54, taking 3 mins 26 seconds off his previous course time.

Roundhay Park: **Laura Goodwin** took 3 mins 4 seconds off her course time, giving her a PB of 33:57.

23rd March:

Halifax: **Wayne Underwood** ran a PB time of 25:15, taking 2 mins 1 second off his previous course best.

Newbiggin-by-the-Sea: **David Waite** produced a PB time of 26:54, knocking 24 seconds off his previous best.

York: **Ben Golding-Smith** ran a PB time of 22:51, taking 11 seconds off his previous best.

30th March:

Halifax: **Helen Rees** ran a PB time of 30:47, knocking 1 min 16 seconds off her previous time.

Roundhay Park: **Paul Corns** ran a PB time of 22:33, taking 42 seconds off his previous best.

Stainland Lions'
Lion of the Month

LINDSAY UPTON

March 2024

Looking at that first ultra, she's literally thrown herself into it!

Thanks for organising the coach, really enjoyed the day out...

On top of that she ran a great time for the half!

2024 achievements so far:

- Snake Lane 10 miles PB
- Golden Fleece Circuit 27 miles
- Harrogate Hustle 35 mile trail ultra
- Hope Valley 20 mile
- Liverpool half marathon PB

Such a determined lady who is willing to take on a challenge and always with a smile!

It's nice to see people getting other Lions involved in events and Lindsay organised a coach for the Liverpool half this month.

Amazing and ridiculous at the same time!

CONGRATULATIONS!

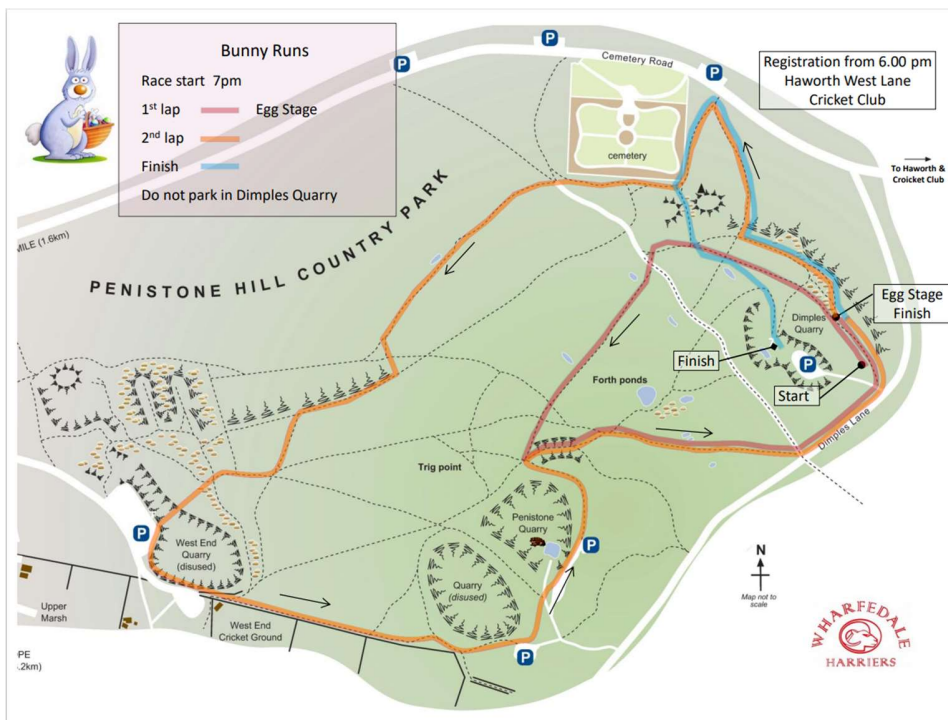
Fell Running Championship - The Bunny Runs with Andy Earnshaw

I said-a hip, hop, the hippie, the hippie to the hip hip hop-a you don't stop the rock yes the sugar hill gang (ask your parents kids) had the right idea when it came to Easter based songs, and what better way to celebrate this holiday (other than boogieing down to 1970s rap music) is to attend a series of fast and furious off road runs at Penistone Country Park in beautiful Bronte Country!

The Bunny Runs are a great introduction to off road running (let's not call it a fell run as that tends to scare people off) as they are well attended, short, not that sharp and you get chocolate (lots of it) what's not to like?

The course is two loops (plus a small starter loop) and is only 3 miles long, it's not 'hilly' but there is one long climb to the top of the park and back down again (which you do twice). The race is attended by all abilities so don't feel like you have to be a fast runner to attend. The race is also run by lots of juniors, so it's a bit chaotic at the start dodging all the kiddies, but that just adds to the fun!

The ground under foot is all established paths but a little rocky so trail shoes are advisable, although if the weather is dry you would get away with road shoes (there is one uphill bit that you might slip on).



These are evening races as the clocks have gone forward by then and we are (usually) blessed by good weather (although don't quote me on that, I'm about as good at reading the weather patterns as Michael Fish (another one to ask your parents about)).

The races take place on 2nd, 9th and 16th April (all Tuesday evenings) registration is at the **Old Sun Inn, West Ln, Haworth, BD22 8EL** from 6pm and the races start at 7, a 10 min walk from the pub.

So, get yourself to Howarth, you will be hopping mad if you don't (I'll get my coat)

Ladies Captain's Update - Maria Chandler



Ladies Captain's Update – March 2024

Well spring is hopefully well and truly in the air we should be able to pack away those headtorches and high-viz for the next 6 or 7 months, and apart from those who loved this year's cross country mud, here is hoping for some drier trails to run on.

This month I had already decided to get a piece from Aileen on things that those of us who had never run a fell race but might be wanting to try our hand (feet) at such a race might want to know. Hoping that this might inspire some of use to have a go this year. We have our inspiration within the club with Aileen regularly achieving amazing things and Helen Hudson achieving an age category win at the recent fell championship race at Bouldsworth Bog, but I am sure it will also not have gone unnoticed with most of us how Jasmine Paris became the first woman to complete the Barkley Marathons. Although not exactly club related, I feel it deserves a mention. The madness of writing a letter to enter, not knowing when the race will start (date or time), a horn is blown one hour before, the race is started by a man and a cigarette and then all she needed to do was run 5 loops of 20 miles while finding and ripping pages out of books, all with no GPS and only her own notes and equipment, and of course this all needs completing in 60 hours! And if you think that's easy, there is some insane elevation covered in the race. Last year she started the fourth lap but didn't finish. The dedication to come back again to get the job done – Inspirational. Unusually there were 5 finishers this year. If you know nothing about this, there is a documentary that you can watch, although for once the Media has written about the story.

So over to Aileen, and thank you for this contribution, hopefully you will see more of the ladies joining you on the fell races.

1) Why do you enjoy fell running more than road running?

There is no noise of traffic, the scenery is so much nicer and you are free to run and take whichever path you want. I love it.

2) I am worried about getting injured as I am sure I am more likely to trip and fall.

Obviously this could happen, but the freedom, challenge and achievement you feel after is so much greater than road running that you will soon forget about the small chance of falling.

3) Are trail shoes OK for fell running or do I need specific shoes?

Trail shoes are OK if they have a good tread and it's not too muddy. Fell shoes have a better grip as they have studs.

4) Will I get lost? Do I need good map and compass skills?

Getting lost depends on the race. Shorter races you don't need to be so good, as there are marshals, flags and

other runners to follow, unless you are first round!

5) I need lots of kit don't I? What is the minimum kit I need and what is the cost?

It's best to have all the kit as races have kit requirements, but on small fells and good weather it may be OK to just have a jacket with a hood and taped seams. I would borrow if you can, apart from the shoes, until you know you are going to do more. I have loaned jacket, whistle, compass, bum bag/backpack. The cost depends on the make, but don't buy top brands until you know you are going to do bigger stuff.

6) Convince me, why are fell races better than road races?

Cheaper to enter than most road races which helps, but for me, I just love it.

7) Which are the best fell races to get started with?

Short or mid length and not huge climb. E.g. Climb on a race: A – steep climb, B – moderate climb, C – less steep climb. Short races would be classed as up to 6 miles, medium between 6 and 12 and then long races are anything over 12 right up to Ultra Marathons. To start I would choose a B race that is medium distance or C race that is short (though there aren't so many of these).

8) The first fell race in the championship is Blackstone Edge 3.5 mile. What is this really like and is it a good one for a first fell race?

I think this was my first fell race. I had a ball, loved it even on a very wet evening.



Thank you Aileen, and I think your smile on the Haworth Hobble says it all.

Well onto other things. Those training for spring marathons are well into their training and are now nervously heading into tapering and the nervous anticipation of the race itself. This month will see many compete in Manchester, London, and in Mags' case in Boston. Then Leeds follows on in May. Good luck to all those competing. You have done the hard part many miles of training and keeping free or mainly free from injury to get to that start line. Don't do anything silly in the last weeks and go out and enjoy your race. Soak up the atmosphere and have a great time.

One of the highlights for me this last month was my first Stainland day out, where a coach load of us headed off to Liverpool on St. Patrick's Day. Thanks to Lindsay Upton for organizing the coach. A great day out for all, and a number of PBs achieved on the day.

Clare Thomas has kindly written a report on this:

The promise of a few post-race St. Patrick's Day drinks 🍀 might have had something to do with me signing up to the Liverpool Half Marathon! But the timing also worked well as part of my marathon training. And I know already some of you are thinking why is Clare doing another marathon when she hates running and enjoyed them so much last year! 😊 But this time it's different as I have a charity place in the London Marathon for Brain Research UK.



1 in 6 of us has a neurological condition.

Neurological conditions include everything from sudden onset conditions such as stroke or traumatic brain injury; to progressive, degenerative conditions such as Alzheimer's disease; and intermittent conditions such as epilepsy and headache disorders. I'm running for this charity as I've lost loved ones to dementia and brain aneurysms, and as a big boxing fan, and it's scary how little we know about the effects of repeated blows to the head and CTE (Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy). It is estimated that more than 20% of boxers develop some signs of "punch drunk syndrome" 🧠

Therefore I have that extra motivation this year to get me round London and it's been great training as part of a charity team.

Back to the half – it was a great idea of Lindsay's to organise transport (don't tell her I said that!) it took the stress out of driving and parking. It was also nice having fellow Lions there to calm pre-race nerves, take all important photos and cheer each other on!

Lindsay and I decided on the way over that we'd run together and try stick to a pace. I was looking forward to the course after doing the extremely hilly Sheffield Half Marathon last year, but it was actually a tough route. The hill after mile one was hillier than expected and the undulating loops of the park did get a bit tedious! The last four mile stretch on the dock was the hardest bit. I think because it was warm by this point and I knew we'd slowed to my head was starting to do. However, the Liverpoolians came out in force to support and the crowd on the final stretch definitely helped give that last little push.

I suggested we held hands over the finish line as I thought what a nice photo it would be (it was not) and then our time would be EXACTLY the same so she wouldn't beat me! 😊 We both secured a PB which was a nice added bonus, but once we'd finished celebrating our achievements thoughts soon turned back to doing double that in a few weeks' time!

Well done to everyone who ran, looking forward to the next trip 😊



One question though – did you go round or through the huge puddle?!

[Clare Thomas is fundraising for Brain Research UK \(justgiving.com\)](https://www.justgiving.com/brain-research-uk)



And lastly this month – just in case you fancy something completely different, Karen Carless has been training hard and recently competed in a duathlon, aiming for qualification for the GB Team in Europe. Here are her thoughts immediately after the event.

Castle Coome Total ‘Chilly’ Duathlon – Thoughts of a Hopeful Duathlete

You’ve raced before. You’ve trained for this. You’ve worked your little socks off for this event. Do no doubt yourself now. Do not dare to question your capabilities, or right to be here.

You started this journey because you wanted a challenge, and you have continued it because you fell in love with every part of it. The training, the events, the battles, the wins, and even the frustration of injury.

. . . . but the Team GB suits, and the professional kit. I am doubting everything. I haven’t ridden my bike enough, my shoes are wrong, I shouldn’t be here. I know that I cannot match their pace or cadence. A coach in Team GB attire advises a small group of ladies as I stand alone, shaking with cold and nerves, trying to concentrate on my transition area. They talk of victories and training sessions and ride tactics. I am more than aware that they are in a different league. I feel so small and insignificant, an imposter. I listen to their canter, and reports of accomplishments I can only dream of.

But isn’t that why you are here? To try and realise your dream. To learn, race, smile and do your best. My smile returns and the nerves dissipate. I feel a sense of relief as all the expectations I had of myself are released. I know I am going to do my absolute best, but I know that this is just going to be a learning experience. I love to learn.

It is so cold, with a biting wind, which means my hands do not want to work with my helmet clasp, or my shoes. My ankle aches, and my toes are numb. But that just adds to the challenge. And I stupidly grin some more. I am in pain, and I am grinning more than ever, almost giggling to myself. There is not a doubt in my mind that I will go out there and complete this race. None.

I need to get warm. I need to feel stronger and possibly a little calmer. I need to run! My warm-up erases every worry. The run works her magic. I am ready to line up with all my peers and do the best that I can do. To run, cycle, then run MY race.

I don't like starting at the back of the pack, but I feel that it is my place today. Less intimidating, less crowded, less elite. More me. I listen as the countdown begins, and we are off. Very slowly over the line until we reach the track, and my pack picks up. Head high, shoulders relaxed, feet tapping, breathing relaxed. I set my sights on athletes to pass, to pick off steadily. Overtaking runners increases my confidence, and my desire to be better. I have a pace set in my mind and I intend to stick to it. 5 min/km's is a decent pace but won't wreck my legs. I run by feel until I see the pit lane, knowing that the run is coming to an end I glance at my watch, surprised that I am quicker than I thought, and slightly regretting not trying harder and chasing a run PB. A momentary regret. In my naivety I think that I need to save my legs for the bike, and the second run.

Over the line and into transition to try to overcome the hand issue. I don't really overcome it, more clumsily work with it!! I put my helmet on, but fastening it isn't successful without working fingers. A couple of warm breaths through my gloves, a shake of my hands and I try again. It take four attempts, and it's only half clipped but it will do. Shoes go on more easily, I lift down my bike and 'sprint' to the mount line. Clipping into the pedals is a dream, and I am off.

Why do my legs ache already? Where has my power gone?

The shock of not being able to spring away confuses me as I chase after my target. This is my first duathlon and I have never experienced run to cycle legs before. My internal dialogue is positive as I pass a couple of ladies but begins to falter as a pack fly past and tuck in inches from my wheel. I grab my brakes in concern. I really am not experienced, or practiced enough, and I have seven laps of this. There is no thought process, or any more self-talk as I watch riders pass and I begin to follow some of their examples. Down into the drops more. Taking the racing line better. Pushing through the pedals with added commitment. I pass riders as powerfully as I can, but they are minimal in comparison to those who pass me. The confidence in my abilities takes a knock every time they come too close. I cannot imagine ever having that capability and power. The cold increasingly numbs my fingers, but at least my ankle doesn't hurt. Always a positive! My jaw aches from clenching though. I'm not sure where my smile went but it is time to get it back. "Race your own race, and most importantly enjoy it".

Do you know how hard it is to smile with an aching jaw and chattering teeth" Very!! But I do it because I am happy as I pull up to the dismount line. I survived. I head back into transition to my racking position, lift my bike up, pull my cycle shoes off, and the battle with my running shoes commences. I can't hold onto the tongue of my right shoe as I try pulling it on. I try a couple of times but give up. I will have to run with it as it is, I don't have time for this. The left shoes is kinder and goes on more easily. The helmet clasp again. I wish I had a child's Velcro fastening. That would alleviate the frustration, and the thought makes me giggle (again) as the marshal watches me quizzically. At last, it releases. I spin my race belt and put my cap on as I head for my final run with brick legs.

I am going to do this. Only 3.2km and I have completed my first attempt at a Team GB Qualifier. I know in my heart that I am not good enough to qualify based on today's performance. But I know that based on the work I have put in, and the love and enthusiasm I have for multisport, I will succeed next time. All of these thoughts fill my head as my legs attempt to carry me up a very short hill. They complain under the weight of my body. My back aches, my legs stumble, my foot is squashed into my shoe. But it is only a couple of miles just shorten your stride, keep your head up and run. One foot in front of the other. Just picture that finish line, a warm drink and warm hands. I pass two athletes, knowing that we are all at the back of the pack, but we are all there trying our best and we are succeeding. When I see the finish line,

and register my time I feel overwhelmingly disappointed, and I want to cry. This lasts for approximately ten seconds, until the smile reappears, and as I cross the line my only thoughts are:

“How many of the post-race Jaffa Cakes is it polite to take?” “My God I bloody love multi-sport events, when can I book another one?” and “Is it normal to have so much conflicting internal dialogue going on in a ninety-minute race?”

I built myself up so much for this event. I trained more than I ever have. My self-discipline was unwavering. I feel that on the day the only advantages I had were the incredible support and encouragement from John, and my very beautiful tri suit.



The disadvantages were overwhelming – inexperience, lack of confidence, self-doubt, capability, timing and being me!!

I took so much from this race. All of it positive. I need to ride more frequently with a group. I need to be more assertive (in all aspects of life). Definitely avoid events in the cold if possible and I must leave everything out there when the race is important to me. No holding back, no ‘saving myself just in case’. I never want the joy of participating in events to fade, and that must be my first priority. But I passionately want to be better and to make myself proud.

The next race that end of season Team GB Qualifier in September I will do both. I will be better, and I will qualify, because I will deserve to be there.

And it will be with a huge smile on my face.

Thank you Karen for this, and good luck in September. With your training and having had this experience, I am sure you will smash it.

Please let me know if any of you out there are doing anything you would like to share here. Otherwise I will continue to keep my ear to the ground and find arms to twist. It would be good to have loads of your experiences from the spring marathons and also any halves or 10k races you may have enjoyed.

Men's Captains Update - Mark Pottinger

Men's Captain's Update – March 2024

The start of Spring is a time of transition. First off, those of us who have been standing in the cold, wet fields of the West Yorkshire Winter League (cross country) finally get a chance to clean up and dry out. This year for the men, the standout runners were the evergreens of Gavin Mulholland, Bill Johnson and Dick Spendlove. Gavin took 3rd overall and Bill came second in the M55 category and they contributed significantly to Stainland winning the Super Vets category by quite a distance. Dick Spendlove added to the Stainland achievements by winning his age category (M75) at the end of season Yorkshire Vets Cross-Country Championships. The men overall finished a respectable 7th for the WYWL season, which is something I hope we can springboard from for next year's campaign. We do need a new cross-country captain for the upcoming season to take over from Lorraine Naylor who has done a fantastic job over the last couple of seasons, please put your name forward if interested

Next, we start to see the emerging results of all the hard graft of those that don't fancy the cold wet mud of cross country but get their kicks from pounding mile after mile (after mile) on cold wet canal path for 4+ months solid. The rewards are starting to emerge: Gavin Foster with a 1:16:53 time at the Wilmslow Half Marathon, followed by Mark "I swear this is my last marathon" Pigford running 1:31:12. Over in Liverpool, we had some great times set: Steven Crowther 1:55:08, John Carless 1:57:39, Wayne Underwood 2:01:11, John Rushworth 2:17:49 and Alan Whiteley 2:41:47. These were preceded by some impressive times by the Hall brothers (Chris Hall 1:22:16 at the Brass Monkey Half Marathon and Stephen Hall setting the Club M35 Half Marathon Record of 1:15:21 at Inskip, both back in January). So, as we enter the key marathon month of April look out for updates from all these chaps and others!

It isn't all about Cross Country and Marathon running though, as we had a good men's representation at the Club Championship Red Hot Toddy 10k race at the start of March: David Farrar 3rd M60, Andy Baird 8th M50, Steve Hallam 1st M65 and Ian Hoskins 2nd M55 – well done all! The next Championship race is the Willow Valley Flyer 28th April – <https://racebest.com/races/tv4vy>

Looking ahead, Spring yields longer days (and hopefully better weather!) so mid-week racing is here. The Fell Championship has a number of great smaller distance races (3-4 miles) on Monday and Tuesday evenings to blow away the winter cobwebs: <https://fellrunninglions.home.blog/welcome/championship-races-2024/>

Finally at the backend of April is the start of the Vets season. If you are over 35 and want to compete in some racing over a series of great off-road courses across West Yorkshire, then this is for you. It's £10 for your first race then the bargain price of £6.75 for subsequent races. There is often food provided and if you are in the top 3 of your age category you get to pick a prize from Gav Mulholland's (running related) goody-bag. The first race is in Honley on 28th April. <https://www.yvaa.org/events/grand-prix/#fixtureList>

Coaching Corner with Colin Duffield

Is your Body Competent?

Introduction

Strength and Conditioning (S&C) is the use of dynamic/static exercises to improve physical performance and what we call 'body competence'. It helps you use your body in a better way.

Although S&C is a discipline in its own right, Yoga, Pilates etc. offer the same or similar benefits.

Proper strength and conditioning allows an athlete to strengthen and stabilize muscles, even out imbalances, increase mobility, correct posture, stabilize joints, learn new movement patterns and enhance coordination. It's really not about muscles, posing and grunting in a gym, and it's not always about power. In terms of running, it develops relevant areas of the body to improve the way a person moves.

Research demonstrates that, for anyone, the right training to improve body competence works. It also shows that incorrect and inappropriate training can be very detrimental to the way the body moves and performs. This is particularly true for runners, so watch yourself!

Some Principles

S&C means engaging in activity to improve performance and/or fitness; this is best accomplished by understanding general training principles:

Individuality - We are all more or less human and have the same structures. Giving these structures stability and teaching movement patterns is useful for everyone. In the S&C world there's a phrase, 'if in doubt, Squat' So a basic programme might look similar for runners, footballers, hockey players etc., there quickly comes a point where specificity becomes important.

Specificity - Physiological adaptations to training are specific to the muscle groups trained and the intensity of the exercise, in running this means that the basics will be transferable, but most runners would benefit from some exercises targeting the specific muscles/structures and movements used in running. In my more radical moments I'd say that if runners, and particularly beginners, don't have a basic S&C programme they might not run for long, or as well as they could, and that's a shame because the people who need it most will see the quickest benefits.

Diminishing Returns/Adaptation - An individual's training determines how much improvements in performance they achieve due to training. A novice will see huge and relatively quick gains in performance when they begin training, however, the gains get smaller and come more slowly as they get more experienced.

Reversibility - The effects of training will be lost if removed for an extended period of time.

Would you like to see the Benefits Menu?

- Increases muscle strength.
- Increases muscle endurance.
- Increases muscle fibre density.
- Increases neural recruitment.
- Improves connective tissue function.
- Improves bone health.
- Improves motor skill and coordination
- Improves mobility and flexibility.

So Where Do I Get It?

Find a good practitioner. If it's S&C, Pilates, Yoga it doesn't really matter as long as the practitioner understands the needs of runners.

Have a play on the internet and find out what's on offer. The best programme is one you'll keep up with.

Always happy to chat.

Colin.

Away Run - March 2024

Jonathan Pybus

March Away Run – Thursday 14th March

March's away run was from the Shepherd's Rest at Bolton Brow. This was about 3 miles from Heath, so ideal for heading into areas that we do not normally run. The middle group had an angulating course that took us through Warley and Luddendenfoot. Great weather for the night which made a change and which made it easier for the off-road sections.

The steady group headed out through Crow Wood Park and made their way up to Burnley Road before also heading to Luddendenfoot via the back roads; they headed back to the pub on the canal with a last short sharp hill before heading on Beach Wood Road.

The food afterwards was an absolute bargain and for £3.50, you could not go wrong!

We will definitely try and go there next year as they made us more than welcome and it's just a good venue to run the Sowerby Bridge areas from.



April's Away Run

The April Away Run is being held on **Thursday 11th April** from The Ripponden Club, Halifax Road, HX6 4BG.

The food options are:

- Chili & Rice
- Veggie Chili & Rice

For the bargain price of £7.50

In The Lion's Den with Gav Dodd



Colin Duffield



How long have you been running and how did you first start?

About 25 years ago.

After a traditionally misspent youth I got into climbing. Eventually got gripped by alpinism and after a few summers in the Alps, peer pressure got to me and I started messing about mountain running.

Joined Tod Harriers in about 2000, mostly fell and ultra running (when it was a fiver an entry and you got doughnuts at checkpoints). I was lucky to be coached by Graeme Wrench and Dennis Quinlan, both had coached at national level (x-country and fell respectively). I learned tons and was drawn into their coaching world. Never really came out of it.

Followed my son to Calder Valley in about 2012 when he was winning stuff for them at junior level and joined the coaching team there. It was about this time that I fell off a bike and my knee hasn't worked since!

Now enjoying coaching at Stainland, Calder Valley, Sowerby Bridge (and others). Beginners to international runners. All equally interesting, often for different reasons.

What made you join the Lions?

Joined Stainland as a 'first claim other discipline-er' after we'd moved over here in 2016 (I think).

What's been your best running experience/race to date?

Ended up accidentally being part of a sponsored team (Team Krypton) and with me very much riding on the coat tails of much faster folk, we won the National Ultra Team Champs two years running.

Some decent efforts in Mountain Marathons (two day navigational jobs) back in the day. However, all this is one busted knee, one degenerating knee, and a serious cardiac condition ago. There's an old adage, 'the older I get the better I was!'

Do you have any advice for a beginner?

How long have you got? Build slowly. Consistency beats intensity every time. Respect your body and don't think you're indestructible, it takes approximately two years to condition your body properly. Trust the process. Find out a bit of the science.

Get a good coach and listen to them.

Don't count miles, count time and effort instead.

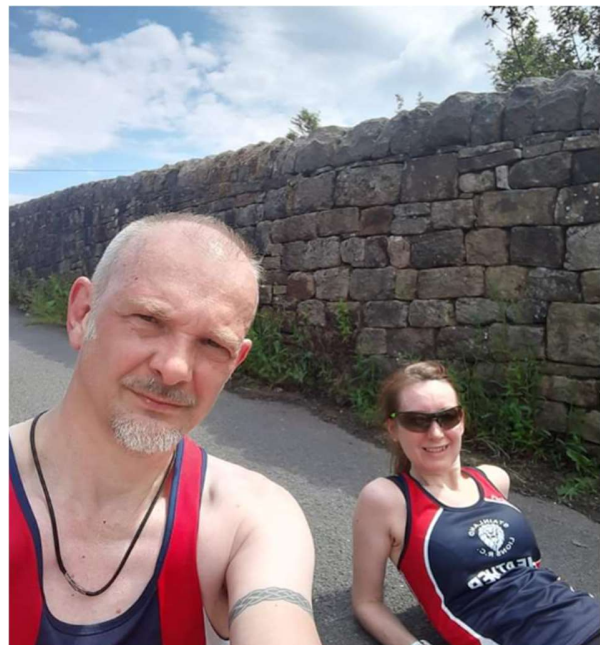
Mostly though, I'd say don't limit yourself. Running is lots of different things, play about with terrain, distance and difficulty. Leave your ego on the shelf and experiment. Have adventures.

What's your go to running shoe?

Something cheap that doesn't injure me. People get hung up and miss that people in shops want to sell you things (the ridiculous scenario of someone 5kg overweight worrying about 20g in a shoe).

BTW, Gait analysis should be done by a physio or a podiatrist, not a salesperson. Don't believe the hype.

Favourite place to run?
Either Pendle Hill or around Stoodley.
Favourite race?
I don't race anymore. Back in the day it would be the Haworth Hobble or possibly Black Combe. It's on the edge of the Lakes near the coast and I remember starting the last steep descent and feeling like I was about 1500ft directly above the sea and falling towards it.
What do you do for work?
I work in the NHS, managing transformation projects. Anything from simple changes in practice to £5m programmes.
Favourite meal?
Vitamin pills and pickled onion Monster Munch.
Favourite tipple?
Usual stuff, good beer, red wine, a nice whisk(e)y. I have a weakness for rum (I don't believe this makes me a drunk, makes me a pirate).
Favourite holiday destination?
In this country, Cornwall. My grandfather was Cornish and I've always visited and felt at home there. Abroad, boring but it'd have to be the Balearics. I like an island.
Any bucket list items?
Outside of running, I've spent a lot of my life making, producing, or recording music. I don't play in bands anymore but still twiddle about with electronics and bother a bass on occasion. I have a long standing intention of re-recording some of my old stuff with different beats and instruments. If I'll ever actually do it is another issue. And I'd like to be an astronaut please.
Any non-running related hobbies?
Music, as above. Also spent 20+ years learning Taoist martial arts but haven't got the time or to be honest the inclination anymore. I cycle and walk, both excellent base conditioning for runners.



WE WANT TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS FOR THE NEWSLETTER - SMALL OR GREAT, THEY ARE ALL IMPORTANT. PLEASE ALSO LET US KNOW WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE IN THE NEWSLETTER GOING FORWARD