



# The Lions Tale

Stainland monthly newsletter



Tony Mott

### From The Chair

A bit of rambling from our chair with a lowdown of what has happened so far this year.

Susan Cash

### Race Reports

A detailed summary of race reports from February. As always, plenty of people in action all around the UK.

Various

### Contributors

Contributions from loads of people this month. Put the kettle on, settle down and read on.

Feel free to contribute next month, any report welcome.

# From the Chair

## Tony Mott



### What a start to the year...

Blimey, has anyone managed to stay sober in February? The social team have worked overtime to bring us another fantastic Annual Dinner and the Bridlington Away Run. Thanks to Bex and JP for organising those. Loads of other folks also help make these things happen – a brilliant club effort. Thanks all!

And we were introduced to Leo Lion at Leon's Thursday Quiz Night. I dread to think where that poor Lion is now...

Crossgates XC was a nice change with hardly any hills to speak of, which made for a fun and fast race. The finish line was perfect for cheering all the runners in and we out-roared all the other clubs combined. It was brilliantly marshalled, making it impossible to get lost... isn't that right Mackers?

A tremendous club performance at Liversedge Half saw us run off with the male team prize (Darren Reece, Gav Foster and Darren Young) and a host of individual prizes... Darren Reece 1<sup>st</sup> M40, Darren Young 1<sup>st</sup> M50, Derek Parrington 2<sup>nd</sup> M50 and John Bassinder 1<sup>st</sup> M65.

Lostock 6 was the second of our club championship races with an army of Lions descending on this small local race on the wrong side of the Pennines. Read all about it later.

Good luck to everyone racing the next club championship race - the Langsett 10k. After that we all get to find out which division Steve has dropped us into... or dropped us in it maybe...

### More bugs, less running...

After a rubbish January, which included missing loads of running because of a cold and a mountain bike crash, I've added illness to the list which has meant another ten days without training. Worse than all that, I missed the Annual Dinner! A big thank you to Tim Walker for stepping into my boat-like shoes and helping Paul to hand out the awards on the night.

Fingers crossed I'll be fit to run Stainland XC. After that it's a jam-packed March of bike-focused racing for me:

Firefighter's Duathlon in Bolton with Andy Earnshaw, Elan Valley MTB Challenge in Wales and then Delightful Dales from Clitheroe... although I'm not sure I would call 200km on a bike "delightful."

As always, if you have any questions or queries please don't hesitate to speak to me or anyone else on the club's committee. Happy running!

Tony




## Sally's PB Corner

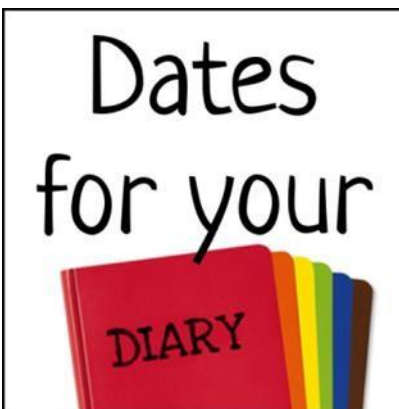
February saw PBs tumbling everywhere...

Darren Reece (1.19) and Michelle Eyre (2.02) at Liversedge Half, where Richard Dunn and Melissa Vincent made their half marathon debuts.

Victoria Armstrong ran Southport 10kin a PB time of 47mins exactly.

There were loads of pbs at Dewsbury 10K: Darren Young 36:46, Suzanne Patterson 41:44, Big Red 42:46, James McNutt 42:51, Stefanie Hopkins 43:02, Cath McHugh 49:55, Bill Lee 55:12, Helen Shenton 59:37 and Wendy Paulson 65:54.

 PB of the month... at the London Winter Run, Darren Reece posted a PB time of 35:34 to finish 29th out of 20,000 runners. Magnificent!



**\*\*\*NEW\*\*\* March Away Run:** Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March – The Cross Keys, Siddal. Check the Facebook event page and forum for all the details. Please order your food ASAP.

**\*\*\*NEW\*\*\* Middleton Park Vets (Race 1):** Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March @ 11am – Are you old? Well, older than 35? Then sign up for the Vets team. Speak with the Bionic Imp, aka Gavin Mulholland to claim your free pass to all the Vets races.

**Beginners Course:** starts Monday 1<sup>st</sup> April for 8 weeks – Catherine and Mel are ~~plotting~~ planning this year's torture for those brave enough to sign up to our Beginner's Course. They will be asking for help with run leading, registrations etc in due course...

**\*\*\*NEW\*\*\* Honley Vets (Race 2):** Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> April – Liked the 1<sup>st</sup> race? Want to come back for more? Feel like you missed out? Honley next up!

**Bluebell Walk:** Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April – not sure where your marshal position is or fancy taking the pooch for a stroll? Come along and walk the Bluebell course before race day.

**Bluebell 10:** Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> May – officially the biggest and best race in the known universe.

**Hare & Tortoise:** Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> May – get buddied up, get lost, get back to Heath, get beaten by someone who fibbed about how fast they are.

**\*\*\*NEW\*\*\* Kirkstall Vets (Race 3):** Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> May – are you not entertained? No, well here is your 3<sup>rd</sup> race of the series. More races to follow. Keep your eyes peeled (put your reading glasses on if you need them).

**Downhill 10k:** Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> June (TBC) – run downhill for 10k, then feel like someone ran over your legs with a steamroller for up to a week later.

**Stainland Vets race:** Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> June – if you are youthful and energetic please marshal. If you are old, decrepit, weary and embracing your mid-life crisis, then run our awesome Vets race.

**\*\*\*NEW\*\*\* Stainland Lions Challenge – The Yorkshire Three Peaks:** Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> July – This is a big one, literally. A few hills and a few miles, but with awesome company... that being YOU! Check the Facebook event page and the forum. We are fundraising for the Forget Me Not Hospice and hoping to reach the £10K golden block target.

**Summer Handicap:** Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> July – very similar to the Winter Handicap, but in Summer. John and Colin promise not to add an extra mile to this one... maybe...

**Stadium Challenge:** date TBC – it's our turn to host our good friends from the valley next door. This year we have a cunning plan to blatantly bias the race in our favour.

**THIS WILL REMAIN IN THE NEWSLETTER. NEW DATES WILL BE ADDED BY REQUEST. EVENTS WILL REMAIN IN THE LIST UNTIL THEY PASS. PLEASE SEND DETAILS OF ANY DATES THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADD TO THE LIST.**

## Lions Publicity Officer

Susan Cash

Summary of Race Reports for March  
Newsletter



*1 February 2019: A quiet weekend, but Margaret Beever ran well to finish 2nd Lady in the Meltham Tough 10K.*



### **Tigger Tor Fell Race**

James Penson was the only Lion at Sunday's Tigger Tor Fell Race in the Peak District. James completed the route (which starts at the Tigers Rugby Club near Sheffield and climbs up to Higgat Tor) in 1 hour 35 minutes. He declared that he'd never fallen over so many times in one race before.

### **Meltham Tough 10K**

The organisers could equally have called this one Meltham Cold 10K. A dozen Lions layered up and shivered their way round the hilly route south of Huddersfield. Darren Reece was 1st M40 and quickest Lion on the day. Mags Beever won her age category and finished 2nd Lady. Aileen Baldwin was 2nd F65.

Results: Darren Reece 37:47, Jamie Westwood 41:24, Mags Beever 41:36, Martin O'Brien 49:51, Paul Corns 49:52, Aileen Baldwin 51:03, Jonathan Pybus 51:32, Jan King 53:56, Paula Pickersgill 57:38, Sandy Gee 58:38, Virginia Lewin 63:53, Debbie Hinds 66:07

*8 February 2019: Despite freezing conditions over the weekend, a number of Lions were in action both on the roads and on the fells.*

### The Wadsworth Trog Fell Race

David Culpan was the sole Lion to race “The Beast”, as the annual Wadsworth Trog is affectionately known. The circular 20-mile route started in Hebden Bridge and included a challenging 3,800 feet of ascent. Conditions on the day were bitterly cold, with temperatures barely getting above freezing and a sub-zero wind chill factor. The ground on the moors above Haworth was covered in hard packed snow and ice, making heavy going for the runners. Despite this, David somehow improved on his 2018 time by over 15 minutes, crossing the line in 4:05:43.



### Pateley Pie n Pint Ultra

James Penson finished in 8<sup>th</sup> place at the Pateley Pie n Pint Ultra on Saturday. James completed the 48K route in 4:55:52. A number of distance options were available for this race, and for his ultra distance, James had to run the very icy 8K course six times.

### Dewsbury 10K

Fifteen Lions took part in Sunday’s Dewsbury 10K in freezing cold conditions. Starting and finishing in Dewsbury town centre, the straightforward out and back route on flat roads attracted a field of over 1,700 runners. Darren Young was first Lion home and 3<sup>rd</sup> M50 in a new personal best time, while Jan King was 3<sup>rd</sup> M65. Paul Corns improved on his 2018 time by over a minute. Catherine McHugh ran well to finish in under 50 minutes, Helen Shenton posted sub 60 minutes for the first time, and a number of the other Lions were pleased to record pbs.

Darren Young **3<sup>rd</sup> M50 36:46**, Suzanne Patterson 41:44, Richard Crombie 42:46, James McNutt 42:51, Stefanie Hopkins 43:02, Paul Corns 45:36, Jan King **3<sup>rd</sup> M65 46:51**, David Collins 47:41, Catherine McHugh 49:55, Bill Lee 55:15, Dawn Medlock 56:44, Diane Thornley 57:52, Helen Shenton 59:37, Wendy Paulson 65:54, Justin Scargill 67:46

### Southport Mad Dog 10K

Victoria Armstrong was first Lion in the popular Southport Mad Dog 10K, finishing in a new personal best time. Over 3,000 runners took part, including three Lions.

Results: Victoria Armstrong 47:00, Gary Clay 57:38, Jeanette Campbell 73:10

### London Winter Run 10K

Darren Reece had a fantastic race at the London Winter Run 10K, finishing 29<sup>th</sup> out of approximately 20,000 runners. His time of 35:34 was a pb despite a congested start. Results: Darren Reece 35:34, Melissa Vincent 61:11

*15 February 2019: There was a fantastic atmosphere at this weekend's West Yorkshire Winter League cross country race, with Lions not only running well in the race but also providing a nice little reminder to us all about what it is to be a Lion as well. A "roarsome" effort to ensure everyone was cheered in. No Lion ever gets left behind.*

### Windy Hill Fell Race

It was touch and go on Saturday as to whether or not the Windy Hill fell race would be able to go ahead, as Storm Erik swept in bringing very high winds and heavy rain showers in its wake. Five Lions braved the howling gale to take on the 9-mile race over rolling hills above Littleborough. The route took in the Old Roman Road at Blackstone Edge, a good deal of muddy Pennine moorland and Windy Hill itself. Hollingworth Lake was visible below for much of the route. James Penson was first Lion home, and Aileen Baldwin won her age category.

Results: James Penson 1:18:12, Damien Pearson 1:19:50, Martin O'Brien 1:32:36, Aileen Baldwin 1:38:02, Steve Boyer 1:46:43

### West Yorkshire Winter League Cross Country Series, Race 5

The fifth race of the 2018/9 West Yorkshire Winter League cross country series took place on Sunday, and it was another great race organised by Crossgates Harriers. Proper old school, across open fields, fast and furious.

Ed Hyland was first Lion to finish in fourth place, but it was the Lionesses who took the glory, holding on to the number one spot with one more race to go. There were fantastic performances from Margaret Beever (2<sup>nd</sup> lady), Lucy Collins, Lorraine Naylor and Danielle Hirst. Cross country captain Tim Walker described the Ladies Team's performance as "absolutely brilliant". Andrew Mackrill also put in a notable effort, showing true grit to complete the race despite arriving late and setting off fifteen minutes after everyone else. Andrew worked hard to make his way back to the main pack of runners.





After five races the Lions are currently: -

1st Ladies' Team

4th Men's Team

7th Vets' Team

3rd Super Vets' Team

2nd Team Overall

The final race of the series takes place at West Vale on 3rd March.

### **Team OA Urban Night Series**

Jim Harris and Andrew Laird Boldy ran as a team in Monday's Team OA Urban Night series orienteering race. They finished in 57:30 and are currently the fourth placed team in the series. The event combines night running with locating checkpoints using only a very basic map, with the aim of collecting as many points as possible.

*22 February 2019: Many of the Lions were in Bridlington for the club's annual weekend away where they enjoyed fabulous running along the coast in the sunshine (see photo), but there was plenty of race action nearer to home too.*

### **Bleasdale Circle Fell Race**

David Culpan ran the Bleasdale Circle Fell Race in the Trough of Bowland on Saturday. A true classic short fell race limited to 120 entries each year, the race is 5 miles long with 1,400 feet of ascent. The first mile took the runners from the community centre across fields before the ascent of Fairsnape Fell. The climb was highly technical (this is code for scrambling up on your hands and knees) near the top. The route then followed the ridge to Parlick Fell before a steep descent back to the finish. David knocked over 4 minutes off his 2015 time to finish in 52:59.

### **Richmond Half Marathon**

780 runners took part in the Richmond Half Marathon on Sunday. The race is fast and flat and has amazing views of the Thames and Kew Gardens. The route follows the river for most of the way. Maria Harron was 3<sup>rd</sup> F40 in a fantastic time of 1:36:56. Speaking afterwards, she said it had been a “really scenic route in the sunshine”.

### **Liversedge Half Marathon**

Stainland cleaned up at the Liversedge Half Marathon! Darren Reece and Gavin Foster led the charge, both finishing in the top ten and helping secure 1<sup>st</sup> Male Team prize.

1st Male Team: Darren Reece, Gavin Foster and Darren Young

1st M40 Darren Reece

1st M50 Darren Young

2nd M50 Derek Parrington

1st M65 John Bassinder

3<sup>rd</sup> M65 Jan King

All the Lions ran well on a hilly, blowy course.

Results: Darren Reece 1:19:38, Gavin Foster 1:20:53, Darren Young 1:26:31, Derek Parrington 1:27:15, Clayton Cutter 1:36:37, John Bassinder



1:47:27, Paul Corns 1:48:09, Richard Dunn 1:48:48, Jan King 1:50:55, Tim Walker 1:56:04, Michelle Eyre 2:02:44, Paula Pickersgill 2:09:36, Gail Schofield 2:12:08, Zoe Mallinson 2:12:20, Jenny Walker 2:17:16, Debbie Hyde 2:24:43, Alex Whyte 2:27:22, Mel Shaw 2:27:22, Melissa Vincent 2:35:51

## My Journey with The Lions So Far...

Lorraine Naylor



I am a quiet kind (ish) person, then there's running! now I am talking. I've often tried going out without having a conversation about running, it's literally impossible! What did I ever talk about before I ran???

Am I passionate about running? Just a little, once upon a time ago (wake up) in 2004 was the year my life as a Lion changed forever. I did a little running on my own, it was then Alison Adams told me to try the club on a Thursday evening. I was so nervous, I was astounded by such a giddy and chatty presence. It shocked me to hear you would run in the rain!

It didn't take long before I signed my soul to the Club! Yes, I was hooked, these were the days when Steve Newell use to take us out on a Monday evening from Brighouse

where getting to 5 miles was an amazing achievement! The days where we were so short of XC ladies I used to get my sister from Ireland to come over to run with the team. If ever I was to regret anything in life it would be not to have joined Stainland Lions earlier in life. For me it's my little world when I can share my aches, niggles, hills, mud, weather, PB's, not to mention dogs of lead, going crazy on the dance floor! You just don't get that from family or work (they don't get it) you suggest running and always seem to get a response "It's bad for your knees"

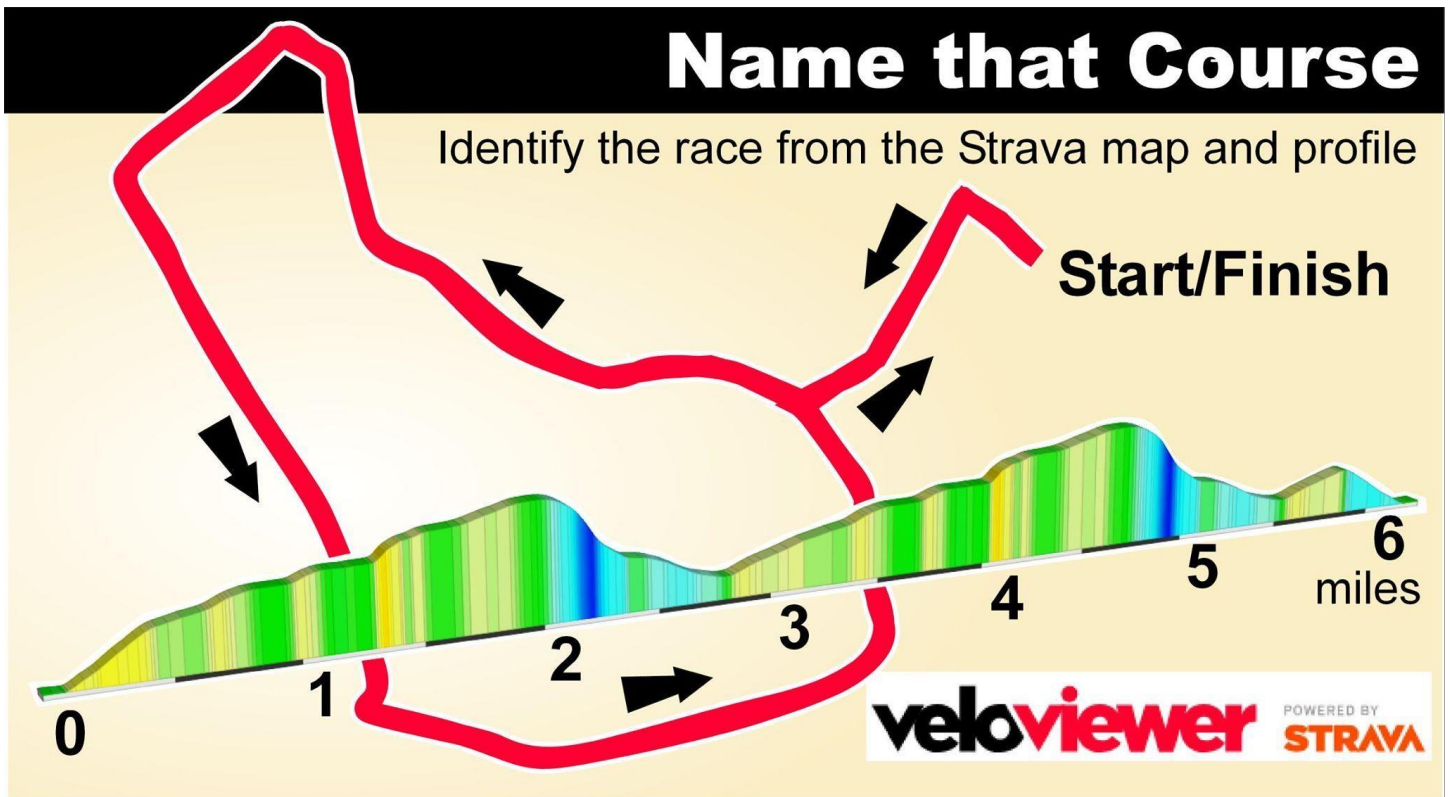
I guess we all run for different reasons. For me it's the adrenaline, I get such a buzz, it gives me so much energy, I mean I could go on forever about the benefits. Everyone who can should run, there would be a lot less violence in the world.

Looking back my best running year was 2008 where PB's galore from 5k's to Sheffield Half Marathon where I got the qualifying time for the London Marathon. These days not too bothered about PB's, I am happier to be injury free, but will still give it my all. In 2009 it all came crashing down when I was diagnosed with Cancer. I can honestly say you guys were so supportive. You kept me going Diane Rafferty was Chairperson and the support I got was unreal. It wasn't much fun running with Chemo, air felt so thin, how Hutchie felt when I use to see him battle his way round Shroggs Park. It must have been harder than running up Everest.

2010 my first run back it took me 26min to do 2 miles, but I was Cancer free that's all that mattered. It was then Andy was asked to work down South so we rented out our house and lived like country pumpkin's for 5yrs in sleepy Dorset. 5yrs later I was back wearing the Stainland Lions colours. I did join a running club, but it was small and very laid back. It wasn't till I came back did I start to see my running improve. I believe it's down to the great encouragement and support from the club. Then there's the track and been surrounded by hills. Stainland Lions is a great running club and so proud to be ladies captain. Onwards and upwards for Injury free year and many happy runs everyone!

Hail, Hail the Lions!

And now for something completely different...  
Jim Harris and Andrew Laird Boldy



## A Grand Day Out... to Bridlington

Jonathan Pybus

On Saturday 16th February we had our 3rd Annual Grand away run. For new members this is an away run at a coastal resort. Normally cheap and cheerful although this year we had good hotels for once!

The hard-core party gang went on the Friday night, and had to endure Steve Boyer's Karaoke display.

Some did the park run at Sewerby Hall which is a great park run whilst the rest of us caught the bus to the North Landing, the starting point for your 8-mile run.

The route was filled with fantastic views of Flamborough Head and for once it was good running conditions that everybody enjoyed. The weather was just fantastic, it was February and i was running without a jacket! The run finished along the seafront in brilliant sunshine, with lots of cheering and tired limbs, especially those who ran the park run as well.

We all went for lunch where we had the top floor to ourselves and waiter service. The evening meal was at the

Ransdale hotel who gave us a great meal, but the stars of the night were the contestants in the first ever Stainland Lions Mr & Mrs competition. Hilarious event with Byrons hat answer stealing the show closely followed by Roys carvery experience! A great shame for the night was that Bex was in bed feeling rotten, missing out on the fun.

After the meal we were straight on to the set of Shameless, I've seen some rough characters in Halifax but Bridlington beats it.

A great weekend!! makes sure you're free next year for one of the best weekends away. What more do you want?



You're  
not  
going  
out like that are you?  
Judith Greenwood

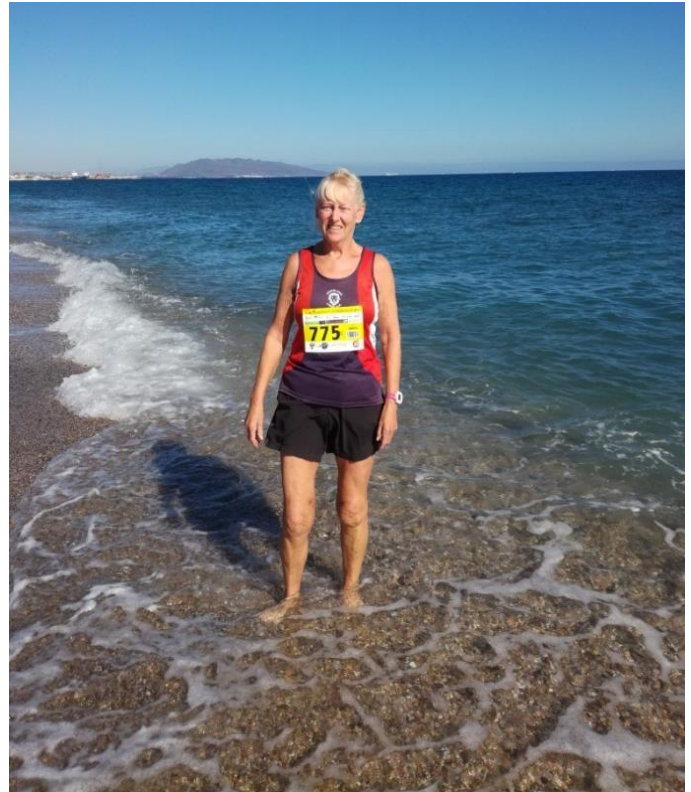
Will you take me for a run a few times around Skircoat Moor? I was asking my husband Eric who was a member of SLRC he had joined them a few years earlier. A year or two after they had formed a running group up at the Red Lion pub. (now 1885) at Stainland. What, Eh, Well go on then. So, I got ready in my "running gear" consisting of pale pink Shell Suit like today's jogging pants and zipped long sleeve hoody type top. The height of fashion in the 80's Also a new pair of fashion trainers. Came downstairs all raring to set off and hubby says Are you going like that? Yes, Why, what's the matter? Oh, come on then, off we go.

We parked up near St Judes Church and we set off on the grass uphill towards the school. OMG, wait wait, hang on a minute. I can't breathe slow down I can't do this. I thought I was quite fit after doing regular aerobic classes and walking with my dog. I had to go and sit back in the car after not even managing 100 yards, so much for a few times round I thought. Hubby did few times round the moor and not even out of breath.

That's it, I will go out by myself. So, I started going out for a run from home, lamppost to lamppost walking, running gradually building up so I could run without stopping for a mile. Progressing to joining SLRC at Stainland in 1992 where the average runners was 2 groups maybe 4 – 6 in a group. Was scary but (we never leave a lion behind) and I received encouragement in true SLRC fashion.

I have completed 5 marathons my 6th will be in London this April. Lots of half marathons, and 10k races my 50th parkrun on Christmas day 2018, cross country, vets' races and even fell races. I love off road but now a little more careful about what is under all those leaves and mud after breaking my leg on a running holiday in Majorca with pals Marilyn and Pat former SLRC members and having 2 arthroscopies on my knee (too much fast-downhill running) I have also been past social secretary of the club also past away run organiser. I am now qualified LIRF and take out groups Tuesday 1885 and Thursday nights from Heath most Sunday mornings 9am from west vale car park if no races. It's usually an adventure in our group, especially summertime off road running from Stainland. We all come back for more the following week. I've met life long pals being a member of the lions and have had lots of laughs on the way with my running buddies and enjoyed running holidays here and abroad.

I hope I can keep enjoying my running and injury free for a few more years yet. Enjoy your running and don't forget "we never leave a lion behind"





# Leo's Adventures



Spotted most recently in the Middle East riding through the Arabian Desert on the back of a camel like Colonel T E Lawrence! He returned to the UK with a hint of a tan and sand in places nobody wants it...





Thanks to Karen Thorne and Byron for doing a sterling job of looking after Leo on their recent trip to the Middle East. Where next Leo? Stay tuned... #leosadventures #lionsontour #stainlandlions

# You shall go to the Ball (And Roxy's)!

## Rebecca O'Neil

The 31<sup>st</sup> Annual dinner was held on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> February at the Venue, in Barkisland, for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year running. A brilliant night kicked off with drinks on arrival, and plenty of mingling between our wonderfully dressed guests. Amazing to see everyone in their finest garments when usually all we see is people dressed in their sweaty running gear! Our assigned photographer for the night, Matthew Radcliffe, was on hand and busy taking impromptu pictures. (More of Matthew's photos from the night can be found here - <https://mattradcliffphotography.pic-time.com/-stainlainlionsannualball2019/gallery>)

The big curtain reveal, akin to the old laser show at the Coliseum in Halifax, showed off our room for the evening, and it certainly looked spectacular. After a last-minute dash to the bar, and a bit of heckling from Colin, our guests took their seats.

Food came as a three-course meal, courtesy of the chefs from Eric's in Lindley. Empty plates on every table, especially where Dan "three meals" Marsden was sat. Three courses Dan, not Three Meals!!

After 8 (the time – not the mints), we moved on to the presentation of various division awards, handed out by last year's chair Paul Armitage and club president Colin Hughes. Apparently, the current chair had work flu, which is what you get when you haven't had to work for a full year and then suddenly find yourself having to do something! Lots of well-deserved awards handed out, including Judith Greenwood, who did especially well winning three awards in total. One of those included the inspirational award. As mentioned on the night, at the age of 70 she is breaking records in well-known tough fell races.

Judith's running partner in crime, Lesley Henderson, provided three luxury prizes for a raffle that was held on the night. We are still awaiting Stephen Hall's review of the Irish dancing lessons that he won...

Once the meal and the awards were finished, the Lions started breakdancing but the only thing they broke were a few bones! Some, however, were more limber than others and we were treated to many a dance offs to the party classics, provided to us by DJ RAVE ON!





Never a bunch to go gently in to the night, a pride of Lions filled several taxis and made their way to the plains of Sowerby Bridge. The destination of choice being Roxy's where the majority partied until the lights came up!

A brill night, and if you have never attended our awards night, I highly recommend you come along next February.

Editors notes – This night wouldn't have been possible without the hard work of Rebecca and the other ladies on the social committee. The effort doesn't go unnoticed and on behalf of everyone a big thank you!!



# The Fells are alive with the sound of Lions

## James Penson

You might have heard about this already but if not, here is the link - <https://fellrunninglions.home.blog/>

Can you smell it? With the salty smell of juicy excitement, our own new spangly Fell Championship is upon us! Starting this month with Lads leap on Sat 2<sup>nd</sup> March (of which a few of you joined in) and with close to 60 runners already signed up to the whole shindig, the word on the fell is that it's going to be a doozy of a year.

25 races to choose from, mid-week, weekends, long, short and even other, there is plenty here to whet your appetite and either gently pull you into this mucky, damp (in places) and glorious world, or just to caress your already honed and perfectly piqued fell fetish.

Time moves by so very fast, leaving ideas and dreams behind, don't fear what you don't know, we grow by experiencing new life, how can we possibly ever know what we could achieve unless we try?

And here is a poem I like a lot, which sums up why I run – mainly because I like it.

### **The Song of the Ungirt Runners**

BY CHARLES HAMILTON SORLEY

We swing ungirded hips,

And lightened are our eyes,  
 The rain is on our lips, We do not run for prize.  
 We know not whom we trust  
 Nor whitherward we fare,  
 But we run because we must Through the great  
 wide air.

The waters of the seas Are troubled as by storm.  
 The tempest strips the trees And does not leave  
 them warm.

Does the tearing tempest pause? Do the tree-  
 tops ask it why? So, we run without a cause  
 'Neath the big bare sky.

The rain is on our lips, We do not run for prize.  
 But the storm the water whips  
 And the wave howls to the skies.  
 The winds arise and strike it  
 And scatter it like sand, And  
we run because we like it  
 Through the broad bright land.



Me again - See you on the fells my friends, don't be shy in asking any of us for advice, help or anything you may think is daft or not, we want this to be super inclusive competition with the whole fell champs evolving and growing as we fine tune it each year into a masterpiece of fell and runner as one.

## Not all those who wander are lost

John Allan

Race recap of the High Peak Marathon. It is a bit of a funny one. Whilst it is run in the High Peak area of the Peak District, it is quite a bit further than your typical marathon. It's also a fell race, run at night, in winter, and must be completed in teams of 4.

If you go the right way (and many don't), it's about 42 miles. There's about 8,500ft of hills and lots of the route is on remote, pathless, boggy, wilderness. There's no route marking and an outright ban on GPS use for navigation (Clayton would love this...)

So, entries are obviously vetted for relevant experience. Last year Calder Valley Fell Runners had a strong team of navigators but unfortunately for them, one of the team sustained an injury and they needed someone daft enough to join them. I agreed to follow them round but made my navigational abilities quite clear. Then 'Easty Beastie' struck and the event was cancelled anyway. Phew.

However, 'Beasties' timely snow dump meant that entries were automatically carried over to 2019. Not a problem, I'll just follow along as planned last year. Then the rest of the team dropped out, one by one, and were replaced by other great blokes but with dubious Nav skills. Between us we had a bit of a problem. The most qualified chap to take the helm has the Instagram handle 'UsuallyLost'... yes, that's me and this isn't looking good.

We decided that with a couple of recces between us, we probably wouldn't die. The recces were great, beautiful clear winters days with far reaching vistas. We still went the wrong way a few times but figured we could wing it on the night. We didn't get chance to recce the last 12 miles either, but it should be light by then? So, we'll wing that bit too...

11pm on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March and we're stood in Edale village hall. There's some of the top names in fell running here.

Most notably the women with Jasmin Paris<sup>1</sup>, Nicky Spinks<sup>2</sup>, Carol Morgan<sup>3</sup>, and Caitlan Rice. Then there's us. (Some light reading about the inspirational women mentioned above... well worth reading in addition to this newsletter).

1. <https://www.runnersworld.com/uk/training/ultra/a25930252/who-is-jasmin-paris/>
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2018/jul/10/fell-runners-116-mile-feat-adds-to-summer-ofsporting-triumphs>
3. <https://www.grough.co.uk/magazine/2019/01/14/carol-morgan-adds-spine-challenger-win-to-list-asjasmin-paris-leads-spine-race#>)

Shitting it. But before we know it, we're off down the road and up the fells. Headtorches on, map and compass in hand and settling in for a long night out.

We managed to get through the first 14miles without incident. Then the clouds rolled in, the rain came, and the temperature dropped. Time to focus properly!

The obvious thing about running in remote areas in the dark is that you can't see very far around you. It's much the same in the daylight when its misty. The real problem however is when its dark AND misty because the headtorch reflects off the fog and you can't even see your feet. If you hold the torch in your hand you can see your feet, but not the map and compass, so that's no good either. Seeing the map was preferable so we slowly and carefully maneuverer around the route. Following the contours, trusting the bearings and keeping an eye on the altimeter, all the while not seeing more than 1-2ft ahead. We were steadily passing teams and doing great!

We slipped up a bit by following another team for the first time about 30 miles in. We were contouring to the south of Bleaklow, a notoriously difficult section and made stupid mistake that cost us about 15 minutes and saw us crossing rivers, 20ft deep peat groughs and waist high heather. Bugger.

The next checkpoint was crossing the Snake Pass road. It was starting to get light (but sill misty.) and the cheery marshals were handing out cups of tea. Happy days! Only a medium distance fell race left to complete. This was the bit we hadn't recced though, we were getting a bit tired and missed a path junction. My fault again really and another 15 minutes lost. Second Bugger.

Back on track and the clouds lifted a bit! We were all still in good spirits and the end was in sight as we trotted along Rushup Edge towards Mam Tor, Hollins Cross then a nice descent back to Edale for breakfast at 10:30am.

It was tough, but somehow, we managed to place reasonably well amongst some of the biggest names in the sport. We could've done better but we had a great night out and nobody died.

## Lostock and Two Smoking Barrels

Steve Hallam

One thing that I wanted to achieve with the early Club Championship program was to give it a "fresh" look, and to include a few events that we hadn't even considered in recent times. Hence, the LOSTOCK 6 was chosen to provide us with an alternative to the usual local 10K's of previous years.

So, was it a success? Well, I believe that it produced the desired effect and although I wouldn't regard it as a "classic" or "must do" race, it had some appeal, especially to the steadies and intermediates amongst us. The hard-core fell runners may have (predictably) given it a miss, but for many of us, this was a great way to spend a late winter Sunday morning.

Essentially, the so called "Six miles of smiles" event lived up to its reputation and certainly left me with a feeling of wellbeing.



Lostock AC provided a warm welcome, insisting on a team photo, recognition for being the largest contingent of runners from a single club to ever attend their race and a general appreciation for supporting their event - Which was nice! They even presented us with special awards for the first Male and Female Lion! They like to be known as The Friendly Running Club - No arguments there, that box was certainly ticked!

Whilst the start and finish areas were in an uninspiring semi industrial area, the route itself was rather pleasant, being a large single loop, mainly along quiet rural roads and through the odd pretty village. Spread over a gently undulating course, it appealed equally to faster runners looking for a PB, and others not wanting anything too extreme. Sue Cash seemed well impressed with the choice, saying that she enjoyed it immensely.

In the unseasonably mild weather, a total of 42 Lions made up 10% of the field, therefore it worked well for us and the host club.

It was good to see some new faces in the Championship for 2019 - Welcome to **John Bannister, Richard Brewster, Laura Goodwin, Debbie Hinds** and **Bill Lee**. Hope you all have a great experience, add some friendly competition and feel part of something special!

From a personal perspective, my aim was to run a solid race with at least some degree of consistency and rack up a few championship points whilst several "rivals" were noticeably absent! All was going great for the first 3 miles, when it suddenly became obvious that I had gone off far too fast and would now struggle to maintain any sort of form for the second half! Will I ever learn? With my heart rate almost off the scale and a familiar fatigue in my legs, I had to resort to my well documented walk breaks just to keep going. One by one, club mates kept passing me, saying encouraging things like "keep going Steve" and "don't stop now, you're doing great" but



probably with some relief that they were gaining some ground! John Bannister and David Farrar both disappeared into the distance, leaving me struggling to hold on to the back of Jingles and Paul McCormick and despite a late rally in the final mile, I just couldn't hold on!

Of course, I may have done better if I had paced it sensibly in the early stages. In my mind I was aiming for a pace of 7:30, which should have been about right for me for this distance and type of course and the way I have been running lately. Not surprisingly, it all unraveled, with the first 3-mile splits being 6:58, 7:05 and 7:15! Mile 4 was a case of digging to maintain something respectable at 7:45. Mile 5 at 8:17 - The wheels were coming off in fine style now as my laboured breathing began to restrict me to that "running through treacle" feeling. The final mile was helped by a bit of downhill at 7.25 but was still a frustrating mix of gasping walk breaks and madly desperate dashes.

Despite all of this, I was still quite pleased to cross the finish line with a chip time of 44:11. Surprisingly at 7:28 average pace, which was what I originally intended! I could have made it easier on myself though.

Next up on the "champ" calendar is the stunningly scenic Langsett 10K which I have never done but comes highly recommended by Ray Mooney, who ran it in the snow last year!

Entries are at a premium, mainly due to the 200 maximum participants restriction. For those who don't have a place but want to be involved, I can only suggest that you check with the organiser for possible drop outs/waiting list etc.

It's a timely reminder to us all that we need to plan and enter the events that we really want to do as early as possible.