



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 April. As always, plenty of people in action all around the UK.

Various

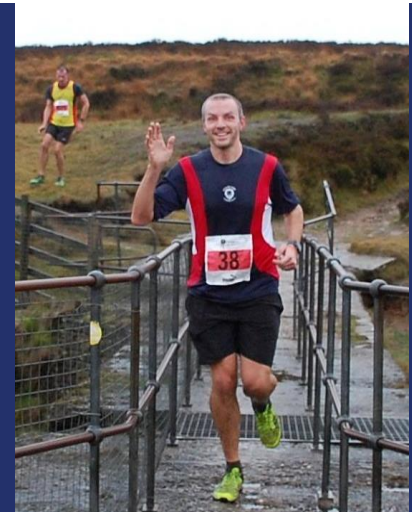
Contributors

Contributions from a few Lions as usual. Put the kettle on, settle down and read on.

Feel free to contribute next month, any report welcome.

From the Chair

Tony Mott



Could someone let me know where April went please?!

The London and Manchester marathons were the big news in April. Months of hard winter training came good for lots of Lions.

Gerry, Andrew, Judith, Stephen, Maria, Lesley, Wendy, Simon, Will, Gail, Emma and Jamie tackled London. Two Gavs, Makinder, Suzanne, Amanda, Ranjit, Tim, Roy and Paul ran Manchester.

There were first-time marathoners, club records, PBs and amazing performances all round. Thanks to the Lion support crews who are always at these events to cheer our runners on route and pick them up at the finish.

Running a marathon is a massive achievement and you should feel very proud of yourself for crossing the finish line, regardless of whether you smashed your PB or dragged yourself over the line in a crumpled sweaty heap.

Looking forwards we have Bluebell and the Calderdale Way Relay to get stuck into in May, as well as the usual flurry of races as the weather improves.

Happy running!!

Tony



Usain's PB Corner

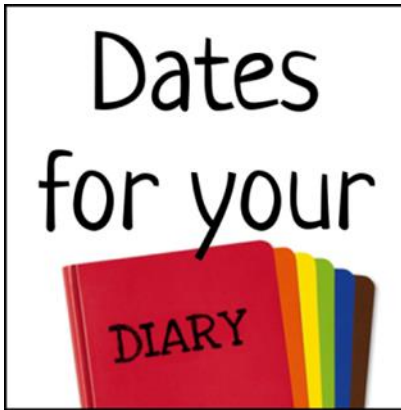
6th April @ Brighouse - Leon Severn PB of 19:14 taking 26 seconds off (This one did not get lost in my junk mail!!)

13th @ Brighouse: Danielle Hirst PB of 20:12 taking 42 seconds off; Zoe Russell PB of 25:21 taking 1 min 11 seconds off; Michael Poole PB of 32:16 taking 2 mins 16 seconds off.

20th @ Huddersfield: Beverley Day PB of 29:44 taking 55 seconds off; Sarah Parker PB of 36:17 taking 30 seconds off. At Halifax: Michelle Eyre PB of 26:58 taking 2 mins 8 seconds off.

At Brighouse: Gareth Knight PB of 19:14 taking 2 mins 19 seconds off; Steve Hallam PB of 21:38 taking 21 seconds off; Jonathan Pybus PB 21:49 taking 10 mins 34 seconds off previous Brighouse outing; and Lauren Cobb PB of 32:20 taking 24 second off.

27th @ Halifax: Michelle Rogerson PB of 22:14 taking 50 seconds off - and her 3rd PB in a row at Halifax; and lastly @ Huddersfield - Me with PB of 31:44 taking 23 seconds off



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

Beginners Final Night: Monday 20th May – Keep an eye on the Facebook group and the Forum for more details of the final night. Please help in any capacity you can.

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

Downhill 10k: Thursday 6th 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 26th 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 13th 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 18th 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 April Newsletter



Summary of Race Reports for May Newsletter

5 April 2019: Hands up if you fancy running 53 laps of a running track? Nobody? Wait, Amjid Khan and Richard Crombie actually signed up for this! But first, some normal races.

Temple Newsam Daffodil Dash

Zoe Mallinson completed the Temple Newsam Daffodil Dash on Saturday, opting for the half marathon distance. Zoe ran well in the Spring sunshine to cross the line in 2:31:49.

Lancaster Mother's Day 10K

Three Lions chose to celebrate Mother's Day weekend with a flat fast 10K in Lancaster. The race is run largely on traffic free footpaths, and all finishers were rewarded with a huge medal.

Results: Caroline Ford 57:33, Diane Thornley 57:50, Helen Shenton 61:53

Ras Yr Aran

David Culpan was also celebrating this weekend, marking his birthday by running the Ras Yr Aran fell race with clubmate Ray Mooney. The 10.6-mile race started and finished at Llanuwchllyn village hall in Snowdonia National Park and included 3,100 feet of ascent. The route followed the Northern Ridge of Aran which has stunning views from the summit and very steep crags to the east. David said afterwards "Only the fence separated us from certain death over the sheer drops!"

Results: David Culpan 2.27.21, Ray Mooney 2.59.58

The Coniston 14 Mile

Renowned as the most beautiful road race in Britain, the Coniston 14 attracts around 1,600 runners each year. A community event, the race is organised by an enthusiastic committee of volunteers from Coniston village. Club coach Mark Pigford, who took part with fellow Lion John Bannister, said he was "just glad to finish" after not having raced for quite some time.

Results: Mark Pigford 1:41:00, John Bannister 1:46:50

Littleborough Amateur Boxing and Fitness Club 5K

Jonathan Pybus and Debbie Hinds both ran well in the inaugural Littleborough Amateur Boxing and Fitness Club 5K on Sunday. The race started and finished near the boxing club and included a section of the Hollingworth Lake perimeter footpath. The Lions' efforts were rewarded with age category honours - 2nd M65 for Jonathan, and 3rd F55 for Debbie.

Results: Jonathan Pybus 23:22, Debbie Hinds 30:45

The Brexit or Exit Track Challenge

A crazy name for a crazy race. Does it even make sense? And who does a half marathon on a track? It's 53 laps! Step forward Amjid Khan, whose reputation for taking on all the wacky races was secured last year when he ran back and forth over the Humber Bridge all through the night. Amjid completed his 53 laps in 1:55:26. Richard Crombie, fresh from his ultra marathon exploits last weekend, toyed briefly with the idea of carrying on for a full marathon, but thought better of it after two extra laps and bowed out in 2:01:05.

Delightful Dales 200

Tony Mott rode the Delightful Dales 200 on Sunday. It's debatable how delightful it can really be to ride your bicycle through some of the hilliest parts of the Yorkshire Dales for 9½ hours non-stop, and it was a long day in the saddle for Tony. Excellent value for money though at only £5 for the event (2½p per kilometer!)

12 April 2019: The clocks have gone forward.....so let the midweek evening races commence! Not one but two championship races this week! Not one but two fell racing championship races this week! Plus - Mags Beever was 1st Lady at the Baildon Boundary Way Trail Half Marathon and there were some storming performances from the runners (and from the Lions support crew!) at the Manchester Marathon.

Bunny Run 1

Taking advantage of the lighter evenings, eight Lions hopped over to Haworth for the first of this year's series of Bunny Runs. These popular midweek mini cross-country races usually attract around 150 runners, all vying for the chance to win armfuls of chocolate and Cadbury's Creme Eggs. Following a short heavy shower just as runners were arriving, the skies cleared, and it was relatively pleasant evening on Penistone Hill with just a slight breeze to keep runners cool in the evening sunshine. With the ground pretty much bone dry, there were some fast times recorded. Leon Severn was first Lion, Paul Patrick improved significantly on his Bunny Run times from last year, and there were age category wins for Clare Smith and Aileen Baldwin. The race was the third counter in the Lions shiny new fell racing championships.

Results: Leon Severn 19:32, James Penson 19:59, Clare Smith 22:29, Paul Patrick 23:04, David Culpan 23:29, Aileen Baldwin 24:56, Jackie Barker 33:43, Alex Whyte 33:45

Joe Salt Memorial 5K, Cowm Reservoir

The Lions sent a small raiding party over the border to Lancashire for the Joe Salt Memorial 5K round Cowm Reservoir in Whitworth. The race was a counter in the main club championship. Gareth Knight, Michelle Rogerson, Jonathan Pybus and Debbie Hinds all recorded personal best times for 5K on the night, with Michelle going sub-20 for the first time. There were age category wins for Paul Patrick (who was running his second race in as many nights), Michelle Rogerson and – inevitably - Aileen Baldwin.

Results: Gareth Knight 19:30, Damian Pearson 19:40, Paul McCormick 20:40, Gerry Banham 21:16, Paul Patrick 21:41, Michelle Rogerson 21:46, Jonathan Pybus 22:02, David Collins 22:11, Helen Armitage 22:18, Aileen Baldwin 23:51, Susan Cash 26:22, Paul Armitage 26:39, Debbie Hinds 30:02

Coledale Horseshoe

Race number four in the Lions' fell racing championship (it's still shiny, still new) was the 8.5mile Coledale Horseshoe. James Penson and David Culpan were the only Lions up for the challenge. Starting and finishing at Braithwaite Lodge, the race took in Grisedale Pike, Eel Cragg and Barrow Summit. Total climb 3,600 feet. The first section out of the village was an imposing 2000 feet ascent to the summit of Grisedale to get the legs warmed up. David Culpan reported, "Eel Cragg was very tricky this year with quite a hairy scramble to the summit and underlying snow making it treacherous underfoot". The race finished with an exhilarating 1.5-mile descent off Barrow to the finish.

Results: James Penson 2.05.25, David Culpan 2.06.48

The Woldsman 50

Sandy Gee completed the Woldsman 50-mile challenge on Saturday. The route, which started at Driffield Showground, could be completed as either a walk or a run. Participants were invited to "experience the rolling hills and big skies of the Yorkshire Wolds that inspired Hockney's "Bigger Picture".

The Overgate 10K Challenge

Lions made up a significant percentage of the runners at the Overgate Challenge, the popular annual charity fundraiser for Overgate Hospice. The total field of 288 included over 50 Lions, many of whom have first-hand experience of the wonderful work that the hospice does. Cool weather made for pleasant running conditions. The Lions had three runners in the top ten, with Darren Reece in third place ahead of Leon Severn in eighth and "people's champion" Gareth Knight in tenth. Stefanie Hopkins was 3rd Lady. Several runners chose this race to make their club debut. Sandy Gee ran it despite having completed 50 miles in The Woldsman the previous day. Clayton Cutter enjoyed it so much, he did a second lap of the course immediately afterwards.

Results: Darren Reece 37:35, 42:18, Leon Severn 41:50, Gareth Knight 42:10, Clayton Cutter 43:16, Ben Carter 44:49, David Farrar 45:50, Stefanie Hopkins 45:56, Michelle Rogerson 46:28, Ian Hoskins 46:43, Paul McCormick 47:31, Gaby Ferris 48:43, Andrew Mackrill 49:02, Michael Dunning 49:03, Amjid Khan 49:31, Jan King 50:17, Catherine O'Shaughnessy 50:54, Aly Brook 53:00, Angela Lee 53:16, Sharon Marlor-Gage 53:44, Anne-Marie Ulliyott 54:30, Richard Brewster 55:17, Becki Watson 55:18, Tony Pinnington 55:24, Michelle Eyre 55:31, Gina Anderson Keeble 55:35, Laura Goodwin 56:05, Paula Pickersgill 56:25, Claire Smith 56:56, Ray Mooney 57:12, Joanne Cooke 57:19, Alison Audsley 57:51, Susan Cash 58:12, Sandy Gee 59:19, Virginia Lewin 60:06, Mark Preston 60:29, Zoe Mallinson 61:40, Graham Robertshaw 63:16, Debbie Hyde 64:11, Debbie Hinds 64:22, Samantha Varley 64:36, Melissa Vincent 64:44, Ken Chilcott 64:58, Kelly Richards 66:22, Anne-Marie Killeen 69:20, Justin Scargill 69:21, Sarah Knight 71:45, Carol Heptonstall 72:30, Jackie Barker 72:44, Peter Cawdron 73:22, Hilary Scargill 79:03, Linsey Taylor 82:28

Manchester Marathon



Starting and finishing at Old Trafford, the Manchester Marathon attracted a huge field of over 10,000 runners. Gavin Foster led the Lions home in an excellent time on his first attempt at the distance, and there were several other strong performances and personal bests on the day, notably Gavin Dodd taking eleven minutes off his previous best time. Suzanne Patterson and Amanda Zito, who ran together, finished in identical lightning-quick times. There was magnificent support from members of the club along the route.

Results: Gavin Foster 2:56:34, Gavin Dodd 3:17:53, Makinder Dhinsa 3:25:41, Suzanne Patterson 3:26:14, Amanda Zito 3:26:14, Richard Dunn 3:56:29, Ranjit Uppal 4:21:40, Roy Lunt 4:31:48, Tim Walker 4:37:25, Paul Armitage 5:15:40

City of Norwich Half

Christopher Bowen made his Lions debut at the City of Norwich Half Marathon. First staged in 1985 by Duke Street Running Club, the race was originally based in the centre of Norwich, hence its name. Then in 1993 it moved to the Norfolk Showground on the western outskirts of the city and it's been there ever since. The race starts and finishes within the Norfolk Showground and follows a rural single lap route through outlying villages. The first half of the course is pretty flat with one or two little bumps in the second half. Christopher posted a time of 1:59:01, a new personal best.

Baildon Boundary Way Trail Half Marathon

The in-form Mags Beever continued her excellent season, finishing 1st Lady at the Baildon Boundary Way Trail Half Marathon. Mags won the same race last year too but was 5 minutes faster this year. Aileen Baldwin won her age category, to complete her hat-trick of age category wins this week.



Results: Mags Beever 1:35:26, John Ingles 2:01:42, Aileen Baldwin 2:08:45, Rikki Hammond 2:19:48, Joanne Cahill 2:41:56, Alex Whyte 2:42:04

Urban Night Series

Another win to report, this time for Jim Harris in Monday's Urban Night Series orienteering event in Huddersfield town centre. Jim's victory was assured before he had even set off, as he was the only entrant in the solo category, all the other participants having opted to run in pairs. But still, a win's a win!

18 April 2019: Again, as last week, there were two championship races on the calendar - plus a fell racing championship race as well. This week's highlights include second place for Fast Ed at the Wardle Skyline and new age category club records for Gerry Banham and Jan King at the flat and fast Vale of York 10 and for Darren Reece at Sheffield Half Marathon (which isn't even flat, but he certainly was fast).

Bunny Run 2

Eight Lions were amongst the 174 runners who turned out for the second race of this year's Bunny Run series, vying once again for the chance to win armfuls of chocolate. It was a bright evening, a little warmer than the previous week but with a stronger wind that always seemed to be head on. The ground was still dry, so it meant

fast running once again. James Penson was first Lion, taking 30 seconds off his time from last week. In fact, all the Lions who ran last week logged faster times this week. There was the inevitable age category win for Aileen Baldwin. The race was the fifth (keep up!) counter in the Lions shiny new fell racing championships.

Results: James Penson 19:30, David Culpan 22:02, Andrew Laird Boldy 22:15, Paul Patrick 22:40, Aileen Baldwin 24:36, Susan Cash 29:14, Alex Whyte 32:18, Jackie Barker 32:49

Mollie Campbell 5K, Cowm Reservoir

Cowm Reservoir is proving to be a fertile hunting ground for Lions seeking PBs. This week's race, a counter in the Lions championship, saw Gareth Knight beat the personal best 5K time that he set over the same course just last week. Paul Patrick went for consistency, clocking an identical time to his effort last week. Paul Patrick, Alex Whyte and Jackie Barker were all running their second race in as many nights, having competed in the Bunny Run the previous day. Paul Patrick and Angela Lee won their respective age categories.

Results: Gareth Knight 19:23, Paul McCormick 20:57, Paul Patrick 21:41, Anne-Marie Ulliyott 24:22, Sharon Marlor-Gage 24:29, Angela Lee 24:35, Samantha Varley 30:09, Alex Whyte 31:15, Jackie Barker 32:13

Wardle Skyline Fell Race

Ed Hyland finished in second place at the Wardle Skyline fell race on Saturday in a time of 45:50. The race, which took place near Rochdale, was 7 miles long with 1,250 feet of ascent. Ed is having a great off-road season this year, having previously tended to compete on the roads.

Wensleydale Wander

Derek Parrington ran the Wensleydale Wander, a challenge event that can be completed as either a walk or a run. Derek completed slightly more than the scheduled distance after getting lost along the way and ended up covering 36K in around three hours and three minutes.

Burnsall Half Marathon

Four Lions competed in the Burnsall Trail Half Marathon, a hilly off-road race in the Yorkshire Dales. The race started alongside the river at Burnsall and took in sections of the Dales Way footpath. Just over two hundred runners took part. Damien Pearson was first Lion home, finishing in sixteenth place.

Results: Damien Pearson 1:49:08, Catherine McHugh 2:34:38, Robert Ashcroft 2:34:39, Emily Wilson 2:38:52

Vale of York 10 Mile

Sunday's Vale of York 10 Mile race was another counter in the Lions championship. The route, which is fast and flat, starts on the runway at Rufforth airfield, home to the York Gliding Centre. There was a bumper turnout of over 40 Lions, and they were absolutely flying! Notable results included:

- Clayton Cutter was first Lion home in a personal best time for ten miles – and he picked up 10K and 5K PBs on his way round too
- Judith Greenwood won her age category
- Jan King was 2nd M65 and broke his own club record set over the same course in 2017 by over a minute
- John Bannister set a new M55 club record
- Gerry "Biceps" Banham was 3rd M60 and set a new club record by almost seven minutes
- Steve Hallam had a brilliant run which would have seen him set a new club record had Gerry not muscled in ahead of him

- Several club members recorded personal best times
- Alex Whyte and Jackie Barker both notched up their third race in a single week.



Results: Clayton Cutter 1:05:19, Gareth Knight 1:05:46, Gavin Dodd 1:07:53, John Bannister 1:10:30, Gerry Banham 1:10:18, Paul McCormick 1:10:49, Steve Hallam 1:14:39, John Ingles 1:14:39, Helen Armitage 1:15:27, David Collins 1:17:21, Jan King 1:16:44, Catherine O'Shaughnessy 1:19:08, Amjid Khan 1:20:32, Angela Lee 1:21:03, Paula Statham-Drake 1:21:48, Paul Butterfield 1:24:41, Michelle Eyre 1:25:06, Richard Brewster 1:25:20, Sarah Lunt 1:26:16, Anne-Marie Ulllyott 1:27:35, Karen Thorne 1:28:25, Claire Smith 1:28:38, Carol Gregson 1:29:12, Paula Pickersgill 1:29:43, Laura Goodwin 1:29:23, Paul Armitage 1:33:14, Zoe Mallinson 1:34:58, Joanne Cooke 1:37:30, Diane Thornley 1:37:39, Philip Richards 1:38:54, Alex Whyte 1:38:16, Lesley Henderson 1:39:22, Justin Scargill 1:39:34, Kelly Richards 1:40:27, Debbie Hinds 1:42:57, Debbie Hyde 1:43:09, Ken Chilcott 1:43:15, Judith Greenwood 1:44:19, Patricia Hallowell 1:48:18, Jackie Barker 1:54:26, Gail Fawcett 1:56:27, Hilary Scargill 2:02:43

Sheffield Half Marathon

This demanding half marathon reward runners with spectacular views of the Peak District and various city landmarks. Starting in the City Centre, runners travel down the 'Eccy' Road, passing Encliffe Park and the outskirts of Dore before returning to the City Centre to finish in front of the Town Hall. The rapidly improving

Darren Reece was first Lion home in a very fast personal best time, setting a new M40 club record, and Michelle “Rocket” Rogerson and Ian Hoskins both recorded personal bests too.

Results: Darren Reece 1:19:26, Simon Rawnsley 1:29:03, Michelle Rogerson 1:39:09, Ian Hoskins 1:40:08, Tim Neville 1:50:51, Melissa Vincent 2:25:38

Lancaster 3 Bridges 10K

Tony Pinnington was the sole Lion at the Lancaster 3 Bridges 10K, clocking 54:21. This is a popular race, with runners from all over the North of England taking part, often as a fast preparation for spring and early summer marathons. Starting at the clubhouse next to Salt Ayre Sports Centre, the scenic route crosses three bridges spanning the historic River Lune. The event website describes the course as “mainly flat and fast”, neglecting to mention the section of steps which Tony likened to Scammonden Steps.

Flat Caps 10K

Gordon Murray was the sole Lion at the Flat Caps 10K, finishing in 52:07. The undulating route around the picturesque Calderdale countryside starts and finishes in Sowerby Bridge. The race is a fundraiser for the Christie NHS Foundation Trust.

Skipton Triathlon

Steven Crowther was the sole Lion at Skipton Triathlon, finishing in 133rd place in 1:26:31. The sprint distance event comprised a 400m swim in Craven Swimming Pool & Fitness Centre, a single lap 22K bike circuit around Skipton and a two lap 5K run around Aireville Park.

Yorkshire Vets Grand Prix Series – Race Two, Honley

Over in Honley it was round two of the Yorkshire Veterans Grand Prix series. Despite a Lions turnout that was depleted by the numerous other races detailed above, there was some great running by the Stainland Ladies, with Emma Forester-Thompson, Aileen Baldwin, Sharon Marlor-Gage and Virginia Lewin all winning age category prizes. The next race in the series is at Kirkstall on Tuesday evening 28th May.

25 April 2019: There was another championship race on the calendar this week - plus no fewer than three fell racing championship races over the busy Easter weekend. And...Rebecca O'Neill ran to Liverpool!!

Bunny Run 3

Thirteen Lions were amongst the 173 runners who turned out for the third of this year's Bunny Run series. After a slight rain shower before the race and a threat of rain just as the race started it was another fine evening with good conditions for running. Unfortunately, due to a timer malfunction, no times were recorded this week. Leon Severn was first Lion, and Aileen Baldwin won her age category as she has done every week of the series. The race was the sixth counter in the Lions shiny new fell racing championships.



Results: Leon Severn 26th, Kevin Robinson 29th, James Penson 30th, Richard Crombie 59th, Jim Harris 62nd, Paul Patrick 78th, David Culpan 81st, Steve Hallam 99th, Aileen Baldwin 106th, Laraine Penson 137th, Susan Cash 142nd, Alex Whyte 163rd, Jackie Barker 168th

Billy Knox 5K, Cowm Reservoir

This week's race, a counter in the Lions main club championship, saw PBs for several of the club members taking part. Gavin Foster, Catherine O'Shaughnessy and Virginia Lewin all won their respective age categories.

Results: Gavin Foster 17:19, Darren Reece 17:43, Clayton Cutter 19:32, Gareth Knight 19:41, David Collins 21:50, Amjid Khan 23:06, Catherine O'Shaughnessy 23:19, Colin Duffield 23:47, Michelle Eyre 25:31, Richard Brewster 25:45, Karen Thorne 27:00, Virginia Lewin 27:48, Phil Richards 28:53, Melissa Vincent 29:12, Kelly Richards 31:48, Pat Helliwell 33:27, Gail Fawcett 34:58

Caldervale 10 Mile

Paul McCormick was the sole Lion at the Caldervale 10-mile race in Preston on Good Friday. The route comprises one undulating lap with challenging hills on quiet country roads. Paul crossed the line in 89:58

Manchester to Liverpool 50 Mile Ultra Marathon

Delays on the TransPennine Express? M62 at a standstill? If you are Rebecca O'Neill, these matters need not concern you as you can simply run to Liverpool instead. The M2L 50 Mile Ultra-Marathon follows the Trans-Pennine Trail and the River Mersey from Manchester to Liverpool. The course is flat and fast (but, needless to say, very long). Rebecca braved the boiling hot weather on Good Friday to complete the route in 10:50:09, cheered on by a posse of supporters from the club.

Speaking the day after her epic achievement, Rebecca said “I just want to say a big massive thank you to each and every one of you for all your kind messages and lovely words I have received since Friday. I tried to slip under the radar with this event - but that wasn't to be! Seeing my friends on the route was the best boost ever - even if I didn't look so appreciative from mile 38 onwards! What a fab club we have!”

Guiseley Gallop 10K

A trio of Lions tackled the Guiseley Gallop 10K on Easter Sunday. Ian Hoskins was first Lion, Michelle Rogerson was 2nd in her age category and Virginia Young won her age category and declared her result “not bad for an old bird”.

Results: Ian Hoskins 50:11, Michelle Rogerson 51:32, Virginia Young 59:03

Helmsley 10K

Two Lions were represented at the Helmsley 10K Multi Terrain Challenge. This community event took place on Easter Sunday on a mixture of forestry tracks, footpaths, roads and fields.

Results: Diane Waite: 56:08, David Waite: 56:09

Newlands Memorial and Teenager with Altitude Fell Races

These two epic Lake District fell races were held together this weekend. The races were the seventh and eighth counters in the Lions fell racing championships. Both races start and finish at the village hall in the small Lakeland hamlet of Stair, and both are extremely challenging. Whilst the Newlands Memorial is hard enough for most people at 11.5 miles long with 3,700 feet of ascent, its big brother race the Teenager with Altitude is more James Penson and Kevin Robinson's cup of tea, at over 15 miles long with 7,600 feet of ascent. Just like last year, the races took place in roasting hot conditions. After the race, Jim Harris commented: “We soaked up some glorious sunshine in the Lakes at the Teenager with Altitude or the Newlands Round (which share a finishing 10-mile ridge run). £8. Free beer. Free beef stew and bread. Free stream to lie down in afterwards to cool off in. What's not to like?”

Results (Newlands Memorial): Leon Severn 2:45:24, Jim Harris 2:52:21, David Culpan 2:54:38, Victoria Armstrong 2:55:23 Rikki Hammond 3:23:08, Ray Mooney 3:34:52, Aileen Baldwin 3:45:16, Steve Boyer 4:30:47

Results (Teenager with Altitude): James Penson 5:51:25, Kevin Robinson 5:51:26

Ackworth Half Marathon

Two Lions competed in the Ackworth Half Marathon on Easter Monday. The course is an undulating but scenic one lap rural route along quiet country roads. The race runs along the edge of High and Low Ackworth, through the small historic village of Wentbridge. Jan King was 3rd in his age category, and Virginia Lewin was 2nd in hers. Virginia was also 2nd in the Yorkshire Vets section.

Results: Jan King 1:48:04, Virginia Lewin 2:12:50



Leo's Adventures



Spotted most recently in London helping out Radzi, as part of the BBC London Marathon commentary team. Thank you to Andrew Falkingbridge for your submission.



Where next Leo? Stay tuned... #leosadventures #lionsontour #stainlandlions

Man Alive, Number 65!

John Bassinder

Three Peaks Fell Race, Saturday 27th April 2019.

This Race is billed as the Marathon with Mountains, I should have kept scrolling right past the entry page when I saw that bit. Yet there I was, along with 900 other runners, stood on the start line at Horton-in-Ribblesdale eagerly looking forward [as you can well imagine] to the next 23.5 miles with its 5,300' climb. I had four other Lions for company, but I knew they wouldn't be company for long, all more experienced at this kind of thing and all faster. Looking around me most of the other 900 also appeared to be serious, hardened fell runners. Beards and tattoos in abundance, even the blokes.

So why is the slowest and least experienced Lion there writing this report? Well I wondered that too, but when Leon messaged for a volunteer there was a deafening silence, I can only think that the rest had gone out running again. So, this certainly isn't an attempt to present myself as an experienced fell runner or even pretend to know what I'm talking about, just the ramblings of a senile also-ran who really hadn't a clue what he was taking on.

How the heck did I come to be stood there in the first place? Well, last year I was facing my upcoming 65th birthday with a sense of foreboding. What I needed to do was set a challenge, something to look forward to instead of this gloomy feeling that my best running days were behind me. The Three Peaks race was also celebrating its 65th birthday and I'd always wanted to do it before it was too late. Eureka! Challenge found, but it's not a race you can simply enter on a whim so here's how it goes;

Prior to entering: Entries open in February but you need to get planning well before then, you're not even considered unless you have run qualifying races. Basically, it's a minimum of two long distance fell races, under FRA regs, in the previous 12 months, or other races from their approved list. My own qualifiers were the Yorkshireman Half [Bizarrely the Yorkshireman Full is NOT a qualifier but the half is, all to do with climb per mile] and the 'Lost Shepherd' 15 miler, run in October from Mytholmroyd. Two lovely races, both on our doorstep, no excuses then.

With those under my belt my birthday present to myself was the race entry. A winter's Saturday afternoon, go on-line, fill the form, press the enter button, too late now. Following day, the longer runs start and so do the injuries. I don't worry too much nowadays, on past experience training for London or whatever this always seems to happen, partly because our mileage is increasing but sometimes because our minds turn existing little niggles into big dramas.

No runners are without their weak spots, mine is a long-standing heel problem due to a bone spur [Haglund's deformity apparently] which occasionally aggravates the Achilles. Pretty persistent this time around but I wasn't for giving up on the race, so you just have to adapt. In the final few weeks I was a stranger to Strava, getting by on just one long run a week and using my cross trainer for 2 hours at a time while cursing Mr. Haglund. I also relented and made an overdue visit to the doctor resulting in the predictable anti-inflammatories. This at least

led to a more photogenic foot as the inflammation went down, pain was still there but then you can't have everything.

Four weeks to go; I'd never even walked any of the route, and now I wouldn't have chance to reccie it either. Ah well, best I can do at this stage is watch YouTube videos of past races. I was looking for inspiration but the sight of our own Tanya Blake from a previous year crawling in sleet on all fours up Whernside with a pained expression did little for my confidence, so I tried reading some blogs instead. Ben Mounsey is always inspiring, let's see...Oh dear, Ben hated it and said it was the one race he would never do again. Not the inspiration I was seeking.

Two weeks to go; Need to read up on these cut-off times. Six checkpoints and three crucial cut-offs which are strictly imposed. By the first cut off, 1hr 45mins into the race, the runners need to be up Pen Y Ghent, back down and along an undulating trail to a tent in the middle of a field in the middle of nowhere. In 2hrs10 they need to be along to the iconic Ribbleshead Viaduct and in 3hrs 30 they should have crawled up to the top of Whernside, slid down again and hobbled along to Chapel le Dale. These three points are where the race route meets the road and a 'Courtesy bus' awaits the unlucky. I'd read all this on entering but hadn't really paid attention. Ah well, too late now.

Other considerations on these kinds of races; Kit of course. As per all fell races, must carry full waterproofs, map compass, whistle, hat, gloves drink, food etc. Food? - Eating on these longer runs was a new experience for me, but you wouldn't walk the Three Peaks without a picnic and you're going to be burning a lot more calories running than walking, so you need to replenish the energy. In the final few weeks I tried gels, power bars, soft fudge sweets and lord knows what 'til I found what worked for me.

One day to go; Carol and I had decided to make a weekend of it [any excuse] and drove up in trepidation on Friday. The forecast for Saturday was abysmal with storm Hannah due to visit and I had visions of Carol spending the whole day sitting in the car in pouring rain waiting for one particular straggler to come in by moonlight. I was on a second course of anti-inflams, heel still tender, not a clue where I was meant to be running. What could possibly go wrong.

Arrived at our Airbnb in a tiny hamlet, an old schoolhouse owned by a lovely bohemian type sculptor, amazing place, we loved it, off to a good start. The local was a proper pub full of muddy walkers with even muddier dogs and a superb menu. Definitely feeling better. No sleep Friday night, again I've learned not to panic about this, seriously, it's normal. I've realised you always sleep more than you think but you only remember the bits when you're awake.

Saturday morning and apologies from this point on, as I said, this is no attempt at a professional sounding race report just my own thoughts;

Overnight rain had stopped as we drive to Horton, arrive feeling more relaxed than I expected to. Park up, register, get shown how to use your dibber. There are check points on the summits as well as the three crucial cut-offs where you must clock-in with your electronic dibber. Always a friendly atmosphere at fell races, and a lot of familiar faces. One hour to go, I'd met up with the other Lions, Leon, Dan Marsden, Dave Culpan and Martin O'Brien, but still had concerns about how Carol was going to spend her day. Thirty minutes to go and Aileen arrived, Brilliant! She sadly wasn't able to run but in her inimitable style had baked a ton of flapjack intending to drive around to the checkpoints and feed the needy. She and Carol teamed up, I left them planning coffee stops and got to the start line feeling a lot more relieved.

Also, on the start line were two ladies from Bingley Harriers with club backpacks displaying a photo of a runner.

We were told that one of their Bingley Harriers' clubmates had, like me, always wanted to run the race but had died earlier this year before he got the chance. At his widow's request the backpacks, which had been made from his club vest, contained his ashes and they were determined to fulfill his wish of racing around the course. Speechless.

Rain stopped, sun came out, we were off, and I was loving it! Whatever happened now didn't seem to matter, I'd promised myself that I would do it and here I was. Anyway, I had a game plan, all I had to do was keep an eye on the more experienced Lions and let them pace me to the cut-offs. Crowded first half mile but thinning out as we start climbing up PyG. I never expected to see Dan or Leon but could pick out Dave Culpan ahead of me, daren't look up much as it's a rocky track, watch where I'm stepping, let's have another quick glance ahead...No, he's gone. No worries, Martin's now alongside me as the track keeps getting steeper, he's running well, getting ahead of me, never mind don't have to keep right with him, just keep him in sight.... Nope, he's gone as well. Ah well, just have to run my own race and hope for the best.

Loving the run up PyG, good track, bit of chat with a few people in the early stages. Must be getting up there now, feels like I've been running for about half an hour, glance up again, no....The top's just as far away as the last time I looked. Onwards and upwards, a lot less chat now, hang on, someone shouting up in front telling us to watch out. The race leaders have reached the top, dibbed their dibbers and are now coming down at us like express trains. How the hell can someone run that fast on this terrain!! They really are unbelievable, ah well, let them go, I'll catch them later. If they're on their way back from the summit, we must be nearly there. Quick glance upwards, nope, doesn't seem to be getting much nearer. Track is changing from rubble to wet rock, busy looking down at my footing, it's getting darker and colder, not that late yet surely. Black clouds above, zip the jacket up, gloves back on. Finally look up and we're nearly there but the wind has picked up, damp and freezing. Up to the line of marshals and a quick dib, feel better for that.

Now the bit I've been looking forward to, downhill. Trying to make up some time but this morning's motivational words from my dear wife are still ringing in my ears "Remember we're on holiday in three weeks, don't break a leg or anything stupid". First bit is grassy, brilliant, loving this. Now onto hard track and here comes the heel pain again. Technique when this happens is one foot flat, one on the toes, hope for the best. Oh dear, I should moan, this puts it in perspective, there's one poor runner down. Hope he's not hurt, be considerate, don't step on him, funny how all fell runners have a familiar look about them. About an hour later when Dave Culpan, who you'll remember is in front of me, passes me from behind I realise what that familiar look was. Sorry Dave, but you must admit, I didn't step on you.

Lovely section now steady up and down on the trail across to Ribblehead. Sun shining again, chance to look up, very scenic but an angry looking sky to one side. People warned about this section in their blogs. Because it's relatively flat it's easy to go too fast and burn out for later, or take your eye off the ball and slow down. I'm keeping a steady pace with two ladies in front, won't pass them, they look like they know what they're doing, let them set the pace. Wish this person behind would back off or come past, sound of footsteps tapping away right behind is driving me nuts, must be right on my shoulder, I hate that, want my own space. I'll overtake the ladies, this pain in the proverbial might keep behind them. No, they're staying with me, he or she is right in rhythm with me, step for step, really annoying, for heaven's sake come past. I'll have a look behind when we go through this gate, I'll let them go in front then do the same to them, see how they like it. Sideways through the gate, glance over my shoulder, Nobody, nobody behind me for a long way. Aahhh! Must fasten that bloody loose, clicking backpack buckle thingy firmly at the next checkpoint. And here it is, just over the brow, the tent in the middle of nowhere and I'm twelve minutes ahead of the first cut-off. That'll do for me.

After a longish tarmac section including some road, I'm really looking forward to catching sight of Ribblehead,

the beautiful viaduct and the second cut-off. Just round this next corner and there it is, best thing I've seen all day, a sight that left me very emotional to be honest.... Carol and Aileen with a load of flapjack. Apparently, there's a viaduct there as well. As I go through the checkpoint the marshals are calling "Ten minutes to cut off", somehow still on target, I thank my faulty buckle for pushing me along. Amazed to hear a voice shout my name and great to see Ben Carter there cheering the Lions on. Ben's there with the Search and Rescue teams supporting and sweeping sections of the course. Thanks very much for your encouragement and involvement, much appreciated.

Onward alongside the viaduct, sunshine, ominous clouds and even more ominous crowds. Can't believe how many walkers we're now encountering having started their journey at first light, it's encouraging passing these though, makes you feel you're going faster than you are. Happy on this path, good surface, nice steady gradient, I'll show these walkers how it's done. Ay Up, marshal here in the middle of the path directing us runners off to the left, goodbye walkers, hope you're jealous, we've got our own route. Across a field, very pleasant, straight through a river, not deep, quite refreshing, this is good.

Whernside is suddenly towering above us, and I mean above, not in front. Where the race route diverts from the walkers' meandering path it opts for a direct vertical line straight up the mountain side. I'm now very jealous of those walkers. For the first part I keep running [just] then it's walk, then walk and push the knees, finally on all fours pulling myself up the vertical hillside, hands grabbing clumps of grass, calves cramping up, too steep for me even to stand upright. Made the mistake of looking up, amazing sight, a line of multi-coloured ants crawling up above me, but demoralising seeing how far to go. Then the even bigger mistake of looking down, that's when you realise this is fairly serious stuff. Even if you absolutely want to stop you can't, it's not an option. It's too steep to walk back down and there's a continuous line behind you anyway. So, the only way is up, as they say, just keep crawling. Mind games with myself now, part of me has decided that I'm not bothered whether I make the final cut-off, I can't take much more of this. This race has rapidly shifted from my 'To do' list to my 'Never again' list. Get a grip man, everybody else is probably feeling the same, just keep going. Black clouds directly above now and it's raining again. When we eventually crawl over the top and straighten up there's a line of smiling supportive marshals and it's time for another dib. I'd read more warnings about the next section, downhill to the last cut-off at Chapel le Dale. For a start there are now hundreds of walkers, must be a bus stop up here. I'd heard they could be obstructive but all the ones I encountered were great, giving us encouragement and standing aside if they could, but of course they still filled the best bits of the path, so you find yourself taking risks over treacherous rocks to get past. One guy is down, surrounded by the rescue team, doesn't look good. Find out later that he'd face planted, broke his cheek bone and had to be airlifted to hospital. Yep, just as past Three Peakers warned me, this is no fun run. The other warnings concerned cramp, leg muscles have been tensed all the way up Whernside and now on the descent there was a massive tendency to cramp. One guy in front of me had come to a stop, laying down on the grass with a concerned walker supporting his leg, flexing his foot back to stretch out his calves.

On to the Steepest part of the descent and the walkers filled the narrow path with no room for anybody else to get past. Following other runners wondering how we were going to get by, needn't have worried this is where the race route differs from the walking route again, though probably not by design. While the walkers stay on their feet on the rocky track the runners go to one side and straight over the grassy edge. Too steep to run down so most were sitting on their backsides sliding down the near vertical grass. My acquired technique was to sit down with my hands flat beside me, one foot flat on the ground, the other leg straight out in front ready to brake, lift my backside slightly off the ground and propel myself down with my hands, sliding on the flat foot. Worked well for fifty yards even overtaking the backside sliders, [though the brave guy/nutcase who roly-polyed for a short way passed us all]. Problem with my technique was that the leg I was holding straight out in front suddenly cramped like crazy, a real spasm in my calf, didn't just feel it but I could see the muscle knot. Reached

a less steep bit and sat rubbing the calf as a dozen backside sliders came whizzing past with shouts of "You OK?", 'Yeah, just cramp'. Steepest descent over, onto our feet again towards the valley bottom, uphill bit forgotten, really enjoying this.

There's Dave up ahead again and he seems to be steadying down, hope he's ok. Caught him up, "You ok?" 'Yeah, steady on, final cut-off just ahead and we've got time'. Must admit, with everything else to occupy my mind since getting to the top I'd almost forgotten about this. Now that I was loving it again though I was really relieved that we'd get through. Mini-party atmosphere at the tent in Chapel as we dibbed with 6 minutes to spare, everybody saying 'That's it...We did it!' We all know at this point that there's still another eight miles left over something called Ingleborough, but this is the final cut-off, you can carry on even if it's on your hands and knees. Incredible relief, but also very sorry for the best part of a hundred people behind us who had run fifteen hilly miles in just over three and a half hours and would now be told to stop and board the buses that were already there and waiting.

Sun shining again, onto the road across to the next fields, hearing shouts of 'Free energy food'. Aileen and Carol again dishing out the last of the flapjack to walkers and runners alike. Everybody in good spirits, lovely gentle start to Ingleborough, grassy meadows, sunshine, spring lambs everywhere, came over all Wordsworth and started smiling to myself, cracked it, easy bit now. Idiot.

By the time I was halfway up Ingleborough the top was hidden in black clouds, the path gets incredibly steep and once again you are pulling yourself up on your hands at times like a proper rock climber. Plenty of walkers had stopped for a breath, can't blame them but the runners daren't, you know you'd never get going again. Really steep again now, sometimes the rough steps are six inches high, sometimes three feet, no chance of any steady rhythm. As we get over onto the flatter bedrock towards summit the hail starts and my exposed legs feel like they're being shot- blasted. Jacket zipped up tight, hood up, gloves back on, can't look straight into the stinging hail, just raise a hand to shield my eyes and glance for the checkpoint. A line of brave marshals straight ahead of me, only about a foot tall so some way to go yet. Keep my eyes down and watch out across wet rock, carry on for a few minutes and glance again. Marshals have gone, oh hang on they've moved, they're over to my left now, or maybe I've veered to my right. On reflection I know which one it is. Correct my line and just keep plugging away until all of a sudden, the marshals are life-sized and amazingly cheerful, standing out in a hailstorm on top of a mountain. Lovely, barmy people.

Final dib, final descent, but it's a long one. About five miles of track across rock, stone flags and slippery limestone until we get to grass again. Seems to go on forever but then over one final small rise and the sight I never thought I'd see again, the marquee in the finish field way below. Unbelievably pass four runners now we're back on grass and come in grinning, amazing feeling, absolutely loved it! Clock said 5hrs 17mins, wasn't really bothered what it said, I'd done it! Dave was just in front of me, Martin had finished a good way ahead, Leon and Dan had finished, changed, had a cup of tea and a meal, but we'd all got around. As had the ladies from Bingley with their friend, and as Dave Woodhead took photos of them with the runner's widow there were more than a few tears. Including some from me.

I'd loved my day, was really proud to complete it but I still wouldn't dare describe myself as a fell runner. Just to put things in perspective, on the same day in the same weather James Penson did a 30 mile fell race and said nothing and the other quiet man of the club, John Allan, casually completed the Fellsman, 61 miles of running over the highest peaks in the area in 15 hours. We have some amazing characters in this club doing amazing things, I was just happy to achieve something I never thought I would. Set yourself a target, go for it.

Pensioners Take on the Big One

Lesley Henderson

It seems like only yesterday when I said to Judith, I fancy trying for the London marathon this big birthday year." Oh heck"! she said, "Go on then I'll enter" Of course, you know what happened, come October, she has a ballot place and I haven't. However, neither of us give in that easily and after trying several different avenues, we manage to secure a place through a friend, to run for Heart Research UK. We were a little concerned about having to raise £1,750 but with encouragement from club members and several sleepless nights coming up with a number of hair brained money raising schemes none of which we had to do, thankfully, (don't ask!) we decided to go ahead.

Then the work begins. At first the training seemed not to too arduous. We kept consistent running three days a week, adding hill reps every Tuesday night at the end of a run and increasing the number of

reps every couple of weeks. There were times when we had to keep Judith in check as she tried to increase the reps secretly. Thankfully our running pals are young and observant and spotted her tactics. We also continued to visit the gym three times a week for strength and core work.

Before we know it, we have reached the long runs and marathon day is approaching fast. The legs are holding out and apart from a passing knee issue and a general weariness by the end of the runs, things are going well. It should be said that anyone who thinks running the marathon is just about running, may need to think again. There were many long and in -depth discussions about the relative merits of porridge over toast or bagels or a full English and of course the subsequent gastronomic outcomes of each. I will not bore you with the details of these!

There were agonizing decisions to be made over wearing apparel and the laptop reverts to long term weather predictions every time it is switched on.



Marathon weekend arrives. We spend Friday evening with other Stainland runners and supporters. It is easy to distinguish one from the other by a glance at the contents of their drink's glasses! We spend much too long at the Expo on Saturday seeking out freebies and being distinctly disgruntled at the lack of them this year. We have, however, secured enough bandanas amongst us to open a shop. We meet Mike Grattan who indeed won the marathon in 1984 and who now runs the Spring training camp in Portugal which we have attended in previous years. He was thrilled to see the 'Halifax Girls' or so he said.

Suddenly, marathon day is imminent. Sleep is not a commodity in huge supply the night before a marathon, but we are assured by other runners that adrenalin will see us through. We have to commend our hotel, Premier Inn, who provided breakfast for runners and supporters from 4-00am and while we were awake at that hour, we managed to sustain our appetites till 6-00am.

By 7-30am, yes, am, we are on our way. We meet the other bleary-eyed lions, take part in a photo shoot, at 7-30am, I ask you, and set off for the start along with thousands of other runners. After leaving the tube, it seems like we've already covered several miles of the marathon before we reach the starting pens. It is freezing! We hang on to our baggage for as long as we can, we force down a jam sandwich, join the toilet queue, partake of the delights of the portaloos, then rejoin the toilet queue! Judith and I are separated as she is a bone fide ballot person and I am a charity runner. I pass the time observing the antics of people negotiating cumbersome costumes in anticipation of the portaloos! At last we hear the starting hooter and excitement rises only to die down fairly quickly as we don't move an inch. Forty minutes later we cross the starting line. From the outset the race is a phenomenal experience and I'm afraid I don't have the literary skills to be able to describe how it actually feels. Suffice it to say that during the run you know that this is an experience that will remain with you and probably colour the rest of your life.

Judith and I do not meet till the end of the race. She is as fresh as a daisy and looks as though she has just run around the corner, I am an interesting shade of grey and require a seat and the administration of the tin foil blanket. However, soon recovered, another photo shoot is required we examine the contents of our goody bags and unusually reject all offers of biscuits /sweets and other culinary delights. We don our tee-shirts and our extremely heavy medals and join the hordes heading for the tube station.

I know it's a cliché but it's true, the crowds supporting the runners are amazing. We were particularly grateful to the band of Lions who had travelled to support and who gave us wonderful help and encouragement. We were both a little stunned at twenty-five miles to hear our names much louder than usual. We arrived at our charity spot to hear the dulcet tones of Julia who had somehow or other procured a megaphone. We arrive back at the hotel to be greeted with the offer of a free glass of bubbly. Sadly, and regrettably we must decline as we are not quite ready to partake of alcohol. What we pensioners required was a nice cup of tea!! We enjoy the camaraderie that evening congratulating and accepting congratulations from other runners all wearing their tee shirts and medals.

We arrive home to find more donations to our charity have arrived in our absence and realise that our initial fears of raising enough were unfounded. Due to the wonderful generosity of Stainland Lions, friends and family our final total is likely to be around the £3,000 mark. Thank you all so much.

To those people who have entered the ballot for next year, good luck you will love it, it's a fantastic experience.

Abraham's Tea Round

James Penson

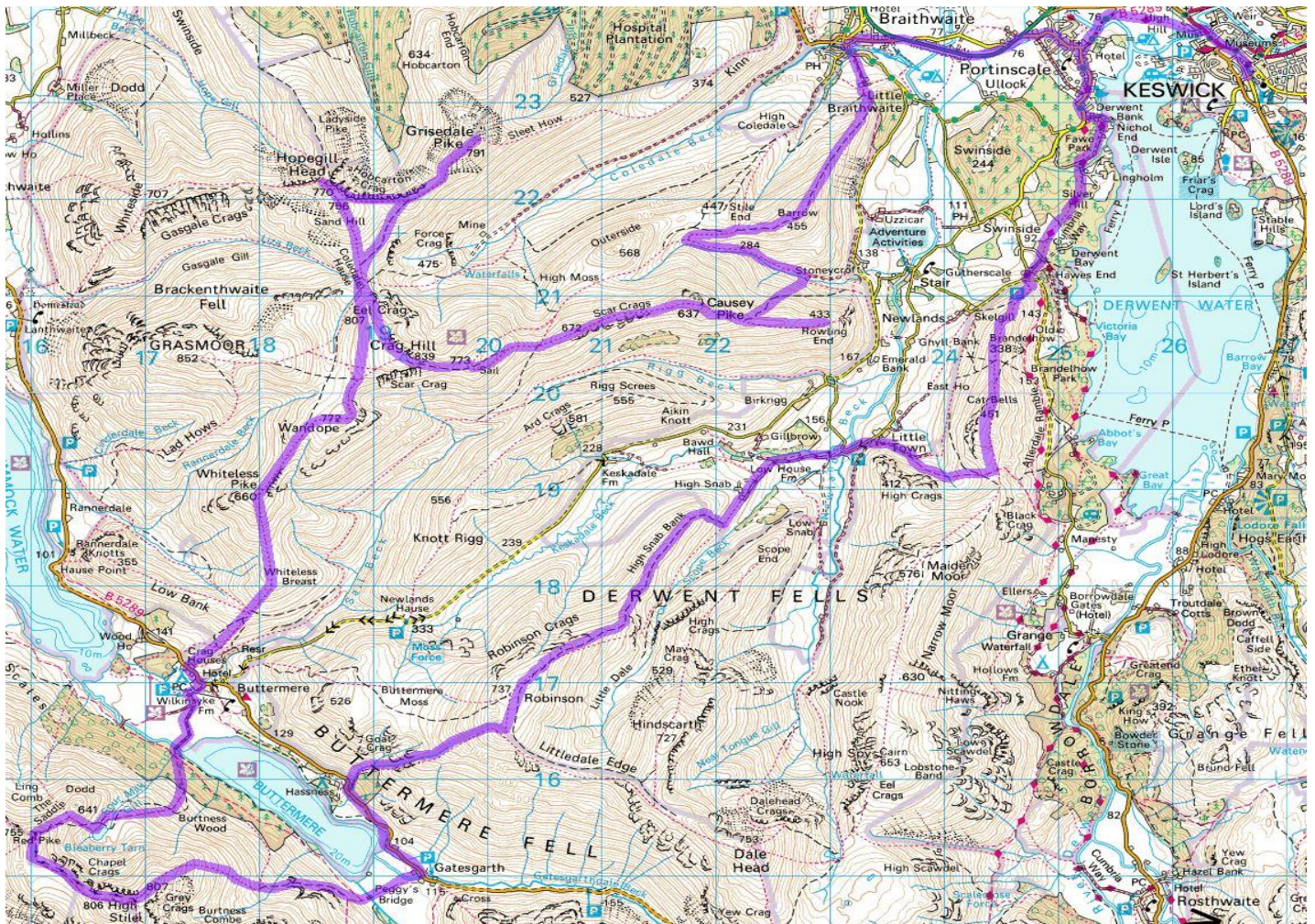


The view outside [Abraham's Tea Room](#) is beautiful, but can often be obscured by the weather. For that reason, someone had the bright idea to paint the view above the window and label all the fells that usually supply a wonderful view of the local area. The tearoom is at top of the George Fisher shop in Keswick which celebrated its 60th birthday in 2017.

Quite some time ago a chap called Alan, who had clearly been daydreaming, said to someone else called Jacob *"Tell ya wat Jacob. Garn round skyline from Tea Room would be a grand day out eh"* Before they knew they were discussing the route and the easiest way of bagging all the summits in a day, pouring over maps, trying to find the lines with the least distance and ascent. It was not an easy task. After a few days of pondering on it, asking others for their opinion, and being told *"it's a steep climb up there if you go that way!"*.

They created a peach of a 30-mile route with 12,000+ feet of ascent and I wanted smell it, touch it and feel its fury.

The route starts at the doors of George Fisher. A short run out to Portinscale village before heading up and over the top of Catbells, down in to Little Town in the Newlands Valley - Past Newlands Church and up the grassy banks of Robinson - Descending Robinson before running around shores of Buttermere - A steep climb up to High Stile and back down to Buttermere via Red Pike and Bleaberry Tarn - A long slog out of Buttermere up Whiteless Pike - Then head over to Crag Hill - Traverse along and then up Grisedale Pike, before doubling back to reduce the climb up Hopegill Head - Back towards Crag Hill From Hopegill Head, and up Eel Crag - Across to sail and Scar crags - Descend Causey Pike onto Rowling End - Drop down into Stoneycroft Ghyll before popping up the last fell of the day, Barrow - It's then back to Keswick and touch the doors of George Fisher. Phew! We went anti-clockwise because the other lads though it would make it easier..... mmmmm!?



The actual running of it was pretty straight forward and nothing much of note happened really, other than steep hairy arsed climbs and descents that make your legs tremble, a shed load of summits, a bridge down so we had to cross Buttermere in a kinda funky wobbly very wet type of way, much weather, hail, snow, wind, sun, lizards, hail (but really hard and it hurt my peachy legs this time as I'd taken my long strides off), I burnt my tongue on a sausage butty at a lovely café in Buttermere village (gorgeous butty though, really moist Cumberland sausages and super cappuccino too). I don't think we got lost? Who knows really?

The views were mainly spectacular apart from when you couldn't actually see and the Lakeland lads Paul and Lee I ran with were top drawer company, time flew by.

A really good pint at the finish was provided at a short trip (I stank of s.....t and was freezing my teets off) to the Wainwright pub which is practically where you finish (nice touch). Then freezing my almost now vanished bits off ,,, did I mention I was cold?, I nipped off back to the YHA for piping hot shower, firm self-rub down, ale, pizza then nachos and to finish, a really top notch drop of Dalmore malt.

Another brilliant day out.

The Manchester to Leeds Express Train!

Rebecca O'Neil

The whole experience started from the beginning of that week really. The GB ultra running club are fantastic at keeping everyone very well informed of the route, kit requirements, in fact everything to do with the event itself. They start going out on the Monday of the week marking out the course and get everyone generally hyped up and buzzing ready to greet us all from the Thursday evening onwards for participants to pick up race numbers and get signed off for kit checks and gps trackers to be handed out to attach to your backpack.

I checked myself in with them on the Thursday then after a few pics from outside Old Trafford we headed off for an Italian meal near our hotel and had an evening walk round Spinningfields and a glass of wine before heading back for an early night. We were due back at 5.30am the next day for a 6am start so knew a reasonably early night was needed. I turned my phone off to ensure my watch didn't ping endlessly with well wishes and a good night's rest was had. I kept this race close to my chest. Only a handful knew, and I fibbed about the date just to stay calm and in control.

The next day we all gathered. A relaxed atmosphere and you start talking to folk or recognising them from various running groups on social media. I got talking to a group of runners with similar expectations to myself and off we set and the whole vibe is just folk doing a training run or club run whilst chatting or listening to conversations. Before you know it, you've passed 2 checkpoints and heading to the 3rd one which was the 15 miles at Dunham Massey. Most of my support posse were there and we tried to do a swift in and out of this checkpoint as I knew my kids would be at checkpoint 5. Ran on to checkpoint 4(22 miles) at Latchford Locks, Warrington and again tried to keep refueling and filling of fluids down to 4 mins maximum. Then on to my favourite checkpoint at 32 miles which was Spike Island! Ice lollies were in grateful supply and again a chance to refuel everything. My wonderful team had everything ready in small jiffy bags so I could grab and stuff inside pocket of race vest. (3 cubes of white bread jam sandwiches, a few raisins and a couple of mini cheddars) The GB volunteers at every checkpoint come gathering round you with jugs of fluids ready to top you up. I had my own fluids readily prepared by my gang but was grateful to receive cups of cordial etc. to throw down my neck as it was now really bloody hot out there!

The kids were buzzing to see me and off we set again. It was good to reach checkpoint 6 at 37 miles as this was a Liverpool postcode! A great boost when flagging. Again, the rent a rabble had got there and there was random kit checks to ensure no one had discarded of taped seam jackets or headtorches on route. If they had there was a time penalty. At this point Cat answered for me as everyone wanted to know what I wanted and who I wanted company to next checkpoint. I just ran off and let them argue amongst themselves then saw Crombie's shadow behind me with cat and Sarah and Neil. They kept with me for a while then headed back (I think, or i think 2 of them stopped with me!) Then from checkpoint 7(44 miles) I can't really remember what happened, but I bypassed that one as just wanted to carry on and Rich and Neil grabbed what I needed to bring to me. Not going

to lie the final 8 miles were tough and it was hot, and it was like being on Spen Valley greenway! Then out of the horizon I saw Cat and Roy and Sarah coming towards me. I think I filled up and started telling them not to lie about how far it was to finish!



Claire and Clayton who had done virtually every checkpoint and were now in control of children at the finish line were apparently pacing the finishers field! At that point my fancy expensive Fenix decided it had had enough at 49.97 miles. I looked at my wrist and said quietly 'you b*****d'. Ironically my apple watch I got for free to test still had 30% battery left!!

We were down to a power walk by then, but I was fine with that as knew for me to try run a bad form run shuffle was slower and unproductive. But as we came into view for last half a mile and I could hear everyone and see the finishing funnel I was never going to walk across the line so off we set into a jog. The feeling to cross and know my body could keep going for over 10 hours and cover 51.5 miles was amazing.

Lots of support, some tears, lovely relaxed atmosphere and finished at a sports ground with a bar! Best half a lager shandy ever!!!

To summarise what i learnt or knew:
- You can't wing that kind of distance and the race director won't let you. You must prove you have run

previous marathons, other distances beyond a marathon before they accept your application. I am so grateful i put in the time to train and had a brilliant 12-week plan to follow. I adapted it as required but you must do back to back time on feet training and learn to run and eat. You just can't escape that. However, the pace you train at is to keep you injury free as much as possible and it is nice, I achieved that on this season of training runs. The terrain was pretty good underfoot. It is 70 % a trail course and the rest tarmac.

I met some fantastic people. I am in contact now with two ladies i shared the experience with and hope to see them again soon. The banter along the course is funny as are the adhoc alternative checkpoints where you got spray gunned with water or offered bottles of san miguel! I did hesitate before i regrettably declined! Those volunteers are out all day and deserve their own medals (size of mini side plates they were!).

Hope I haven't bored you too much. If you want to pick my brains ready for next year, please message me. It's a cracker of a 50 miler for your first longer ultra! Big thanks to the gang and to the kids for supporting me and understanding when I couldn't always make football or netball due to getting my long runs in. And all your good wishes after were overwhelming.