

Ultrarunning World

ROAD, TRACK & TRAIL MULTIDAY & ULTRA DISTANCE NEWS
ISSUE 15



SNOWDONIA SLATE TRAIL ULTRA

89 MILE ULTRA AROUND SNOWDONIA **22ND FEBRUARY 2019**

An 89 mile circular ultra marathon around Snowdonias historic slate industry past. Starting and finishing in Bangor, on the North Wales Coast, it takes you through many well-known places such as Llanberis, Betws-Y-coed and Beddgelert as well as some lesser known places.



FOR MORE DETAILS VISIT: WWW.UPHILLDOWNDAL.COM

Editorial



Great to be back with issue 14. This month features race reports from Scotland, Ireland, England and Wales plus some classic races in the US, the iconic Badwater 135, the legendary Last Annual Vol State and Cool Moon 100. News from some premier 24 hour events in Australia, Maria's Italy On Trails news column, Sarah has a peek at the dark side of Ultrarunning with her Taxi's and Toilets feature and Arctic John shares his kit choices. There's also a flashback to 1990 and UK multiday history with a reprinting of Malcolm Campbell's NALGO 6 Day Race report.

Most of the big name races are over for another year but the calendar is still stacked with interesting and new events. Currently taking place is the Adelaide 6 Day race in Australia, the Atacama Crossing by 4Deserts, the 400 km Ultra Gobi has just wrapped up and on the horizon is a new 6 day festival in Uruguay starting Oct 21st. The event takes place partly on a flat autodrome on a 1.1 km loop. Taking place the same weekend is the 2nd Via Iberica, a 7 stage 450 km race starting in France and passing through the Pyrenees finishing in Catalonia.

In the next issue we will have an interview with Kristina Paltén, a race report from the Listowel Endurance Festival in Ireland, Coast to Coast with Sharon Gayter and much, much more.

Many thanks to everyone who has been a part of this issue, it's been a privilege and a satisfying experience.

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Send original and previously unpublished articles to the above email address. Last dates for submissions October 14th, November 16th, December 14th. Please include a 40-50 word bio and some accompanying photos and a headshot for the contributors page. Thank you.

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SUMMER REBELLION

135 MILE MULTI DAY ULTRA
16TH MAY 2019 - SOLO & TEAMS

The summer version of the popular winter Rebellion.

The route is along the full length of Glyndŵr's Way National Trail. The route takes you through some of the most beautiful and remote parts of Mid Wales. Starting in Knighton looping through Machynlleth and then finishing in Welshpool - the route is one of the most picturesque and challenging in the UK.



FOR MORE DETAILS VISIT: WWW.UPHILLDOWNDALE.COM

The 30th IAU 100 km World Championship

The 30th IAU **100 km World Championship** took place on September 8th 2018 in Sveti Martin na Muri, Croatia. 168 men and 115 women athletes from 41 countries took part on a course that began with a 2.5km lap followed by 13 7.5 km laps out and back on a closed hilly road.

In the men's race Hideaki Yamauchi (JPN) won in 6:28:05, Takehiko Gyobat (JPN) was second in 6:32:51 and less than a minute behind was third placed Bongmusa Mthembu (RSA) in 6:33:47.

The women's event was a

closer affair with Nikolina Sustic (CRO) taking first place in 7:20:34 with Nele Alder-Baerens (GER) second in 7:22:41 and third was Mai Fujisawa(JPN) in 7:39:07.

Japanese took the gold medal in team competition, South Africa won the silver medal and the bronze medal went to Croatia.

Full results on the race website www.cro100.run

The last week of August saw the **Ultra-Trail du Mont-Blanc** (UTMB) with its series of races taking place. The UTMB itself is a

106 mile race (depending on which variation is used) which follows the route of the Tour du Mont Blanc through France, Italy and Switzerland, with 2,300 runners starting and finishing in Chamonix.

The mountains and the difficult conditions (-10°C at the high passes and rain) proved too much for most of this year's favourites. Jim Walmsley (USA), Kilian Jornet (ESP), Luis Alberto Hernando (ESP), Sylvain Court (FRA), Ryan Sandes (RSA), Alex Nichols (USA), Tim Tollefson (USA), Benoît Cori (FRA), Michel Lanne (FRA),

and Zach Miller (USA) dropped out of the race for the men and Mimmi Kotka (SWE), Magdalena Boulet (USA), Caroline Chaverot (FRA) dropped in the women's race.

Women

Francesca Canepa : 26:03:48

Uxue Fraile Azpeita 26:08:07

Jocelyne Paulu 26:15:11

Men

Xavier Thevenard 20:44:16

Robert Hajnal 21:31:37

Jordi Gamito 21:57:01

For all results: <http://utmb.livetrail.net>



© UTMB® - photo: Franck Oddoux



Women's winner Megan Alvarado
photo by majicphotos.com

The NorthCoast 24 Hour Endurance Run 2018 took place in Cleveland, Ohio and was the US 24 Hour National Championships on Saturday September 22. Conditions were dry but cool in the evening. The race was won by Olivier Blond with 160.497 miles and women's winner was Megan Alvarado, third overall with 140.514 miles. Second placed man was Padraig Mullins (IRE) with 142.378 miles and third was Joe Fejes with 130.132 miles. Second placed woman was Emily Collins with 123.459 miles

and third was Charlotte Vasarhelyi (CAN) with 118.368 miles.

Across the pond in London on the same day, the **Self Transcendence 24 Hour Track Race** at Tooting Bec was getting underway at Noon. One of the oldest 24 hour races in the world featured some of the best British talent along with some experienced European runners. The weather turned wet early on and continued for most of the race easing up half an hour after the event concluded on Sunday

afternoon. With a high number of drops in the wet and cold it was surprising that a few people pulled out some great performances. Michael Stocks proved to be the man who had everything right finishing with 154.815 miles (249.150 km). Second place was Paul Maskell with 153.534 miles and third was David Bone with 138.194 miles.

First woman was Sarah Morwood with 132.427 miles. Second was Hilde Johansen (NOR) with 109.038 miles and third

was Susie Chan with 102.346 miles. [Full results](#) on the website.

Phil McCarthy's Transcon is progressing and is currently in Ohio. His average mileage has increased in the last weeks according to sources averaging around 62.6 miles over the last 26 days.

Current predictions for his finish look like the early morning of October 10th.

<https://share.findmespot.com/shared/faces/>



Laz reaches the Pacific Ocean Photo by Sandra Cantrell

viewspots.jsp?gllId=07hPXzWAcf7y9Z7OA20XZZ3iZMFgipMc7

<https://www.mccarthyrunningexperience.com/phil-s-run-across-the-usa>

LazCon drew to a close, on schedule on September 13th as Laz finally arrived at the Pacific Ocean at Newport, Oregon after setting off from Newport Rhode Island, a distance of 3,306 miles, in a time of 126:11:41:57 – no days off. Laz posted everyday of his journey and you can read his posts at [Vacation Without A Car](#) and there are photos there and on Facebook at LazCon 2018.

Pete Kostelnik continues his journey from Anchor Point on the Kenai Peninsula in Alaska to Key West, Florida. This 5,300 mile journey was the next longest run Pete could think of after setting the record for TransAm, running from San Francisco to New York City in 42 days and 6 hours – a distance of 3,067 miles. Pete has about 2000 miles to go and is currently Southwest of Minneapolis and stayed near Mankato last night. Website: [Pete's Feet Across America](#) and [Live tracking via Garmin](#) and on [Instagram](#).



Last weekend saw the 36th edition of the **Spartathlon**, a 246 km race from Athens to Sparta in the footsteps of Pheidippides, an ancient Athenian long distance runner, who in 490 BC, before the battle of Marathon, was sent to Sparta to seek help in the war between the Greeks and the Persians. The race is renowned for its tough cut-off's in the early part of the race but this year participants from 51 countries were also subjected to the attentions of Cyclone Zorba which caused flash flooding at

various points along the course and torrential rain and wind caught most if not all runners.

The race was won by Ishikawa Yoshihiko (JPN) in 22:55:13, second was Radek Brunner (CZR) in 23:36:43 and third was Joao Oliveira (POR) who finished in 24:33:35. The women's race was won by Zsuzsanna Maraz (HUN) in 27:04:28, Katerina Kazparova (CZR) was second in 27:46:27 and third place was Teija Honkonen (FIN) in 28:34:29. [Full results.](#)

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A tale of two races

Tim Erickson, 30 June 2018

While trail running may be the preferred option for most ultradistance runners, there is still a place for the traditional track based ultra. Australia boasts two of the longest standing of these events. In fact, they are Australia's two longest running ultradistance races.

Australian Sri Chinmoy 24 Hour Track Championship

The Sri Chinmoy 24 Hour race has been staged variously at Adelaide, Brisbane and Sydney for the past 37 years, and has many times been awarded the prestigious title of National Championship. It is the oldest ultra distance event in Australia. It was cancelled in 1998 and 2001, so has been held on 35 occasions.

Like all Sri Chinmoy events, it is renowned for the level of care and service provided to runners, and the family atmosphere amongst helpers and athletes (most of the organising team are or have been ultra runners).

In 2010, the overall winner was Bernadette Benson with 200.884km. This is the only occasion on which a woman has been the first to finish in this event.

The race records are held by Yiannis Kouros who ran a world record distance of 303.506km in 1997 and by Meredith Quinlan who ran 214.795km in 2014.

One runner stands out in terms of quantity and quality in this event, namely **Anyce Melham**. Anyce has competed in 31 of the 35 staging's of the Sri Chinmoy 24 Hour Championship, starting with his first run in 1984. Since then he has only missed the event twice, both because of injury. He normally runs in excess of 100 miles on each occasion, 2018 being no exception.

Victorian 24 Hour Track Championship / Coburg 24 Hour Carnival

In 1983, Cliff Young, a 63 year old potato farmer from The Otways in country Victoria, covered 850+ km in 5 days 15 hours and 4 minutes to win the inaugural 'Sydney to Melbourne'. This marked a great surge of interest in ultra running.

In 1984 Dot Browne organized a 24 hour race for Geoff Molloy who wanted to test himself before the next Sydney to Melbourne ultra race. Thrown together in a hurry at the Box Hill track, the

continued on p.13

Anyce in 1984 (left) and in the 2014 Sri Chinmoy 24H Championship (right)

Photos courtesy Anyce Melham



Year	Venue	Starters	M	Winner	Distance	F	Winner	Distance
1982	Adelaide Harriers	14	12	Bob Bruner	199.768	2	Kay Haarsma	161.612
1983	Adelaide Harriers	31	28	Bob Bruner	205.315	3	Helen O'Connor	154.862
1984	Adelaide Harriers	39	35	Gerry Riley	204.051	4	Helen O'Connor	170.096
1985	Adelaide Harriers	39	35	Cliff Young	235.969	4	Eleanor Robinson (ENG)	167.000
1986	Adelaide Harriers	37	31	David Standeven	228.556	6	Cynthia Cameron	200.615
1987	Adelaide Harriers	35	32	David Standeven	234.313	3	Susan Worley	155.336
1988	Adelaide Harriers	24	21	Owen Tolliday	253.063	3	Cheryl Standeven	168.584
1989	Adelaide Harriers	25	21	Mike March	257.767	4	Helen O'Connor	155.317
1990	Adelaide Harriers	26	21	Peter Gray	202.014	5	Susan Worley	141.036
1991	Kensington	33	25	David Standeven	237.436	8	Helen Stanger	207.969
1992	Adelaide Harriers	25	21	Rudolf Kinshofer	216.856	4	Susan Worley	136.812
1993	Adelaide Harriers	23	19	David Standeven	209.218	3	Sandra Barwick (NZ)	174.490
1994	Adelaide Harriers	21	18	Joe Skrobalak	198.423	3	Lorraine Lee-McGough	172.791
1995	Adelaide Harriers	20	17	David Standeven	211.797	2	Helen O'Connor	136.000
1996	Adelaide Harriers	16	13	David Standeven	219.037	2	Anubha Baird	142.161
1997	Kensington	13	10	Yiannis Kouros (WR)	303.506	2	Helen O'Connor	142.119
1998	Not held							
1999	Adelaide Harriers	19	14	Mick Francis	224.521	5	Anubha Baird	171.722
2000	Adelaide Harriers	16	11	John Twartz	185.805	5	Anubha Baird	183.240
2001	Not held							
2002	Adelaide Harriers	16	14	David Standeven	200.448	2	Carol Baird	179.811
2003	SANTOS Stadium	15	13	Mick Francis	211.459	2	Carol Baird	180.919
2004	SANTOS Stadium	16	14	Mick Francis	221.323	2	Felicity Joyce	171.543
2005	SANTOS Stadium	16	14	Anyce Melham	197.779	2	Carol Baird	194.945
2006	SANTOS Stadium	20	17	Mick Francis	227.928	3	Carol Baird	192.436
2007	SANTOS Stadium	20	18	Mick Francis	226.241	2	Rebecca Oliver	138.634
2008	SANTOS Stadium	20	19	Michael Lovric	209.424	1	Erin Kreiss	140.434
2009	St Lucia Brisbane	19	18	Jonathan Blake	224.229	1	Meredith Quinlan	201.463
2010	St Lucia Brisbane	23	17	Colin Solomon	190.935	6	Bernadette Benson	200.884
2011	QE2 Brisbane	14	13	Trevor Allen	200.405	1	Sharon Scholz	163.156
2012	Blacktown	35	28	Mike Cauty	210.892	7	Allison Lillie	192.168
2013	Blacktown	25	16	Trevor Allen	201.048	9	Larissa Tichon	192.935
2014	Blacktown	34	28	Bryan McCorkindale	223.743	6	Meredith Quinlan	214.795
2015	Campbelltown	31	24	Kevin Muller	220.442	7	Karen Chan	171.941
2016	Campbelltown	34	30	Malcolm Gamble	222.656	4	Sharon Scholz	201.931
2017	Campbelltown	27	21	Stephen Redfern	220.416	6	Cheryl Symons	165.732
2018	Campbelltown	38	23	Stephen Redfern	245.566	15	Sharon Scholz	188.450

Records							
1997	Kensington	Yiannis Kouros (WR)	303.506	2014	Blacktown	Meredith Quinlan	214.795

event saw Geoff set a new Australian record of 216 km, and then go on to win the Sydney to Melbourne race. The 24 hour event was so successful that it became thereafter an annual event. In 1985 30 runners lined up, with Geoff Molloy breaking his record with 232 km and Margaret Smith achieving a women's record of 177 km. In 1986 the

race became an official trial for the Sydney to Melbourne ultra run, with 44 entrants trying to achieve the 200km qualifying mark. Brian Bloomer set a new men's Australian Record of 242 km and Cynthia Cameron broke the women's record with 191 km.

Races

Year	Venue	Starters	M	Winner	Distance	F	Winner	Distance
1984	Box Hill	9	8	Geoff Molloy (AR)	216.000	1	Caroline Vaughan	90.000
1985	Box Hill	38	35	Geoff Molloy (AR)	232.400	3	Margaret Smith (AR)	177.600
1986	Box Hill	38	35	Brian Bloomer (AR)	242.598	3	Cynthia Cameron (AR)	191.216
1987	Box Hill	37	35	Barry Brooks	227.574	2	Cynthia Cameron	141.057
1988	Coburg	41	39	Nick Reed	208.859	2	Sue Andrews (AR)	202.890
1989	Coburg	50	48	Mike March (AR)	260.099	2	Kim Talbot	168.493
1990	Coburg	45	43	Bryan Smith	249.881	2	Sandra Kerr	165.009
1991	Coburg	35	34	Bryan Smith	250.729	1	Merrilyn Tail	145.242
1992	Coburg	29	25	David Standeven	217.051	4	Helen Stranger	196.213
1993	Coburg	8	7	Neville Mercer (NZ)	229.755	1	Elvira Janosi (Jugoslavia)	141.126
1994	Coburg	8	7	Igor Streltson (RUS)	221.200	1	Sandra Kerr	154.600
1995	Coburg	11	10	Yiannis Kouros (AR)	282.981	1	Dawn Parris	134.160
1996	Coburg	9	7	Yiannis Kouros (WR)	294.504	2	Helen Stanger	211.126
1997	Coburg	16	13	Yiannis Kouros	266.180	3	Helen Stanger	206.860
1998	Coburg	12	10	Helen Stanger	228.680	2	Helen Stanger (AR)	228.680
1999	Coburg	14	12	Yiannis Kouros	251.229	2	Shayne Walthers	60.800
2000	Coburg	14	11	Bryan Smith	200.703	3	Shirley Young	176.810
2001	Coburg	16	15	Vlastik Skvaril	193.487	1	Shayne Dean	99.062
2002	Coburg	13	12	Mick Francis	216.298	1	Mikela Ward	104.414
2003	Coburg	26	25	Ian Valentine	175.887	1	Carol Baird	167.290
2004	Coburg	26	22	Carol Baird	189.692	4	Carol Baird	189.600
2005	Coburg	27	21	Rudi Kinsofer	192.909	6	Jill Green	165.986
2006	Coburg	27	24	Garry Wise	185.818	3	Michelle Thompson	166.053
2007	Coburg	30	26	Martin Fryer	228.686	4	Catherine Cox	149.021
2008	Coburg	34	30	Mick Francis	231.258	4	Sharon Scholz	184.517
2009	Coburg	37	27	Jo Blake	243.651	10	Susannah Harvey-Jamieson	209.458
2010	Coburg	35	31	Barry Loveday	232.602	4	Michelle Thompson	172.906
2011	Coburg	39	28	Rick Cooke	216.428	11	Kerrie Bremner	203.020
2012	Coburg	45	35	Ewan Horsburgh	234.870	10	Sabina Hamaty	184.908
2013	Coburg	44	32	Barry Loveday	243.777	12	Kerrie Williamson	192.410
2014	Coburg	48	34	Barry Loveday	265.000	14	Bernadette Benson (AR)	238.261
2015	Coburg	51	39	Paul Hopwood	229.873	12	Nikki Wynd	221.113
2016	Coburg	48	39	Kevin Muller	242.240	9	Sharon Scholz	192.000
2017	Coburg	35	27	John Yoon	225.611	8	Donna Urquhart	203.600
2018	Coburg	20	17	Daragh O'Loughlin	217.260	3	Nikki Wynd	201.290

Records							
1997	Coburg	Yiannis Kouros (WR)	294.504	2014	Coburg	Bernadette Benson (AR)	238.261



The race left the Box Hill track and came to Coburg, another Melbourne suburb, in 1988. The Sydney to Melbourne race was enjoying huge publicity and popularity. The 1989 24 hour run had over 70 entries and had to be culled to an eventual start list of 50!

The Coburg 24 Hour Carnival has proudly hosted the Victorian 24 Hour Track Championship each year since 1988. As of writing, the Victorian 24 Hour Championship has been held on 35 consecutive occasions, matching the 35 staging's of the iconic Australian Sri Chinmoy 24 Hour Championship.

In 1998 and 2004, women runners actually won the championship, illustrating that this is an event in which both sexes can compete in their own right. The men's championship record is held by Yiannis Kouros who ran a World Record of 294.504km in 1996. He subsequently increased that world record to an astonishing 303.506km in Adelaide in 1997. The women's championship record was set in 2014 by Bernadette Benson with 238.261km.

If Anyce Melham is the public face of the Sri Chinmoy race, then **Peter Gray** fulfils that same role with regard to the Victorian 24 Hour Championship. He has competed every year since 1988, a continuous run of 31 participations.

Both events look set to continue for the foreseeable future, and both Anyce and Peter are keen to keep their 'run' going.

The next Coburg 24 Hour Carnival will be held in Coburg (Melbourne) on the weekend of 13-14 April 2019 while the next Sri Chinmoy 24 Hour Championship is expected to be held in Campbelltown (Sydney) in June 2019.



Photo courtesy
Australian Ultra
Runners Association
Peter Gray – then
and now

Badwater 135 2018

Debbie King



Photo courtesy Debbie King

October 2010. Heathrow departure lounge. Destination – Brazil. There I was, amongst a group of experienced ultra runners, heading to the jungle to take part in a multi-stage ultra. This was my very first ultra and I didn't really know what I was doing or what I was letting myself in for. I mean, some of my food allowance consisted of 4 family size packs of Skittles. Do you know how much they weigh?

One of the runners in the group mentioned Badwater 135 and someone else asked what this was. I had never heard about it so I listened with interest. I then realised that in May of 2010, I had ridden very close to Death Valley, whilst on a motorbike trip. And that was it. Eavesdropping on this conversation changed my life. I

knew I wanted to run Badwater, despite having not even taken my first step in my first ultra!

I completed the Brazil jungle ultra and experienced the usual feelings of loss, emptiness and grumpiness after I got home (these feelings were nothing compared to how I feel now). I spent the next 7 years entering races to achieve qualification for Badwater. Amongst the smaller ultras, my main races were the Cotswold 100 (2012), St Oswald's 100 (2015), Cyprus 135 (2016) and the Trans Pennine 200 mile (2017). I submitted my application for Badwater in January this year but I was not expecting to be chosen, as I have never crewed the race or taken part in any of their other races.

Photo by Martin Paldan



February 9th, this year. I'm watching the live Facebook feed with Chris Kostman, the infamous RD of Badwater, calling out the names of the successful applicants and he got to runner number 5. He started saying 'she is a rookie from the UK, she has completed the Cotswold 100 and the St Oswald's 100...' I sat bolt upright in the chair and turned to face my partner Simon, who was watching and listening with me. Chris then said "...and Cyprus 135" and that was it. I screamed and burst into tears and threw myself on Simon to give him a hug, as the look on his face was one of fear, shock and surprise. I then phoned Mimi (Anderson), and through tears I managed to tell her I had been chosen although she had been watching the video too so she was fully aware. She and her husband Tim had kindly agreed to be my crew. I then played back the video, just to make sure Chris had actually called out my name.

Months of training and planning and sitting in the sauna in my running clothes ensued and suddenly, I was on the start line of the Badwater 135, 23rd July 2018, 20:00 hours. I nearly did not make it though. In April this year, my dad was diagnosed with stage 3 small cell lung cancer. I felt so incredibly guilty about leaving him and mum in July, at a time when his treatment would be at its peak. But my parents knew how much this event meant to me, so through both our tears, Dad told me to go to America and bring the Finisher's buckle back for him. I told him I would do my best, as long as he got better. His request was easier to fulfil than mine.

My crew consisted of Simon, Mimi and Tim. They were simply incredible and without them, I could not have got through it. They perfectly managed my fluid and salt intake so we never had any issues over that aspect, although I struggled to eat throughout the race. They did their absolute best to get me to eat, and I only had one tantrum when Simon was telling me to stop being stubborn and eat some noodles. I retorted in a very sharp tongue, "I'm not being stubborn, I just don't want to eat them!". At a previous halt, he gave me a piece of jam sandwich that I chewed once and then spat out. The effort of chewing was too much. He still loves me. I think.

As soon as the runner is allowed a pacer, Mimi joined me on the road, and this role was shared between her and Simon until the finish. Mimi's right knee was trussed up in scary looking knee brace. Following her Guinness World Record attempt last year of running across America, her right knee is now seriously and permanently damaged. She is allowed to run small distances but any long distance running is no longer possible. The brace offloads any stress on the knee and helps protect it while running. Tim did a wonderful job of driving the support vehicle, ensuring it never got stuck in the soft verges along the route. All three of them

Race Reports

were fantastic in keeping me hydrated and spraying me with water, and providing a constant supply of wet buffs for putting around my wrists or on my head to keep me cool.

No words can really explain how hot it was. I read every article I could get my hands on about the race, and they all mentioned the heat. I think my two months of sauna training helped but it was still incredibly hot. I thought it would be cooler at night, away from the glare of the sun. How wrong I was. My eyes were constantly stinging the first night due to the heat coming off the tarmac, but thankfully, the second night was a lot cooler. I had one 'wobble' on the approach to Panamound Springs. Suddenly, it felt like someone had switched on the world's strongest hairdryer and my legs felt extremely hot. I was not happy at this point. Turns out the car thermometer registered 136 degrees Fahrenheit. I think my tantrum was justified.

The cut-offs were constantly on my mind. I wanted to hit the first one at 50 miles in about 10 hours but this went out the window due to the heat. I made it with about an hour to spare. I wanted to bank as many hours as I could, knowing that I would lose a lot of time on the second day. I was slow, and at times I got slower but I was able to make the cut-offs. I learned to love the dark because it hid the incredibly long stretches of road. It was soul-destroying looking ahead at the road, 6 or 7 miles long and you still couldn't see where it ended! On that note, the scenery was absolutely breath-taking and I had to remind myself to lift my head up and appreciate it.

I made it to Lone Pine with plenty time to spare, and my desire for a McDonalds strawberry milkshake was fulfilled, although I couldn't drink it all as I felt too queasy. After a 30 minute rest, Mimi and I made our way up the 13 mile home straight to Mount Whitney Portal. Simon had kept me company for the previous 35 miles or so, he took a well-earned rest in the car. Tim and Simon still gave us all the support they could muster, providing ice, water and a bag of crisps.

Two miles from the finish, we were exposed to a massive thunderstorm, which pelted us with the biggest hailstones. Jeez, they were sore! The emotions of crossing the finish line were dampened (pun intended) as we were all absolutely frozen from the rain. We were given blankets to keep us warm whilst we waited for our photographs to be taken and for me to receive the Finisher's buckle and t-shirt. We then drove back down to Lone Pine, cheering for the runners who we passed that were still making their way to the finish.

I felt no emotion crossing the line, apart from feeling frozen due to the thunderstorm, but boy oh boy have my



emotions caught up with me now. I still get emotional talking about it now. I don't know if or when that will go away.

Badwater 135 was my life race. My goal. My dream. It was also my dad's dream, to see me come back with the Finisher's buckle. He is due to start his last course of treatment, two weeks of radiotherapy. He has had his ups and downs over the past 4 months but he is still fighting. That's something we have in common.

I now feel completely lost, like a part of me has been left behind in Death Valley. The race meant and still means everything to me. I'm not sure how I will fill the void that is Badwater, but I will be forever grateful and thankful for being afforded the opportunity to take part in what I think is the most iconic footrace in the world.

The Random Act of Kindness Ultra (RAOK) 2018

Rhodri Jones



The Random Act of Kindness Ultra (30 Miles) was my first Ultra marathon. Having completed two 'normal' marathons in under five hours I felt this was the next suitable challenge. The run itself was based around the town of Llanelli in West Wales. The views were lovely, and the weather was almost perfect, a mild temperature but without the sun and no sign of rain which was surprising for Wales!

Out of the 50 or so people who signed up, 41 attended the event with 38 managing to finish the 30 mile run. The winner completed it in a time of 3h 42m, with the tail runner coming in just over 7 hours.

The first 12 miles were flat, around the coastal path where many other races have taken place over the season (Park Run, Llanelli Half Marathon, Great Welsh Marathon).

The following 12 miles were much more challenging, heading up the cycle path near to the village of Tumble. The uphill of 6 miles was gradual, which made it quite difficult on the leg muscles. The only thing that was refreshing was the buffet of goodies waiting at the top ready for the turn back downhill.

After finally making it back down the hill towards the coast, cramp kicked in at mile 22, which made the next five miles very challenging. Somehow I managed to get running at almost full pace again by mile 28 and finished in just over six hours.

Being named the 'Random Act of Kindness Ultra' it was very appropriate. The marshals and race organiser were incredibly friendly, each offering water and jelly babies at their stations. The race had a 'no plastic policy' meaning water was

available, but your own bladders/bottles were needed to refill - this was made clear beforehand.

Upon finishing the race, we were handed a very lovely goody bag. This contained an autobiography, a t-shirt, banana, crisps, sweets, and what I thought was most extraordinary was the 'prize'. It was a hand drawn cartoon of myself (with my race number) with the phrase 'Rhodri is awesome and a RAOK 30 finisher' followed with 'kindness breeds kindness #BeNice'. This was displayed in a small clear glass frame. It was very bespoke and something which I had never seen before which was quite original.

One of the main differences I found about running an ultra, compared to a marathon was the absence of runners. In most mass participation events you can either use guides or pacers to keep yourself motivated. In an ultra it is a much bigger mental battle with yourself. I really enjoyed the challenge.

Being able to categorise myself as an 'ultra' runner I feel incredibly proud to join this elite group. Many people have completed marathons, whether this be their limit, or perhaps completing it for charity which I think is fantastic. Having completed an ultra I can see the big difference between the two. Now that I've done 30 miles, my next challenge will be 40 miles, and I cannot wait.

Being my first ultra I learned many tips:

- Use bottles instead of a bladder - my bladder which had an awkward clip to hold water took a while to refill at different stations and when full added unnecessary weight to my running backpack. I would suggest using two good sized water bottles which can be refilled more regularly, but are quicker and lighter when stored in a bag.
- Run your own race- it's easy to get caught up in beating a person in front or setting a time, but listen to your body and just make sure you get to the finish in one piece!

Thanks for reading my review and hopefully see some of you out there in the future.



2018 Cool Moon 100 mile Endurance Run



Photos by Liz Ginn, Martin Sengo and Sarah Taslock

Tina Shinn

for 100 miles, so I needed to run my own race no matter how cool it would be to win. I knew it would be a hard race in the first place, it's two loops, the hardest of the two is 13.5 miles and the other 11.5 miles, the temps were over 100 degrees, little to no shade, highly exposed on the hardest loop and about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the second loop is without shade, challenging hills to climb over and over, dry loose dirt to breathe in that floated in the air after being trampled on by Ultra running feet and many more challenging aspects.

The race started and I was ahead of all but three guys for a while, then after the first 13.5 miles at the aid station the second girl showed up, she wasn't as far behind me as I thought. I reminded myself to let it go, it's okay that she's running well, besides it's her first 100 mile race and in my heart I knew she was running too fast, I knew she'd burn out eventually, she had no idea how hard this race was, but getting my mind to be patient is hard. I let her go, being okay with it, then caught up to her again and passed her feeling good! Later I checked to see where she was, never more than 10 minutes away, I should never check, but I was too curious.

50 miles was completed and I was able to pick up my pacer, always a highlight in a race. Sarah Taslock was first and she's amazing and keeps me focused. We headed down the trails and about 5-6 miles into the loop loud footsteps of someone flying down the hill, and yes it was that girl and she wanted to join us, soon it would be dark and she didn't have a pacer. I thought "sure, at least I know where she is". The problem was that I began to take on her pace which was too fast, she is also very strong on uphill and as we started to climb steep switch backs that are about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles up, she

I have overcome many obstacles when it comes to my running life and beyond. The 2011 head on collision was my first obstacle, yet after 3 years of no running I grew my miles up in a short time and my goal was to see what I was capable of. I did my first 50k February 2015 and by August 2015 I ran Cool Moon 100 mile as my first 100 miler and was shocked when I was first place female & fourth overall plus breaking the women's course record by almost 2 hours! From there I got stronger and faster until September 2016 when suddenly I started getting weaker. This got worse and by March 2017 different muscles seemed rigid, I was weak and tired all the time and my breathing became abnormal. By April 2017 I'd been diagnosed with Connective Tissue Disease which is a form of Lupus and a couple of other diseases that like to play together. I had to tackle this one so differently; I couldn't train much and had to find relaxation techniques,

stress relief and special ways of stretching my muscles to help them. I had signed up for Cool Moon 100 miler for 2018 and I was so worried that I wouldn't be ready for it. In a year I'd only averaged 10-15 miles a week and that was including a couple of 100 k's that I somehow pulled off while constantly chasing cut off times!

2018 brought some promise, my breathing was better and my muscles weren't as stiff as they had been, so I started slowly running and building up miles and lots of days of rest in between runs. As race day got closer I was up to 35 miles a week. Race day strategies; Run when it feels good, walk and/or stretch if my body sends any signal at all that it's having an issue, stay hydrated, keep nutrition in check with CarboPro as my main source and above all else keep moving no matter what!! I told myself before the race even started not to be competitive, I knew I wasn't trained

was moving and of course I wanted to keep up, huge mistake for me. I argued with myself about her possible blow up later and I didn't listen. I got to the top, so tired and my muscles not happy with me at all, first mistake! Same with the next loop, she joined us and we got to an aid station where her daughter met her and ran with her for the next two miles to the start/finish area. Her decision, lie down and decide if she was finished at 75 miles. I started the second to the last loop, my last hard loop with Leah Gonzales. My muscles grew more painful by the mile, it doesn't take much for my muscles to get angry and I'd really set them off! It got to where I could barely run, more of a shuffle and a walk as quick as I could. Muscles super tight and rigid, sharp pains in my legs especially my right leg which is always my worst due to a chronic issue from the wreck which now flared up, but I pressed on. One more 11.5 loop to go, the other runner girl packed up and left burned out. I should have listened to my coaching self. I hadn't kept my race day plans in check and let my desires get the best of me and I was paying dearly for it.

My nutrition wasn't as good as it should have been, I started out strong and my focus diminished. I also tried Pickle Juice pop which ended up zapping the moisture out of my mouth and caused a sore on the side of my tongue, another rule I broke, never try new things during a race if you don't know how it will affect you. I tried many new things that didn't pay off like running shorts that I never ran, they kept rubbing off my Squirrel's Nut Butter, and so I had to re apply to keep from chafing more because my shorts kept taking it away! We also decided to add a lot of ice to my bladder which diluted my CarboPro mixture so, my nutrition was no longer going right and of course by this time no food on earth seemed appealing.

Leah kept my mind on the miles being shaved off, kept me from closing my eyes that didn't want to stay open and kept me on course always turning

my negative into a positive; Leah truly had the hardest job and did a phenomenal job. Finally the last mile and I was home with people that I love screaming with excitement. Across that finish line with hugs everywhere and I was finally able to sit down. First placed female, the only female that was able to finish the 100 miles and 4th overall. We started with 25 of us and in the end only 5 of us crossed the finish line, it was that difficult. What kept me going is an easy answer, I'm a coach and trainer for Team Kick Butt Champs which is everyone that gets out there and tries their best and doesn't back away from a challenge. The individuals that I coach personally are Tina's Kick Butt Champs. Every time I even thought I might not make it or it's so intense I pictured each one of them and how they inspire me so much with everything they've accomplished and everything they are working hard to accomplish. I wanted to show them that you can do anything, that you can dig deep and find more and you're always stronger

Photo by Martin Sengo



than you'll ever realize until you're standing there with goals met and Joy in your soul.

Photo by Sarah Tadlock



The Last Annual Vol State 500K 2018



Cherie Titus McCafferty and Lisa Holland McFadden
Photo by Donna Burns

"Fire tests gold, suffering tests brave men." Seneca

The Last Annual Vol State 500K is a 314 mile race designed to test both men and women and is guaranteed to induce suffering. The mastermind behind this event is Lazarus Lake, also known as Gary Cantrell, or simply Laz, but there is nothing simple about Laz. This man is the genius behind quite a few races, such as the Barkley Marathon, that he created specifically to

bring many people to their knees. Completion is never guaranteed and I believe that is the brilliancy of his mind. Laz knows that there are people amongst us who want to be challenged to the utmost extreme, knowing that failure is an absolute possibility, but also that the taste of victory would never taste sweeter.

The LAVS race piqued my interest the moment that I heard about it and I knew that I would one day attempt to complete it, I just

Cherie Titus McCafferty

wasn't exactly sure when that moment would be. I spent a lot of time reading the race description, reading race reports, watching public Vol State videos, and asking friends who had actually completed the race every question you could imagine. I even ran the length of North Carolina from Virginia to South Carolina with six friends. We picked a shorter route that we completed in four days at a comfortable pace, stopping at hotels each night. This was done just to give us an idea of how a multi-day race would feel. Upon completion, I was hooked and I knew that I was more than capable, both mentally and physically of tackling VOL State. That was December of 2015 and perfect timing didn't present itself until 2017.

I realize that timing is never perfect, but I swear that the Universe was screaming that this was my time. My youngest was heading off

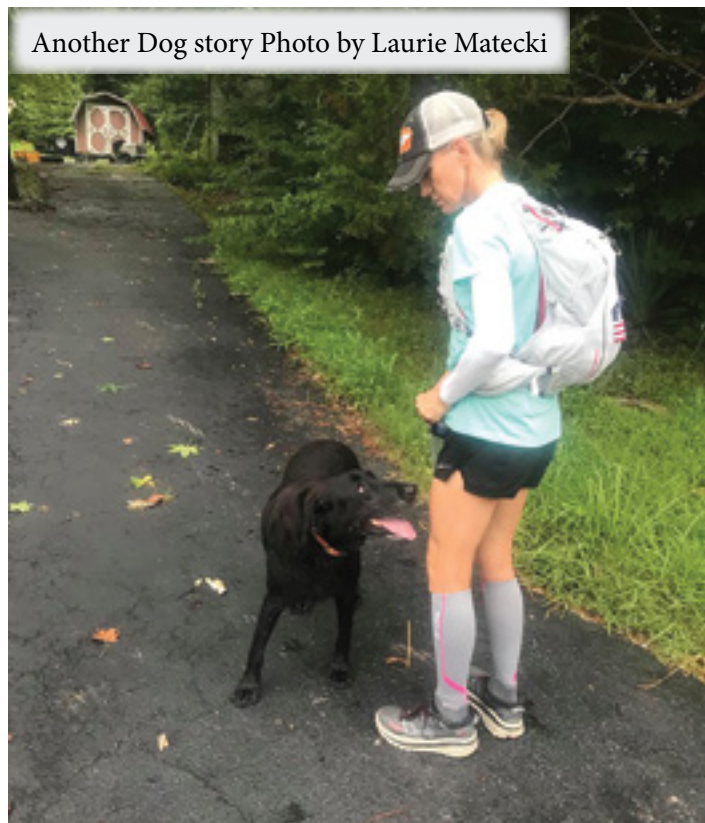
for college that year, my middle child enlisted in the Army, my eldest child lived over an hour away, my husband retired after serving 27 years in the Army and would start a new job that required him to be away more months each year than he would be home. On top of all of that, I was on the verge of turning 50. So, it was just me and my dog and a lot of time on my hands. My daughter later told me that she was convinced that I would lose my mind, because for over two decades my main job was to take care of my family. Well, I didn't lose my mind, or did I? That answer is still debatable, because not only did I successfully complete the race in 2017 in a little over eight days, by myself unaided, but I once again found myself heading across the Mississippi River to the start of the 2018 LAVS 500K in Missouri.

Something magical happened to me last year



The Bench of Despair Photo by Laurie Matecki

Another Dog story Photo by Laurie Matecki



once I touched the rock at Castle Rock, GA marking my completion. The tears that flowed were happy tears filled with pride that made me feel invincible and unstoppable. The strange thing at the finish was, I still felt strong and had no chafing or blisters. The few blisters that I had at the start had healed. I was amazed and wanted to tell eight days of stories to anyone who would listen, it was that life changing. Five of my girlfriends not only listened, but decided when registration opened a few weeks later that they, too would attempt it. I literally had to make a split-second decision, because the spots available were quickly diminishing. I, of course, registered. Part of the allure of this race for me, was wanting to touch the magic again, which is what brought me to the ferry. The magic was right there

on that ferry. Nearly 120 people from all over the world, in every shape you could imagine, with stories that may never be told, gathered together with one common denominator, to test themselves in the most primitive way imaginable. There would be no more than ten days to cover 314 miles on just your own two feet. There was a sense of excitement in the air mixed with nervousness that could be seen on all of our faces. Deep down inside we knew that if we failed, the meat wagon, driven by an awesome woman named Jan, would be en route to pick us up. Many of us masked our fear with nervous chatter, while others stood in silence soaking everything in. The most remarkable runner that I saw that morning was a woman with a vest that said Blind Runner. I didn't know her, but I knew that I would be cheering

for her from afar. That's the beauty of this race, we all want nothing more than for everyone to be successful. Suffering together, even miles apart, creates strong bonds that are hard to describe and even harder to break.

Laz was absent this year, trekking across America, living his dream of doing a transcontinental, the Lazcon 2018. In his place, was Carl Laniak, ready to drop the cigarette and see us on our way. I was excited and at the mark of the start, at approximately 7:30 a.m. on July 12, we headed back on the ferry to cover the mile and a half across the Mississippi to Hickman, KY. That's where the fun begins and the real work starts.

Less than a half hour later my feet were touching land and I was running. My friends and I agreed that we would each be running our own race, but I also knew from the year before that many of us would keep leap frogging each other at least for the first few days, meeting up at the few businesses and rest areas that were available on this course. I also knew that many runners had calculated their completion times prior to even stepping off of the ferry. I, too, was guilty of doing this both years, but I promise that for most of us, the times we formulated would be grossly miscalculated. It certainly seems like simple math. Running 50 miles in a 24 hour period, even with 4-6 hours of sleep and a few hours for breaks to cool off and eat, seems completely reasonable. This would be

the case in a normal race, but this race is anything but normal. This race is very much like a game of survival and I knew that my friends were thinking the same thing, yet I knew that there would be no way to convey that to them. They would figure it out as did I. Last year, I was able to cover 56 miles in the first 24 hours, giving me faith that my plan would be successful. The second day is usually when reality sets in. It takes about that much time for the extreme heat, lack of proper food and sleep, and constant mental games needed to get from one town to the next for the plan to fall apart, leaving each runner to recalculate and just to accept that you can't look at the big picture, that you have to just look at what's right in front of you and keep moving.

I kept a steady pace, focusing on getting to Union City, TN. I had friends behind me, friends in front of me, and I was making new friends in between. The first stretch of country roads were filled with huge semi-trucks and cars filled with sleepy drivers blasting by, trying to get to their early morning jobs. This was good training for the entire race, the ability to stay alert and run safely, often at times with very little shoulder on the road. I looked forward to finding the first gas station and I knew that many runners would converge there to cool off. This was the first of many happy reunions for many of us. I didn't want to stay there for very long. I just wanted to

Race Reports

grab a cold drink and use the rest room. My lunch would be at the Subway that was just a few miles away, and my dear friend, Lisa, agreed, so we set off, keeping a comfortable pace and arrived in no time at all. Quickly, food was ordered, phones were plugged in, and shoes were taken off. It felt so good to just cool off and recharge. While eating, our other crazy friend, Laurie joined us and we of course started talking to the other runners who happened to be there. Next to us was a woman, Sharon, who we had met the day before. It was there that we decided that we would all travel together until we got to the next town, which was Martin. That was the beginning of many days of laughter. The four of us, when running together, had so much fun.

As predicted, our ability to stay together faded within a few days. Each of us had to listen to our bodies and stop when we were hot, move when we felt strong, eat when we were hungry, and sleep whenever and wherever we could when our bodies refused to move forward. Often times, those moments weren't in sync with one another. Our struggles were different, but we had a way of running into each other throughout the race. I also stayed in close proximity with other runners and was able to share many miles, rest stops, and food with some really amazing people.

The rules were simple for screwed runners. We were responsible for carrying or purchasing our own

Photo by Laurie Matecki



supplies, we could accept no aid from crew members or their runner, we were not allowed to enter any vehicle, unless instructed to by a law enforcement officer, we had to follow the course route exactly as directed, and we had to check in twice a day at 7:30. We were allowed to accept aid from strangers, who were fondly referred to as Road Angels, and angels they were. Whether

you decide to accept aid or not from the Road Angels, there is something beautiful about random strangers offering a cold bottle of water, popsicles, peaches or any other snack. Even the simple act of strangers pulling over to ask about our journey warmed my heart. In this day and age, where the world seems crazy and our country feels divided, seeing such

acts restored my faith in humanity. That was, and will forever be my favorite part of the journey, complete strangers offering food or a shaded place to rest. Another highlight of the race was the simple act of unplugging for hours at a time, not being readily available, instead focusing on the animalistic need to survive and to keep moving forward.



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RULES

Wasatch Front 100 Mile Endurance Run

September 7, 2018

Beyond Setting Pace

Text and photos by Sonja Wilkey

"Nothing can dim the light which shines from within." --Maya Angelou



This is not your typical race recap, so if you're looking for a point to point description of the Wasatch Front 100 Mile Ultramarathon course or a detailed rundown of the pros and cons of running it, you'll have to look elsewhere. Don't get me wrong, it is an incredible race, spectacular scenic course, an experience as gruelling as it gets, but my experience at Wasatch this year was memorable not for the endless climbs at high elevation, the ankle-twisting rocks, or the scorching heat, but rather for the stranger who came into my life at mile 46 and over the course of the next 54 miles, 16+ hours, touched a chord so deep and profound in me that I feel my life will

be forever changed. This is a story of selflessness.

I've never had a pacer before. I am a bit of a loner, and have always felt that I'm better off staying in my own mind when running a race. Socializing takes energy, energy I don't care to expend during competition. The idea of being in a "race", but not actually "racing" it ... that's an oxymoron.

The little demons in the back of my mind started playing tricks on me, though, as I visualized my upcoming challenge a few months prior. This race was to take me through unknown mountains with big, scary creatures and small, stinging trouble-makers alike, rocky drop-offs, climbs for

the hands and knees, and ridgeline trails flanked by steep jagged cliffs. One mistaken step could mean the difference between making it to the finish line and knocking on heaven's door. (These may sound like related outcomes to the more poetic amongst us, but for the realist, they're very, very different). The thought of taking this on by myself in the dark of the night was a little intimidating, to say the least.

So... when this random person (random to me, at least, at the time) posted on the Wasatch100 Facebook page her offer to be a pacer, I snatched it up as fast as cyberspace could process my response. In a matter of seconds, two strangers from opposite ends of the country were united to share an incredible journey together.

The skeptics among us might question: Did you look her up? Did you make sure she isn't an axe murderer? Are you sure she'll be able to keep up with you? No, actually I didn't, but I'm not sure if she did much Google-stalking of me, either. We both, as we learned once united (there was plenty of time to get to know one another on the trails) have a similar "it'll work out" kind of attitude, where too much information is seen more as a burden than a causeway. There are, after all, more trustworthy, good people on this earth than evil demons, right? We had the odds in our favor.

Statistically, it was much more likely that she was going to slow me down rather than kill me. *That* bothered me enough that I had to look her up on Ultrasignup, check out her



race results. I was reassured. Maybe I should have looked her up on America's Most Wanted, too?

As the day of the race approached, she and I shared a few quick messages back and forth to nail down the logistics of where we'd meet, when, and for how long. It was easy, no stress planning, a stark contrast to the meticulous preparation that went into each drop bag's contents, my attire, my nutrition plan, altitude management, medical supplies, and more. The beauty of simplicity: I may have been losing it to a bad case of information overload and preparation burnout. My still-to-be-met pacer was the Yin to the Yang of my pre-race anxiety-ridden brain. I wouldn't be doing Wasatch justice if I didn't dedicate a segment here to attempt to encapsulate the race which calls itself "100 Miles of Heaven and Hell". A few key points I believe sum it up:

- 9 minute record breaking pre-race briefing
- top notch volunteers from start to finish
- 26,000ft elevation AND descent,

much of which was rocky and very technical, not to mention at as low as 60% "effective" oxygen percentage (actual % remains same but pressure goes down as altitude rises)

- 4500ft climb miles 3-8 to kick things off
- scorching heat with long stretches of direct sunlight
- frigid overnight, frequent storms, unpredictable weather
- moose sightings, wasp stings
- fabulous sunrise and sunset, and another sunrise...
- spectacular mountain scenery

All in all, the above perks made this a 100 mile journey never to be forgotten. Minus the moose sighting and wasp nest eruption, my other points are commonly noted in other Wasatch reviews, blogs and the like. It's a special race, drawing special people to a very special place.

Back to that idea of special people, I planned to meet my pacer at Lamb's Canyon, mile 46 aid station. In my mind, I'd have her with me until

Brighton, mile 67, at which time I was hoping to retreat back into my little world of solitude and knock out the final third of the race on my own. Jogging up the hill towards the cheering crowd at the station, I heard my name shouted out. Only one person could possibly know my name. I was elated to hear that voice, I cried out her name in return, picked up my cadence and finished my climb with a heart warming embrace of my newfound friend.

There is generally a lot of frenzy and hustle and bustle at aid stations. I don't like to waste time, it adds up quickly and really can ruin a decent finish time. I did what I needed to do as my pacer got her things together, too. Her equally wonderful boyfriend was there to assist. We were off together a few minutes later, 2 strangers heading off into the sunset, literally, entering the world of the unknown.

Neither of us had ever run this race or these trails before. Heck, I'm from the east coast, and she from northern Utah, where she has plenty of spectacular trails of her own. Neither of us had a functioning Garmin (she,

Race Reports

not even a watch!). My headlamp had mysteriously died (at the start, with fresh batteries, another story for another time), but I had a handheld. She was “pretty sure” her headlamp had enough power to get us through “most” of the night. I had left fresh batteries in one of my overnight drop bags, “I think?”

What else could we do but keep moving and hope for the best? “It’ll all work out.”

My pacer and I talked and walked for a long time. My legs were tired, hers fired up, but I was dictating the pace. She was attentive to my needs. She asked at just the right times if I needed anything. We learned about each other, bumping questions off one another and exploring commonalities, passing the time deep into the night. She pacified my common waves of paranoia that we had missed a turn and were off course. She kept such a contagious, positive cheer in her voice, I couldn’t help but be happy, too. Even when I felt the need to groan, it was followed by a shared chuckle between the two of us.

How blessed I was to have this angel by my side. She didn’t make me feel bad that I was the tortoise to her hare. She kept me on track (no pun intended), saw things (aka the moose at the trail’s edge) that I might never have seen, and lifted me whenever I started to get down. She shared her treats, even a timely piece of gum, when I was running low. During a tough stretch of downhill in the dark of the night, I suffered 3 consecutive falls--#1 ankle rolling, #2 tailbone bashing, and #3 pure exhaustive body slip and slide with no significant injury. Thereafter, I turned into the *devil* and began my profanity rant and mental breakdown.

“You are now witnessing the nasty side of me,” I professed to her. “I’m so sorry.”

“If *this* is the worst you can do, I think we’re good!” she replied gleefully, and on we went.

My stretch of evil was short-lived.

When we got to the Brighton aid station, mile 67, where I was going to leave her to finish the race on my own, it was 2am, and I was dragging but nicely revived by the station’s warmth, real bathrooms, real food, and many helpers. My headlamp got fixed and batteries renewed, long shirt pulled on to get me through the chill of the night, warm broth to heat my core. My pacer chatted with her boyfriend and went to refresh herself in the bathroom. We hadn’t really discussed, since starting our run together, whether she would continue with me to the finish or stop here as originally planned.

“She really wants to take you to the finish, Sonja,” her boyfriend informed me. “She *really* does.”

Over four hours of darkness loomed ahead of me. Thirty-three miles, upwards of 8 hours realistically.

Should I stick to my plan and break off, get back in my comfort zone of running solo, or welcome this new friend to join me for the most exciting part of the race, the finish? It was all or none, and without hesitation I decided to go all-in. Heck, if she really wanted to keep running, maybe I was doing her a little favor in return by having her join me? This was no time for me to be selfish, and, to be honest, I kind of liked this girl!

If what she had done for me already wasn’t noteworthy enough, yet another tribute to this remarkable human being lies in her sensitivity to the cues I was giving off. We didn’t have to talk all the time. She happily jogged alongside me in silence, taking in the crisp mountain air. Without ever pushing me, she gave just enough kick and encouragement to keep me challenging my limits. Night turned to day, the sky turned from black to red, orange, then blue. The chill was lifted and our long shirts got peeled. We helped each other tuck extras into our packs. We checked off the remaining aid stations one by one until finally,

upon arrival at the final aid station (most delicious ginger snap cookies, ever!), we learned that the final 6 miles would be “relatively flat” and “smooth”. After what the race course had handed us for the previous 94 miles, this was to be heavenly!

We ran those final 6 miles at a refreshed steady pace. I hoped there was enough reserve in me to run to the finish line, and indeed there was. Together, my pacer and I crossed under the Wasatch100 banner with arms in the air, then arms embraced around one another. That hug lasted a long time. My pacer was as happy for me as I was grateful for her.

Looking back on the race, there is nothing I remember more than Mandy’s glowing eyes, her contagious smile, and her unbelievably selfless, caring approach to life. What she did for me was just a drop in the bucket for her. She has been pacing others for years, volunteered in many other capacities, and serves her community and family on a daily basis. She gets her own fire out of serving others and is truly an inspiration and an angel here on earth.

It takes a special person to shed their light so far and so bright. May we all be as lucky as I was to share a sliver of life with such a shining star.



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Skyrunning and ultra-trail on Monte Rosa

by Maria E. Bellini



The view from the Monte Rosa SkyMarathon 2017 - photo: ©Ian Corless - iancorless.com Monte Rosa SkyMarathon Race organisation

Heat in the city

Trying to sum up 'Summer in Italy' can be a harder task than that of running one of its many ultras. One thing is certain, it's definitely not all

about visions of ancient olive groves, hill top villages, and merrily riding around on a Vespa. Unless of course you happen to have access to a Vespa, live in a hill top village and tender to an ancient olive grove.

For most of us living in the boot, summer seems to boil down to: first and foremost - *Trying to Escape the Heat*, followed by a close second: *Trying to Avoid the Traffic* on the Italian motorways, and thirdly - yet of only slightly less significance, the evergreen: *War Against Mosquitoes*. All of which are relatively simple to resolve, but do however require a certain amount of planning and strategy.

For those of us 'unfortunate' to have chosen running as their preferred digression to life's unpredictable tides and currents, Italian summer running can be akin to being part of a circus in a sauna. More so the case if you are restricted to running in a city with concrete and lack of green spaces. It does funny things to your mind. And with temperatures fumbling about the 35° mark, it comes as quite a surprise that Italy doesn't claim mass

Emelie Forsberg & Kilian Jornet take third place at the Monte Rosa SkyMarathon 2017 - photo: ©Ian Corless - iancorless.com Monte Rosa SkyMarathon Race organisation





UTMR 2017 - photo: ©Anuj Adhikary - www.anujadhikary.com - KORA Explore - UTMR Race organisation



Monte Rosa Walser Trail
- photo by Marco Spataro

participation to the Badwater® 135, with all the heat acclimatisation we manage to get here.

Run to the hills

So where do we run and train? Those who remain in the city, are forced to put their alarm clocks at unearthly hours to take advantage of cooler temperatures. Some just stop altogether, introducing a month long hiatus, replacing actual running with ‘thinking about running’. Others that holiday by the sea, manage to get in some cheery early morning runs along deserted shorelines, whilst many head up to the mountains combining training and holidays and may slip in a trail race or two.

Regions like Piedmont, Veneto, Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol, and Friuli Venezia Giulia and specially the Aosta Valley are just those sorts of mountain places. The Aosta Valley is home to Italy’s four tallest mountains, all over 4000m - Mont Bianco, which Italy shares with France and Switzerland, Monte Rosa and the Matterhorn (Cervino, in Italian), which are both shared between Switzerland and Italy, and the Gran Paradiso - which is *ALL* Italian!

Trails will be bubbling brightly with hikers and trail runners, *Refuges* are open and busy serving up bowls of creamy polenta and apple cake. There are grinding uphill to conquer, verdant pastures to refresh the spirit, and abundant Views (*with a capital ‘V’*) that will have you questioning the meaning of life! These are popular destinations, as weather permitting, they can provide a total mental reboot and quality trail running.

March to the Mountains – Monte Rosa, Aosta & Piedmont

Of all of the Italian “4000ers”, it’s usually Monte Bianco which steals most of the limelight, due to the UTMB® Trail Running ‘Summit’ which takes over many a trail runner’s

Race Reports

summer thought process. So I'm taking you *eastwards*, where the Aosta Valley blends into Italy's Piedmont region, and where we can find Monte Rosa, the second highest mountain in Europe.

The name

A mountain that goes by the name of 'Rosa', and although it means 'pink' and 'rose' in Italian, *in this case*, the word Rosa, comes directly from the *patois* dialect, spoken in the Aosta Valley and refers to the word: *roëse* or *rouëse* which translate to "glacier."

Walser tradition

Monte Rosa is also home to Walser tradition and culture.

Originating from the Swiss canton of Valais, throughout the 12th and 13th centuries, groups of farmers and mountain folk migrated and settled in other areas across the Alpine regions of Italy, Switzerland, Austria, and even Liechtenstein.

Walser communities are characterised by a strong Germanic influence, and traditions and values are still held strong today.

You can read more about the Walser population here: <https://www.alagna.it/en/the-walser-today/>

And finally...

Last but not least, under Monte Rosa, lies a 20km squared gold field!

Trail races in Monte Rosa

Monte Rosa SkyMarathon 2018

website: <https://www.monterosaskymarathon.com/?lang=>

This June, the legendary Alagna Monte Rosa SkyMarathon took place after a 22 year long break.

Yet this is no ultra. We're in the realm of Skyrunning. With a course of 35km and 7,000mD +/- teams of



UTMR 2017 - photo: ©Anuj Adhikary - www.anujadhikary.com - KORA Explore - UTMR Race organisation

Monte Rosa Walser Trail - photos by Marco Spataro



two took on a race route that tackled demanding terrain, ski slopes, snow fields, and crossed glaciers and crevasses. The highest point of the race being the Margherita Refuge, at the summit of 4,554m.

The race took place for the first time in 1992 (for solo runners) with only four editions taking place, it was interrupted in 1996. In 1993 legendary Italian Fabio Meraldi set the record in 4h24', and in 1994 Gisella Bendotti in 5h34'.

2018 Winners 1° TEAM Collé-Boffelli (Collé - Boffelli) in 04:39:59 – 2° TEAM Salomon (Comazzi - Minoggio) 05:03:26 3° TEAM Jornet-Forsberg (Jornet Burgada - Forsberg)

05:03:56

Ultra Tour de Monte Rosa

website: <https://www.ultratourmonterosa.com>

Early September brings us the Ultra Tour de Monte Rosa UTMR. A spectacular race that takes runners around the whole mountain along the long distance hiking path, the TMR (Tour Monte Rosa) which encircles Monte Rosa. With a Race Director extraordinaire, Lizzy Hawker, who used to train along the race route, the UTMR offers several options for trail runners.

UTMR 2017 - photo: ©Anuj Adhikary - www.anujadhikary.com - KORA Explore - UTMR Race organisation



The Ultra Tour comes in at 170km, 11,300m D+ (in a single stage) starting in Grächen in Switzerland, and has a generous cut off time of 60 hours.

Second option is the 170km 4-stages, 11,300m and is as follows: 36.7km, 42.9km, 45.2km, 44.2km. With daily time limits of 12 hours, this gives trail runners the possibility to really appreciate the scenery in *daylight*.

The third option is the 100k Ultra 3 Passes with 6,420m D+. Starting in Italy's Gressoney-la-Trinité and finishing across the border in Grächen (CH), with max time limit at 28 hours.

(time of writing is mid august 2018)

2017 170km single stage Winners:
M Tsang Siu Keung | Stone HKG in 30:14:01 and W Julia Boettger GER in 35:05:38

Monte Rosa Walser Trail

website: <https://www.monterosawalsertrail.com>

The Monte Rosa Walser Trail has two ultra distances, 114km with 8,240m D+ and 50km with 3,940m D+. End of July, 2018 saw the 6th edition for this international ultra, which takes place in the Aosta Valley. Other distances include a 20km. The spectacular race course was designed by Italian skyrunning legend, Bruno Bronod and starts and finishes in Gressoney la Trinité.

2018 114km Winners: M Luca Manfredi Negri ITA in 18:59:06 and W Laura Besseghini ITA in 20:48:30.

Monte Rosa EST Himalayan Trail

Website: <http://www.meht.it>

This ultra trail takes place at the end of July, and starts in Piedmont's

Macugnaga at the far end of the Anzasca Valley at the foot of Monte Rosa's famous Eastern Himalayan Wall. 2018 was the first edition.

The Ultra distance is a moderate 60km with 4,450m D+ with the highest point of the race course being at 2,868 m at Passo Monte Moro. Max time limit is 19 hours. There are 11 aid stations en route. Other distances include 26km and a Relay 39k + 25k

2018 60k Winners: M Giulio Ornati ITA in 8:51:16 and W Giulia Saggini ITA in 12:15:59

Further resources

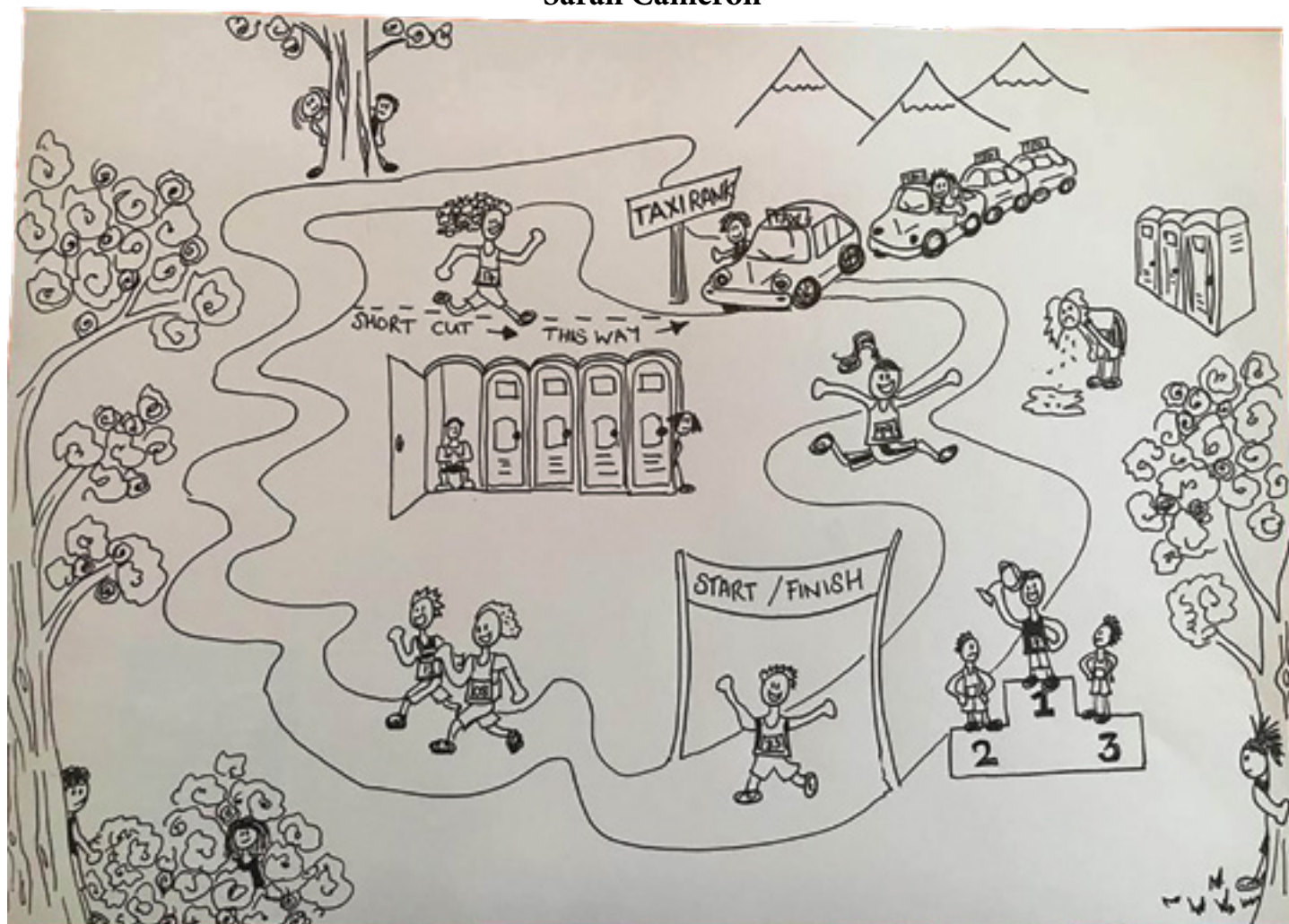
Visit Monte Rosa - <http://www.visitmonterosa.com/en/>

Swiss Monte Rosa <https://www.myswitzerland.com/en/monte-rosa-tour.html>

Refuges on Monte Rosa – Italian side <http://www.rifugimonterosa.it>

Taxis and Toilets

Sarah Cameron



“Olympic athletes cheat by using drugs, ultra runners cheat by getting taxis and hiding in toilets.”

-Dan Lawson

Most ultra runners are familiar with the odd trip to the portable toilet and treat it as a necessary evil, yet it seems that some are happier to spend more time in there than even the worst concoction of gels, coffee and that unfamiliar energy bar that looked good on the aid station table can provoke.

Canadian Kelly Agnew had been suspected of cheating several times before he was finally caught. He had a number of wins, course records and FKTs to his name, for each one receiving adulation from his friends and followers on social media. There had however been doubts cast on his considerable achievements; at one race he was quietly disqualified but allowed to run the same event again a few years later. At another, a runner and pacer saw him jump into a car and skip a big chunk of the course. The pacer confronted him at the finish, but eventually let it drop and the result stood. Agnew's times were frequently missing from checkpoints, including on the out-and-back section at the Leadville 100. But the most

common incidents occurred at looped course events. Runners reported only ever seeing him at the start/finish areas and he was spotted coming out of the woods with his headlamp switched off on more than one occasion. Other competitors were confused as to how he could have passed them in the rankings without having passed them on course.

It was at the Across the Years 48 hour race in 2015 that he was exposed. He stole the win from world-class runner Jon Olsen, raising suspicion by running 55 miles more despite stopping 7 hours before the time limit. The organisers stated that Agnew was 'witnessed circling back at the start/finish staging area after completing a lap, spending over 7 minutes in a portable restroom and then 'completing' the lap and going on for his next without actually running the mile loop'. He effectively won the race by sitting on the toilet. He was disqualified from the race and had his previous wins at the event wiped from the records.

Another ultra running veteran and serial toilet-hider, Mark Robson was exposed at the beginning of this year. Organisers at the Australia Day 100k race filed a seven-page report on the reasons for disqualifying him from their event including the following details: ‘When Mr Robson came in to complete his 4th lap time in 1:09:14, he crossed the timing mat and went to the toilet. He spent approximately 5 minutes in the toilet which accumulated towards his lap 5 time. He appeared to change clothes, and then took off to run lap 5. This was his fastest lap in 1:02:02 for 12.5 km which once again had no split measurement from the far aid station. This would make that lap somewhere near 58 minutes for 12.5 km discounting the toilet stop. At this point volunteers manning the far aid station were instructed again to look for Mr Robson to pass, yet they did not observe him coming through the aid station.’ The Australian newspaper revealed this wasn’t Robson’s first offence. He was reportedly suspended for two years by Triathlon Australia in 2014 after an investigation found he had “engaged in deliberate and premeditated actions to gain an unfair advantage” in several events between 2011 and 2013. He has been banned from competition in Australia.

At Rocky Raccoon earlier this year, Patrick Wills crossed the line in second place with a time of 17:01, 17 minutes ahead of the third placed runner, an extremely impressive result for his first 100 miler. He won a trophy and accepted a cheque for his accomplishment. However, when the data was analysed, the split for his 3rd lap was 50 minutes quicker than for his 2nd lap and his 4th lap was 40 minutes quicker. It is extremely rare for runners to get faster during a 100 mile race; negative splits are extremely unusual, so the race director became suspicious. When he checked, it was clear that Wills hadn’t been through the manual timing points. It appeared that he had probably been hiding in the bushes or the toilets and sporadically jogging over the sole chip-timing mat. When questioned and asked to provide a GPX file for the race, Wills basically went into hiding. He has subsequently been banned from most of the major races in the US and Ultra Sign-Up have changed his profile picture to one of Rick Astley.

And one more story about hiding in portable toilets before moving on to the taxi cheats... Sergio Motsoeneng, an excellent distance runner with a proven track record finished 8th at his first attempt at Comrades in 1999. In televised interviews after the race, Sergio stated that he would donate his \$1,000 prize money and solid gold medal to help the people of his impoverished village in eastern Africa. However, a reporter from Afrikaans daily newspaper The Beeld published some questionable photos of Sergio taken during the race.

In the time that elapsed between the first and second photos being taken, Sergio had apparently switched his watch from his left wrist to his right wrist and inexplicably grown a scar on his left shin. It turned out that the competitor wearing bib number 13018 was not one, but two people. Forty-five minutes into the race, Sergio ducked into a portable toilet where inside, his identical twin Fika was hiding. The brothers switched

shirts, hats and shoes and Fika continued the race. On further examination, the organisers decided that this switch had happened not just once but several times during the 90k race. Effectively the twins had organised their own relay. The siblings were stripped of the prize money and banned from competition for 5 years, each citing poverty as their reason for having cheated.

So onto those taxis. And other vehicles.

Following the Thames Path 100 in 2017, the race director James Elson noticed some strange data. One male runner had recorded an average pace of 4’40 per mile for a 9-mile stretch of the course between Reading and Whitchurch and he had gained several places during this time. When asked to provide a GPX file, the statistics showed several mile splits in the low 3 minute range. It was clear that he had either got a lift or taken a taxi between the two points so was disqualified and banned from all future Centurion events.

The recent female winner of the UTMB, Francesca Canepa, was disqualified from the Tor des Geants in 2014 following an investigation by the organisation into reports that Canepa had travelled between two aid stations in a vehicle. She left the Cogne ‘life base’ as first female and in 7th place overall, not far behind ultra running royalty Nickademus Hollon and Paolo Rossi. The next major checkpoint was at the refuge known as Dream Berdze, but there was an interim control point at Les Goilles, between the two valleys. When Paolo Rossi reached Les Goilles he discovered that Canepa was ahead of him, despite not having passed him on the course. He eventually caught her up and asked her accusatorially ‘How was the trip from Cogne to Les Goilles in the car?’. To add to the confusion, there was no record of Canepa passing through Les Goilles and none of the volunteers had seen her. Another runner claimed to have spotted her in a parking area at Cogne, getting into her coach’s car. Rossi didn’t make an official complaint but there was enough doubt for the organisers to DQ Canepa from the race. She denied the claims and dismissed them as ‘absurd’, stating that there was no-one at Les Goilles when she went through, so she helped herself to a cup of tea and then carried on.

Suspicions were also cast on French ultra running star Emilie Lecomte that year following her second place finish at the gruelling Ronda dels Cims. Former winner and ambassador of the event, Nerrea Martinez crossed the line in third place, twenty minutes behind Lecomte. Twenty minutes is a tiny margin after 105 miles and 13,000 metres of elevation change, but the two athletes had been together at the refuge Sorteny just 8 kilometres previously, with Martinez still running strongly. Martinez’s crew then reported having seen Lecomte travelling by car from Sorteny to close to the finish line at Ordino. GPX data showed Lecomte to have achieved a top speed of 24 kmph during this section, but the organisers decided to let her result stand due to a lack of evidence, stating that the unlikely data could have been caused by a technical anomaly.

There have been other high profile cases of ultra runners cheating or being suspected of having cheated, such as the well documented example of Rob Young who is thought to have travelled inside his support vehicle instead of running alongside it during his attempt to break the world record for running across America. Dave Reading claimed to have run 6 marathons in 48 hours whilst training for a LEJOG attempt, but it was later proven that he too had had vehicular assistance and had ridden in a camper van for much of the distance. In 2017 Guinness refused to validate the world record for running 521 miles in one week on a treadmill, a feat allegedly achieved by Amy Hughes. Guinness were clear that Amy's attempt did not meet their standards because there was no independent witness. Eye witness reports were more damning, claiming that Amy was seen leaning onto the bars of the treadmill when she thought no-one was looking and that she left the treadmill running whilst she took rest breaks.

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect is that there is rarely any prize money up for grabs in these cases and people even cheat during events that they have set up as personal challenges and even charity runs. It seems that the driving force is the perception of others; their motivation appears to be having praise plastered on their Facebook page by friends, family and online acquaintances. The fact that they haven't actually earned that admiration does not seem to be an issue for them.

But even if there is just prestige at stake, cheating needs to be taken seriously because it diminishes the genuine achievements of those who train hard and rinse themselves during an event in order to execute their perfect performance. It doesn't just affect people at the pointy end of races either; if someone in the middle of the pack cuts a corner they may be, for example, stealing a top ten position in an age category from the runner who really deserves it.

It seems appropriate to finish with a quote that was published on [news.com](http://news.com.au).

following the Mark Robson case: "Ultra running is an amazing test of endurance, where at the end of the day the only goal is knowing you have achieved a super test of strength and resilience. I fail to understand how cheating assists achieve that objective."

If you're interested in this subject I highly recommend checking out Derek Murphy's excellent, crowd funded site:

<https://www.marathoninvestigation.com>

Sources:

www.marathoninvestigation.com

www.news.com.au

www.iancorless.org

www.tordesgeants.it

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sport24.lefigaro.com

www.theguardian.com

www.runnersworld.com

www.atlasobscura.com

The British Ultrarunning Podcast by James Elson and Dan Lawson, in particular Episode 10 which gave me the inspiration for this article and the excellent quote for the title.



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The 2018 Connemara100 race report

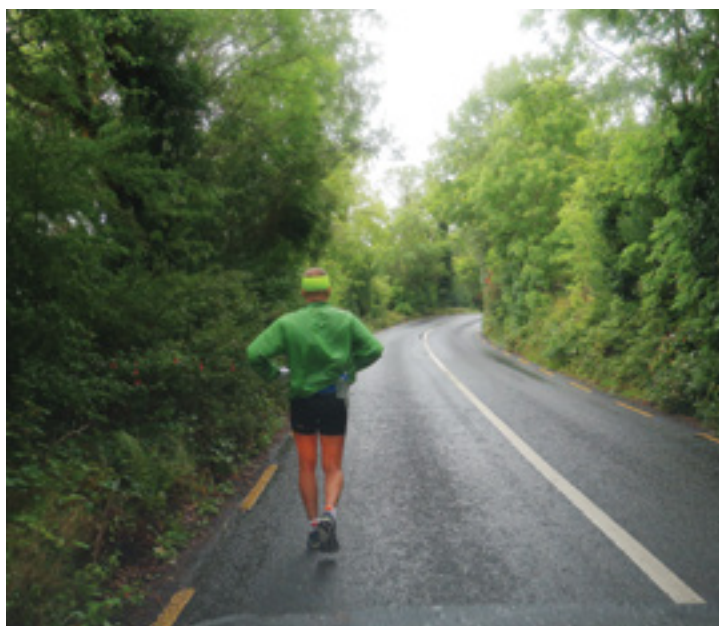


Text and images
by Tapani Tarnanen

I was looking for an European 100 mile road race, and I found one in Ireland that seemed nice and quiet: Connemara100. I registered in the spring, and that's when the waiting and planning of the trip began! I'd never been to Ireland before, and joining me on my trip as my support crew were my wife Kristina and daughter Taru.

Connemara100 is a small event, and this year there were 32 people who were at the start line. 28 were able to finish within the 30 hours' time that was the time limit. The course is run along the local roads and your support vehicle follows you behind all the





time, making sure that other traffic doesn't come too close, and that the runner gets all the drink and food they need when they need them. Reliable support crew is very important.

The start and finish of the road race are in the beautiful Clifden, where a loop around the town is run first before heading out on the course proper. The race has 4 checkpoints along the course (at mile 28, 55, 67 and 82) and two of them had cut-off times (mile 28 and 55).

At the beginning I had some other runners to keep me some company, but most of the time I got to run in silence with only my crew keeping me

company. My running felt good, and the only downside was the long rain that started during Saturday evening. There were a couple of long and steady climbs between the mountains, but other than that the road was hilly and the scenery beautiful. At night I had a lot of sheep keeping me company on the silent roads.

The course was easy to follow. The official road race book had maps of the course on it, and some of the crossings had race staff to show the correct way and to make sure that everything was going well. Sometimes they gave advice from their car when passing by.

At the end of the race my running switched to mostly walking, but I kept moving towards the finish in Clifden either way. Once you reached the town, there were still 3 loops around the town to be made before crossing the long-awaited finish line! The cheering was great in the towns that we passed as well as along the roads from the many cars passing by. All the participants were taken into consideration at the pre-race meeting and especially at the awards ceremony after the race. Connemara100 is a very warmhearted event that I can happily recommend to everyone.

P.S. Oh, and I managed to get a new PB for a 100 mile run. Cool!



Main Cast (in order of appearance):

Alan McDonald	Core Crew	Driver & Fixer
Barry Lovern	Core Crew	Checkpoint Charlie & Support Runner (3) KLL-FTW
Dave Hanna	Trailblazer	Fellow Runner – Got me into this mess
Michelle Young	Day tripper	Support Runner (1) Auch-GLC
Ruth Morgan	Day tripper	Support Runner (2) GLC-KLL
Alistair Robinson	Day tripper	Support Runner (2) GLC-KLL
Mabel Morgan	Mascot	Athletic Contemporary

2017. I ran and was delighted to finish the race in 2017 - however a couple of issues on the day (days!) and a time of 31:20 left room for improvement. Despite having said, “never again” and meaning it, the temptation to have another go got the better of me; I entered the ballot and was ‘lucky’ to be offered a place, I was also fortunate to get Fling and Devil entries meaning I was having a second crack at the WHW Triple Crown (an unofficial event comprising 3 races on the WHW).

Before. My WHW year started in January at the Oak Tree training weekend with Dave and Michelle. I suppose this was the first sign of improvement on last year’s efforts – this year I remembered trainers (left on the doorstep 2017), managed the full out and back to Inversnaid (only Rowardennan 2017) and was considerably less drunk in the bar (total disgrace 2017). Last year I had completed some long training runs but been inconsistent, not running regularly. This year I followed a plan of low but regular weekday mileage with a longer run, building in distance, Saturdays. Having told Michelle about my training spreadsheet she took on the multiple roles of trainer, conscious and persistent (but welcome) nag. February to June we stuck to the misery miles spreadsheet, adhering to my plan which I think proved beneficial; I was encouraged by a personal best Fling finish of 10:55 in April. Pre-race 2017 I averaged 17 miles per week, this year it was 30, I was a little fitter, a tiny bit lighter, not acutely injured and a great deal better prepared. Tinkering with my race plan spreadsheet was a near daily activity in the couple of weeks prior to the race – following dozens of versions I ended up back where the draft plan had started, a 24 hour finish. I genuinely felt I could not manage 24 hours; however the time I planned for each individual section was reasonable, the problem was this assumed I was running, and with all the sections strung together on the day it seemed inevitable that time and pace would drift at some point. I told the crew my plan targeted 24 hours but that 25-26 was more likely. A further personal goal was to, unlike 2017, finish in time to use the hostel room and actually sleep in the bed I had booked.

Come race weekend I had the Friday off and was desperate to get some sleep. I prepared everything in the morning and went to bed around 15:00, where I entirely failed to sleep, but hopefully benefitted from the rest. I got up at 21:30, had a shower and ordered dinner from the local takeaway –honestly believing a fish supper (much to Michelle’s horror and disgust) was a great idea, it would fuel the night ahead and still had a couple of hours to be digested. I was served the largest fish ever to have swum the 7 seas – it was a monster. That fish supper was like a brick in my stomach until around Beinglas 12 hours later. I drove to Alan’s – he took over and his long weekend of driving began. We arrived at registration 23:58, Sandra Beattie told me I had better get a move on or I’d be

DQ'd – something which was pretty appealing to be honest. I was tagged, weighed and ready to go. We met Dave and support – he was typically cheery and anxious to get going. Alan took some pictures and we had a quick run through of the plan and kit, Alan queued up to get me a coffee and I listened to the race brief – this year Sean predicted there would “be no weather”.



Fancy a run Neil?

During. 01:00 and we were off into the night.

Milngavie – Balmaha (time of day, 04:20). I jogged along steadily here, everything felt fine, it was cool but not cold and midges were not out in force – ideal except from the ludicrous time of day and huge distance to Fort William. Just before turning left on to the ‘tedious path of many gates’ I followed the runner ahead of me down a short stretch of road and found we were running alongside but not on the WHW, the path was parallel to us on the other side of a fence – this was only perhaps 100 metres - but I was not on the trail - cheating? I over thought this insignificant deviation far too much – before eventually stopping for 30 seconds to penalise myself and thereby dispel my irrational worry, odd behaviour which I can only attribute to sleep deprivation. Last year when I passed through Drymen I remember thinking how daunting the remaining distance was and struggling (walking a little way) on up the trail, but I felt much better this year and jogged straight through and onwards. Shortly before Conic I was able to switch off my head torch and made good progress up and over the hill down towards Balmaha. I passed Fraser McCoull on the descent who I knew had completed a tough 100 miler only weeks previously – he said he had sore feet but hoped a shoe change at Balmaha would see him right. I arrived at the checkpoint ahead of schedule; with

Race Reports

neither of the crew around I found our unoccupied car and waited a bit unsure what to do – fortunately I did not think I particularly needed anything so decided to leave my head torch hanging from the wing mirror to hopefully indicate I had been and gone and resolved to just get moving, but at that moment Alan and Barry appeared with porridge and coffee at the ready. Barry rebuked me for exceeding expectations – it was certainly out of character and a running first for me.

Balmaha – Rowardennan (06:04). I like this section and its familiarity somehow makes it pass relatively quickly, it was a sunny pleasant morning and I think I may have been very close to enjoying myself. Fraser overtook me so I hoped his shoe change had worked its magic, unfortunately I passed him again shortly before the checkpoint still complaining of foot pain. Fraser was instrumental a few years back in getting Dave and myself out on the WHW and eventually participating in this race, I was sorry to hear that later in the day he had to withdraw – he will be back to fight another day. The midges at Rowardennan were not bad and I stopped to eat a little porridge. I do not like carrying a pack and avoided this by taking a light jacket with some supplies in the pockets, I also wore a belt throughout the race carrying mandatory kit (Foil & Phone).

Rowardennan – Beinglas (09:53). I jogged out of the checkpoint and decided to try keeping this going until reaching the fire road climb. Having managed to keep moving reasonably I walked the climb eating and drinking what I had brought from the checkpoint. The WHW race follows the ‘Low Road’ which I have only run twice previously – it is more technical and, for me, slower than the ‘High Road’ – it seemed to take a very long time, not helped by a few small walking stints, before I emerged back on to the fire road. I arrived at Inversnaid ~08:05 and sat down for a couple of minutes to eat and drink the contents of my dropbag before pushing on towards Beinglas. Again familiarity helps me here; all of the familiar climbs, rocks, gates, bridges and posts pass by and I reached Beinglas feeling okay and glad to have the lochside behind me. Alan and Barry were ready with supplies; I ate a little, restocked pockets and moved on.

Beinglas – Auchtertyre (12:21). Again I knew there was an incline a mile or so out of the checkpoint so I jogged there then snacked and walked my way up. I walked a lot of this section 2017 and was conscious of trying to push on where flat or downhill. I tried to keep up with people in front of me and run when they ran, although I generally lost them eventually this helped to gradually pull me along. Cow Poo Alley was dry and clear – I soon reached the Crainlarich gate reckoned to be the halfway point – last year my knee was bad here and I felt good to be feeling okay going into the rollercoaster stretch. At the road crossing I was quite happy to be stopped by traffic for a minute before crossing over and jogging on to Auchtertyre. Running up towards the checkpoint I was beginning to struggle a little – but at ~50 miles this is to be expected. I was weighed at Auchtertyre and had lost a couple of kilos which I assured the marshal, John Kynaston, was simply my monstrous fish supper eventually breaking down. I changed T shirt here, had a drink and picked up my first support runner, Michelle, she of the nagging misery miles.

Auchtertyre – Bridge of Orchy (14:50). Michelle and I chatted all the way to Tyndrum, she was already having to set the pace by running on ahead and instructing me to keep up – left to my own devices I think I’d have been walking from here on. We saw Alan & Barry again briefly at Brodie’s Store before walking up the road out of town. From this point I was not able to really run consistently, and certainly not of my own volition – this is where patient and persistent support is

essential. Although pretty slow we did jog most of the distance in to B.O.O. Alan & Barry were waiting at the train station as they could not get parked at the checkpoint, we had a drink at the car and all walked down to the checkpoint. Instruction came from further up the route that runners must now carry/wear a jacket – so Barry ran back to the car to fetch this (I had ditched it at Auchtertyre) affording me a couple of very welcome minutes sit down.

Bridge of Orchy – Glencoe (17:54). From B.O.O there is a reasonably lengthy climb up Jelly Baby Hill – we walked all of this. Nearing the top and to the strains of ‘Flower of Scotland’? on a tin whistle (strains seems about right) we passed Murdo who was busy with a couple of people so we passed by without collecting the ubiquitous Jelly Baby. I ran, slowly, down to Inveroran, walked briefly and started jogging at the cottage just past the hotel. I surprised myself by managing to maintain the jog until the gate at the start of the drove road. I then walked until the path tops out opening up on to Rannoch Moor. From here I was increasingly grumpy and difficult; Michelle had to work hard encouraging me to run as much as possible. Although slow this was far easier than last year – the weather at this point in 2017 was horrendous, we were lucky this year, great weather throughout but enough breeze to keep the midges in check. Running in to Glencoe I could hear Ruth shouting her regular tiresome encouragement of “doing really well” “nearly there” “not far now” “looking fresh” and other assorted positive lies. I had a coffee here and Ruth badgered me to eat and drink, before bringing Miss Mabel out to say hello. Thanks again for pushing me this far Michelle and tolerating what can only be described as a petulant child for over 20 miles.

Glencoe – Kinlochleven (21:13). We left Glencoe 9 minutes ahead of schedule and arrived in Kinlochleven 8 minutes behind – I had gone from exceeding to missing target - but I had anticipated this collapse in pace and this section was a huge improvement on my time and condition last year, I was also pleased the schedule had held up this far. From Glencoe I was with fresh support runners Ali & Ruth (as Michelle says at least on their section they had one another) and we had a good time chatting and jogging along. Again support set the pace and I tried (often failing) to keep up. I was glad to reach the Devil’s Staircase as it meant I had a guilt free walk. Ali was very disappointed by the absence of the honesty shop at the top of the Devil which had surprised us last year- I pointed out to Ali these are turbulent times in retail, first House of Fraser closures, now this. The long descent into Kinlochleven was pretty slow but much improved on last year’s trudge downhill. We jogged in to Kinlochleven where Alan pointed out he was able to walk alongside me as quickly as I was ‘running’. My weight here was roughly the same as Auchtertyre - I lingered too long (~17 minutes) but needed the rest and refuel, also I was aware that 24 hours was now, almost certainly, out of reach so although time mattered to me I felt comfortable taking a break. Ali & Ruth - you both done great, thanks again – there is no doubt Ruth you are a very strong and robust women.

Kinlochleven – Lundavra (00:12). It is a long tough climb out of Kinlochleven and we (Barry had taken over as support) walked all of it. Crew all day had been patient and encouraging, Barry was no different, ignoring my grumpy attitude and encouraging us to jog any flat or downhills – helping to push me along at a pace I would never achieve on my own. The WHW is used by thousands every year, walking, running, cycling – and I really don’t know why, the surface towards Lundavra ranks somewhere in appeal and comfort between hot coals and broken glass – every step was painful now and I was making slow progress although Barry kept us moving and we eventually reached Lundavra which was a boost – there was a roaring fire on the go, music blaring out and of course, typical of

Race Reports

any checkpoint in the wilderness a photo booth. In our exhausted state we simply stood in the frame – failing to notice the props, too tired for observing correct, wacky, photo booth etiquette.



Lundavra – Fort William (02:31). Although it was now Sunday and we were struggling along in the dark it was the home stretch, we would finish, I would see the inside of a hostel room and sleep in a bed soon. For the last time Barry led alternating spells of jogging and walking and the final miles dropped away until we saw Alan at the Braveheart carpark who I think shouted some improbable nonsense about my picking up the pace. Barry & I jogged along the road to the '30' sign and I walked for a minute or so before forcing myself into a run for the final kilometre.

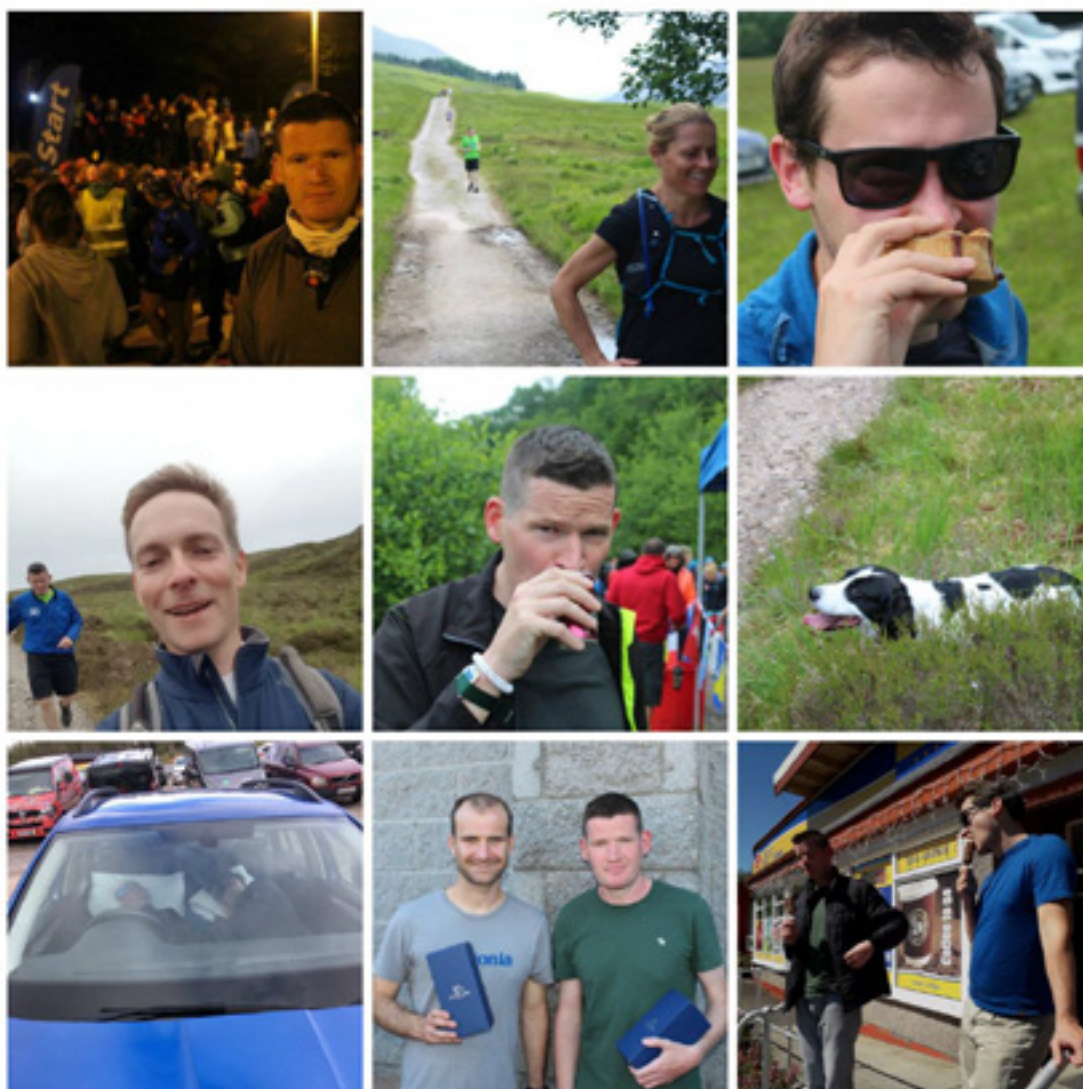
WHW Take 2: 96th Position / 198 Finishers, 25:31:01



After. The WHW prize giving is a special event, I was very proud to see Dave collecting his well-deserved second goblet for finishing 5th in an incredible time of 17:44:17. As with the first my second goblet (finish) was a team effort, enormous thanks to;

- The organisers, marshals, volunteers, crews and fellow runners for making this happen.
- Michelle, for the many months, laughs, beers, sodas and misery miles, we are all looking forward to crewing your 2020 WHW Race.
- Ali, great company, thanks for coming along, I think you were exceptionally obliging and brave agreeing to support again after last year's night manoeuvres.
- Ruth, you are an excessively nice person, I'm not sure how to handle such enthusiasm and positivity but think I am improving – I barely recoiled from your parting hug at Kinlochleven.
- Barry, I hugely appreciate all of your efforts over race weekend but especially your support over the final 15 miles of unremitting all out fun.
- Alan who looked after me (again) and everyone else so well (again) - making it all work (again) – Thank you.

Next. I will be running the Devil (Tyndrum to Fort William) in August, completing my second Triple Crown Challenge after which I have told the crew I will only return to the WHW if and when the route is fully carpeted - we will see if my resolve holds come the ballot in November. I had a great weekend at this special event and hope you have enjoyed my report, thanks for reading, Neil.



Glenmore 24 – 2018

Sometimes you need a Plan-B

by Stuart McFarlane



Glenmore 24 Base Camp Photo by Amanda Macfarlane

by Stuart Macfarlane

The Race

Glenmore 24 is more than a twenty-four hour race. It is a party, a festival, a celebration of running. Held in Glenmore Forest just outside Aviemore this trail race takes in the full splendour of the Cairngorms National Park. The atmosphere around base camp is electric with singing, cheering, cowbells dinging and the occasional blasting of the horn to indicate that another runner has reached the magic 100 miles.

The race loop is 4 miles: starting

at base camp the first mile is on technical trail, the second mile is Landrover track, the third mile is mainly uphill and, thankfully, the fourth mile is nearly all downhill until you are back at base camp again. Being split into four such different sections makes the route really interesting and leaves little opportunity for boredom. After twenty-three hours runners can choose to do small loops around base camp rather than setting out on the 4 mile loop.

My Expectations

I have run at Glenmore each year since 2013 – on the first year I did the 12 hour race so this year would be my 5th doing the 24 hour option. I have hit the ton twice; in 2016 I managed just under 104 miles and in 2017 just shy of 108 miles. My hope for 2018 was to achieve over 100 miles again – but I knew that that was not going to be a simple walk in the park.

Over the past year my training has suffered due to health issues – in

October 2017, due to an enlarged prostate, I had a catheter stuck up my willie for a few months. This remained in place until the end of December when I had a TURP operation to fix the problem.

Despite this I managed to keep my six year Runstreak going - though my mileage was much reduced and speed and hill work were out of the question. Then on the 7th of January 2018, while buying a few beers in Aldi, I had a heart attack and was admitted to hospital (Note: other supermarkets are available for the purpose of heart attacks and beer buying). When begging the nurse to give me an extra five minutes before attaching me to the ECG, so that I could complete my distance for the day, failed – I realised it was perhaps time to put the Runstreak on hold for a little while.

On the 10th of January I had four stents inserted into my heart – I was fixed and ready to run. I started Runstreak Mark-2 on the 17th of February but, although I was running again, it took me a while to get approval from my cardiologist to do long distance races.

Fortunately I got approval in time to take part in the 95 mile West Highland Way Race being held in June 2018 – I completed that but, with lack of proper training, it was very tough going!!

In the 9 weeks between the West Highland Way Race and Glenmore I averaged 75 miles per week in training (including 3 other ultra races – Clyde Stride, Run the Blades and Devil o' the Highlands) so I was mildly confident that a target of 100 miles was possible at Glenmore.

Preparation

It probably took me longer than 24 hours to prepare everything for this race (my wife says 24 weeks). Some six or so Really-Useful boxes were



Glenmore 24 - the last few minutes Photo by Amanda Macfarlane

filled with spare kit, spare shoes, food, water & electrolyte drinks, blister plasters, midge sprays, sun lotion, tic removers and several thousand other items that would be absolutely essential during the race.

My wife, Linda, and I travelled up to Glenmore on the Friday morning and battled the wind to get the tent set up. We were staying at a nearby hotel and were joined later by my daughter Amanda, my son, Brian, and his wife, Jayne. Brian was taking part in the 12 hour race, Amanda on photography duty and helping Linda and Jayne on support duty.

On the Saturday we went to the base camp around 11am to register, listen to the briefing and complete final preparations for the mid-day start.

My Race

I had planned to start out at a modest pace of 45 minutes per lap, gradually slowing, and from lap 11 I would have a full hour for each lap – this would give me 100 miles with 30 minutes to spare.

At first all was going great – well for the first seven laps. I completed 28

Race Reports

miles in 5 hours 7 minutes against a plan of 5 hours 45 minutes – but then the dreaded stomach ache struck. The next three laps took an average of 1 hour 11 minutes; I was in so much pain I could barely run.

At this point I had to rethink my plan and, rightly or wrongly, I decided to set a new target of 80 miles – Plan-B was in place. I took a tent break in the hope that a rest would shake off the tummy pains. It didn't.

One of the problems that I have when running ultras is that I find it very difficult to eat. Was lack of food causing the pains? It seems unlikely as it started after just 28 miles of running. Was it the new isotonic drink I was using? I don't really know – but, just in case, I switched to water.

After an hour of tent rest I set out again, feeling no better. Three laps later, having completed 52 miles (it was now after 1am) I opted to take a 2 hour tent break in the hope that all would be well after a longer break. It wasn't!! At 3:30am I set out into the dark once more.

There is a strange phenomenon at Glenmore, base camp can be really cold, the temperature was just a few degrees above zero during the night but as you run around the forest there are pockets of very warm air. As a result I was reluctant to take off my jacket while at base camp but minutes later was wishing that I had.

After another couple of slow laps it was early morning. The sun was up. All was well with the world (apart from me still having a sore stomach). I knew that 80 miles was now within grasp – my mood brightened and my pace started to quicken a little. I completed lap 19 in 53 minutes and lap 20 in 56 minutes – I was keen to give myself more than an hour to do a final lap rather than spend the time doing small laps (which feels tougher and tends to be slower). Lap



Celebrating with Spot the Duck Photo by Amanda Macfarlane

21 was completed with 15 minutes remaining so it was on to the small laps and a further 0.7 mile giving me a total of 84.7 miles.

Summary

After the race I felt a strange mix of disappointed and pleased. Disappointed that I hadn't met my 100 mile target but pleased that at least Plan-B had worked out. There were more runners than usual doing the 24 hour race this year, 120

against 86 in 2017 and 89 in 2016. This year I finished 49th out of the 120 (by comparison I was 7th out of 86 in 2017 when I ran 106.7 miles).

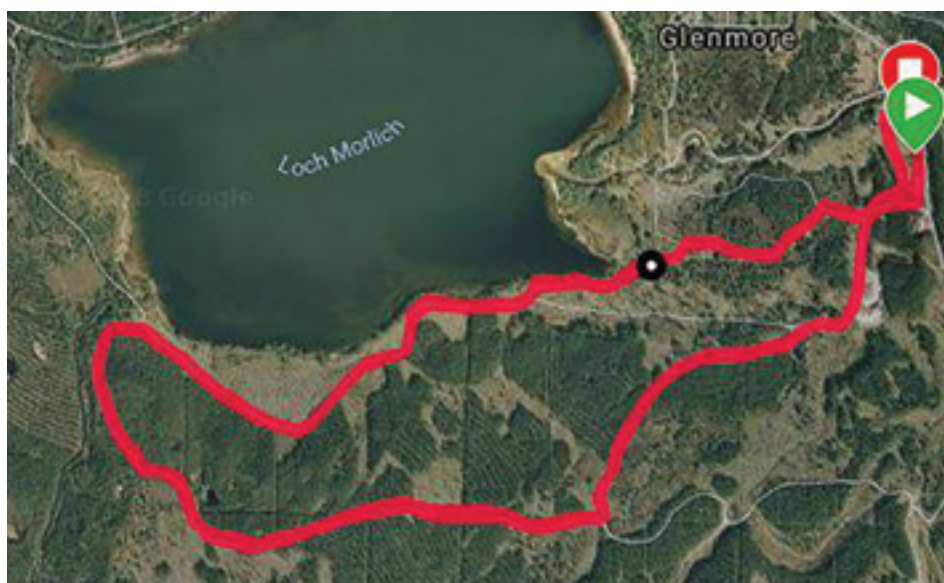
In total I spent a little more than 3 hours in the tent. On reflection I wonder if I could have done things differently after the pain came on – could I, should I have kept going without taking time-out? I do not know – but I do wish I could have another attempt at the race in a week or two. Sadly I will have to wait another year.

This is a very well organised race by the extremely experienced BAM Racing Team of Bill Heirs and Mike Adams (who also organise the Glen Lyon, Great Glen and Glen Ogle Ultras). A host of cheerful and encouraging marshals make sure that the event runs like clockwork . . . well in a 4 mile anticlockwise clock sort-of-way!!

More information can be found at www.runyabam.com/glenmore-24

About Stuart Macfarlane

Stuart took up running at the age of 52 and is now 65. His running adventures include: a Runstreak of over 6 years, running from the Scottish Borders to the northern tip of Shetland and completing 26 marathon distances in 26 days. He



Glenmore 24 - Route

has completed 93 races at Marathon or Ultramarathon distances.

Stuart has had many humour

and inspirational books published including "A Marathon of Running Jokes".



Buachaille Etive Mor

Photos & Text by Morven Walsh



Beautiful Buachaille Etive Mor, which lies at the head of Glen Etive in Glencoe. One of my favourite all time running locations which holds a special place in my heart and where I got the opportunity one Sunday morning with David my husband to go and explore again.

We had first visited this majestic mountain some 26 years ago but due to the weather had never reached the summit; our return visit was just as special. To give a bit of history, David and I are both runners. We like different things

but we still enjoy our runs together. On this morning the weather was perfect, I was full of excitement and grinning from ear to ear about our awaiting adventure. After leaving the car we headed up through coire na tuilaich, up towards to boulder field near the top and the scramble over the scree onto the ridge. Once up onto the ridge we headed left along the ridge to the cairn which marks the highest peak of Stob Dearg at 1022 metres high.

We were lucky as the clouds were swirling around to be given the chance to enjoy



the view which unfolds before your very eyes. I have to say at the moment we just sat and soaked up the magnificent view and sheer drop straight down into the void of what is Rannoch moor. Time was limited though and with the weather changing we knew we had to start moving once again. We gingerly ran over the rocks and stones heading back the way we had come. When we reached the point of descending back down again, I had to just sit and take it all in once again. Sitting on a small ledge, perched carefully I took some photos and enjoyed the absolute peace and quiet as it was only us. We had only passed 4 walkers on our run so I think we all

had enjoyed the solitude that morning.

Photos taken and off we went negotiating our descent. Now this can be just as tricky as with the boulder field and loose stones you really have to keep your wits about you and go steady. The rain had also begun but nothing terrible and if anything it added to the brooding atmosphere of Buachaille Etive Mor. On reaching the path off the mountain and heading back to the car I stopped and looked back with a feeling of complete joy and happiness at being given the chance to enjoy such a beautiful Munro with David. We were tired and happy and felt very lucky to have enjoyed such an adventure.



Summer of Running

Helen Pike



I try to do what I can to support charities that I feel passionate about but as a seasoned marathoner/ultra-runner I was starting to lack the “WOW” factor to entice support from family and friends. I needed a to go bigger, I needed a gimmick so this summer I took on a number of challenges (7 races over 6 months) to raise awareness and funds for the Cure Parkinson's Trust. Parkinson's has affected my family (including my lovely Mum) over the decades and I wish to do everything I can to prevent this cruel disease continuing it's devastation for future generations.

My Summer of Running included some fun but challenging adventures.

22nd April - London Marathon - PB achieved 3:22:48 – Even in the Heat Wave!

12th May - Dukeries 40 (Hobo Pace)—A totally vegan event in Sherwood Forest (PB achieved 6hrs 35mins) - 2nd lady, 6th overall

19th May - Cader Idris Mountain Race - (2927ft of ascent!) - Fantastic fast and frenzied fun.

9th June - Convergence (Beyond Marathon) - A 24 hour unsupported and self-navigated adventure to Hope in the Peak District from anywhere in the UK. This race is all about the preparation. You decide how far you think you can travel in 24 hours then devise your route. Arrive 1 second late and you are disqualified and harshly all miles are measured as the crow flies. I ran 66.7 crow miles (85 miles in total) from Waseley Hills (South Birmingham) to Hope travelling along off-road paths/canal achieving first Solo Female Winner with 4 hours to spare.

27th July - Kennet and Avon 145 mile Canal Race - A tough Bristol to London race and my longest distance ever. With the help of fellow runner and new friend David Betteridge I finished 2nd lady, 7th overall in 33 hours and 30 minutes with blistered feet and a big smile on my face! A beautiful route for those willing to push their boundaries.

25th August - Dig Deep Ultra Tour of the Peak District - 60 miles of hills, hills and more hills! A tough race with over 10,000ft of ascent but with

each climb being rewarded with outstanding views and beauty it feels like a privilege to be able to take part. Finishing 1st lady in 12 hours 48 mins this felt really hard. It was hot, my legs and strength hadn't fully recovered from the KACR and I felt sick/dizzy for most of the 2nd half.

With a dose of grit and a determination not to let my supporters down I was very relieved to finally reach the finish line.

8th September - National Forest Way Ultra 75 (Go-Ultra) – A relatively new and highly recommended



race consisting of toughish terrain, significant climbs and navigational challenges. This race is much harder than it first appears. Looking at previous results I started to panic – only 4 finishers in 2016 and 5 in 2017. I decided to do some last minute route recce-ing and queried a number of navigational points and cattle hotspots with super-organised race director Wayne Busby who put my mind at rest and implemented diversions

where necessary. Finishing 1st Lady and 1st Overall in 14hrs 45 mins it was a fantastic end to my summer of running!

A massive thank you to everyone (especially my mum) who has supported me and The Cure Parkinson's Trust over the summer. Between us we have achieved great things and raised over £1,000.

Now for a sit down.

<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/HelenPike>

I Divorced a Bridge

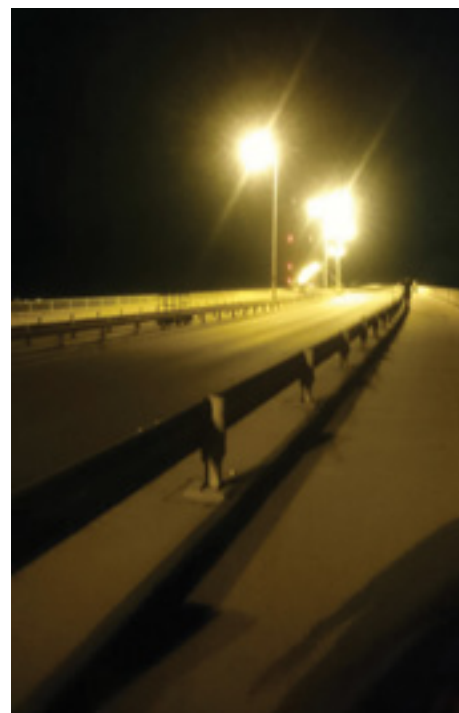
Text & Photos Byron Crook



Hell on the Humber, commonly known as HoTH, has been a life journey in my ultra running career - from way back in 2013 with my first

venture at Halloween the Autumn 6 Hour version, right through to 2016 HoTH knocking up over 104 miles in little over 22 hours. Karl Jackson

RD, has a knack of getting you hooked and making a gathering of great friends into the HoTH Family. This year I'm setting out to divorce





the bridge. A 36 hour divorce bill of sweat, tears, laughs and pain. There is always a whole heap of pain to be had.

So it's race day. Pack the car, pick up another like-minded mad man in the shape of Giacomo Squintani, a 4 hour trip north to Hessle and the north side of the Humber Bridge to HoTH base camp and what turns into the Event Village. The Humber Bridge was once the world's longest suspension bridge, 2 miles (ish) cone to cone, with no flat. You're either going up or coming down. In fact there is in excess of 250ft elevation per lap.

I had started my ultra running life back in 2013 turning out for Helloween HoTH revisited - a 6 hour

version of the big race. Through the years I've built up to 12 and 24, and now the 36 hour HoTH. Knowing how physically and mentally brutal this race is I often question my judgement, but the over-riding feeling of being part of something so special with a select group of people inspires me.

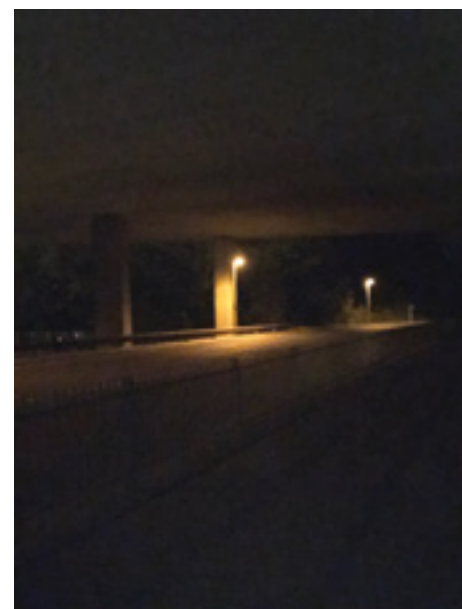
So camp was set and the race brief over. There was time for a quick celebratory whisky with Karl Jackson RD. I was celebrating my last HoTH and I'd brought a special Cotswold malt up for the occasion.

7pm and we are off. No big bang or fanfare, just a simple 'GO'. As usual you get a few Usain Bolts heading to the front getting a few quick laps in... it never lasts! The complete opposite

goes for me and a few veterans - walk or very slow jog to start with. Looking after your legs in the early stages is very much key to this race. It was good to get in the first view of the Humber. Being tidal this is one bit of scenery that changes and as such becomes important as the hours tick by and you look for visual stimuli. At this point the tide was on its way out.

I was feeling comfortable as I went out on Lap three, and let's face so I should be. I had been more than concerned with my lack of training having had a hectic year and a little loss of mojo not being helped by the relentless heat. Anyway, into the Darkness for the first time it was - 9 hours of it. No head torch is needed but in a few areas around the Base camp you do need to be careful where to put your feet, especially if you take the option to give your feet some respite and run a little on the grass.

Fuelling for me these days is all about proper food, I stash some treats in the cool bag ready for the low points which WILL come. I started fuelling from lap one and told myself to eat something no matter how small every lap. Early on just a few flumps, Haribo or a bit of fruit. For later I thought I'd give Pot Noodle a go to replenish the salt. I always carry Gingsters and pork pies. Also making their debut and providing a big hit



Race Reports

were Jelly Pots and clotted cream rice pudding, supplemented by The HoTH table of goodies. As for liquid - water mainly with Coke and tea at points where I needed a boost.

After around 4 hrs people started to comment about being tired and some started taking early naps. It appears most people had not taken into consideration that they will have been up most of the day anyway. Some will have worked and some like me travelled a good distance. Driving personally kills me. So it's harder than we thought but the attitude of some was keep moving whilst others slept. The Bridge became a very lonely place with maybe only 3 or 4 runners on it at any time, and including cars passing above us. I manage to do this until 5am where I got an hour. This is the first time ever getting my head down and it paid off. I woke just after 6am a little cold but feeling awake. Saturday morning saw the HoTH village swell as the 24 hour guys and gals turned up.

I got a good fartlek session going. Walking up to the bridge then run to a phone box, walk to a phone box all the way across, then repeat on the way back. This approach had me lapping between 1 hour and 1 hour 10mins a lap.

The weather had been very kind during the night with temperatures dropping to maybe only 16c and the breeze was nothing to shout about. This changed slightly during Saturday with temperatures rising into the 20s and the breeze getting up to more like the HoTH winds I've become used to - but nothing too bad.

At halfway I'd got 66 miles in and I was quite happy with this. It meant I had reassessed my target to getting in the 100, and taking the positive out of the race that I had stayed on my feet for the event. That being said I had some battles ahead, mostly with my head. Lap after lap heading out from base camp I tried to tag onto whoever was ready for a chat. This made the afternoon session speed along rapidly.



The HoTH Dog



At around 5-5:30pm you get to see all the enthusiastic kids doing the 30 minute tower run full of energy and spirit. You can't help but get a lift from this.

As the clock moved to 7pm the tide had come in and gone out again, the cows had moved field and the sun had done another half lap of the globe. Now it was the start of HoTH's first ever second night. The 36ers and 24ers had been joined by the 12ers and 6ers. I found this to be

a significant time. There were fresh people to talk to and admire with their fresh legs and feet, and it's the start of the final phase. Just one night shift to go!

The feet on this race take a brutal bashing. They feel every single strike as the bridge gives you no mercy. It is basically steel with a micro layer of grippy stuff. This fact and the constant up or down (no flat) completely shatters the bottom half of your body if you are not prepared.

On this occasion I wasn't and it hurt like hell. Only myself to blame!

One thing to look forward to at HoTH is the midnight pizza delivery. Just the ticket to see you into the small hours, which are dark and can be very lonely as people take breaks enabling them to get to the finish. In the hours after pizza the bridge again becomes a lonely place. This tends to be the time the HoTH creatures emerge from the bridge itself - the HoTH Dog and the HoTH Platypus

Platypus





to name just two. I did start to see things as the race progressed, more and more random in nature. This year I had the pleasure of sharing the closing miles with Dee Boudierba who was aiming to get in the 100. Both of us struggling, we helped each other along. I had put myself in a position that 100 would come around 3am. I had agreed with Karl that a celebration would be needed in the form of the 100 MILE WHISKY. As I said earlier, more miles should have been achieved, but the 100 mile mark is always special, as this would be my last HoTH 100 it was time to get that whisky out again. Not your everyday refuelling strategy.

I went on to do just one more lap with Dee which set her up to go out again for her 100 before the pain in the feet became too much. 104 miles from very little training in this hellish environment was an acceptable total and I was content. I might just add that a HoTH mile is just over a normal - so the final total for me was 110 miles which includes numerous toilet breaks at 1/4 mile per visit.

The event finishes after 6:30am, and I declared myself finished. I started to pack away base camp which is a horrible task as you hobble around the tent un-pegging the ropes and moving your kit back to the car.

Shortly after 7am Karl called all those

left to gather for the presentations for all events. Nobody really knows who has done what as race HQ will not tell you how many laps you've done, let alone any of your competitors. I never race. I always do my thing and I come wherever I come. I had put myself in the pack for 2nd and 3rd as 1st place I was confident was going to Giacomo who had been relentless. I was however surprised to be called out as I had come 2nd. A great way to divorce my favourite bridge! Or so you might think.

I'm left with a whole library of memories and a great family of friends. Oh, and as I came 2nd, I get free entry to next year's event...

This is a great friendly event that will soon have you hooked.

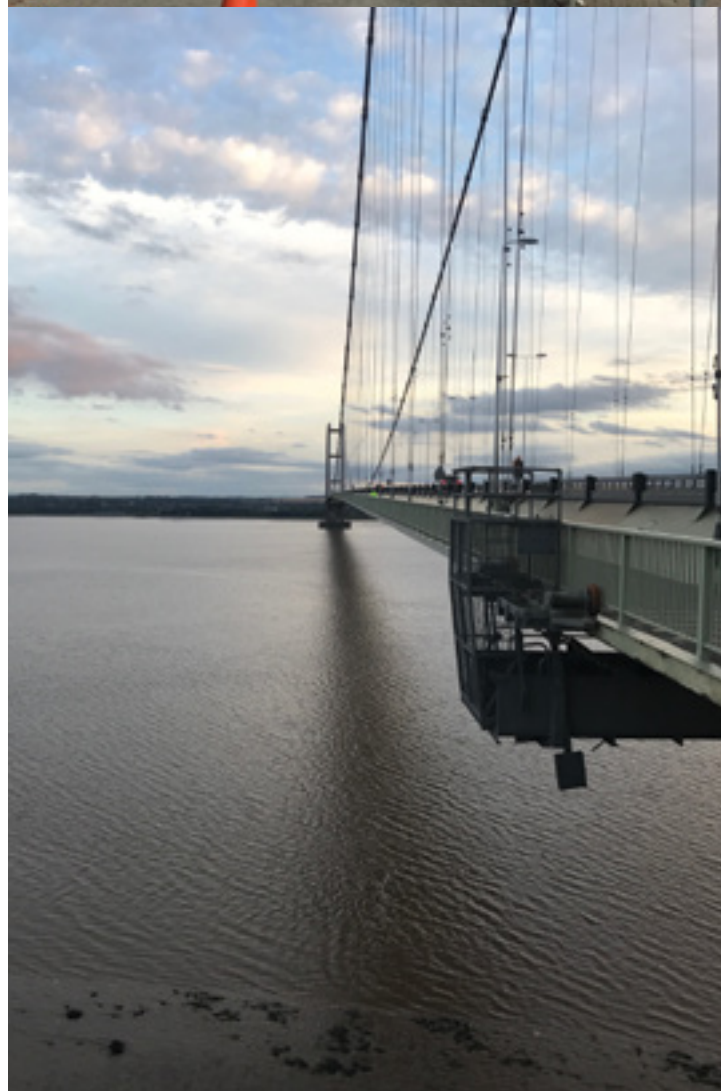
Facebook page is Hell on the Humber (the one with lots of members).

Hell on the Humber Results 36 hours

Men

Surname	First name	Race length	HoTH miles
Giacomo	Squintani	36 Hour	132
Byron	Crook	36 Hour	104
Ian	Griffin	36 Hour	100
Oliver	Coulbeck	36 Hour	100
Dee	Boudierba	36 Hour	100
Sally	Wheelhouse	36 Hour	68
Sally	Cope	36 Hour	48
Sarah	Rodgers	36 Hour	48





Hell on The Humber (HOTH) 2018 – 12 Hour Race

My name is Baz Earnshaw, I am a 52 year old mother of 4, grandmother of 5. I have ran for about 20 years but have only come back to it in the last couple of years after having serious health problems. I seem to now have the urge to push my body hard and hope it doesn't give up on me. This year as part of my marathon training I decided to sign up to some endurance races as part of my preparation. So this is how I found myself running across the Humber bridge for 12 hours last weekend.

Hell on The Humber (HOTH) 2018, what can I say? I am a complete novice at endurance events never having raced over half marathon distance until recently. I entered the 12 hour race and completed 36 miles, graduating to an ultra runner.

The event was really well organised, relaxed and as a novice arriving anxious and apprehensive, I felt looked after from arriving on site, when I checked in after each lap and until we left in the morning. For me it was a night to remember that has left me with mobility issues and ravenous hunger! The race involves 4 mile laps over the Humber Bridge, pounding the metal bridge in the words of Lionel Ritchie, "all night long" and pushing my body to places I never thought it would be able to do. Having a good support team helped me stay focused throughout the night and the changing colours as daybreak arrived was an amazing sight as it meant the race was nearly over.

I ache but I'm not broken, stairs are definitely an issue and I can't stop eating but I have already signed up for next year but this time for 24 hours.

KACR 145 (or 153!) Always read your race emails

Wendy Shaw



previously completed several races along the Thames and buddying my fiancé Alex in this race last year, navigation is one thing I didn't need to worry about. I was just going to head out and enjoy the day.

Myself and Adrian (my crew) arrived in Bristol on the Thursday night, after a small hiccup of a swing instead of a 2nd bed in our room, we changed rooms then kit and breakfast were laid out ready for the following morning. I value as much sleep as possible before a long race and being totally prepared for the morning helps me to achieve this.

I wandered from the hotel to the start eating my porridge in the morning. Bumping into another couple of runners along the way was reassuring we were heading in the right direction through the roadworks that are Bristol city centre. It was nice to see a few familiar faces at the start, Keith, Dick, Allan, Stu, Pam, Natasha, Georgina back in nice company. A few jokes shared about my lack of direction!

The start of the race was uneventful, I had a plan, I stuck to it, I ate, I drank, I kept cool, I kept runners around me to reassure me I was on course. One of the runners who saved me navigating through Bath was Helen Pike. We chatted for a while, she'd been out and recce'd the route recently on her bike. This was her first race over 100 miles. We tag teamed for a while, talked about family, fundraising and how it feels at the end of 145 miles. We joined in a celebration party when we found an open cold water tap in the middle of the day when things were really starting to heat up!!

I left Helen for a while at some stage, maybe 40-50 miles, I caught up with Natasha and moved into first female position. I expected Natasha would be catching up with me shortly when I next had to slow down with the heat or to eat the tub of porridge that had magically been presented to me by Adrian with water boiled by Helen Pike's crew! (Thanks Helen's hubby, I didn't catch your name). I tag teamed with Pete Summers and Darren Strachan for a while, running into the 60 and 70 mile aid stations together. Adrian appeared at Hungerford with a very welcome Magnum ice cream, then I met my first buddy Will, a 2nd Magnum ice cream and I sucked up my first real low of the race. Will and I ate, walked, jogged and chatted our way through to Reading. We bumped into Adrian and his sister Joanne half way at Aldermaston where Adrian left us to get some sleep.

The 86 mile checkpoint couldn't come quick enough, it was getting dark, I was feeling tired. A change of kit, a

KACR (Kennet and Avon Canal Race) is a 145 mile footrace from Bristol to London. Starting at 6am on Friday 27th July 2018 (first weekend of the school holidays).

After running 220.5kms at the Barcelona 24hr track race in December 2017, and subsequently being selected to join the GB 24 hour team, I competed at the European 24 hour Championships, achieving a bronze medal in May. 2018 had been a very serious year of training and racing for me. Along with completing my final degree assignment and planning a wedding for September, KACR was to be a non-serious fun run enjoying running point-to-point on local trails.

The race starts at Bristol Temple Meads railway station and follows the Kennet and Avon canal into Reading where it continues along the Thames to Windsor (or so we thought, but I'll get to that!). Although I knew none of the first 60 or so miles from Bristol, living just outside Reading means the Kennet and Avon is our home stomping ground and having

cold burger, a chat with Paul Ali then me and Alex were on our way. Home soil, I was awake, I knew this route, I was fuelled and ready to get on with it. We ran into and through Reading, Shiplake and Henley, 100 miles was calling. Coming out of Henley the sleep monster started to take control, I was tired, I was falling asleep on my feet, sleepiness like I've never had in a race before. I begged Alex to let me sleep at the Flowerpot if I drank a couple of glasses of coke on arrival, I NEVER stop at checkpoints but I really couldn't stay awake. He agreed I could have five minutes, we ran in, I downed some coke and threw a blanket over my head. I know they were chatting but I don't remember about what. Five minutes later we were off and I was awake, it worked!!

We knew the route from here, dawn would soon be breaking, a cold shower through Marlow freshened us up and we were motoring. We knew from last year where the next checkpoint was and our way out of Windsor, through Slough to join the Grand Union canal, this wasn't a fun run anymore, I was in 5th position overall, 1st female and cooking with gas. We ran through Bray, sped through the woods towards Windsor and looked for checkpoint 8 to appear, on our left, through the trees, just a little but further, but it didn't appear.

We reached Windsor, we'd gone too far, we'd missed the aid station, I called HQ hoping it was just round the corner, but bad news. Knowing the route we hadn't checked the maps for ages. Checkpoint 8 had moved from last year and we'd run a good four miles past it and were instructed to head back to Bray lock. My hour lead on the 2nd lady was gone! We turned on our heels and ran the quickest miles for hours, we had the satnav on the phone, maps in hand, where was this checkpoint? We asked runners, walkers, cyclists and finally the lock keeper at Bray. Do you know where Marsh lane car park is? The lock keeper knew. Phew!! He sent us running up a lane that seemed 10 miles long. Finally we reached Marsh lane car park and checkpoint 8.

No time for breakfast, just an update on position and timings. I was now 9th, the 1st lady left 20 mins ago. It wasn't good news but could have been worse. We cautiously headed along the Jubilee river, a much nicer route than 2017, we knew I still had a chance of catching the group but couldn't afford to go wrong again. Those extra 8 miles of working had taken a lot out of me, I needed to fuel and relax a little, there were still at least 25 miles to go.

We reached Slough and back on a familiar route. I mentioned to Alex how fortunate we were to know our way through the town and how this was the first civilisation for a long time, maybe some runners would be drawn into the shops, cafes and nice toilets, giving us a chance to catch up.

We sighted the first walking up the high street, then another queuing in a shop, then around the corner was another checking his map. Adrenaline kicked in. We ran,

we ran quicker, we turned into the Slough arm and there was Helen and another runner in front. We'd caught the group.

I was tired but I wasn't ready to throw in the towel now. I'd worked for this, I needed this, I was going to get this. We regrouped, refuelled and set off for the last effort to the finish. We passed Helen and didn't stop. A quick bite of food or sip of lucozade and we ran on. The worst thing about these long races is no matter how good you feel or how well you are moving, there could always be someone behind moving better, moving faster, catching you up chasing you down.

A quick snack stop with Lindley and onto the welcoming sight of Bulls bridge, 13 miles to go. The front of my shin was in agony, but easier to block out and run than walk. Energy was good, motivation was high. We ran a mile at a time, ticking it off, starting to recognise landmarks getting closer to Paddington. We passed Adrian with two miles to go, he said Stu was only a couple of minutes ahead but I wasn't interested in chasing, I'd done what I needed to do.

I set out to complete, but I enjoyed competing, I loved the feeling of successfully following my race plan and getting the results despite the detour. It was nice to still be first at the finish.

We turned into Little Venice, there it was, nobody has caught us, we'd done it. 32 hours 46 minutes, a new ladies course record. A few jokes shared about my bonus mileage and home we went to rest and celebrate. To take home the trophy was a lovely feeling, but it was an even better feeling knowing we'd had to fight for it.

With GB commitments out of the way for a few months, uni over and by the time of reading, LLCR and our wedding will have been and gone. I am now looking forward to taking on some new remote coaching clients and spending some time developing other peoples race plans, so other ordinary people get the chance to do extraordinary things.

If you'd like to discuss coaching options, Wendy is available at: wendy@wendyshaw.eu



Roseland August Trail Race 2018

The Plague

by Alan Giles



Photo caption: Photo courtesy Mudcrew

Initially I had signed up for the Plague as company for my friend Aidan who had completed the 32 mile race in 2017 and found the experience lonesome. He had asked a group of running friends who would be up for it; and I was unanimously “volunteered.”

I embraced the challenge though, I had always found the ultra distances appealing, and having already ran numerous marathons was used to running for several hours at a time.

As a local to the St. Austell area I was at a bit of an advantage; knowing the majority of the course from previous experience. Luckily enough a friend

of mine, (and eventual winner of this year’s event), agreed to accompany me on my long run. We decided to do the second half: the return leg, which filled in the few blanks I had and also allowed me to do the route in full, albeit only one way. The lead up to the race was surprisingly calm; while others seemed worried, I was confident that I would finish the race.

I guess as time wasn’t an issue this year (providing I made the cut offs of course), most race anxiety was nonexistent. Lining up at the start at Porthpean was a great experience. So much excitement, muffled whisperings and cheering.

And before long (at 0005,) we had a raucous 10 second countdown. We were off. From the very start we tried to be sensible. A conservative speed down hills and on flats, and straight into a brisk walk for any substantial uphill. “Settle in, settle in,” I found myself saying repeatedly to my friend and accomplice. Parts of the night run were so serene. There were many comments on how it felt like it could easily be mid afternoon; even though it was pitch black.

Before long we arrived at the first checkpoint. Gorran Haven at approximately 11 miles. A quick water fill, a few Jaffa cakes and we were back out on the trail. The race

continued like this; quite comfortably throughout the night section, with a sensible pace and seemingly random conversations that could have been plucked from anywhere.

We reached CP2 at Caerhayes in good time and again refilled and left quite quickly. The sun rose at 0605 and we spent a long while in silence just watching it come up. Stunning on such a beautiful stretch of coast path. We arrived at the final check point before the half way point, (and turnaround), at Portscatho, still in high spirits.

We took on a little water and carried straight on to get the remaining 4 miles of the first half done. We arrived at St. Anthony's Head soon enough, where a welcome change of clothes was given to us by my fiancée Amy.

With fresh pants, socks, shorts, and shoes (and a quick kiss), we started

the return leg. At about 40 miles in, just as I was starting to feel really strong, Aidan had a "wobble" as he put it. I wanted to pick up the pace, but as he was struggling we carried on at the pace we had stayed at.

This ended up being quite lucky I think as my left knee started to ache shortly after. We carried on picking off the miles until we reached Mevagissey. Aidan turned around and declared that "he couldn't run any further."

I encouraged him just to keep going until the next uphill, which we both knew wasn't far away. He did and seemed to push through his wall; getting stronger and stronger from this point onwards. I however; started weakening from here. We arrived at the final check point at Pentewan, tired but still smiling; especially as we knew many faces here and were handed ice lollies from one of the

many spectacular Marshall's. We had four miles to go. The hardest four miles. By this point I was beat. Plus I knew that the "dreaded steps of doom" were still to come.

Nearly 200 steps down followed by nearly 100 steps up. I walked the majority of this section, my knee now seizing quickly if I stopped for only a minute. By the time I had reached the final hill I had lost a lot of time in comparison to my prediction, but with no fast goal

I walked up to the finish line and soon heard cheers from the many people waiting at the line. I crossed in 17 hours and 16 minutes, in position 47. Out of the 200 starting runners less than 100 finished. By finishing this race you are invited to The Arc of Attrition; a 100 mile winter race. I vowed I wouldn't enter on the finish line. Three days later I did. Wish me luck!



L'ÉTOILE VERTE D'ÉGUZON
Val de Creuse - Berry - Limousin

300 km
6 étapes

1-6 SEPT. 2019

Au pays de l'arbre et de l'eau...

- Etape Val de Creuse Sud 45 km
- Etape Val de Creuse Nord 49 km
- Etape La Gauloise Verte 53 km
- Etape La Berrichonne 56 km
- Etape La Limousine 65 km
- Etape Le Tour du Lac 29 km (GR)

Infos : transegaule@wanadoo.fr

Label Transe Gaule

Lakeland50

by Leila Majewska aka Lili Insane



“Believe you can and you are half way there” ~ T. Roosevelt

Mardale Head climb

Hi, I am Leila and some of you may remember my article about Durham Dales, for those who don't - I am a beginner trail runner who has gone from the sofa to completing Lakeland50.

How the story started?

Well, not like most of them - I never had a drinking or drugs problem, didn't face any mental health problems or break downs. On holiday in Pakistan I went up Margalla Hills, upon seeing the sunrise I decided to be a trail runner. Weighing 14.6st and with a

fitness level far from ideal to be a runner, I moved to a new city called Sunderland and joined the beginners group in the running club. 24th January 2018 I ran the first mile in my life - it was bloody hard.

Anyway, as training goes I did jog-walk 3-4 times a week (more power-walk than jog) and become a daily visitor to the gym, but I wouldn't say I was training.

I didn't follow any plan, didn't set myself time targets and as much as I

enjoyed it, results were not quite as I'd imagined. Then I ran my first road half marathon (I actually ran it all without walking or stopping with a 12min/mile pace) and a week later I heard about Lakeland50 from a friend.

I love to challenge myself and sometimes I feel like I am a bit invisible, so without telling anyone I decided I would go for the charity entry on payday.

Once I mentioned L50 in my club some people weren't very supportive,

“You have no business to run it, you are unfit and better do 10k's for a few years” was the ‘advice’ I got, but to be honest I didn't care and it just made me more convinced I wanted to give it a go. I decided that if I completed the Conistون Trail Marathon, I would go for the L50. I completed the Conistون an hour before the cut off and paid for the entry to the L50 the next day. At this point most people would train very hard to get better, but I am not like most people 😊 I decided that I was going



Start line

to give it a go and that I would finish in 23h 59min (basically to just make each CP's cut off). Due to changes in my work shifts to nights I couldn't attend the gym anymore, so my weight plateaued at 13.9st and my fitness level went down instead of up. Most of the people around me either didn't believe I could do it or just chose to ignore what I was about to do. Well - I was right, they were wrong (feels really good to be able to say it!)

Saturday morning, at the start line I was very emotional and burst into tears from nerves, literally shaking - and at this point I have to thank the amazing Emma Williams who helped me get it together!

We set off and I felt really strong, the weather was

nice, sunny but not too hot and everything was great. Then it started to rain a little and the wind become stronger, but I reached the first CP an hour before cut off, I spent only four minutes there and felt really energised. Then the biggest climb on the way to Mardale Head CP started - 2510ft over 9.4miles already seemed hard enough, suddenly it began to pour rain and hail.

Before I managed to pull my waterproof on I was soaking wet. Shaking from cold and very slow uphill, I continued to the next CP - I was still 27 min before the cut off, so far so good. The route became a bit easier and I managed to again accumulate some spare time before the next CP cut off. Although I was shaking from cold and my hands in

soaking wet gloves became purple, I didn't think about giving up even for a second. Once I reached Kentmere Hawaii CP I had a longer sit down there, which perhaps was a mistake as once I stood up my left ankle was really painful and stiff. I got myself together and was on my way to another climb. I had the gpx file on my Fenix and ETA was around 19-20 hours, so I was very happy and shocked with my performance which was better than even I expected. I reached Ambleside in great spirits, even more happy as there was my good friend Mike patiently waiting at the CP to see how I was doing. He said I looked fresh and cheerful compared to most of the runners arriving there (not sure if it was true or he just wanted to energise me) and made me a cup of hot tea

😊 At this point I found that many people DNF here due to the horrendous weather, which gave me an energy kick realising that since I've gone so far I can do it! I left Ambleside with a huge smile and went into the darkness. That part of the route, which I had worried would be very hard as I've never run at night, was actually quite easy, I had a really great head torch thanks to my friend Mark Robinson.

I reached Chapel Stile soaking wet, with hypothermia and dehydration and my left ankle was really swollen, but still before cut off. I had two bowls of beef casserole (my first meal since the start apart from 3 energy gels) and sat there for perhaps half an hour before I left again. It was



Run For Tony

Race Reports



Ambleside

cold, but as I was wet and shaking it didn't really make that much difference to me. Sadly my ankle was getting worse.

I took two paracetamols and carried on. The pain was bearable, I knew I would finish and nothing else mattered. Until... boom 🌟 I placed my poles the wrong way on wet rocks and tumbled down hitting my right rib cage on the rocks and literally smashing my left knee onto stone. Never in my life have I felt such pain. With tears falling and swearing to the heavens I got up and started to walk. I had to be in adrenaline shock because it was so painful but I still tried to jog - which wasn't smart. My kneecap slipped out and my knee locked completely. At this point I was in between two CP's, hypothermic, dehydrated, soaking wet and in agony with my left leg unable

to bend at all - it just felt physically impossible.

I took out from my vest another two paracetamols and just started to walk using the poles as crutches to avoid using my left leg as much as possible. I couldn't bend my knee at all which made uphills and downhills very very painful. I reached Tilberthwaite CP (like seriously they couldn't find an easier name for it?) in such a state that people there asked if I need help. I didn't tell them exactly what happened - obviously if I did a marshal would pull me from the race. I just said I have some pain in my knee and some other runner gave me Ibuprofen (now I know never to take ibuprofen during running, luckily nothing happened to me) and I left.

Climbing those bloody rocky stairs on a sunny dry day would be a pain in the a***, so imagine it in the

rain, freezing and with a leg that couldn't bend at all. The last 3.5 miles of the run took me almost 3 hours. The pain I felt I can only compare to the 17 hours of labour when I had my daughter. I could hardly see anything, my eyes were full of tears. I used all the bad words I knew in English and Polish and then started to hallucinate people (which in reality were sheep). The technical downhill on the way to the finish was so painful that I wanted to just tumble down it.

I reached the finish-line with a time of 23:42:43 - still 16 minutes better than I had planned lol. 😂 At the finish line some of my friends (Jill, Catherine, Ant, Mike and others) were waiting for me which lifted my spirits. All I remember was saying "I need

paramedics" 🤦 to be fair you can see in the photo the state I was in. I was quickly covered in foil blankets (in total 6 blankets) and was taken care of by a physio and... got my medal!

Was it worth the pain? - hell yeah it was! Would I do it again? In a blink of an eye! Did I consider a DNF - no I didn't, and I believe it is my mental strength which helped me to finish as my body was definitely underprepared (not to say not prepared at all).

Why have I done it? Because I know best what I am capable of and I will never let others tell me what I can and can't do.

Did anyone help me? Training wise I didn't didn't do any recces and didn't really do any hill workouts,



Finish line



but there was one special person who believed that I could do it and came to support me. He was there the moment I arrived a day early until the finish. He even waited for me in Ambleside CP in the middle of the night and I can't express how happy it made me to see his face there! So a big thank you goes to Mike Thompson for being there for me when I needed him the most!

Mike, you were a great friend and I am a lucky girl, that now you are not only my best friend but also a lifetime partner and my running coach ❤️.



Nalgo 6 Day Race

The first 6 day race in the UK in modern times took place in Nottingham at the Harvey Hadden Track in November 1981. In 1990 the third and what turned out to be the last NALGO Six Day Race took place at Gateshead and it wouldn't be until 2013, with the British Ultra Fest, that the next such event would take place in the UK.

Malcolm Campbell was the President of the International Association of Ultrarunners (the IAU) from its formation in 1984 until 2004. Malcolm was an ultradistance pioneer and set national records but perhaps his most famous achievement was a two-man race with Marvin Skagerberg from the Anaheim Stadium, Los Angeles to New York, a distance of 3,559 miles. It took them 92 days and Marvin won by 16 minutes.

By Malcolm Campbell

Six Day racing is alive and well and living in Gateshead. To be more specific at the Gateshead International Stadium where between October 13th and 19th 1990, one of the most memorable and dramatic races in the history of the sport took place.

There were thirteen athletes in the race from nine separate countries and this international gathering produced so many stories and incidents that this poor writer finds it impossible to condense this epic into one small article. In the New Year NALGO have very kindly offered to help me produce a supplement which will contain a wealth of details and statistics about this fascinating race.

The simple facts will show that James Zarei set a new British All Comers record of 1001.505 km (622 miles 508 yards) setting a great number of records at intermediate distances on the way. The facts will not show how hard he had to work and how desperately unlucky he was not to land the main prize of the George Littlewood record. Already I can feel myself wishing to set out the great drama of George Littlewood who completed 623 miles 1320 yards in Madison Square Garden in 1888 which is still the British Record and ranked number 2 in the All Time World Rankings Lists. Once I start to write of these matters it is difficult to stop so in this article I shall just recognise the brilliance of George Littlewood who set one of the longest long distance track records in athletic history and give more attention to him in a following article.

Three years ago Maurice Patterson - the Race Director - discussed with NALGO the project of a series of Six Day Races at the Gateshead International Stadium aimed at promoting the sport internationally and improving the standard of performance in the United Kingdom. It was an ambitious project and this year's race was the third in the series.

The early leaders were Dusan Mravlje (Yugoslavia), Maurice Taylor (Australia), James Zarei (UK) and Otto Seitzl (Czechoslovakia) and after 24 hours Mravlje was leading with 132 miles about 5 miles ahead of Taylor who was a further 6 miles ahead of Zarei. All three runners looked comfortable as did the rest of the field who appeared to survive the first day without any really serious problems.

Michel Careau (Canada) winner of the first NALGO Six Day Race was in fifth position at the start of the second day with 113 miles and was obviously enjoying the contest. He was about a mile behind Seitzl and a mile ahead of Max Courtillon (France). Careau has become one of the great favourites with the sporting public at Gateshead and as the word spread that he was now 50 years old and making a concerted effort to beat as many Canadian Masters Track records as he could during the race enthusiasm for his efforts was evident from all quarters. Eventually Careau would put together so many records that it is impossible to list them in the article and this will be done in the NALGO Six Day Race Supplement.

Mravlje maintained his lead up to 48

hours with 218 miles and looked very strong and comfortable. At this point he was about 6 miles ahead of Zarei who was also looking comfortable. Seitzl had managed to secure third position with 200 miles and he was about 14 miles ahead of Taylor. At this point in the race as the demands for sleep arise there is an exchange of advantages given and taken by various runners. Sometimes the smart move is to take a rest while you are reasonably fresh; have a good meal and while it is digesting, sleep. Of course while this is happening the other runners who may not be so fresh can remain on the track and enjoy their temporary advantage. This is the tactical part of the event and perhaps decisions on a course of action to take should lie with the runners helper as it did with the runners manager so many years ago.

Into the third day and now a few problems. The most serious were those of Dusan Mravlje who was obliged to retire. He had had a viral infection a few weeks earlier and was having breathing problems. A few rests during the third day had been taken but Race Director - Maurice Patterson - obtained medical advice and it was obvious that retirement was necessary. It was a great shame for this very talented runner who many expected to pass 600 miles. Mravlje is a Sydney to Melbourne winner and has run in most countries in the world. Before leaving for home he paid great tribute to the staff and organisation at Gateshead and has promised to return for the next 6 Day Race.

Renate Nierkens (Germany) had run in all three NALGO Six Day Races.

Ultrarunning History – Classic Events

She had some injury problems in her first attempt but Maurice Patterson had recognised in her a special talent and suggested that she might prove to be one of the stars of the future. With every passing hour she was proving this particular point as she edged remorselessly nearer the Ladies World Masters Record. Totally concentrating on the task in hand she would finish the race with 458 miles.

Jaraslava Karpiskova from Czechoslovakia had a few problems early in the race. Many of these problems were associated with her footwear which did not appear ideal for the Gateshead track. Fortunately Ron Hill Sports had been very supportive towards the race and replacements were found. In the closing stages she would be running as well as anyone.

Tirtha Phani from India had the most horrific injury problem after the first day which the physiotherapists worked hard to rectify. Most athletes would have retired with the injuries he received but although for most of the race he was obliged to walk he was greatly admired for his bravery and one can only imagine how far he might run in an injury free condition.

Paul Bream (UK), Dan Coffey (UK), Stefan Schlett (Germany) and Tom Grace (USA) all had minor problems during the event. None of them sufficient to force retirement but all reason enough for performances that were a little below their best. The track is no respecter of persons as many fine athletes at Gateshead in the past have learned.

Into the fourth day and James Zarei proceeded to give evidence of his latent brilliance as he edged slowly away from the rest of the field. He finished the fourth day with 408 miles about 30 miles ahead of Otto Seidl. Maurice Taylor had a few problems and was still in third position a further 23 miles behind.

As the word spread of Zarei's run continued enquiries from the media

were received and the basic questions involved the records already achieved in the race so far by him and the records likely to be achieved. We had approached two rather special sources during the race – IAU Network Statistician Dave Rose who maintains an enormous amount of material on multi day events and Tom O'Reilly. At this point I am in danger of writing at some length about Tom but this will have to wait for the NALGO Supplement. Sufficient to say that Tom was the holder of the records that James Zarei was now attacking and it says much for this great sportsman that not only did he provide the information readily and speedily but also sent a message of support and encouragement.

Zarei's first British All Comers record was therefore the 408 miles in four days. O'Reilly's distance had been a little over 405 miles.

On the subject of records it becomes very important to mention two people in the Race Administration; Maurice Robertson who is responsible for the lap-scoring operation which is the best in the world and Stan Jewell – Race Statistician who is also the best in the world at this very specialized job. It's very easy for Race Directors to ignore times at intermediate distances. For example 400 miles, 450 miles, 500 miles etc. But these are distances that the athletes very understandably wish

to have their times recorded – not estimated by taking the time at the end of the lap in question but recorded at the specific point. Stefan Schlett had it right when he described Stan as the "Mile Master" and so he is.

Zarei finished the fifth day with 511 miles and the sixth day with a little over 622 miles. The story of the race need to be told in full but it's fair to say that the sporting press who came to the start of the race were probably expecting to see a "pole squatting" event. At the end of the race they were all full of praise for the athletic achievements on show. Shortly after the race Tom Grace returned to New York. "No one takes any notice of Six Day Running" said one of his club mates. Tom's reply was "When were you last on the front page of the 'The Times'".

Note. Subject to ratification the following Six Day records were achieved:

Race Director – Maurice Patterson

James Zarei	British All Comers
Otto Seidl	Czechoslovakian
Michel Careau	Canadian Masters
Renate Nierkens	World Masters
Max Courtillon	European Masters
Tirtha Phani	Indian

A full listing of all records achieved will be published with the NALGO Supplement.

Nalگو 6 Day Race Results

1	James Zarei	UK	1001.505 km	622 mls 525yds
2	Otto Seidl	Czechoslovakia	832.4 km	517 mls 392 yds
3	Maurice Taylor	Australia	773.43 km	480 mls 1023 yds
4	Michel Careau	Canada	758.232 km	471 mls 242 yds
5	Renate Nierkens	Germany	738.23 km	458 mls 1248 yds
6	Max Courtillon	France	675.1 km	419 mls 849 yds
7	Paul Bream	UK	655.55 km	407 mls 589 yds
8	Dan Coffey	UK	616.630 km	383 mls 266 yds
9	Stefan Schlett	Germany	610.640 km	379 mls 755 yds
10	Tom Grace	USA	534.22 km	331 mls 1433 yds
11	Tirtha Phani	India	516.22 km	320 mls 1338 yds
12	Jaraslava Karpiskova	Czechoslovakia	477.81 km	296 mls 1573 yds
13	Dusan Mravlje	Yugoslavia	460.4 km	286 mls 133yds

Ultra Kit

Arctic John



Kit. We love it. We hate it. We need it! And in a stage race where you have to carry everything you'll need for 6 days, it matters that you get it right. I like longer events partly because it demands attention to detail, it gives me an opportunity to work things out, measure, weigh, test and make lists. I'm sure I'm not the only one. Pretty sure anyway.

The discussions in camp around kit at the recent Deadwater Ultramarathon, a 6 day stage race from Deadwater on the Scottish Borders to Chester on the Welsh Border, were interesting. A competitor who shall remain nameless recounted on day 3 how he had remembered his towel being light from using it many years ago so had put it in his pack. What he had forgotten to remember is that because it was effectively a small rectangle of Pertex it's absorbency was the same as a plastic bag. It did dry quick though.

And that's the thing about kit. Love it, hate it or feign indifference what works for you won't work for someone else. In fact what works for you might not work for you the next time you use it so it's important to test, test and test again if it matters to you that something works. Last year I carried a cheap sleeping bag (£70) and a silk liner (£40) and this more or less kept me warm each night. The trouble

was they were quite bulky so this year I was determined to cut down without breaking the bank. Sleeping bags can be expensive so I narrowed my choices down and had the good fortune to borrow one off a couple of friends to try out. Testing kit need not be a chore – I had a few wonderful nights on the tops of mountains and lying next to my campervan in the sleeping bag, on the roll mat I intended to use inside a bivvy bag to see if I could get on with them. I could so in they went. Hanger 18 if you must know, reasonable price (£195), light weight and warm.

I also made the decision to carry a smaller bag than planned at the last minute. 8 weeks before the race my back went and I could hardly walk let alone carry a rucksack. The preparation I had was built on carrying my Montane Dragon 20, used by several competitors, but the week before when I put it on I realised when fully loaded it sat on my lower back exactly over where it hurt. So I made the decision to use my Ultimate Direction Peter Bakwin pack which was smaller and sat above my lower back on my ribcage but it meant I had to think hard about how to pack and what I really needed. Kneeling on the pack to zip it shut worked well and I worked out a way to bungee my roll mat to the top and attach my cup to the back without it banging



around and annoying me. It also meant I carried less, gone were my running tights for the evening, and emergency running spares, and in came my Spiderman leggings which were lighter and less bulky. My spare Helly was replaced by a wafer thin North Face layer and my jacket from last year replaced with my Berghaus smock. Little things but they all made a difference together both in bulk and weight.

There was much talk of weight in camp both before, during and after the race. Absolute weight perhaps not as important as percentage of your own weight being carried. This was important to me in that I wanted my pack to be lighter than last year, which I achieved managing to shave off about 2.5 kg. I started with about 5.5kg before water which I was very proud of! Cutting the edges off my meal packs only shaved a little but it all adds up. I made some concessions – I like a proper mug for drinks so my plastic mug remained. I also found to my surprise that the long dessert spoon from the kitchen drawer was lighter than my long handled spork, which I was always worried about snagging something with the points anyway.

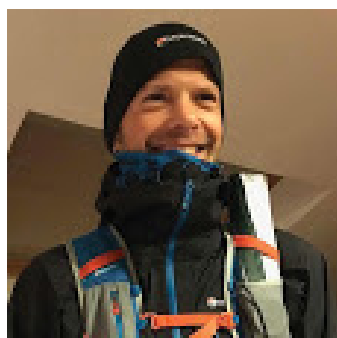
Some people just packed, they put in only what they thought they would need without weighing and I like that. I could never do it mind you, the not knowing would kill me but I admire the philosophy greatly. Maybe one day. Maybe. I've got the micro scales now though so that would be a waste.



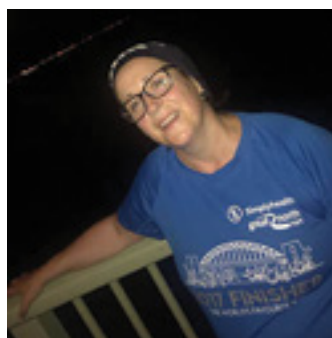
Contributors



Maria Elisabetta Bellini is the founder of www.italyontrail.com a trail race calendar & magazine aimed at all who want to enjoy the trails in Italy. Originally from the UK, she lives and runs in Italy and has been working in sports promotion for over ten years.



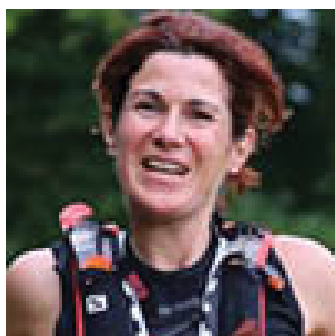
Arctic John Parkin, the head teacher at Oxenhope Primary School, won the inaugural Deadwater 235 mile stage race from Scotland to Wales in 2017. Visit John's blog for his interesting race reports at: showboater-daily100words.blogspot.co.uk



My name is **Baz Earnshaw**, I am a 52 year old mother of 4, grandmother of 5. I have ran for about 20 years but have only come back to it in the last couple of years after having serious health problems. I seem to now have the urge to push my body hard and hope it doesn't give up on me. This year as part of my marathon training I decided to sign up to some endurance races as part of my preparation.



Tim Erickson is an ultra athlete and administrator from Australia who dabbles in the occasional long running or walking race but is better known as the Coburg 24 Hour Carnival organizer. A former international racewalker, he pads out his retirement with involvement in a wide range of sporting associations and clubs.



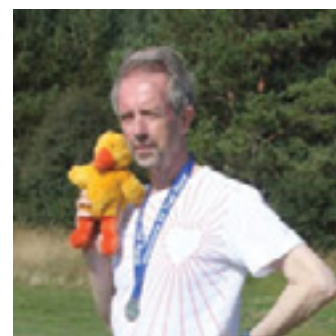
Sarah Cameron is an ultra-running vegan who lives on a vineyard in the south of France with her husband, two children and far too many pets. She juggles family life with looking after said pets, making wine and indulging in her many hobbies, most of which involve either consuming things or attempting to burn them off. <http://cakewinerunning.blogspot.fr>



Sonja Wilkey is an emergency room physician and acupuncturist living in Richmond, Virginia, with her husband and two teenage children. Sonja has been ultrarunning for the past 5 years. She primarily runs in Virginia--her trip to Wasatch100 in Utah was a big milestone!



Wendy Shaw Mum of two, who started running in 2010. In 2011 completed my first 50-mile ultramarathon. I have since completed 25 x 100 mile events with many podium finishes, 1st female - 6th overall KACR (2018), European 24hr championship bronze medal winner (2018), 2nd female, 5th overall (220.5 kms)- Barcelona 24hr - (2017), 2nd female GUCR (2017), 1st female - 3rd overall Crawley 24hr - (2017).



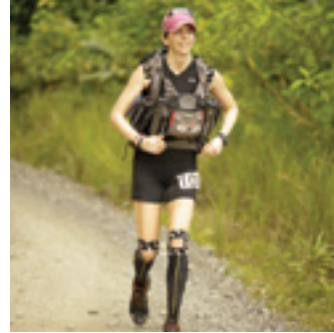
Stuart Macfarlane took up running at the age of 52 and is now 65. His running adventures include: a Run streak of over 6 years, running from the Scottish Borders to the northern tip of Shetland and completing 26 marathon distances in 26 days. He has completed 93 races at Marathon or Ultramarathon distances. Stuart has had many humour and inspirational books published including "A Marathon of Running Jokes".



My name is **Rhodri Jones** and I am a 28 year old runner for 'Amman Valley Harriers' based in the town of Ammanford in South Wales. I took up running in May 2017 and enjoy the satisfaction that comes with road running, and the challenges faced in trail running. Completed my first Ultra in Sep 2018 and looking for the next challenge...



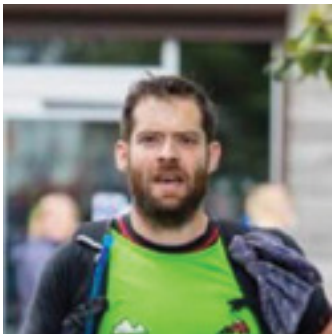
Byron Crook is 46, has been running for 5 years and lives in Overbury, Gloucestershire. He runs to be in the outdoors and if he can find someone to chat to out there, all the better. Loves runs with a pub en-route.



Debbie King I took part in my first race, a 10k, in 2004, and from there, my love of running has grown. I have done several marathons and saw footage on tv about the Brazil jungle ultra. My life has never been the same since. I have a wonderful partner Simon, who puts up with all my ultra running nonsense. He runs marathons but has not entered the murky world of ultra running. Yet.



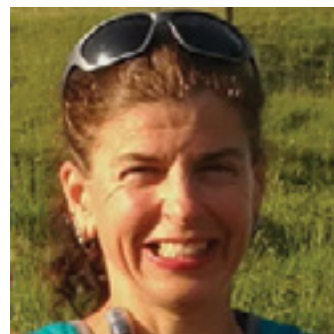
Tina Shinn I'm 50, happily married to my 7th grade crush for almost 30 yrs., started Tina's Kick Butt Champs coaching/training people to achieve their athletic/fitness goals with lots of success, love growing my food, love caring for people and been running since I took my first step, literally!
www.teamtkbc.com



Alan Giles is a 34 year old proud Cornishman who began running at 30 after struggling to walk up hills. His first ultra was The Plague 2018 and plans to try as many as he can!



A GP Practice Manager, **Morven Walsh** has been married for 22 years and has two daughter's aged 19 and 14. Morven started running when she was 40 and discovering trails, hills and ultra running has made her feel very at home running long distances and meeting other wonderful runners on the journey. The Great Glen is Morven's longest race so far at 73 miles. She says "I will always encourage and support others to try and we are all more capable than what we believe".



Helen Pike is a Birmingham based runner who started Ultra running 5 years ago at the age of 40. With 1st lady wins including the Wychavon Way Ultra, UTPD, Convergence 2018, Apocalypse 50 and the Robin Hood 100, Helen enjoys escaping the city for weekends away running in the hills.



40 year old **Neil Ramsay** lives in Edinburgh and has run over 20 ultras, all in Scotland, including two finishes at the West Highland Way.



Cherie Titus McCafferty lives in North Carolina and has run many ultras over the last seven years. This year Cherie completed Vol-State for the second time.



Finnish ultrarunner **Tapani Tarnanen** lives in Helsinki with his wife and daughter. Tapani has run quite a few ultras and his most recent was the Sillamäe ultra: 24h/100 km in Estonia.



Dan Lawson by Debbie Martin-Consani