

# Ultrarunning World

ROAD, TRACK & TRAIL MULTIDAY & ULTRA DISTANCE NEWS  
ISSUE 19



DU 16 AU 22 JUIN 2019  
EDITION 2

# La Mi Mil'kil

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Welcome to issue 19.

We start off this edition of the magazine with something that everyone has an opinion on, nutrition. We are privileged to share the thoughts of Food for Fitness guru and founder of Go Faster Food, Kate Percy, with a philosophy based around the idea that real food fuels you better. Nutritional strategies in ultras and multiday races recognise the importance of strengthening the system pre-race, during and post-race with all-round support that facilitates optimal functioning to the best of our ability or capacities.

We are also very happy to welcome US ultrarunner Amy Mower to our team of correspondents. Amy has qualified to take part in this year's Spartathlon and will be sharing her thoughts during her preparation in the run up to this iconic fixture on the ultra calendar in September in a new column, Spartan Quest.

Our race reports section focuses almost exclusively on trails this issue and begins by visiting Wales for another offering from the organisers of Up Hill Down Dale with a report from the inaugural Snowdonia Slate Trail Ultra which took place in February this year. Abi Summerfield shared her experience at the Brecon Ultra and there's a great article by organiser Stuart Lamb on the Across Wales Walk which sounds like a must-do event.

Venturing across the free and open border to Bristol we have Helen Pike's Green Man Ultra write-up. Helen is one of the UK's best ultrarunners finishing on the podium in her last seven ultras listed on the DUV. We are honoured to have Helen as one of our regular correspondents. Race reports from the Arc of Attrition, Moonlight Challenge, The Spine, Liverpool - Leeds Canal Race (LLCR) and the final instalment of James Campbell's epic Hardwolds 80 article make fascinating reading.

Sonja Otto will be contributing stories and news from South Africa starting with an article about the SOX Trail race on the Garden Route.

There's a handful of race reports from the USA including two from the Jackpot Ultra Running Festival in Las Vegas, Lonestar 100, Amy Mower's Farmdaze 24 Hour and Tim Hardy's Arrowhead 135, a diverse selection of interesting ultras which we hope you will enjoy.

Printed copies of the magazine from issue 18 onwards are available now and ordering is through the website which will be available shortly. Copies can be ordered by email or by phone and cost £5.50 plus p&p.

The next issue will be our 20th and will be something of a celebratory milestone. A few races starting in the next couple of weeks include the world's longest annual race, the Self-Transcendence 3100 mile race, Mil Kil, WiBolt, the South African Running Festival 6 day plus other events and the 43 stage La Grande Course - France Foot Race Tour.

We look forward to bringing you more news and stories that illumine and inspire.

Best wishes, Abichal and the Team.

## The House:

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  - Amy Mower

- **Photos**
  - Front cover: Eric Mbacha in the 50 km option of La Bouillonnante 2019, one of the most popular ultras in Belgium. Photo with kind permission of Vincent Lescaut Photographie
  - Back cover: Leonie Ton, women's winner at Sri Chinmoy 12 & 24 Hour Races Basle 2019 Photo by Alan Young

### Ultrarunning World Magazine

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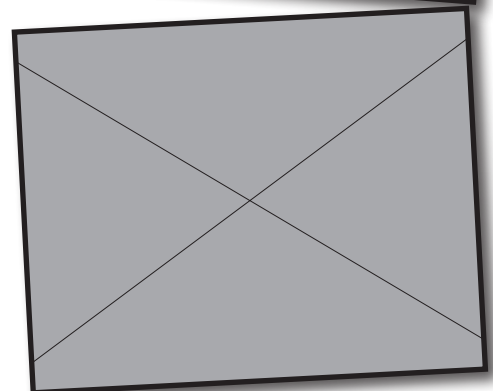
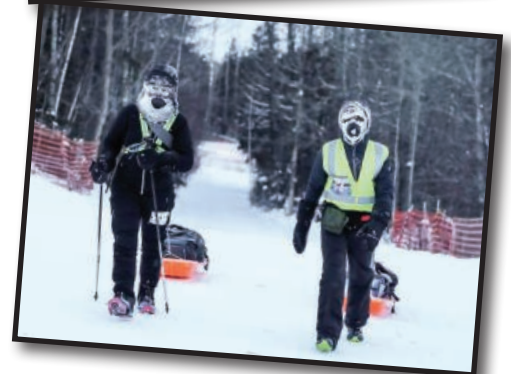


Send original and previously unpublished articles to the above email address. Last dates for submissions: July 7th, August 4th and September 1st Please include a 40-50 word bio, some accompanying photos (if you have any) and a headshot for the contributors page. Thank you.

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# CHORLEY 6 HOUR ROAD RACE



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**10am - 4pm**

**WHERE**  
**Astley Park,**  
**CHORLEY**



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# 2019 IAU



**2019 IAU Trail World Championships** take place on June 8th in Miranda do Corvo, Portugal. **ULTRA TRILHOS DOS ABUTRES®** is a 44 km semi-self-sufficient race with a total distance of 44 km, starting at 9:00am. The course follows the paths and tracks of the Serra da Lousã – Freguesia de Miranda do Corvo and Freguesia de Vila Nova, with approximately 2.100 meters of accumulated gain. [Race website.](#)

The **2019 IAU 100 km Americas Championships** will be in Sao Paulo, Brazil. The Championships will take place on 27th July 2019 on the Avenida Tomé de Souza in the city of Bertioga. The course is a 5km loop which the athletes will cover 20 times. [Details on IAU.](#) [Race website.](#)

The **2019 IAU 50 Km World Championships** will take place in Brasov, Romania on September 1st. The course consists of traffic free 100% asphalt pavement with a 1st lap of 5km and the 2nd to 6th laps will each be 9 km long. [Race website.](#)



And another reminder that the **2019 IAU 24H World Championships** will take place on 26th – 27th October in Albi, France. [Race website.](#)

The US 24 hour team who will travel to Albi has been announced and is perhaps the strongest team the Americans have ever produced. The USA Men's 24 Hour Team features Olivier Leblond, Rich Riopel, Jake



Nicky Spinks photo courtesy inov-8

Jackson, Steve Slaby, Harvey Lewis and Greg Armstrong. The USA Women's 24 Hour Team are Katalin Nagy, Megan Alvarado, Camille Herron, Courtney Dauwalter, Gina Slaby and Pam Proffitt Smith.

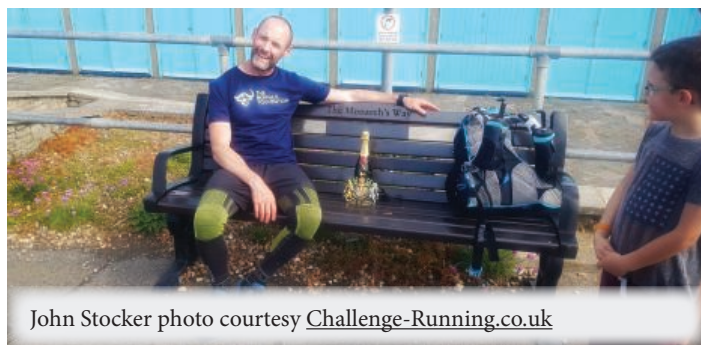
**Nicky Spinks** produced another phenomenal performance by completing the 122 mile Paddy Buckley round double in 57 hours 27 minutes.

Nicky, 51, started on Friday May 17th and has now completed doubles of the Paddy Buckley, Bob Graham and Charlie Ramsay Rounds, which summit the highest peaks in Wales, England and Scotland. More details on the [BMC website.](#)

The 615 mile **Monarchs Way**, the longest multiday in the UK, saw John Stocker (pictured below) take the win at the second attempt in 287:30:36, a new course record by 11 hours and 5 minutes. Ellen Cottom became the 1st ever Female finisher of the Monarchs Way completing the distance in 310:23:54. 7 starters and 5 finishers. [Results.](#)

This year's 25<sup>th</sup> **Grand Union Canal Race (GUCR)** was won by Alex Whearity in the fourth fastest time in the race's history, 25:08. (Race report in issue 21).

**Jim Walmsley** recently set a new world best time for 50 miles at the HOKA ONE ONE Project Carbon X 100K Challenge in California.



John Stocker photo courtesy [Challenge-Running.co.uk](#)

He averaged 5:48 per mile on his way to completing the distance in 4:50.08, beating the previous record by 43 seconds. That record, set by Bruce Fordyce, has stood since 1983's London to Brighton. [More details.](#)

**Ultra-Trail Australia 2019**, May 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>, the 9<sup>th</sup> event in the Ultra Trail World Tour was won by Marcin Swierc in 09:31:15 and first woman was Amy Lamprecht 11:03:28. [Full results.](#) [Race report.](#)

Just in: **The Danube Run 2019** a nonstop relay run for a charity organisation from the Brigach and Breg springs, along the Danube to the Black Sea to Murighiol from 7<sup>th</sup> June to 19<sup>th</sup> June. The event covers 3,145 km in 12 days and starts at Donaueschingen at 15:00. The event raises money for the charity by selling the 289 stages. The runner is changed every 10-12km and the event runs 24-7 through the 12 days. More [details on the website](#)

**Hardrock 100 Cancelled.** [Details.](#)

## Recent Races

### 1.01.2019 - Hardmoors 30

The ultrarunning calendar begins on New Year's day with the **Hardmoors 30**. This approximately 30 mile race is a loop around Whitby, including Robin Hood's Bay, Ravenscar, and Cloughton starting and finishing at Fylingdales Village Hall. The course follows old railway lines and sections of the Cumbria Way. This year's race was won by Philip Jones in 4:04:30. First woman was Hannah McMahon in 4:58:46, 23<sup>rd</sup> overall. 184 finishers. [Full results.](#)

### 5.01.2019 - Blade Runner Ultra Winter Edition

**Blade Runner** is a 50km completely way marked mountain trail route with 2200m of elevation gain across SAS Selection heartland of the Brecon Beacons. Start and finish at the red telephone box at the Storey Arms. This year was the second running of the event and was won by Keith Wigley in 5:22:18 and first woman, third overall was Mary Gillie in 6:16:23. 56 finishers. [Full results on DUV.](#)

### 12.01.2019 - Country to Capital

The 11<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 45 mile **Country to Capital** race, hosted by Go Beyond Ultra which starts at the Shoulder of Mutton pub and finishes at the Waterside Cafe, in Little Venice saw Luke Delderfield cross the finish line in 4:56:35 three minutes ahead of Geoffrey Cheshire in a competitive field. First woman was Rebecca Ferry in 5:53:16. Cat Simpson was second in 5:53:36. 370 finishers. [Full results](#)



Start of Peddars Way Ultra photo courtesy Positive Steps

### 20.01.2019 - Gloucester 50km

Organised by Anne and Norman Wilson, the **Gloucester 50k** is one of the few road ultras that has endured. Starting at the Severn Vale Sports Centre School Lane, Quedgeley there are several sections before 5 loops of the neighbourhood. Charles Harpur was first man in 2:59:59 and first woman was Samantha Amend in 3:28:07. 27 finishers. [Full results on the DUV.](#)

### 26.01.2019 - Waterway 30

The **Waterway 30** starts and finishes at South Wheatley Village Hall, Nottinghamshire and is organised by Ronnie Staton at Hobo Pace. The route takes in the scenic countryside following two waterway towpaths, the 'Cuckoo Way' along the Chesterfield Canal and the 'Trent Valley Way' beside the River Trent. First home in this 31 mile trail race was Paul Richardson (Garden City Runners) in 3:52:14. First woman was Melissa Venables (SPA Striders) 8<sup>th</sup> overall in 4:28:58. 164 finishers. [Full results.](#)

### 26.01.2019 - Peddars Way Ultra

**The Peddars Way** trail is approximately 48 miles long and starts at Knettishall Heath finishing at the Village Hall Kirkgate, Holme next-the-Sea. Organised by Positive Steps this event forms part of Positive Steps Grand Slam with the other races being the Norfolk 100 km and the Kings Forest 50 km. The race was won by Ben Shirley (Wellingborough and District Athletic Club) in 6:32:18 and first woman was Naomi Moss (Grange Farm & Dunmow Runners) in 7:40:35, 12<sup>th</sup> overall. 141 finishers. [Full results.](#)

### 27.01.2019 - Flitch Way 100k

The **Flitch Way 100k** features 10 x 10 km out and back sections along the Flitch Way in Essex following the course of a former railway line and starting at Rayne Train Station. Designed as a Spartathlon qualifier, the event has a 12 hour cut-off. Daniel Barnett was first to cross the finish line in

8:36:25. First woman was Leanne Rive, third overall in 9:29:33. 10 finishers. [Full results.](#)

## 02.02.2019 - The Arc of Attrition 100/50 Mile

The **RaidLight Arc of Attrition** is a 100 mile point-to-point coastal race from Coverack to Porthtowan in Cornwall with a 36 hour cut-off. The Arc50 is a shorter option from The Minack Theatre, Porthcurno to The Eco Park, Porthtowan starting a day later and with a 15.5 hour cut-off. This year's 100 mile winner was Kim Collison (Team Raidlight) in 20:43:46. First woman was Laura Swanton (Mudcrew Running) finishing in 26:48:13, seventh overall. 67 finishers. In the 50 miler, first man was Neil Martin (Overton Harriers & AC) in 8:53:51 and first woman was Emily Cook (Mudcrew Running) in 11:30:14. 67 finishers. 100 mile results. 50 mile results.

## 02.02.2019 - Pilgrim Challenge

The Pilgrim Challenge North Downs Way Multistage Ultra to give it its full title starts and finishes at Sandy Farm Business Park, Farnham, Surrey. The course follows the North Downs Way, a marked National Trail, to Redhill and returns on day two giving a total of 66 miles/106 km. The race was won by Paul Russhard in a total time of 8:50:59 and Teresa Reason was the winning woman in 11:30:01. 160 finishers. [Full results.](#)

## 3.04.2019 - Beyond Limits Ultra Race (USA)

Featuring 200m/72/48/24/100m/50m/50k events, the Beyond Limits Ultra takes place at Mountain Center, CA. Karla Kent won the 200 miler in 66:18:45 and second place was Dagobero Calderon finishing in 69:21:33. A clean sweep by the women in the 72 hour event saw Charlotte Vasarhelyi winning with 212 miles and first man was Scott Thompson, fourth overall with 194 miles. The 48 hour was won by Susan Kokesh with 150 miles and Alann Lopes was first man, third overall with 126 miles. Sarah Emoto won the 100 miler in 17:50:18 and Joshua Holmes was first man, second overall in 18:07:38. Full results on [Ultrasignup.](#)

## 9.5.2019 - 3 Days At The Fair (USA)

This year saw a venture into the longer multiday distance for the first 10 day race at 3 Days At The Fair along with 6 day/72/48/24/12/6 hours/50km events. Taking place at the Sussex County Fairgrounds in New Jersey, the 10 day was won by Philip Eberts with 1176.430km and first woman was Yoshiko Jo with 852.952km. The 6 day saw Jeffrey Dimaggio take the win with 605.113km and Jean Hofschulte was first woman with 490.849km. In the 72 hour Ryan Jones covered 378.195km to pip Lisa van Wolde, 354.055km, first woman, fourth overall in a closely fought race. Over the 48 hours first man was Camilo Martinez with 275.197km and Ultrarunning World correspondent



Amy Mower was first woman with 325.087km (third best in the world so far this year). Full Results.

## 22.4.2019 - JOGLE Ultra - John O'Groats to Land's End (GBR)

Only two finishers in the JOGLE ULTRA this year with Adam Holland (pictured above) first to reach the finish in 205:59:00 and Calvin Hemmings made it in 236:23:00. Photo courtesy Ultra Running Limited

## 06.04.2019 - American River 50 Mile Endurance Run (USA)

One of the largest 50 mile races in the United States, American River 50 Mile Endurance Run begins at Folsom Point, at Folsom Lake State Recreation Area in the Sierra-Nevada Foothills and finishes in Auburn CA. Christopher Denucci was the first home in 6:20:53 and 2018 women's winner Emily Hawgood was first woman in 7:23:43, 8th overall. 363 starters. [Full results.](#)

## 10.4.201 - No Finish Line Athens (GRE)

The 3rd No finish Line Athens part of No Finish Line International is a 90 hour fundraising challenge and takes place around the canal at the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Centre in Athens. This year's winner was Athanasios Stimoniariis who covered 500 km and first



among women, fourth overall was Lindita Hokja with 382.000km. [Full results.](#)

### 13.04.2019 - Race Across Taiwan Nonstop 246km (TPE)

Features three options: 246/165/110 km starting in Wuci District, Taichung City Taipei on the West coast and running to the East coast, the runners have 46 hours to complete the 246 km distance. Winning in 28:27:37 was Nomoto Hironori and first woman, fourth overall was Nicole Lau Wai-Han in 36:19:05. 58 finishers. [Results on DUV.](#)

### 13.04.2019 - 32<sup>nd</sup> 24<sup>h</sup> Coburg Harriers Carnival (AUS)

This long standing Australian 24 hour track race saw Kevin Muller win with 251.605 km. Nicole Vaughan was the women's winner with 191.628 km, fifth overall. 35 runners. [Full results.](#)

### 18.04.2019 - Double Top 72 Hour Run (USA)

The Double Top 72 hour trail race takes place in the Cohutta Mountains in northern Georgia along with 100 mile, 100 km, 50 km events and is held inside the Fort Mountain State Park. The course consists of an inner and an outer loop that is about 20 miles long with 5000 feet of elevation gain. The start/finish area is at the Old Fort area of the Park. The 72 hour was won by Mark Leuner with 246.229 km and first woman was Arabelle Romeo with 196.339 km. 5 finishers. Full results on [UltraSignup.](#)



### 20.4.2019 - Sakura Michi (JPN)

There once was a man who decided to plant Cherry trees along the 250 km road connecting the Pacific Ocean and the Sea of Japan. The race is in honour of that man, Ryo Sato. This years winner was Takahashi Nobuyuki in 24:09:00 and first woman was Hirosawa Shiho in 26:51:00, 6th overall. 113 finishers. [Full results.](#)

### 22.4.2019 - The 24<sup>th</sup> Self-Transcendence 10 & 6 Day Race, New York (USA)

The Self-Transcendence 10 & 6 Day Races take place in Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Queens New York. The course is a flat, scenic, 0.8 mile/1.287km asphalt loop in a park setting. Organised by the Sri Chinmoy Marathon Team, the 10 day was dominated from the start by Budjaergal Byambaa (MNG) who finished the race with 759.2 miles/1221.813 km. Women's winner was Makula Samarina (UKR) finishing with 584.8 miles/941.144 km.

The 6 day race was led by Susan Marshall on Day 1 but Ultrarunning World Correspondent Annabel Hepworth (AUS) edged into the lead on day 2 and continued to build throughout the race finishing a clear winner in cold and wet conditions with 402.4 miles/647.600km. American record holder Joe Fejes also led from day 1 closing out with 422.4 miles/679.786 km. [Full results.](#)



## 3100 Diaries

The 23rd Self Transcendence 3100 Mile Race gets underway June 16th. The field has been announced and sadly Yolanda Holder has withdrawn due to injury.

The field which is smaller than usual, still features some of the top names in multiday running. The record holder, 8 time winner, Ashprihanal Pekka Aalto (pictured below) returns for his first multiday outing since the Self-Transcendence 10 day race last year which he won with 826.4 miles/1329.961 km after battling with this year's 10 day race winner Budjaergal Byambaa (MNG).

Three time winner and the 2018 victor Vasu Duzhiy will be at the start for his 8th race. Harita Davies will be the only woman taking the challenge this year.

The field

Ashprihanal Aalto (FIN), Vasu Duzhiy (RUS), Smarana Puntigam (AUT), Nirbhasa Magee (IRE), Ushika Muckenhumer (AUT), Ananda-Lahari Zuscin (SVK), Harita Davies (NZL) and Todor Dimitrov (BGR).

Race website: [Srichinmoyraces.org](http://Srichinmoyraces.org)

Ashprihanal Aalto Photo courtesy [www.srichinmoyultraphoto.com](http://www.srichinmoyultraphoto.com)

# Real Food for Ultra Runners

Kate Percy



**Nutrition guides for ultra runners often need both a PhD to understand and an iron will to sustain.**

**Passionate that real food fuels you better, Food for Fitness guru and founder of Go Faster Food, Kate Percy, gives a no-nonsense, easy to follow guide to eating for ultra running.**

**T**raining your stomach for an ultra run is pretty much as important as training your legs. The challenge is not just to nail your everyday diet to maintain a healthy immune system and help you train, race and recover

better more consistently, but also to find foods you can eat comfortably on the run. Even if your training has gone to plan, even if you've eaten a great diet throughout, your stomach can often have a mind of its own during the actual race.

Let's start with the easy part; making good food choices to fuel your everyday training:

### **Keep consistent and balanced**

As an endurance runner, eating consistently well on a daily basis is as important as healthy eating just before a race. It's what you eat during your training that will help you keep optimum form, aid recovery, prevent injury, maintain a strong immune system and promote good sleep.

Keep your diet as varied and unprocessed as possible. Get your energy from a wide range of natural, wholesome foods rich in all three macronutrients (aim for around 60% carbohydrate, 20% protein and the rest from fat) and keep up your intake of vitamins and minerals.

### **Don't Skimp on Carbs**

Carbohydrates are your most accessible source of energy for the body. Slow releasing, unrefined carbs, like whole grain bread, brown basmati rice, quinoa, couscous, pasta, pulses, and starchy vegetables such as sweet potatoes will sustain your energy levels and help prevent peaks and troughs in your energy and mood, as well as provide plenty of vitamins and minerals.

### **Pump up the Protein**

Protein has a very important role to play in supporting your general health and training. It will help the

growth and repair of muscle tissue and regulate your metabolism. Choose foods such as eggs, dairy, soya and beans as well as nuts and seeds. If you are a vegetarian, it's best to eat a mixture of these foods containing protein over the course of the day.

### **Fill up with Fats**

The remainder of your calorie intake should come from foods containing fat. Fat is important for brain and nerve function, for transporting fat-soluble vitamins such as vitamins A, D, E and K around the body, balancing hormones and most importantly for controlling inflammation. Most runners find that foods higher in unsaturated fats such as oily fish, nuts & seeds, avocados, cold-pressed vegetable oils, and nut butters help their general health, immune system and improve recovery. Conversely, too many saturated fats in processed foods such as crisps and biscuits provide calories but lack the nutrients that can really help your running and general health.

### **Plan for Success**

Plan your meals in advance on both training and rest days. Making soups and stews in advance to freeze and keeping your store cupboard well stocked will reduce the temptation to resort to less nutritious options such as takeaways on days when you are too busy to cook from scratch.

### **Time Meals around your Training**

Eating a meal rich in slow-releasing carbohydrate and quality protein about 2 hours before a run will sustain energy levels. Post run recovery is also crucial to your sustained running success. Muscles are at their most

receptive to nutrients during the hour after exercise, so get some post run recovery food down you as soon as you get back, especially after runs of over 90 minutes. A combo of carbohydrate and protein (4:1) will replenish depleted glycogen stores and help muscles repair.

Milk is an underrated sports nutrition drink – a smoothie with milk or yoghurt, a banana and a spoonful of honey, perhaps some flaxseed or oats, is an effective, balanced and tasty post run recovery drink.

## Don't be too rigid

We were not given taste buds for nothing. Your training diet needs to be functional, of course, but food should be a pleasure too. Most of us need a few of our favourite indulgences if we are to sustain a good diet over the long term. Experiment with your favourite foods: try replacing refined sugars in cakes and flapjacks with banana, dates or date syrup, for instance, or making brownies with black beans or avocado.

Again, to sustain a good diet over the long term it's important not to cut out particular food groups, or over complicate your meals.

## Keep it Simple

Chia seeds, acai, lucuma powder; almost every month you'll find a new miracle 'superfood' on the market. These are fun to experiment with, but can be incredibly expensive; definitely 'nice to have' rather than essential. Don't forget life's simple pleasures can be just as good and highly nutritious; scrambled eggs, avocados, broccoli, baked beans on wholemeal toast, crisp apples and juicy pears.

## Mind your pees

It's important to stay hydrated all the time rather than to just think about it during your runs. You'll feel

better, run better and focus better. We do have individual hydration requirements, however, so there is not one size fits all in terms of how much you should drink. The easy way to check you're well hydrated is to monitor the colour of your urine. It should be pale yellow, almost transparent in colour. The darker your urine, the less hydrated you are. Simple

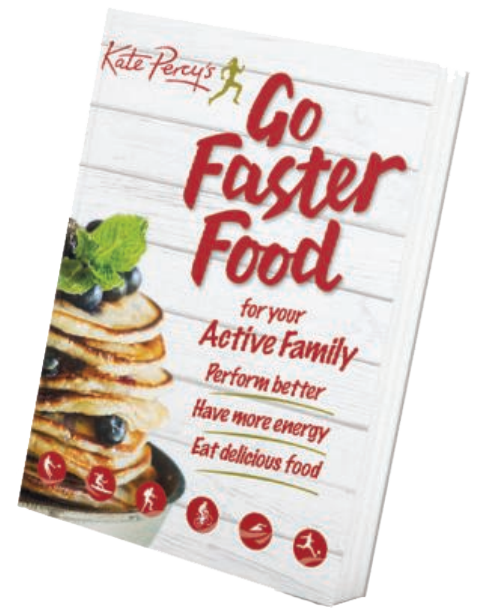
## It's your body

Once you've understood the basics of a balanced training diet, it's up to you to discover what works for you. Listen to your body. 33 year old ultra-runner, Luke Tyburski, who has completed the Marathon des Sables, Mount Everest Ultra, and the 12 day Ultimate Triathlon from Monaco to Morocco, has tried countless alternative approaches to eating, from paleo to high carb/low fat diets. He has finally settled on a lower carb/higher fat diet, eating most of his carbohydrate rich foods immediately after his runs to aid recovery. That's what works for him.

The average runner can store between 1500 to 2000 calories worth of carbohydrate as glycogen, enough to keep him or her going for around 90 minutes, after which the body resorts to using fat reserves for energy, which can be less efficient. Experienced, well-trained athletes may want to consider 'fat adaptation', which is essentially training the body to use fat stores for energy, thereby saving glycogen stores for a longer period of time. One way of doing this is to prepare your body by training before breakfast once a week.

## FUELLING ON THE RUN

Most endurance runners will have experienced GI (Gastro-Intestinal) problems during a race, despite following a great training diet. There is, unfortunately, no magic spell to eliminate these entirely, but following these simple rules will help you run



more comfortably:

## Practice makes perfect

Testing your fuelling and hydration strategies in training will minimise the risk of GI problems during your race. Not just what you eat and drink, but also the art of eating and sipping on the go.

Trying a new bar or energy gel for the first time in a race is a recipe for potential disaster. It's safest to try out everything you eat in a race during training. As experienced ultra runners, Canadian husband and wife team, Jonathan Sinclair and Melissa Gosse, comment, "On our first ultra, just after we'd switched to eating entirely vegan, we made the mistake of trying some new vegan bars everyone was talking about for the first time during a race. They killed Jonathan's stomach, something in them did not agree with him and it put a kink in our race for the next 4 hours or so."

## Set a timer

Ultra running is a deficit sport. It's near on impossible to replace all the calories you're expending, but it's important to give it your best shot. It's a good idea to 'drip feed' yourself with calories on a regular basis, setting a timer to remind yourself to consume something every 20 minutes or so.



Take a combination of treats and necessities, enough to provide up to 60g carbohydrate an hour (that's what the average runner is able to absorb). You'll need to hydrate regularly too. Drink to thirst, ensuring you replace the minerals (electrolytes) you'll lose through sweat. If it is really hot, salt tablets might be worth considering.

## Runner's Trots

As experienced ultra marathon runner Andrew Hassard admits "...sports nutrition works for anything up to 5 hours. Over that, your body just starts rejecting it or can't cope with it – to put it crudely, it comes out one end or the other!"

When putting your body through the trauma of an ultra run, it's highly likely that your stomach will get upset; most runners have experienced the indignity of 'runner's trots'. If this happens, slow down to a comfortable pace, keep snacks small, although don't stop completely or you'll run the risk of exhaustion. Keep up your hydration and keep calm.

## Motivate yourself with proper food

Eating proper food has the same effect as putting on dry, fresh socks after 10 hours of running. It just feels nicer and gives a psychological boost. Research continues to unfold, but there is growing evidence that the body absorbs nutrients from 'real food' more efficiently than it can from

synthetic, engineered foods, especially when the stomach is traumatised. In addition, without something tasty to look forward to, most runners start to avoid taking on nutrition, and that's when problems set in, as Luke Tyburski, [www.luketyburski.com](http://www.luketyburski.com), describes:

*"I kept falling asleep on the side of the trail, and then waking up not knowing where I was...and then there was the time I asked a tree for help..."*

## But what to carry with you?

"It's important to take easy food which will not deteriorate in the heat, so avoiding dairy and meat, especially if you are camping the night before. I love the convenience of Kate Percy's GO BITES energy balls. Being vegan, gluten free and 100% natural, they digest really easily too", recommends endurance runner Nikki Love, who in 2017 ran 63 marathons in 63 days, in 2018 she ran around Ireland and in 2019 is planning to run across Australia.

Try a combination of savoury and sweet; you'll be likely to feel like these at different points in the run. Bulkier items can be carried by your crew (if you are lucky enough to have one):

- Dried fruit- raisins, dates, apricots
- Kate Percy's GO BITES (obvs!)
- Nuts - almonds or salted peanuts
- Fruit – 1 banana, 1 orange (pre-cut

into segments), 1 apple chopped up sprinkled with cinnamon

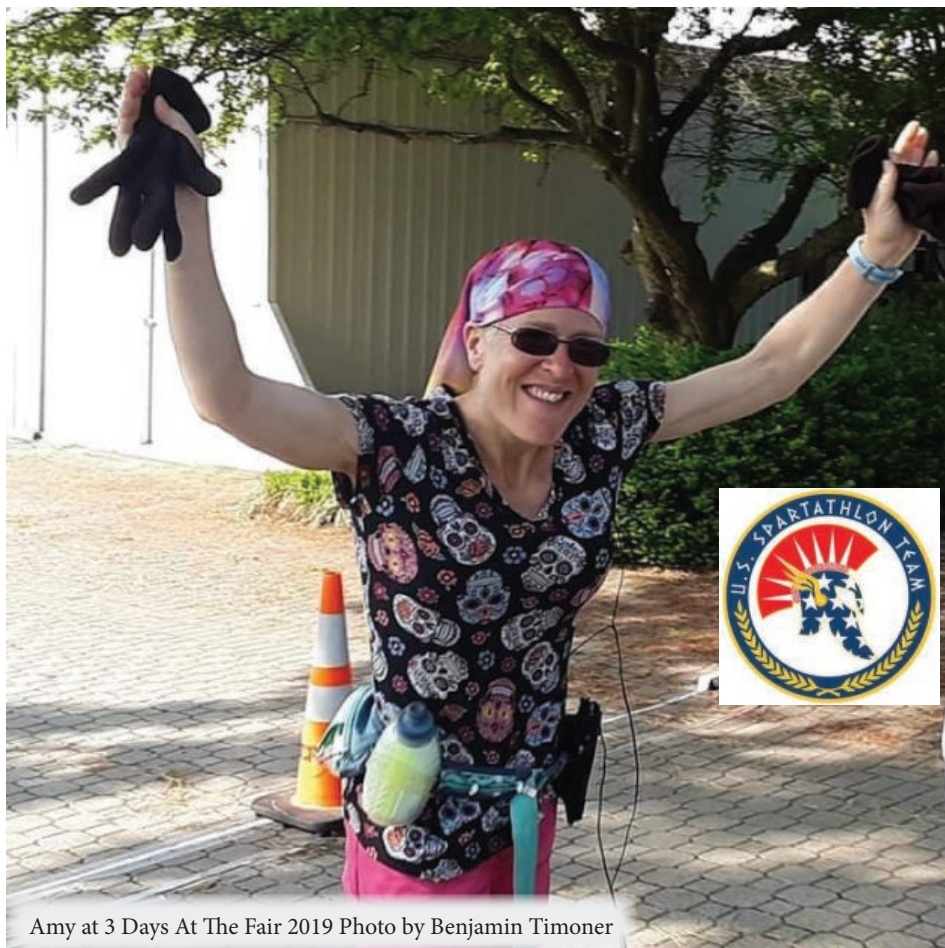
- Sweet treats – slices of malt loaf, small sweet potato brownie, jelly babies or sport beans
- Savoury - small marmite sandwich, ½ bagel with peanut butter, savoury bread eg. sundried tomato & basil loaf, tortilla wraps with guacamole, hummus or jam
- Homemade chia seed energy gel
- Baked sweet potatoes, cooled, chopped up and sprinkled with salt
- Rice balls with peanut butter & apricot (see Kate Percy's Go Faster Food recipe on [www.gofasterfood.com/recipes/peanut-butter-rice-balls/](http://www.gofasterfood.com/recipes/peanut-butter-rice-balls/))

For more information or to buy copies of Go Faster Food and Kate Percy's GO BITES, please go to [gofasterfood.com](http://gofasterfood.com). Use the reader discount code TASTER20 for 20% off your purchase.

Kate Percy's   
**Go  
Faster  
Food**

# Spartathlon Quest

Amy Mower (aka Cake Bandit)



Amy at 3 Days At The Fair 2019 Photo by Benjamin Timoner

A few weeks ago I received word that I was selected as one of the 15 members of the US Spartathlon team. This race has been held since 1983 and traces the actual historical route of Pheidippides who, rather than running 26.2 miles, actually ran 246 kilometers (or about 153 miles) from Athens and Sparta, which is the name of the town now occupying the former site of ancient Sparta. The race is on September 27th, and features some impressive hill climbs/descents, and severe early cut-offs. Although I will have 36 hours to complete the entire distance, I'll need to be at 50 miles by 9 hours or I DQ.

As a runner, my forte has always been slow and steady. I've never been what anyone would consider 'fast', and I did not start to podium with any regularity until I hit the multiday

events. My time qualifier for even being eligible to apply for Spartathlon was to run 100 miles in less than 22 hours. That being said, it wasn't MUCH less... So. My mission, for the next 5 months? Work on speed. And hills. And more speed. Really my whole goal for this race is to avoid DNF. Which, for this race, I understand is a worthy goal.

For the next few months, I'll give some updates on how it's going. As this is my first report, I can tell you what's been accomplished since I learned, on March 7<sup>th</sup>, that I was on the team.

On March 8th (Spartathlon Training Day 1), I threw in the first 'speedwork' I've done since my 6 day race over New Year's. As a high mileage runner, what I consider speed work is pretty unimpressive. My normal morning

runs have generally been about 16 miles on weekdays, so on a 'speed' day, after about a 4-5 mile warm-up, I try to do a total of 3 hot miles, with a mile of recovery in between each of them. So, the 'speedwork', such as it is, will take place between mile 5 and 11.

I was pretty astounded, for that first speed day, how quickly I was able to actually run that first hot mile, since my slow easy pace prior to that had been hovering between 10:45 and 11:30. I pretty easily got in an 8:25. Sweet. Then two more, both under 8:30. The cool thing is, in between the hot miles, my recovery pace was much faster than my normal slow-easy, which actually gave me enough time to do a total of 18 instead of my usual 16. Now, 4 weeks later, I've found that the introduction of the one dedicated speed run per week has improved my comfortable pace by about 30-45 seconds per mile.

I've also had a couple of distance runs thrown in as good training, the Naked Prussian 50 miler (trail), and pacing Fred Murolo at Umstead for the back 50, this past weekend. Both, I feel, have left me stronger.

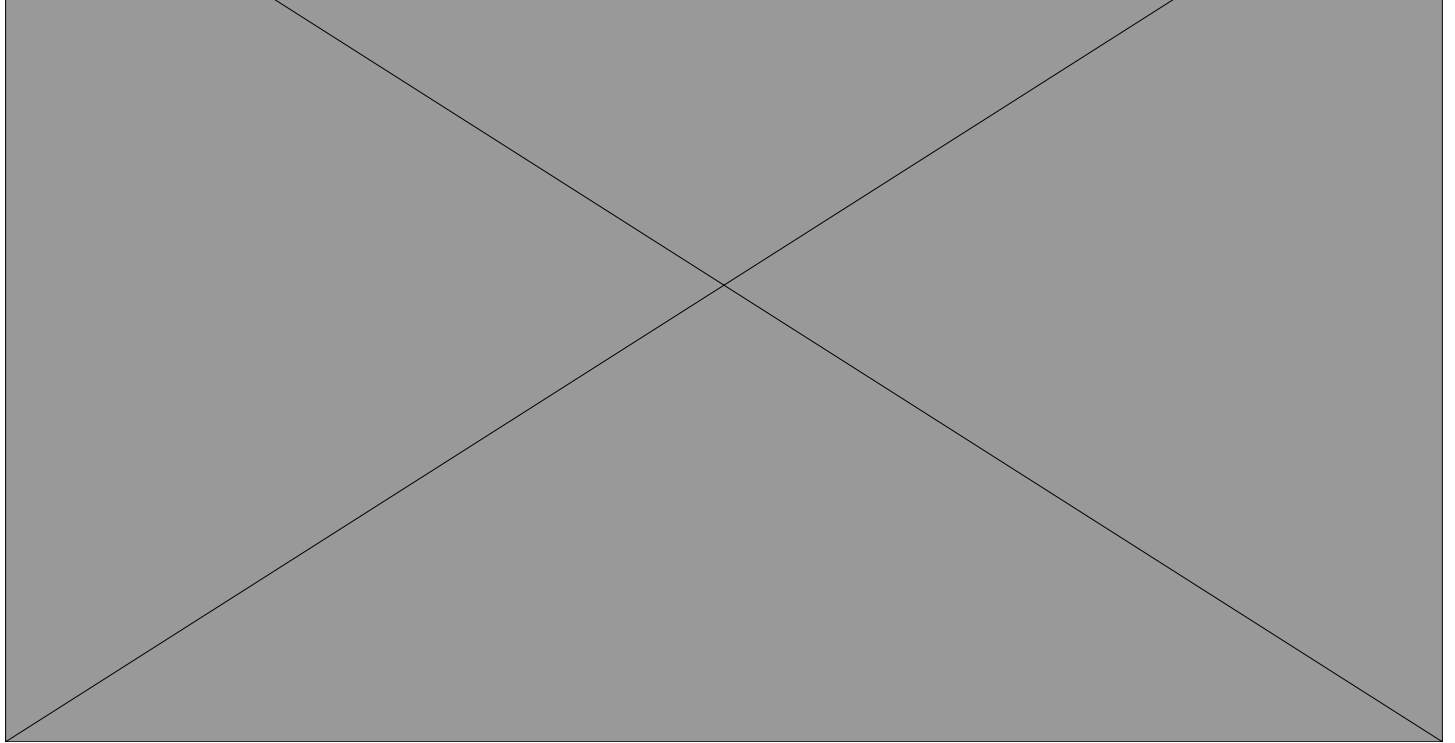
Finally, I've hooked up with a coach, Shannon McGinn of Creating Momentum Coaching. She's been a wonderful addition in terms of providing wisdom and insight on what I've been doing, while continuing to let me create my own plan.

The best news I've gotten so far is that the amazing Bob Hearn, 3 times Spartathlete, has graciously agreed to crew me. His wisdom, experience and strategy will be invaluable.

That's where I am less than 5 months out from race day. Between now and next month, I hope to PR at the C&O 100 miler at the end of April. We shall see how that goes...

# The Snowdonia Slate Trail Ultra 2019

Nick Grahame  
Photos by Evan Davies



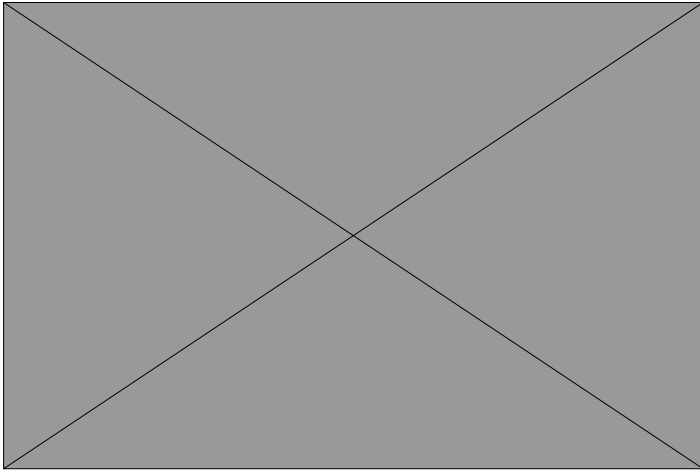
It was an unseasonably warm February weekend, the warmest since records began it would ultimately transpire. I was pleased to have the weather onside. Injury had foiled my attempts to complete my last race in November (another Up Hill Down Dale multiday event). After a couple of months off to recover, I had just 7 weeks to train for this, and knowing the sun would be out was a bonus.

I would have to wait for the sun though, the race started at 7pm, with a few dozen headtorches bobbing out of Bangor and into the Welsh countryside. The Up Hill Down Dale events generally feature long stretches between checkpoints (25 to 30 miles), but the first checkpoint was a mere 13 miles in. I munched my way there through a variety of new snacks I was trying. It pays to have some variety in your pack, as you never really know what you might fancy. Normally I am quite reliant on gels, I also took Lucozade in place of some of my water, and a choice of savoury nibbles (mini-cheddars, peanuts, scampi fries). I was a food conveyer system, shovelling something down my neck every 20 minutes. The first leg made for a good shakedown, a way to feel my way into the race and get my head in the game. Warm soup and bread rolls awaited. I arrived at checkpoint 1 feeling pretty good, with no sign of the previous injuries I had suffered with.

The second leg continued into the dark. Mentally it's quite tough starting at sundown and pushing through

the night. Despite my best efforts to rest and get sleep in the week before, it's still at the end of the day where your brain wants to sleep. The draw of the next checkpoint was motivation to keep moving. You've got to have a game-plan, and mine was to make as much progress as possible early on, to start the big leg, from checkpoints 2 to 3 as soon as possible and maximise the time in daylight. After about 10 hours on the move with visibility limited to the immediate footpath illuminated by my headtorch I rolled into checkpoint 2. This was one of two 'big' checkpoints, with drop bags packed with all the goodies you think you might need. Mine included some odd items, based on previous experiences; coat hangers to dry clothes on, a big snuggly top to wear whilst chilling out, a printed list of things to do, assorted batteries and a range of potentially desirable snacks. I had pushed reasonably hard to get some time and miles in the bank and was feeling a little fatigued. Reminding myself that the objective was to finish regardless of ranking and to get beyond my recent failure, I spent an hour or so at the checkpoint. Of concern was a blister I was developing on the underside of the little toe on my left foot. I made the executive to decision to pop it and dress it.

By the time I left, around 6 in the morning, things were just beginning to get light. The extra time taken at the checkpoint did not go unnoticed either. My legs felt fresh and I was ready for the next section. I knew that this was



the tough one, the most elevation and the longest distance between checkpoints. The sun was coming up and the tactic from this point was to enjoy the journey. Low spirits were a big factor in my previous DNF so I was determined to keep smiling. The route did not disappoint, from very early on the route was stunning. The footpath followed a torrent of water cascading over rocks. Over the next 30 miles the waterfalls became more impressive and breathtaking. The other major features were the old slate mining sites. Several of these are found along the route. Incredible buildings still standing long after the industry had vacated. Huge piles of discarded slate litter the hillsides. Probably the only disappointment was passing through Ffestiniog. Given the demographic of the town, I had pinned my hopes on finding a Greggs there but it was not to be. I did bump into some fellow competitors chowing down on goodies from the local Subway and I took a few minutes to join them in the sunshine.

The weather became quite hot at one point, but by the afternoon it had cooled to a more tolerable temperature. By the time I arrived at checkpoint 3, the last homely house before the finish, I had been on the go for over 24 hours and the darkness had returned. I thought that I might get some sleep but I knew that every hour I spent here was an hour I wouldn't spend in a bed at the bunkhouse. That was enough motivation to keep on keeping on. Yet, given the previous benefits of spending time at the last checkpoint, I employed a similar tactic, consuming food and water and drying my sweaty feet. I chose to change from running tights, which were chafing, and put on some warm hiking trousers and boots. I knew that the temperature would drop, for the final 23 miles I would be moving more slowly. After a couple of hours I set off again feeling snug, warm and ready for anything.

Ten minutes into the final leg I was sweating buckets. The trousers were warmer than I had anticipated, the temperatures were still mild, I was moving at a faster pace than I had thought I would be. What to do? I had no other clothing options with me so stripped off and ran the next 10 miles in my underpants until ground frost started to form on the high ground and I dressed more appropriately.

An unusual yet liberating experience!

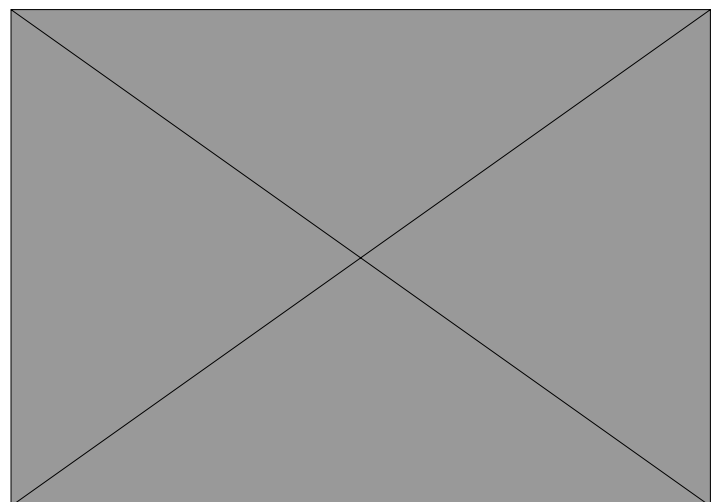
At some point the hallucinations began. Nothing too outrageous. Faces peering at me from the rocks and trees, or simply everyday items mistaken for other everyday items. It became a game, seeing how close to things I had to get to finally click what they were.

In the dark during the second night on the move the route crossed a lake which doubtless looked amazing in the daytime, I ran alongside this moonlit body of water and through a boulder field. If there was a footpath it was sparse at best. It was here that I clocked my longest mile (around 45 minutes). For some, I suspect, this would be the final straw.

From this point onward, it was just a slog to the finish. It felt like it would last forever but maths was on my side. I continually reworked the numbers, trying to work out when I would finally get to bed. I knew I would certainly finish within the 48 hours, it was just a case of how much more suffering it would actually take.

The landscape was looking familiar as I was retreading the steps that I had taken in what seemed like a lifetime ago. The sun rose for a second time on Snowdonia and I was into single figures of miles to go. With 9 miles remaining, I remember reflecting that I still had 10% of the distance to cover, a crushing thought. I focused on those miles, chipping them off one at a time. I thought that with the daylight the hallucinations would retire but if anything they became clearer. Donald Trump peered at me from a tree and I laughed out loud to myself.

The last few miles were a strange mental torture. With a good twelve hours left on the clock, only a park run left to go, I started thinking about lying down by the road to sleep. Everything looked more comfortable than walking or standing. It's a funny thing, how much easier the miles look when they are behind you compared to when they were of in front of you. As I got into the final mile I increased my pace from a shuffle, after 37 hours on the move, I arrived back to hot food, a hot shower and the deepest sleep I can remember.



# Brecon to Cardiff 2019

Text & Photos Abi Summerfield



Startline selfie

Last autumn I stumbled across an event organised by Run, walk, crawl. It caught my eye as it was an area I was familiar with, Brecon to Cardiff. I opened the link....70k...ooof! I'd never run anywhere close to that. I wanted some company to do this event, this is a race which I wouldn't dream of tackling on my own, especially not the first time. I thought of my friend Julie Richards, we met though our Swansea running group Pecynblaidd 4 years ago, I suggested it to Julie as we are a similar pace and fitness. she said, "Oh I've never even done a marathon let alone an ultra," I said "that's ok, neither have I!" I sent her the link and she responded by saying that the route sounded beautiful, and she was in!

In the same week as I was deliberating the entry, I shared my thoughts in a Whatsapp group with another

collection of friends who I met through a mutual love of an SAS simulation race you've probably heard of called the Fan Dance organised by AEE. One of the group, Sara Renfold instantly sent a screen shot of her confirmed entry. Boom! The next day I entered too.

Skip forward three months (yes, just 3 months), and following a very short and intensive training regime designed by our running group founder (which of course included a winter Fan Dance and a trip to the Forest of Dean to do Trimax's Seven Sins trail run) the weekend of the event had arrived.

We registered the night before at the finish venue, a swift and easy process where they handed out your chip band, map and number. They also had a variety of bits of kit you could look at, try on and purchase if you fancied.

Come the morning after, the weather was grey with intermittent showers, not the best, but it was much better than the conditions we had trained in over the winter months and the forecast was set to improve throughout the day. The start venue was at the theatre in Brecon, following a short but thorough briefing we were scanned into the start pens, the horn blew and we were away. It



GO!

was difficult to get giddy at the start as you knew that you had a whole day's activity to be excited for but it was a jolly atmosphere and everyone was chattering. The first 10k or so was along the canal to Tal y bont and into checkpoint one, much of which I witnessed the old game of the raincoat hokey-cokey. I decided to go without the raincoat for the time



The banner





Supplies

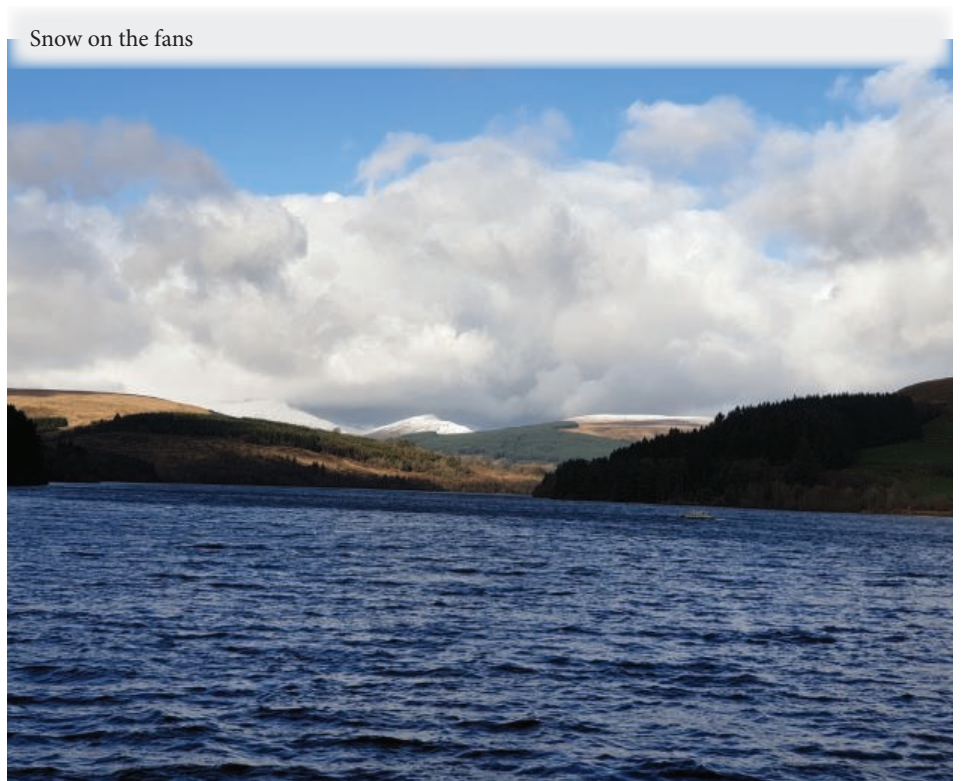
being, we were moving fast enough and keeping warm so the drizzle didn't bother us too much. It was very flat and good to get the miles covered. The section following the checkpoint took us steadily uphill past Tal-y-bont reservoir up to the highest point of the race at Torpantau (near the halfway turnaround for Fan Dance, so I knew vaguely how long this route would take us uphill). The scenery was quite beautiful here and we could see the snow covered foothills of the Fans. Happily as we got to the reservoir, some familiar faces from our Fan Dance group were there with some mini banners and lots of cheers. We briefly stopped to say we were ok and then hurried off up the hill. This forest track was a drudge but we chatted to people and had a little nibble (nuts and dried fruit) on the way. The temperature was dropping as we climbed and this culminated in a brief but biting blizzard at Torpantau. We saw our friends again at the top, they offered us refreshments but we declined in favour of pushing on away from the cold and snow (many layers of buffs and jackets were donned at this point).



Pontsticill Res

There was some more forest track and then we made our way down some pleasant paths to past the top of the Brecon railway and along the side of the Pontsticill Reservoir onto a different forest track to the village (more nibbles along here, hot cross buns with butter and Marmite). We also passed through checkpoint 2 where I discovered I had annoyingly

lost my chip band from my wrist. Probably a victim of the raincoat hokey cokey! The officials were ok with this, they took a picture of my number and made a note of it. Once into Pontsticill village, our amazing friends met us again, this time with a very welcome cup of tea. The best! We stopped and enjoyed the break. Sara had pulled away from us at the



Snow on the fans

# Race Report

Just after the blizzard



start (no fussing with clothing for her) and she was now about 10 minutes ahead of us. Feeling buoyant after tea, we headed on down the village and bumped into our coach and club organiser, an unexpected surprise as he had promised he couldn't make it (we both confessed later to getting a little bit emotional at seeing our coach but we had clearly contained it well). He didn't keep us for long, furnished us with a few supplies, told us he

was proud and packed us off. Shortly after we turned onto the Taff Trail. I felt like this was a milestone as this would be the path we would travel on for the rest of the day and I knew we were only a few miles until half way. The going was much easier now on a plush tarmac pathway and no need for the trail shoes anymore. Within an hour we were at the halfway stage and checkpoint 3 with roughly 25 miles done. We were both surprised at

how good we were feeling, we stuffed our faces (dried fruit, ginger shot and another hot cross bun) and changed our shoes. This felt like decadence, not to be underestimated how amazing fresh shoes make you feel. A quick wee stop and we were on our way through Merthyr Town. Some of the signage was easy to miss here so I recommend you get your map out to save yourself time. We had a spring in our step, new shoes, the most of the miles under our belts and it was downhill all the way to Cardiff. Just then both our sports watches gave us a little note to say we had done a marathon, we had a quick high five and smiled at each other as this was the furthest either of us had run.

The Taff Trail threads all the way down the valley through the towns and villages, Merthyr, Abercanaid, Troedyrhiw, Aberfan and Quakers' Yard, never too far from the A470. Our pace was steady now and we felt happy to trot on while others walked. We kept bumping into our original group of friends who were leapfrogging to the next access point as other friends and family started to appear. My sister-in-law, husband, niece and nephew appeared with an exquisite banner, and at the next corner my partner and 18 month daughter greeted me at checkpoint 4, the best surprise! We fuelled up (frazzles and fluids) and had some cuddles before carrying on. Our path went under the A470 twice and continued on down the valley to Quakers' Yard where it started to feel more residential. We were also met by some cowbell ringing crazies who happened to be friends from our running club, one of whom was my bestie and the person who got me into running this ridiculous distance.

We now had, what felt like the never ending trudge to checkpoint 5 (the sausage butty stop). The path seemed to go on and on, and the light definitely had the feel of dusk about it. Our friends still met us every so often, but by now Julie and I just wanted to crack on and get to



AAE support crew



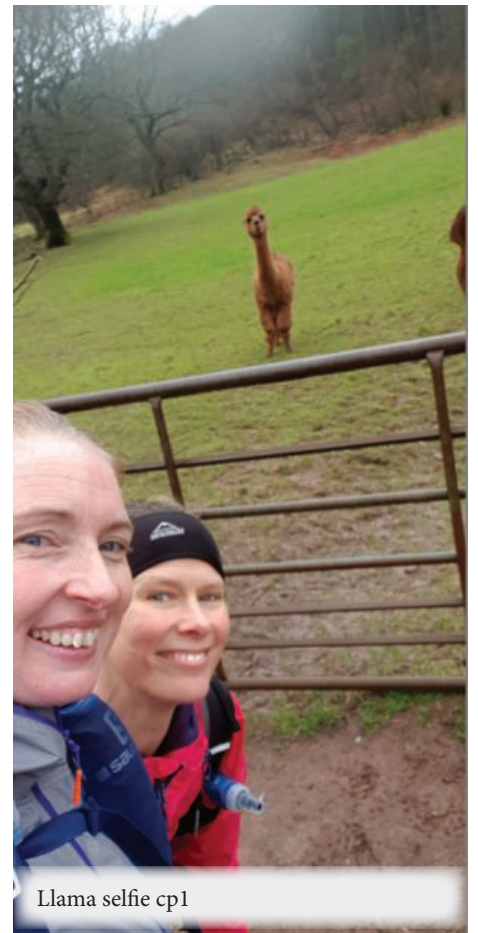
Best cuppa ever

the finish. This section saw the end to what had been a day of dry feet, a massive puddle about 15 to 20 meters long crossed the path and there was no way around. This also put pay to the Vaseline preparation on my feet. It was no match for the water and in the next few miles I could feel the prickle of blisters, I was sad as I'd never had a running induced blister before. After what felt like hours my sister-in-law, flagged us into Trallwn working man's club, for a much needed comfort break, sausages, paracetamol and tea. By now we were starting to ache and Julie spent some time in the toilets slathering herself with deep heat in preparation for the last 6 miles. I think we both could have stayed there all night, we managed to leave and got a move on, we were on track for about a 10 hour finish.

We got out of the club and darkness was looming, I put my head torch on and we had a little trot. This last section weaved along the left hand side of the valley a little way above the towns of Pontypridd, Treforest

and Rhydyfelin. The trees had closed around the path shutting the light from the bottom of the valley out and we were feeling sorry for ourselves, we slowed to a fast march and chatted about how pleased we were with what we were about to achieve. We saw a few other runners through this section, most of whom were walking rather than running, it was the most lonely part of the day. Just as we were feeling quite demoralised by the darkness and the cold, we hit the road that dropped down to the venue. We started to trot joyously. A little under a 1km later we were running into the finish venue, our friends meeting us on the road which made our eyes fill with tears (I still can't believe they stayed out with us all day) and my sister-in-law and family on the finish line cheering. We crossed the line as we started, together.

It had taken us 10 hours and 51 minutes, my friend Sara had finished in 9:57, the last 6 miles had really knocked our time. We were extremely happy with our first attempt at an ultra distance race, we both learnt a lot about how we cope, particularly in terms of nutrition (neither of us really ate much), I was particularly happy with my kit choices, I might have been a little conservative and



Llama selfie cp1

would carry less next time. I highly recommend this event (even though I have no other ultra race to compare it with), it is easily accessible with a super friendly Directing Staff, lots of supporters along the way and easy to crew.



Finish

# From the Border to the Sea: Crossing Wales in a Day

Stuart Lamb

Chairman, The Across Wales Walk Association



Mike Pinner Sahrah Wilding Wyn George arrive CP2 2015

In 1964, members of West Birmingham YHA Group assembled on the English border with Wales, intent on covering the 45 miles to the coast at Cardigan Bay in one day. Footsore and exhausted, this first test of their endurance evolved into the classic challenge we know today, drawing loyal entrants back, year after year. Thus was created The Across Wales Walk: a unique event traversing some of the most beautiful and varied terrain these isles have to offer.

OK, but wait, “You’re describing a walk in a running magazine!” I hear you say. Well, yes, I cannot deny it: the event described is a ‘walk’, but one which is also relished by runners annually. Let me explain what The Across Wales Walk entails. After a night spent in the Memorial Hall in the picturesque village of Clun in Shropshire, entrants are provided with breakfast, then transported by coach to the Welsh border at the remote hamlet of Anchor. At 05:00, 130 entrants set off to walk, jog or run the 45 miles to Clarach Bay, near Aberystwyth. With five intermediate checkpoints, the route traverses the magnificent Kerry Ridgeway, explores secluded deep valleys and crosses the mighty River Severn before summiting Plynlimon: the highest mountain in mid-Wales. Having crossed the watershed, the route then skirts Nant-y-Moch reservoir before following the

Leri valley to Bontgoch and thence to the coast at Clarach Bay. The terrain is a mix of road, track and open upland, the majority of which, particularly in the early stages, is seldom if ever walked. Whilst a narrative description for a recommended route is provided, entrants are free to devise their own providing all checkpoints are visited. Thus, entrants favouring road options over tracks and paths are free to do so.

Having completed the event, entrants are transported to Aberystwyth University to spend the night in the Halls of Residence, followed in the morning by breakfast and a joyous presentation ceremony before coaches are taken back to Clun. Thus, entrants experience a full weekend with copious opportunities for socialising, networking and entertainment, all in addition to a superbly challenging day in mid-Wales. These are the reasons so many come back, year after year.

Inevitably, as may be expected, the AWW has appealed to runners wishing to pitch themselves against the terrain, weather and other entrants in order to record fast completion times. For the fastest ever completion, albeit on the pre 1996 route (which had substantially more road in the central sections) we have to go back to 1991 when the future IAU World Champion at 100km Carolyn Hunter-Rowe completed in 7 hours 22 minutes. On the current route, the record is held by frequent entrant Denis Jolly who, in 2014, completed in 7 hours 51 minutes. More usually, however, the fastest time is between eight and nine hours.

There is, however, another aspect to the AWW. In 1984 the most prolific challenge walker of that era, Nev Tandy, attempted a feat considered hitherto impossible: to ‘double’ the event. Nev left Cardigan Bay on the Friday preceding the event and executed an unsupported overnight crossing

Route AWW Image courtesy OS Maps



## Upcoming Race



Brian Layton approaching CP5 172miles done 8 to go 2015

of Wales before turning around at Anchor to walk back to the coast with the main event. So it was that the tradition of 'doubling' the AWW was born and, in each year since, this has been attempted by up to 10% of the field. In the early years the incredible duo of Clive Lungmuss and UTMB entrant Richard Rosser clocked up ten double crossings each. However, as may be expected, such challenges have developed over the years. In 1997 Phillip Gwilliam became the first doubler to also arrive first at Clarach Bay on his return leg; then 2000 saw the first female double by Susan Denham-Smith. Chris Pritchett achieved the first sub 24h double in 2010 and then went on to establish the fastest time for a double crossing in 2012 of 22 hours 57 minutes.

As may be predicted however, the challenges associated with the 'Across Wales' have not ended with the 'double'. In 2003, Roderick Hollands raised the bar when he completed the first triple crossing. Then, in 2012, came TRA regular Brian Layton who, in that year, completed a single crossing, followed by a double in 2013, the second ever triple in 2014 and the first ever quadruple crossing in 2015. In 2016 and 2017, Brian pushed himself to the limits of endurance to attempt the first quintuple crossing, but he is yet to succeed. Not that completing 4½ crossings over a period of four days can ever be viewed as failure! In 2019 with two weeks

rather than the more usual one separating the 86 mile Ridgeway Challenge and the AWW, Brian may reach this landmark. The Across Wales Walk has become a backdrop against which, over the years, extraordinary feats of speed and endurance have been displayed.

So, ultrarunners, you are cordially invited to come and join us for an unforgettable weekend in mid-Wales. You won't have a number pinned to your shorts, there won't be split-second timing, nor will you see results on the website within hours of completion. Instead, you will have an experience quite unlike any other, over some wonderful country, and often with challenging weather. Oh, did I not mention the weather? The first week of September has thrown at us just about every possible combination over fifty-five years: baking sun, hail, snow and, inevitably, we've had the "unholy trinity" of heavy rain, high wind and low cloud. One year in particular, 2006, when the event was suspended after 25 miles remains scorched in our memory. We occasionally get perfect conditions and enjoy gorse and heather in full bloom, with stunning views from Plynlimon of Cardigan Bay, all the way from Bardsey Island to Pembrokeshire.

The 56<sup>th</sup> Across Wales Walk takes place on 7th September 2019. Entries open on 1st May. Please visit [www.acrosswaleswalk.co.uk](http://www.acrosswaleswalk.co.uk) for more information.



Stuart Lamb



## Winter Green Man Ultra

Helen Pike



Helen Pike Photo by Race photographer Mick Ward

I'm not sure when my desire to run the Green Man Ultra started but I suspect it was something to do with the very impressive looking medal and the, new for 2019, prestigious belt buckle awarded to runners who complete both The Winter Green Man (March anti-clockwise direction) and the new Summer Green Man (August clockwise direction) in the same year. Four different buckles are available, awarded cumulative running time

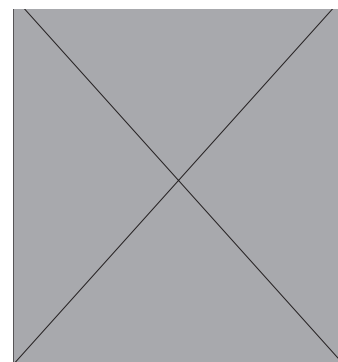
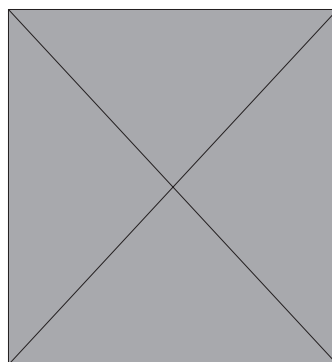
over both events – Sub 15 hours; sub 18 hours; sub 21 hours; sub 24 hours.

As a 45.7mile loop of outer Bristol, it's not a massive distance but a tough challenge due to a total ascent of 4677ft and likely inclement weather conditions creating copious amounts of mud, mud and more mud! In fact, last year's Winter GMU had to be rescheduled to September due to a 'Beast from the East' blizzard. On reading previous year's race

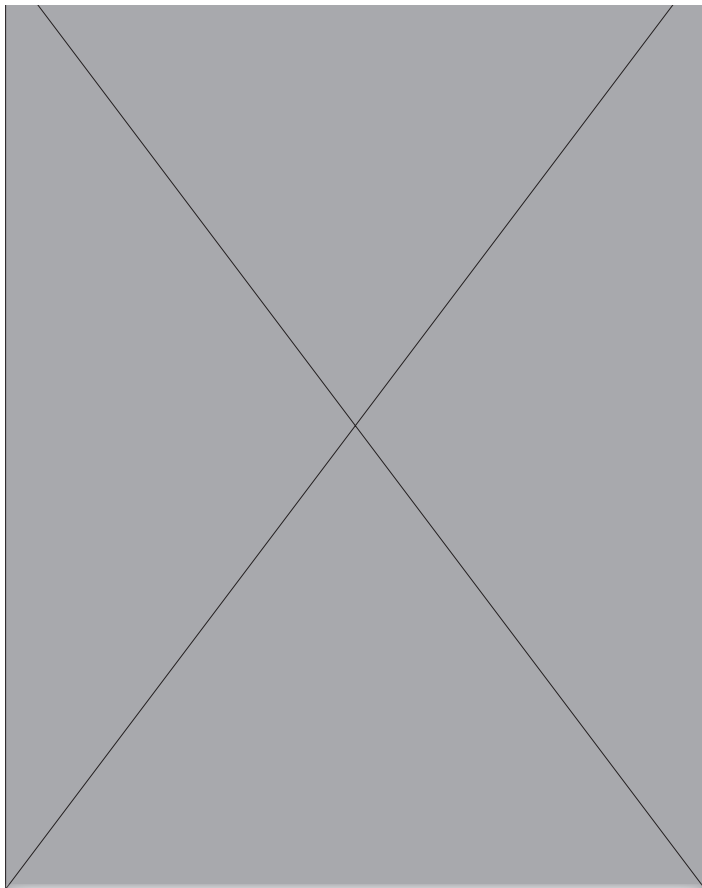
reports, the same message rang out loud and clear, recce the route or run with one of the experienced 9 hr, 10 hr, 11 hr or 12 hour Timelords offering navigational assistance thus avoiding getting lost.

I'm a great fan of route recce-ing whenever possible so I headed down to Bristol with my partner Paul two consecutive Sundays in early February. First, we tackled the 2<sup>nd</sup> half (23 miles), Shortwood to Ashton Court in the snow which was great fun but very slow going. Then, the week after, we slipped and slithered our way round the 1st half. The snow had melted leaving almost unrunnable flooded fields, muddy bogs and rivers that had burst their banks. Both route recces zapped our strength each taking around 5.5 hours and I started to appreciate just how difficult this race was going to be. My initial hopes of a sub 9 hr finish had dwindled into just praying we would complete the challenge in the 12 hour cut-off. Thankfully though, the

weather remained dry for the 2 weeks before the race and we were only forecast light rain and wind on the day. The school car park is locked overnight, so after parking up the campervan in a nearby hostelry, we arrived at Ashton Park School in the drizzling rain around 6.30am. The muddy carpark was already filling up so we were glad we had arrived early. Facilities at the start were well organised, with a bag drop, massage and showers for after the race. Friendly marshalls in bright orange hoodies handed out runner's numbers and chip timers whilst the Timelords chatted and reassured everyone that they would have great day. We were required to carry the in-depth race map/directions booklet (all 64 pages!) but I had also printed off my own, easier to follow, OS maps and uploaded the route to my watch. My Ambit Suunto 2 battery frustratingly only lasts about 6 hours whilst following a GPX route so I'd packed a spare watch for later on.



Top 100 and Top 150 finisher's medals

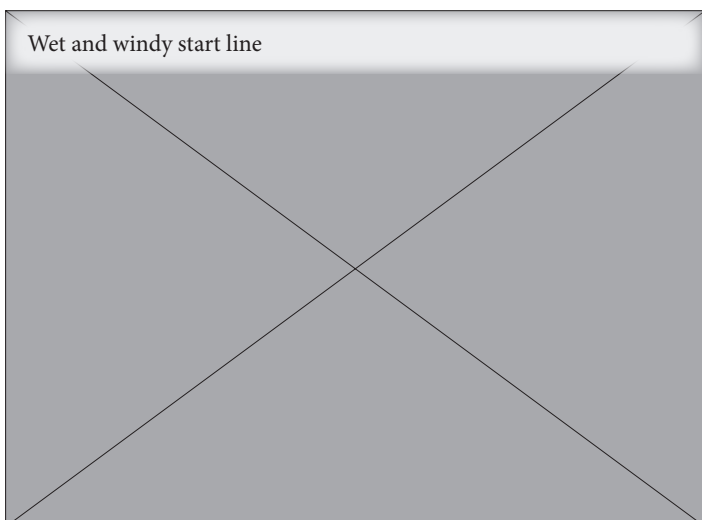


Do you want to build a snowman.....?

The drizzle had turned to rain and apart from myself and a couple of other runners everyone was ready to start wrapped up in their jackets, caps, buffs and gloves. I prefer to run in a vest and shorts, but had erred on the side of caution wearing a T-shirt due to the open hills and rainy, windy forecast. Now

I looked totally out of place. Debating whether to get my warm gear out of my pack, I decided I knew myself best and stuck with my minimal clothing choice.

After a short race briefing from race director Steve Worrello we were off. I'd heard that it was best to go off fast to avoid getting caught in bottlenecks at



Wet and windy start line

gates but that's easier said than done when the first half a mile is all uphill. The rain had magically stopped and I smiled to myself as I passed many runners stripping off their jackets, hot after the uphill struggle.

The first 9 mile section towards Malward Village Hall was easy to navigate with lots of runners to follow and chat to. The mud was sticky but runnable and the pace was good. I'd spotted a couple of women ahead of me so guessed I was currently within the top 5 ladies. Trophies are awarded to the first 6 men and 6 women and also the 1<sup>st</sup> male and female veterans (over 55's).

At 9.29am, I passed through the first checkpoint (9 miles) offering malt loaf, water, squash and coke without stopping continuing on through Pensford, Woollard and Compton Dando. Here we joined the River Chew following it through grassy fields to Keynsham.

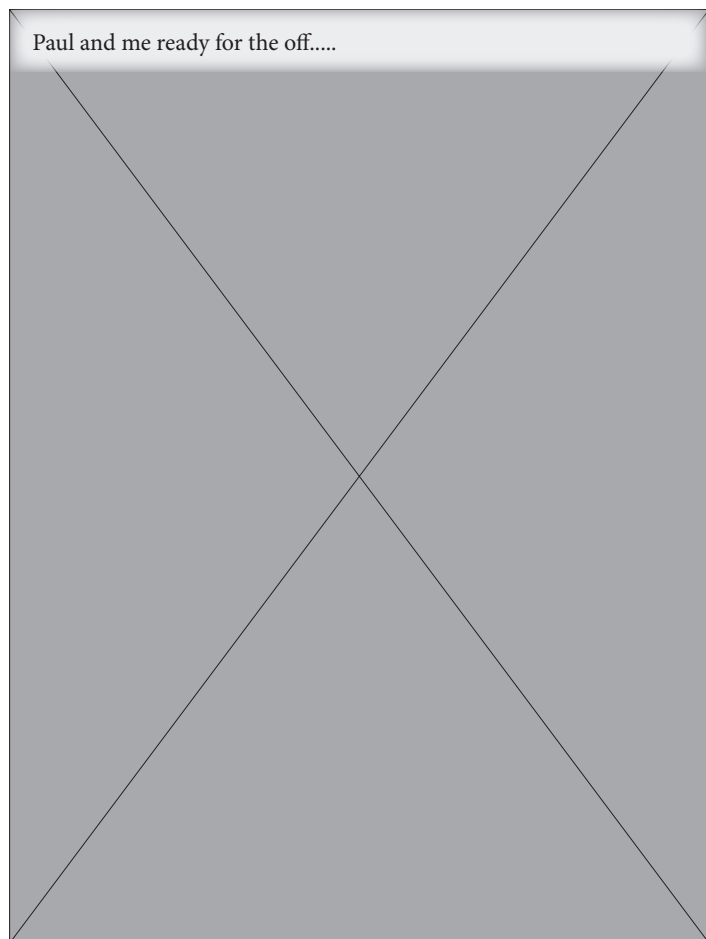
Reaching Checkpoint 2, The Brass Mills pub (16 miles) at 10.35am was a real treat. The slightly shorter 30 mile 'Green Boy' runners were waiting for their start at 11am. As a smiley marshal named Mark expertly filled my bottles with Tailwind, I was informed that I was currently the 2<sup>nd</sup> lady. This surprised me and I realised that one of the ladies I'd spotted ahead (Elizabeth Dyson) must have taken a wrong turn, easily done with public footpaths continually crisscrossing our route. A selection of cake, sandwiches, sweets

and cold drinks were on offer but, being a dairy-free vegetarian, I stuck to my own snacks slightly disappointed that there was no fruit to supplement them. Leaving swiftly for the next 12 mile section, I knew I had to maintain my previous pace if I was to keep the 2<sup>nd</sup> lady position. From our route recce, I remembered that the next section included the Bristol Bath railway cycle path, runnable grassy fields and a picturesque river section at Winterbourne Down. I caught up with 2 runners Nick and Steven approaching the Kendleshire Golf Club and ran with them up to checkpoint 3 buoyed by their contagious enthusiasm.

The White Horse Pub (28 miles) appeared sooner than I expected at 12.37pm and I realised that a sub 9hr finish was definitely possible. An enthusiastic gentleman cyclist shouted that the 1<sup>st</sup> lady (Jane Faram) was only 10 minutes ahead of me. I topped up my tailwind and water but again was disappointed to see that there wasn't anything vegan on offer. Rewarding myself for getting this far, I put on my iPod for some energising 80's disco and headed out just as the 1<sup>st</sup> 30 mile runner arrived. Running alone, I began to tire in the heat and wondered if I'd pushed too hard at the start? A Torq caffeine gel soon got my energy levels up and I was glad that I'd kept just water in one of my bottles to splash over my face. Pressing on I reached

# Race Report

Paul and me ready for the off.....



Patchway and was passed by the 2nd and 3rd place 30 mile male runners. Keeping them in my sights, I ate some nuts and raisins whilst marching up Spaniorum hill. At the summit, running towards yet another style, I tripped over a tree root sending me flying. My entire left arm scraped across the wood from wrist to armpit as I fell. Picking myself up, the stinging grazes served to strengthen my determination. Spurred on, I headed down into Henbury and checkpoint 4 at Blaise Castle.

We had been warned in advance that a local cross country race also taking place that day would cross our path. Runners cheered in support outside their club gazebos and I returned a wildly crazed, too much caffeine smile back. The

area was packed with people so I was relieved when an orange clad Green Man marshall shouted at me and waved towards the 39 mile checkpoint. A minimally equipped aid station of drinks and malt loaf however tea and coffee were on offer for the first time. My watch was almost dead so I got out my spare and let it search for a signal whilst I filled my water. Still in 2nd lady position, I crossed the field and up the steps eating a squashed homemade sandwich to keep me going for the last 6.7 mile section. I remembered this to be mainly road with some steep uphills. Frustratingly, despite numerous restarting attempts, my watch would not pick up a signal. Damn! I was going to have to navigate without it from

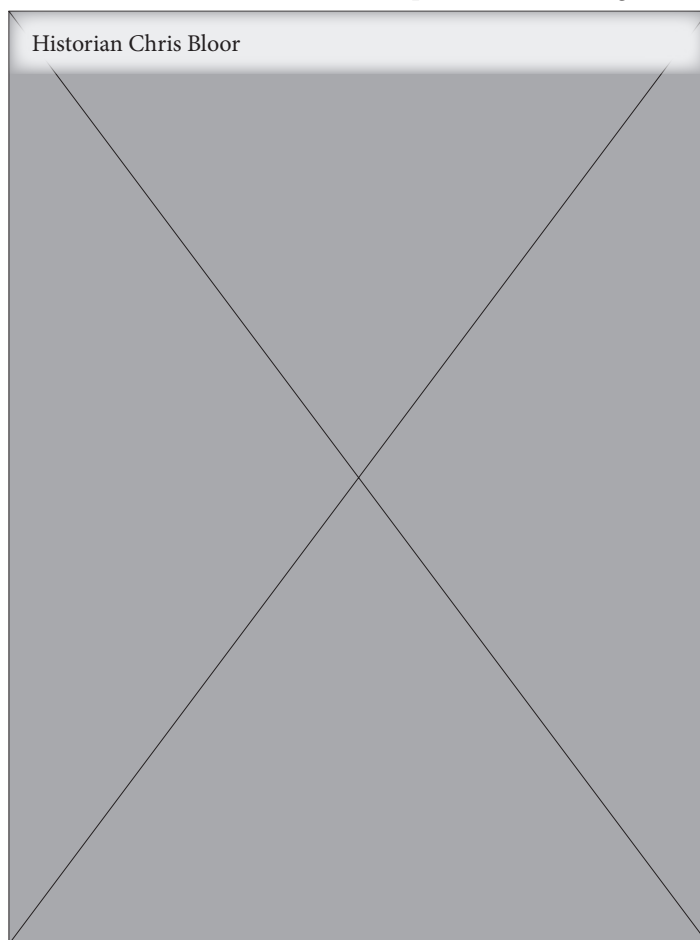
memory or get my maps out. Conscious of losing time, I foolishly decided to attempt it from memory.

Three miles on and I realised I was lost. I continued to march on uphill hoping I'd recognise something to get me back on track. Then I spotted Nick and Steven at a junction to my left. Upon joining them, they informed me that the third lady had already passed but wasn't far ahead. Kicking myself for my navigation blunder, I doubted I would catch her but would give it my best shot.

Picking up the pace I headed across Durdham Down, up round the Clifton Observatory and down to the Suspension Bridge. I knew from my route recce that this would be busy with pedestrians but I couldn't

afford to walk. Repeatedly shouting, "Excuse me please" as politely as I could, I managed to reach the other side without being berated or knocking anyone over. Then a short road section up to the Ashton Court Estate and a sharp left into the deer park. I later discovered that this is where the legendary Green Man stone sits which could be touched for good luck. Spotting the school and the ULTRArunning finish flags down below me, I raced past completely missing it. I made a final grassy downhill dash and across the playing field to finish 19th overall and third lady in 7hrs 53mins. Extremely happy to arrive sub 8 hours, I sat and chatted to Elizabeth. Admiring our incredibly heavy Top 50 medals and podium trophies we both laughed

Historian Chris Bloor





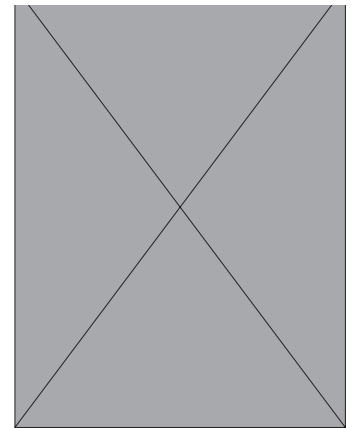
about our unplanned detours. Whilst waiting for Paul to finish, I got some tasty veggie chilli, bread and rice from the school canteen (unfortunately not suitable for vegans due to the Quorn mince used) and chatted with Chloe and Matt from Bristol based Good Gym running club. Matt had finished in an impressive 7hrs 43mins with Chloe enthusiastically cheering everyone at multiple spots along the route. I was impressed with their club ethos of incorporating running with performing good deeds within the local community.

I also had the honour of meeting Chris Bloor, a dedicated historian and conservationist, who explained the history of

the race. Chris devised the Green Man challenge as a circular walk 12 years ago enabling Bristolians to get out and enjoy the local countryside no matter which side of the city they lived. Anybody who successfully conquers the 46 mile route around the Community Forest Path within a 12 hour period is termed a Woodwose, from the Old English wuduwāsa or wood-being. They are ceremoniously awarded a presentation certificate and name entry into the book Forestal Book of the Honourable Order of Woodwoses. This applied to all runners completing the race and Chris attends the race each year to acknowledge their achievement.

An utterly exhausted, Paul arrived just before dark in 9hrs 33mins. He had struggled to keep food down throughout the race and almost pulled out at 28 miles after decorating the pub garden with his stomach contents. Interestingly, against the marshal's advice, he carried on so as not to jeopardise his chance for a GMU belt buckle in the summer. Happy with his equally impressive Top 100 medal, he showered and thoroughly enjoyed the meat chilli option.

It appeared that the chip timers had failed due to a technical issue so race times and splits weren't available until 2 days after. I was delighted to see that I'd ranked 8<sup>th</sup> in the female



Top 50 finisher's medal

Winter Hall of Fame (a record of the fastest 100 male and female finishers in the race history). Having got the tough one done, Paul and I are now looking forward achieving our cumulative belt buckles at the, hopefully, drier and faster Summer Green Man in August.

**2019**

**19<sup>th</sup> 100km del Sahara**  
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# The Arc of Attrition

A report by Alan Giles  
Photos by No Limits Photography



**T**he Arc of Attrition has one hell of a name for itself, “The UK’s toughest winter ultra marathon.”

A 100 miles of coastal path spanning the ‘arc’ of Cornwall. It sells out fast and is on a lot of bucket lists. It was to be my first 100 mile race and it was also on my 35th birthday. For the few days leading up to the event, and even at the start itself I was surprisingly calm.

Aside from the freak snow storm that had hit us the day before; causing me to miss early registration, everything had gone smoothly. I had what I needed, I was where I needed to be and everything seemed to be ticking away nicely. The race is split up into five sections interceded by four checkpoints; Porthleven, Penzance, Land’s End and St. Ives. I had no major plan besides a finish, I didn’t want to over think it.

I knew that so much could (and probably would) go wrong, if (and when) it did, I would be better equipped to deal with the situation if my plan was more ‘fluid.’ I wanted to get to the first checkpoint during daylight and set off at a fairly reasonable pace, nothing uncomfortable and certainly not racing. I was pleased with the progress, and with how I felt.

Being from Cornwall I knew many of the other entrants

and spent time running with and talking to many people who I know well, and before long I was approaching the first checkpoint in daylight. After a quick feed, (and bite of birthday cake) I got straight back out onto the trail; bound for Penzance. I felt great and didn’t want to waste too much time at the first checkpoint.

Now though, I was to run at the beginning of the long dark period and donned my headtorch. I soon caught up with a friend and we ran for a long while together, finally arriving in Penzance. I still felt pretty good, and was surprised that we had managed to make really promising time to the second checkpoint. I left the second checkpoint more weary than when I had arrived and was faced with a long flat section.

Up until now the race had very much been run/walk because of the savage ascents/descents and so I decided along with a friend to keep the run/walk theme regardless of the flat terrain. This seemed to help and we soon hit the hills again. It was here I took a turn for the worse, approaching the Minack Theatre at half way, I was really struggling. I had been swearing and cursing for a few miles at my stupidity for choosing a ridiculous hobby. After climbing the absurdly steep (and long) staircase to this point I decided I was out. It was stupid and I was going to bed.

My crewman gave me a good talking to; he said that it was only five miles until Land’s End and checkpoint three. If I could make it there, I could sit down and refuel, even if I took an hour, or an hour and a half. I had built up a healthy buffer and if I could make it there I could have a good rest. Begrudgingly, I went. A few more choice words passed my lips but I was so glad I did. After a quarter of a mile I started running and I felt great. It was my favourite part of the race.

I ran with ease and a great smile on my face. After a little detour, (even an extra mile and a half did not phase me) I arrived at checkpoint three happy. I refuelled and felt I did not need the extended wait at the checkpoint, so after about twenty minutes I braved the night and the coast path. Alas, for me it was not to be. My head was well and truly “in the game” at this point, and I felt sure I’d finish.

Unfortunately my left ankle and foot began to swell after leaving checkpoint three. After a short time I could no longer run, I could barely walk. Some quick calculations meant that at my current pace, I would not make the next cut-off regardless of the buffer I had accrued and at my next crew meet I withdrew. I was 65 miles in. I’ve heard a few people say that if you learn a lesson from a race it



was a worthwhile experience regardless of result. I always thought this was rubbish, however the lessons I learned on this race will prove more valuable than any buckle. After feeling so awful and ready to throw in the towel; to feeling so wonderful within a few miles was such a revelation. That will stay with me for a very long time and I am sure I will draw on that in many future races.

Thanks to my crew for this gift; if it wasn't for you I would never have known. The power of people astounds me, from the people you run with, to the people who support you, to the volunteers who help run these events; thank you all.

The difference you make is immeasurable. I hope I also have made this kind of difference to others, as this kind of connection really is one of the greatest gifts from this wonderful sport.

Will I go back? Undoubtedly.

Will I succeed? Hopefully.

Lessons learned, although it's such a savage race anything can happen. I do want that buckle.

Wish me luck!



# Saxons Vikings Normans Running Group (SVN) Moonlight Challenge 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2019

Justine Flett



“I don't even like running”. I don't really know where to start not having written a race report before except for the odd lengthy post on Facebook. So I'll just start at the beginning and tell you how it went.

The beginning? How far back do I go, well a memory from 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2016 showed up on Facebook on the morning of the race, reminding me that I was so proud that 3 years ago to the day I had completed my very first 5K Parkrun and was quoted saying, I didn't even like running. Here I was now, at the age of 47, never being a runner in my younger days nor particularly sporty, doing my last long night-time run, before my first 100 mile race. A race I was doing to help raise money for an all-terrain wheelchair for a friend who has primary progressive multiple sclerosis. This race is taking place at the beginning of March 2019, the Samphire 100. So, the moonlight challenge was my last dark long run before the race. I intended to use the

race as a last test of the gear, clothing layers and trying out some last minute fuel ideas before the 100.

This was giving me more nerves than normal but thankfully the facilities were well stocked at the race start. I'd had previous experiences where I hadn't got my rest and fuelling right on other night-time runs which caused a lack of energy, severe stitches and breathing issues that brought me to tears, these unpleasant feelings made me very determined not to mess it up this time.

I spent Friday evening making sure I had got all my kit right and all the new hotpack foods ready that I was going to try. I have to say I spent less time preparing kit than I normally do as the race was a familiar course for me starting at Brook Farm, Reculver in Kent. It was on a looping lap of 6.25 miles, which I had run twice before on the Kent 50 milers in the two previous years (both daytime races). It has two aid stations, one at base camp (a big farm barn) and one

about 2 miles out, which you reach twice on a lap, affectionately known as 'Jelly Bean Junction'. The SVN crowd are so friendly and welcoming it really helps take the edge off pre-race nerves.

I'm not a fast runner, but I have found I do have some grit and determination just to keep going and get the job done, so I was hoping to be able to meet the 6.5 hour cut-off at 31.5 miles and get another loop in and run the last loop with one of my pacers for the 100 miler who also happens to be my trusted partner Rob McGregor, but as you will find out that was not to be.

I got to bed early Friday night and deliberately planned to do very little Saturday morning, except volunteer at my local Parkrun as it was its 300th event, to have a hearty breakfast and make sure I stopped eating by midday. I tried very hard not to get dragged into my much loved partner's spontaneity of cleaning the car an hour before we were due to leave the house. We left the house at 1:30pm for a short drive from where we live to Reculver, which all helps as a short journey meant less stress and more opportunities for disappearing off to





the loo several times before the race started.

We had no problems parking when we got to the race start and the friendly faces of Rachel Smith and Travis Wilcox, the race directors, greeted us at the registration where I picked up my number, pins and punch card for the lap system. I was able to put all my different clothing layers and food in the barn (no concerns about it all getting damp and I was able to pick up what I needed every lap). Most of my kit consisted of pre-made tailwind, Nakd bars, bananas, ham and cheese croissants and a hotpack of shepherd's pie that I was really looking forward to. The organisers had laid on a burger van as well so I thought it would be a reward at the end of the race to have hot chips on the way home. It's always good to have something nice to look forward to.

The race briefing was very inspiring, seeing lots of other runners receiving awards for different running



achievements and meeting running friends I hadn't seen in a while and hearing how some of them had finished a marathon in the morning and upon finishing had driven 90 minutes to Kent to run the moonlight challenge. Some of the others were going to take it easy tonight as they were off to run the 1st Lenham Cross marathon starting the next morning at 8am. I was in awe.

So just before 3pm on this beautifully, unusual, sunny February afternoon in my running shirt, full length tights and a fully stocked race vest of tailwind and Nakd bars, phone and blue tooth earphones, my goal was to complete each loop in 1 hour 20 mins to meet the 6.5hr cut-off. It always takes a while for my body to understand and almost accept that we are running again, no matter how many dynamic stretches I do. For the first 50 or 60 minutes it's always me discussing with my body that the pain will pass and that it needs to pick the

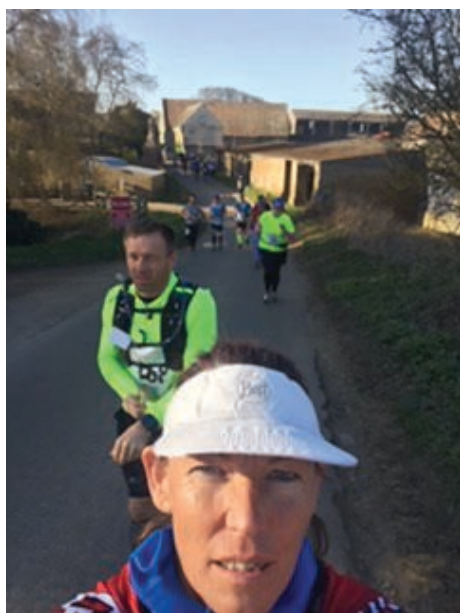


pace up, sort my breathing out, ooh hang on take a photo you must not forget to enjoy the journey, have I got all I need, how do my feet feel, give your body a chance, am I too hot, is it too windy, am I too cold, dear me! All I need to do is to let go and let it happen and as always I finally settle. About an hour later the first lap went absolutely to plan and it was very comforting to be back on the combination of light trail, concrete farm tracks, the hum of the not to far away A299 and the beautiful Kent countryside that we had been warned may get a bit foggy later as technically it was a swamp.

Feeling quite chuffed with myself on lap 1 and getting back to base camp it was lovely as Rachel Smith a long standing friend who hadn't run for a while decided to come join me for a girlfriend catch up on lap 2. Bearing in mind I have known Rachel for years prior to either of us running this was amazing, after all the many 100



# Race Report



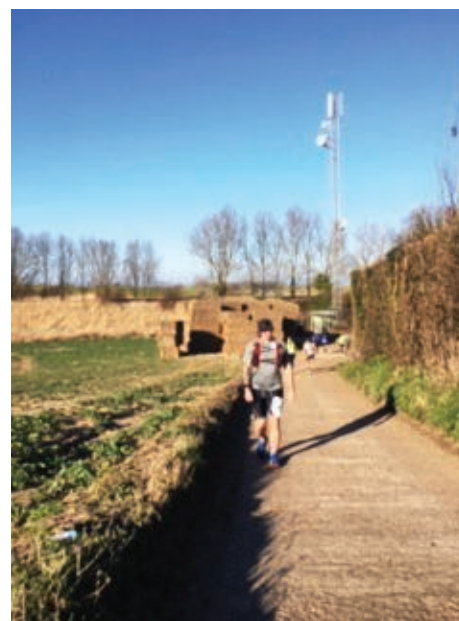
milers and ultras she has run to spend six wonderful miles catching up on life in the sunshine. Nevertheless, I still found it hard to keep up with her and I had to slow the pace a little. By the time we finished lap 2, I was 10 minutes ahead of time for the cut-off. I was a happy bunny as it gave me the opportunity to get ready for the dying light and heat of the day and take another welcome toilet break, (I do seem to pee a lot at races). On went a long sleeve lightweight jacket, gloves and chest lamp. I made a mental note of the time as I wanted to see how long the chest light would last before the battery ran out.

Lap 3 the body was feeling good, the breathing had settled, the light was beginning to fade and as it did, so did



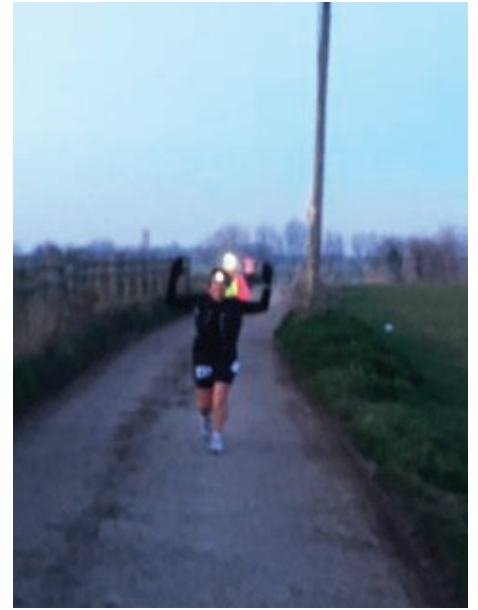
I. In all the excitement of running with an old friend, I had pushed a little too hard on the previous lap and most of all I had forgotten to fuel as I normally do, which meant I started with a few crampy sensations and my pace started to die. This was partly due to the fuelling error and partly, I think, to being cautious of the trail parts of the track being very uneven and slippery. I guess in the back of mind somewhere a little voice was saying do be careful you have a 100 miler to do in 2 weeks, don't damage anything now. I started to correct my fuelling as best I could, but every time I checked my pace it wasn't improving. At this point rather than spiral into negativity I often speak to something I call my higher power, just like a voicing out loud of thoughts to a universal energy, I asked for a little help to adjust to the dark and somehow, if possible to get back on track with the pace. By the time I finished lap 3, one banana and a nakd bar later at the start of lap 4 I had pulled back the minutes and was out again at 3hrs 55 minutes. I was much more comfortable in the dark despite the uneven ground. I found the shadow of my arms in my peripheral vision quite comfortable rather than the off-putting distraction it was earlier.

With hope in my heart I dived into lap 4 eating another banana and was amazed that I didn't need anymore layers either. I knew timing wise I was cutting it all rather fine, but decided to push on as hard as I could. The fog was starting to come down and there was definitely a change in temperature at this point, which had quite an effect on my breathing, luckily the trusty buff came into play and the air was warmed through it, giving my lungs a little respite from the colder, damper conditions. After about two thirds of the way round lap 4 it was starting to dawn on me that I wasn't able to pick the pace up enough or if I did, would this be a good move with the big race only two weeks away? My chest light was starting to lose its brightness and I was concerned that if I pushed on for



the longer ultra tonight, and it would be touch and go if I would make the cut off anyway, would I cause myself more of a problem and not recover in time for the 100 miler or worse still, create an injury? I was pinning a lot on the 100, but it's because I didn't want to lose the sponsorship money I had raised towards my friend's new wheelchair by not completing the 100,





due to my ego. I got back from the marathon distance with only an hour to the cut-off and knew I wouldn't make the longer ultra tonight. Was I disappointed? Yes a little, I thought I would be more disappointed than I was though. So I repacked the vest, changed chest lights and took a trusty bacon and cheese croissant out with me to complete the 50k Ultra. After I had eaten I let go of my disappointment, or thought I had and decided to switch on an audio book only to find that my phone battery had died. I must remember it loses power more quickly in the cold. I felt smug as I knew I had a battery pack and cable in the back of my running vest.

It was hysterical how annoyed with myself I was when I couldn't access the pocket as normal because of the lamp and extra layer I was wearing and the zip on my jacket had got stuck. My hero arrived out the dark behind me in the form of Andrew Coveney who managed somehow to access the battery pack for me.

I was so happy now to have some company in my ear as the fog and mist was getting thicker and I needed to just get the job done, before getting too cold. I spent the last 3 miles listening to a book that surprisingly was set in the village where I grew up and spent my childhood, it was a lovely comforting feeling that allowed

me to finish the race with a smile on my face and with some trepidation look forward to the race in 2 weeks time.

The things I took from the challenge were, I need to give myself more time to adjust from the day to night, that fog is cold, my chest lights although bright, will require quite a bit of charging, best laid plans can always go astray, be kind to yourself when you get things wrong and the sky at night is a beautiful thing. This SVN race was a wonderful, safe, friendly environment to test out and prepare for night running, even when you don't run for long enough to test out the food you bought with you.

A promotional banner for the Trail Kursiu Nerija 2019 10 19 race in Klaipėda, Lithuania. The banner features a background image of a beach with two runners in the distance. The text includes the event name, date, location, and logos for IRN (International Trail Running) and UTRAC (Ultra Trail Running Association). The website URL www.trailkursiuNERIJA.com is displayed at the bottom.

**TRAIL**  
KURSIU  
NERIJA  
2019 10 19  
KLAIPĖDA, LITHUANIA

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# Overcoming a Broken Spine – The Spine Race 2019

By Garth Reader  
Photos by Lisa Reader



### This all started some time ago...

I first heard about the Spine Race in 2016. Being a somewhat eccentric ultrarunner from the States, it sounded like my kind of event. 268+ miles of the Pennine Way from Edale to Kirk Yetholm in Northern England. Since the Spine is held in January the weather is typically terrible and there are only about eight hours of light a day. You can expect darkness, rain, wind, snow, fog, freezing temperatures, no real trail markings and infrequent aid stations. It is billed as “Britain’s Most Brutal Race” and is quite the challenge. I applied for the 2017 edition and was accepted. I had experience in ultrarunning, orienteering, stage racing and everything necessary to participate. I devoted time to train, invested in a good kit and was diligent in addressing all the thousands of details associated with an event of this magnitude. I even did a stage race in Iceland to shake down my equipment. The Spine was going to be an “A” race for me. When January of 2017 came around, I was ready.

When the start went off, I realized that perhaps I was not. Everything was not quite as I had imagined it would be. The weather, the terrain and most of all the slippery conditions under foot. Even so I gave it my best shot. I ran smart, but by the half way point I was suffering from a significant back issue and not able to stand up straight. By the fourth day

I was reduced to a “techno incarnate” version of Gollum and by the fifth day I was limping along at barely one mile per hour. Reaching Byrness, it was apparent I was done. The weather was deteriorating and with the remaining 26 miles over the Cheviot hills it would be bad form to press on only to be brought back down by the Mountain Rescue. I conceded and my tracker was removed.

My first and only DNF (to date) hit me hard. I was lost for months trying to figure out what happened. Did I not prepare sufficiently? Had I not respected the race? Did I give up too soon? Physically I recovered rapidly but mentally I had been crushed. However, during those dark times my supportive wife Lisa told me, “You have unfinished business, you need to go back and finish the Spine”. That statement got me out of my self-pity with a mission. I NEEDED to finish the Spine. By June I was back on the horse and enjoying running again.

### Fast forward to 2019

While I had other running obligations in the early months of 2018, the day the Spine’s registration opened for 2019 I committed. On the downside I was two years older. On the upside I was wiser with one attempt under my belt. Game on! Minor tweaks to my kit were made including a



new pre-production Raidlight Responsiv 24 race vest with a front pack. Training involved more core strength work and I backed off some on the pack runs. Even though I had been training and racing for almost three years straight with no breaks I kept going. I was going to be ready.

A strange side story to interject here. During the High Lonesome 100 in August, while wearing my Spine shirt from 2017, a racer named Walter Handloser approached me and asked if I had done the Spine before. It transpired he was going too, it's a small world when you run into one of the only two runners from the USA entered in the upcoming Spine edition.

As the race drew near, feelings of self-doubt begin to creep into my mind. What if conditions were biblically epic? Additional JIC (just in case) items started making their way into my resupply bag. I started second guessing many things. I pored over my previous navigation errors. Fortunately, my departure date arrived and ready or not I was on my way. The one solace I had was that this time I was there to finish. Not to race, not to beat some predetermined time, but to just get to Kirk Yetholm.

The hop over the pond was uneventful, and the logistics from 2017 were repeated. I arrived at Edale early for kit check and was one of the first through, no problems. Lisa and I met up with friends of ours from the Grand to Grand



Ultra, Mark Thompson and Lynn Rowe. The plan was for Lisa and Lynn to follow Mark and myself throughout the race cheering us on at road crossings and pubs. We enjoyed a lovely dinner out and made it to our accommodation. Some final preparation, then off to bed for a very sleepless night listening to the wind howl.

## Edale to Hebden Hey (about mile 0-45)

The check-in on race day went smoothly and the start was on time. The weather was windy with a little drizzle. The field made good time as the conditions were acceptable, especially the footing. No massive snow run off as was the case during my previous attempt. As the day progressed the temperatures dropped and the wind really picked up (30 mph) for a while. In spite of all this I got to Hebden Hey ahead of my anticipated schedule and I decided to sleep an hour or so and allow the weather to subside.

## Hebden Hey to Hawes (about mile 45-107)

This is the longest stretch of the Spine. I got a positive start out just before 1:30 AM and was making good time running with Walter Handloser until around Gargrave. Walter's pace was just a little too fast for me so I throttled back and let him go. This decision put me by myself for the next 40 miles. OK, I was used to running alone. I made Malharm Tarn and had a quick supper with a fine cup of coffee provided by long time Spine volunteer and resident chile expert John Bamber. (Note: in New Mexico the proper spelling is "chile" not "chili"). This was in return for the two tins of New Mexico Hatch Green Chile I gifted him at check-in. Setting off at dusk I started the climbs over Pen-y-gent where of course the weather deteriorated. High winds and rain made the dark climb not much fun. In fact, the whole way into Hawes the wind was ferocious (a constant 30 mph with stronger gusts) necessitating the use of goggles. I really do dislike the wind, I was beginning to develop a list to my left side because the wind was constantly from the west. This slowed me down terribly and I rolled into Hawes around 6:00 AM exhausted and about three hours behind where I hoped to be at this point. I could hardly stay awake to eat some breakfast. Time for a change of plans. I decided to get the 3.5 hours of sleep I needed at the expense of losing some daylight. In the Spine the ability to improvise, adapt and overcome is a key attribute. I believe that letting go of my initial plans was critical in the end.

It was also at Hawes that I realized that I was having some blister problems. Previously I had removed the insoles from my shoes to make some room for my waterproof socks. That was a mistake which I corrected a little too late and had to live with the consequences in the days to come. I used a lot of tape from then on.

# Race Report



## **Hawes to Middleton (about mile 107-143)**

Rested but with a late start I made my way toward Great Shunner Fell. Shortly after leaving the checkpoint I met up with Paul Horsewood. A very pleasant chap who asked if I didn't mind him tagging along with me for a bit. Little did we realize that this partnership would last for the next 160 miles until the finish. We were fairly well matched, and with respectable footing and weather conditions, we moved along at a good clip. Upon reaching Tan Hill, we were greeted at the pub by Lisa and we stopped for a Coke (the original energy drink), some potato chips (crisps) and pack food since the pub was not serving then. After the quick stop, we pressed on across the boggy moor to the A66 underpass where a slight navigation error cost us a little time. The rest of the way into Middleton was quite uneventful. There we got situated and slept for a solid four hours.

## **Middleton to Alston (about mile 143-182)**

The trail to Cauldron Snout was pleasant and the weather was calm, cool and partly sunny. As we climbed up onto the moors, we saw lots of red grouse. Dropping into Dufton we stopped for the obligatory full English breakfast at the Post Box Pantry, filling up for the climb to Greggs hut. As we approached Green Fell the darkness descended and the weather turned; wind, snow and a cold temperature. Four of us linked up for the trek over Great Dun Fell and Little

Dun Fell to Greggs Hut and the prospect of chile noodles and a hot drink.

While the others decided to take a little break, both Paul and I thought it wise to continue on. We wanted to get below the storm as quickly as possible and do some serious resting in Alston. Memories of struggling the final miles in a sleep deprived state during 2017 were with me. This time we were in much better shape and had a great visit on the way into town.

Lisa and Lynn were on the road to greet us a few miles before Alston, as their accommodation was right on the track. It is great to have your own personal cheering squad. We arrived at Alston just before midnight and I had the best plate of lasagna of my life. Sleep came easy that night (for a short four hours).

## **Alston to Bellingham (about mile 182-222)**

Paul and I traveled this day mainly by ourselves. The weather was cold but clear and we made good time. At Greenhead we stopped at a pub for a huge plate of French Fries (chips) with gravy and a large Coke. Afterwards we began the Hadrian's Wall section. A much more pleasant experience than in 2017 for me. Paul would crush the uphill and me the downs, it all evened out. Lisa caught up with us around dusk to cheer us on. Though we were tired, we both were in good spirits with lots of pleasant and intriguing conversation along the way.

We eventually made our way to the Horneystead Spine Pit Stop where we were treated to a wonderful bowl of soup and some bread. Helen, who runs the Pit Stop, remembered me from two years ago and we had a pleasant visit. A quick thank you and we were on our way into Bellingham. It was on this section in 2017 that I started to really crash, but now I was feeling strong. I was beginning to believe that I was going to make it.

Once in the Checkpoint, we did our best to organize ourselves and get some sleep. Unfortunately, it was cold and noisy and our sleep was restless at best. Alarms were set for an early departure.

## **Bellingham to Byrness (about mile 222-242)**

Preparation for leaving Bellingham tried my patience. While everyone was helpful it was very difficult to find a flat spot due to the small size of the facility. This was also compounded by a required kit check as well as a large group trying to leave about the same time as us. We finally made it out and were on our way. The weather was excellent and despite our poor sleep we made great time. This was the day to race! The track was good, navigation was easy and there was limited elevation gain on this section. As we approached Byrness I started to remember back two years

ago. How I was limping along in the dark at this point and grasping the very real revelation that I was not going to finish. An old church with a graveyard full of headstones came into view, it was there that I decided to bury these demons and move on. They were gone. We made our way into the check station at Byrness for a quick bite and some cheers from Lisa. Then and there I knew I was going to finish. Only 26 miles or so to go.

## Byrness to Kirk Yetholm (about mile 240-268)

The weather was holding as we climbed up into the Cheviots. The views were stunning. The footing was excellent so now there was some real trail running. We made the Lamb Refuge Hut just before dusk and had a nice spot of tea provided by the race volunteers. We eventually pressed on looking forward to the last 17 miles. We could taste it.

The Spine was not quite finished with us. As we climbed on and reached Windy Gyle, the weather obliged us with one last blow. The wind came out of nowhere, snow and fog descended, and the temperature dropped dramatically. Ice was forming on the flagstones and we each took a spill. Paul even lost a glove in the wind, but fortunately he had a spare pair. We struggled into the second refuge hut at a reduced pace.

During a quick cup of tea, we were quizzed about the conditions we encountered. Race officials were considering holding runners at the Lamb Refuge Hut due to the ice and low visibility. We thanked them for their support and headed down the last seven miles. Soon, we were below the storm and on a less slippery footing. We picked up the pace in order to finish in time for a quick beer since Paul had to head back home that night. His wife Michelle and a friend were waiting at the finish to spirit him away.

It was amazing finishing, there was quite a crowd cheering us on. Paul's wife even ran in with us. Lisa was there leading the cheering. As Paul and I touched the wall of the Border Hotel together, we knew we had both accomplished something tremendous. We had overcome the Spine together, yet individually. We had done it in a respectable time and in good form.

Stage races and multi-day events such as the Spine are not always about the race. True, they provide you with a challenge and you can focus on that. A podium finish, a personal best, a certain finish time are all goals worthy to strive for. These events also allow for forging new friendships with others from around the globe. The time you spend facing a challenge together can form strong bonds.

I had also overcome my "broken" Spine from two years ago, putting to rest frustration and self-doubt that had been lingering since then.



# LLCR 130 miles (Liverpool to Leeds Canal Race)

Wendy Whearity



Wendy and Alex – Photo Stuart March Photography

**L**LCR (Liverpool to Leeds Canal race) is a 130-mile footrace from Liverpool City centre to Leeds city centre, following the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. Starting at 6am on Saturday 25th August 2018 (the last Bank Holiday weekend in August).

Having only ran 145 miles (or so) at KACR (Kennet and Avon Canal Race) 4 weeks earlier, and never racing this close together, I had no intention of running this race. Alex suggested the idea after I finished the KACR in relatively good shape, it was the weekend before our wedding, the children were away camping and due to unforeseen circumstances, my original prosecco drinking plans had been changed. Faced with the

prospect of being home alone or following Alex's race in the car I figured I could plod my way from Liverpool to Leeds and just enjoy a day out on the trails.

I did have a few concerns, my vision of a canal between Liverpool and Leeds was not a pretty one. I pictured abandoned factories, illegal raves, running through the pub and nightclub fall out at 2am. I also had no idea where I was going, getting lost is something I don't particularly enjoy in the daylight, but the idea terrifies me after dark and I had no time to recce the route. Yeah, I can hear you, "how can you get lost following a canal?" trust me I could get lost in my own house.

Local runners and good friends of ours Paul Ali and Paul Beechey who had jointly won the race in 2017, advised us about the route and how it was very easy to follow, they talked us through a couple of navigational points where you leave the canal. I appealed on facebook for a buddy runner to accompany me through the night section but sadly nobody was available. Alex was keen to run his own race and as we both race very differently, I let him go on.

After a hideous 7 ½ hour Bank Holiday Friday drive we arrived in Liverpool on the Friday night, just before early registration closed at the Travelodge so Alex quickly ran across to pick up our lock keys

etc. I tried to catch him up with Adrian our crew, but we ended up in the wrong Travelodge, this is how good my navigation is. We checked into our hotel, The Radisson Blu, on Old Hall Street which is right at the start, and after a little issue with 2 single beds for 3 adults, we nipped out for some dinner at a great pizzeria, Trattoria 51, just 100 metres down the road.

It was a cold and blustery start to the race, the first mile or so weaves along city centre roads, 50 metres from the start we were all about to head the wrong way if local lad Phil Vincent hadn't called us back. Stu Wilkie, James Bennet and Alex led from the start, followed by my little group of myself, Mark Bissett and Ian Kittle. In ultra-racing

the field gets spread out fairly quickly, what was quite strange about this race were the positions in the first couple of miles hardly changed over the entire race. Stu, Alex and James started and finished 1,2, 3 and Mark and Ian finished together in joint 7th place.

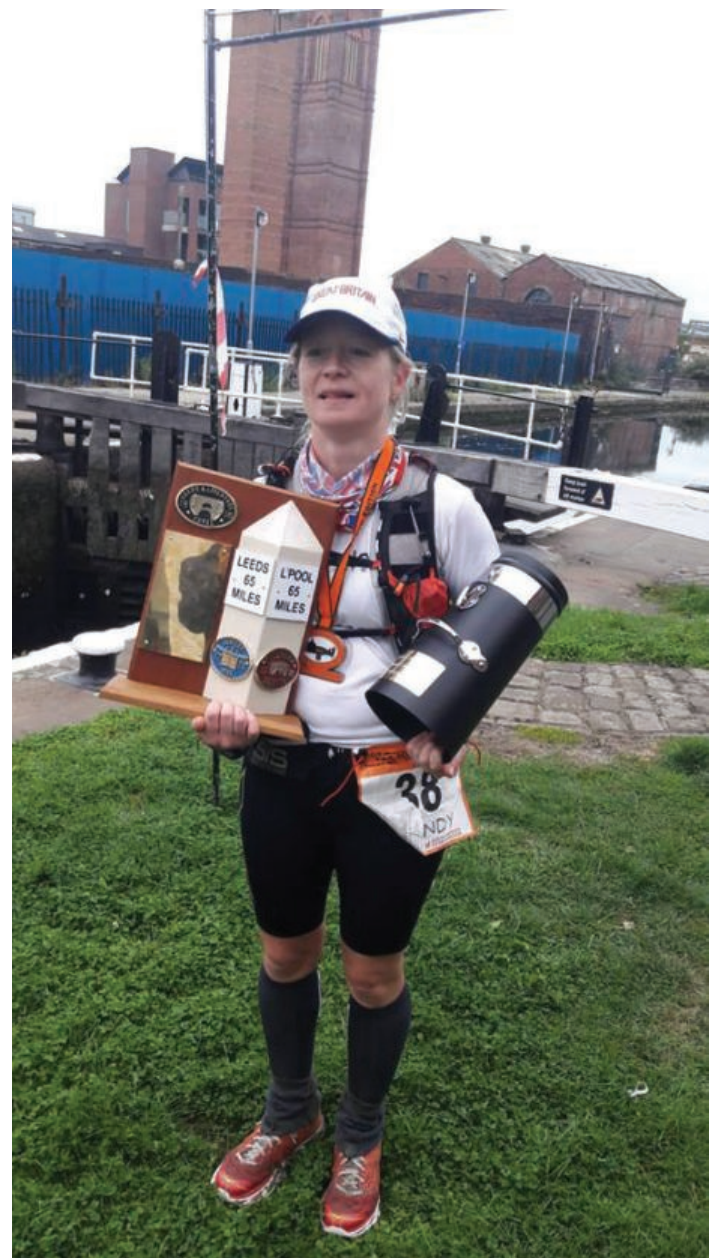
Once you leave Liverpool city centre the route is quite picturesque. I ran and chatted with Phil Vincent for a while, he was a valuable tour guide telling us the history of parts of the route, the supermarket James Bulger had been taken from, highlighting the white ¼ mile markers that stretch the whole length of the canal and tricky navigational spots to look out for. I explained I was in no hurry and would just plod out the race from start to finish sticking with Phil for the first 20 miles or so. We experienced a few heavy rain showers accompanied by sunshine and rainbows, no major navigation, it was surprisingly pleasant.

Having spent much of my childhood in a Lancashire town, Chorley, I was looking forward to mile 30 or so to see if I recognised anything. Sadly, when we lived around there, I didn't even know there was

a canal. Being well into the day we met plenty of dog walkers and family adventurers. Some would ask what the race was and reply in a thick Lancashire accent with comments such as, "you're off your nut, did you forget your medication today?"

There are officially only 2 tricky navigation points in this race. The first is at about 72 miles the second just after 80 miles. It was therefore a bit of a surprise when Alex called me as I was approaching the 50 mile aid station to advise of an unexpected detour where the towpath left the canal altogether and headed through a housing estate, dual carriageway and behind an exciting sounding Caribbean club (at 2pm in the afternoon). Thankfully he had done all the sussing out of the diversion and was able to talk me through it on the phone, at this point I was still convinced I would catch him, I was wrong.

Although I'd read the instructions and looked at google maps, at mile 72 I still found myself in the middle of a roundabout, which resembled a flower with tunnels coming off in every direction. After



New womens record holder Photo by Keith Godden

trying a couple that were clearly not right, I asked some local looking lads the way and thankfully they were spot on with their directions. Soon I was back plodding along the canal.

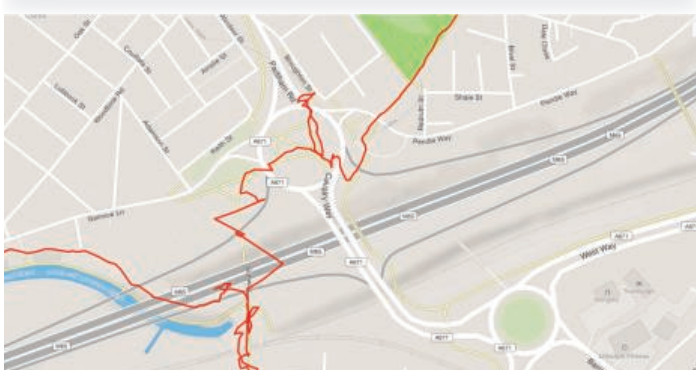
The next navigation point is just after 80 miles at Foulridge tunnel, this spot however caused no issues with clear directions in our race pack.

Leading into this race I was carrying a still slightly mangled toe from

KACR, I wasn't sure it had enough skin cover for 20 miles never mind 130, I had heavily taped and sudocrem'd it but by mile 80 it had enough, and I had to find a seat to take the tape off and hope for the best. Thankfully a few miles of hobbling and it settled down and I continued plodding on.

Alex pushed on through the night, he called to say he'd just passed Stu at 100 Miles but Stu fought back and soon retook his lead

That roundabout!



# Race Report



Photo by Keith Godden

and pushed on to put a gap between him and Alex finishing in 23.08 with Alex behind in 23.51, they both had great races and it was nice to see Stu take the win.

For me, the hours of darkness seemed to last forever, sleep monsters were plaguing me. I chewed away at the packet of caffeine bullets in my pocket, hoping to wake up. I bumped into the pub fall out, but they seemed harmless, then there was the figure dressed in dark clothes, with no light, along a very dark section of canal in the middle of the night. He seemed to panic as my light got closer to him and pinned himself against a fence, covering his eyes. I realised my head torch must be blinding him, “sorry

I forgot my light was so bright”, he relaxed when he heard my voice. “I thought you were the police chasing me” he said, “I’m just trying to find my way home.” I decided not to hang around to find out why and pushed on for a few of my quicker miles. I needed dawn, and coffee.

As I arrived at the 115-mile checkpoint begging for anything containing caffeine I was advised that James Bennet was in 3rd place, only 15 mins ahead of me, maybe if I could wake up, I could chase him down. With daylight came a few moments of hallucinations, red dog poo bins looked like bright orange LLCR crew hoodies, regrettable they were not crew, just dog poo bins. I

was also fascinated with what I thought was a giant eel swimming through the water, as I got closer, I realised my giant eel was the ripple of a tiny little black duck. I gave myself a wake-up slap for that one!

It was daylight, people were out jogging, walking their dogs, a beautiful morning in Leeds, that is unless you need to answer the call of nature. I debated with myself if I could wait, I asked some joggers if they’d seen the finish, a couple of kilometres they said, it couldn’t be too far, even the ¼ mile markers were in the high 120’s. Alas I couldn’t wait, I had to detour off the path and find a good bush. I must have lost 10 minutes here, but the alternative wasn’t worth thinking about. I hoped there wasn’t anyone right behind me who went past whilst I wasn’t looking.

Back on the towpath, looking for the finish to appear in front of me. Those familiar with canal running will know about the bridge numbers. At dinner the night before, Adrian in our crew had mentioned, “you’ll know you’re getting to the finish by the bridge numbers”, this conversation came back to me and I checked my map to see the final bridge number, it was 226, I was at 224, I must be just around the corner, I was not, the next bridge was 225a, followed by 225b, 225c, 225d, 225e, 225f, 225g, 225h. I was really starting to get frustrated when I turned the corner and saw the finish tent in sight.

Finally, I was there, 26hrs 45mins for first female, 4th overall and a new ladies course record. James had maintained his 15 minute lead on me and was just chilling at the finish. Sadly, I was nearly 3 hours behind Alex. A hug and a 2nd chimney trophy from the legendary Dick Kearn, a hot porridge prepared by Pam Storey and some warm dry clothes. A short walk to our hotel, just as the rain started once again, a quick shower and a snooze before the drive home.

6 days left to get my feet back in some state to wear a pair of sparkly heeled shoes and clear up any chaffing that might show under my wedding dress. Thankfully we were both fit and well enough to run from the wedding to the reception as planned along the Kennet and Avon canal and after 130 miles the weekend before there was almost room to breathe in my dress.

Overall, this race surprised me in many ways, the route was lovely and compared to parts of the Grand Union canal that are littered with rubbish, the Leeds-Liverpool canal is well maintained and very picturesque. The canal races are always well organised, I was amazed each time my drop bag beat me to a checkpoint. The volunteers are always helpful and friendly going out of their way to make sure you had everything you could possibly need and a little bit more.

Would I do it again? Absolutely!

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## Hardwolds 80

### Part 3

James Campbell

***On Saturday 24th November 2018, I took part in and completed the inaugural Hardwolds 80 Ultramarathon. A race of 80 miles starting in Hessle and finishing in Filey, travelling mostly along the Wolds Way National Trail. It was the furthest I've ever run.***

#### Wintringham – Potter Brompton (14km)



As we walked out of the CP, Mick and I both noted that we were now very cold. We looked ahead and saw that the path climbed away from the village so felt confident that we would soon warm up. I felt a lot better now that I was in fresh dry gloves and buffs, but I was worried about Dave and hoped he'd be OK.

We chatted along the back of Wintringham and Mick told me that if he finished the race, he had complete his 1,000 Hardmoors miles too. Despite having eaten almost a full pizza in the CP, I continued to feed on my baby food as we walked.

We got a jog on as the path headed into the woods behind Wintringham, I had an idea from comments made by people who had recce'd this section that there was a steep climb coming, I thought this was going to turn out to be exaggerated. I was wrong. As we arrived, I could see the grade was similar to that of Roseberry Topping, but with no steps and stretching upwards into the dark.

I walked slowly up the grade and Mick quickly pulled away. I was reluctant to use my poles as the straps were still damp from the rain and I didn't want them to wet my dry gloves. I was overtaken by two runners (I think one was Darren Barnes) and decided as a concession to take one of my poles out and use that up the climb.

The climb lasted for about 500m, I reached the top of the climb and stowed my pole. The path now tilted downhill, along the edge of the hillside along a bit of a raised berm surrounded by bushes. I ran along trying to close on the head torches in front but was slowed a bit from the soreness of my right little toe and now hotspots on the balls of both feet.

Eventually I reached a road, where the Wolds Way sign pointed both left and right, one pointed to Wolds Way via a campsite, the other Wolds Way on its own. I couldn't remember any mention of this from the route description (the route description does tell you what to do here, I've checked) and was about to consult the route via Suunto, when I spotted head torches in the tree line to my left.

I took the left route and found myself running along the edge of woodland on a path very similar to one of my local training routes in Castle Eden Dene. The familiarity with the surface allowed me to run for extended periods at a time, sometimes counting up to 360 seconds before short breaks.

The path emerged from the woodland onto a field edge path that was riddled with rabbit holes that were a constant injury risk. I used my hand torch to pick these out ahead of time. I could now see a group of five or six runners strung out a few metres apart some distance ahead and I focused on running intervals to gain ground on them. I was feeling the need to be in company on this stretch. I wanted to make sure that I kept moving well, I wasn't worried about getting lost, as I could now see the A64 down to the left and knew the path. A few twists and turns usually only changed direction at a road crossing or field edge and would likely be signposted well.

The path crossed a road and skirted around the edge of a plantation and I briefly caught Mick again as the path turned left into another field. The path then turned right and seemed to remain flat enough to run, after about 200m, a slight change in grade meant that running was hard as the slippery surface meant that I kept sliding downhill to my left and it was difficult to maintain safe footing.

After about 20 minutes, the path turned left on a steep downhill, where there was a gate to pass through a field wall, that slowed the group ahead down. I caught onto the back of the group and realised it contained Matthew Swan and Keith Wise as well as Mick, the other part of the group appeared to have pulled further ahead.

We ran through another slippery sloped field and emerged onto a road. I used the opportunity of a decent surface to turn off my head torch and use moonlight to run steadily on the downhill section. As we left the road and entered another section of woods, I remember Keith saying to me that he had "Run out of run" and was walking it in. I did some maths and replied, "We've just done 100km, 62 miles, only 18 miles to go and we've got 7 hours left to do it in. If we can't do that, we shouldn't be out here."



Matthew and I plodded along ahead of Keith as the path rejoined the road and went downhill, before taking another right cut across a short field to another road where there was a line of crew cars. I recognised one car as belonging to Keith's wife Kristy and remembered that she was one of those looking after Dave. I asked her how he was and she told me that they'd got him warmed up and he was fine. This made me feel so much less worried and I thanked her and moved on up the road.

Further up the road we passed Wayne Armstrong in another crew car as we turned up a steep hill. Matthew pulled slightly ahead as he climbed faster than me, going up or down a hill was now quite painful due to the blisters, but I decided that there was not long left and cracked on.

The path took us through another bit of woodland then out pointing downhill along a lane that turned right. We passed a pair of runners that included Mark Baines before turning right onto a sandy path. I could see some buildings up ahead and suggested to Matthew that we try running some 30/30 intervals but after the second interval I ran out of steam and chucked another Chia Charge down my neck to try and recover some energy.

We crossed the road by the farm buildings, that marked the end of this section at 17h:55m.



## Potter Brompton – Staxton Wold (5km)

Once across the road, the sandy track continued. I was struggling to maintain the pace that Matthew was setting and started to lag behind. As I dropped off, Mark Baines caught me up at a jog. The lady he had been running with had pulled out at Potter Brompton and got into her crew car so he was pushing on alone. He was quickly past me and a minute or so later overtook Matthew's head torch.

The next road crossing brought me back on familiar territory, this was Ganton, where I'd run the route into Filey in August. Back then it took me around two and a half hours. Tonight I had around 5h:40m to do around 24km so in my head, I was now feeling very confident despite the amount of climbing I knew was packed into the next 5k.

I jogged through the sleeping hamlet of Ganton then walked onto the track that tilted uphill after it crossed the stream at the end of the road. I kept a steady walking pace for about 200m until it dipped behind a hedge, one of the few places on the Wolds Way, where I thought it was easy to make a navigation error.

As I entered the new field, I saw that Matthew's head torch was almost at the other end of the field where the path turned right and headed up the hill. A climb that goes on for around 2 km and gains around 100m, I prepared myself by taking on board more Chia Charge and getting my poles ready. I was grateful that the surface of the field was still nice and grassy and not as thick with mud as I'd expected it would be at this time of year.

As I turned the corner and headed uphill, I looked back along the trail and saw a pair of head torches about 50m behind me. I climbed at a steady pace, taking care not to put too much pressure on my increasingly sore blisters and aiming to keep moving as close to 5km/h as I could. According to my maths, I had 5h:30 minutes to do less than 24 km so in theory, that pace should see me finish within 24 hours. Especially given that I hoped to be able to pick the pace up on the downhill from Folkton Brow to Muston.

I climbed slowly following the path as it zig zagged across the side of the hill following the field edges. I had passed the Wolds Way signpost that said Filey was 13 miles away, but knew that could not be relied upon, as the final stage of the race took a circuitous route around Filey.

I was now on the penultimate straight uphill section and the pair of head torches behind me were slightly closer, but still a decent distance behind. I could still see Matthew in front and another light just beyond him.

As the path took another left turn onto Binnington Brow, I was caught by Brian Cutmore and Stephen Gibson. We chatted as we moved on together, I told them my feet were in bits and I think they both echoed the sentiment about their own feet. They pulled away from me as the road crossing at Staxton Wold Farm came into view and I took a moment to pop a couple more paracetamol and some Pro-Plus.

I crossed the road, looking forward to a nice tarmac surface on this hill, it was another one I'd run intervals on in the summer. I had nothing left here, the hard surface seemed to put more pressure on my blisters. I found myself moving very slowly and leaning on my poles. Time seemed to stretch out, seconds seemed to pass like minutes. I saw Brian and Stephen turn a corner at the radar station about 300m and it seemed to take me ages to get there. I finally arrived at Staxton Wold on 19h:11m. I knew this was slower than planned, but now I had a good downhill surface to run on.

## Staxton Wold – Flixton Wold (4km)

The lights of the radar station illuminated the road perfectly, so I was able to turn my head torch off for awhile. I started running downhill and maintained what felt like a strong pace. Suunto seemed to indicate I was moving around 7m:45s – 8m:30/km which I was happy with. I didn't stow my poles, because I knew that there was another steep climb at the bottom of this hill, I just ran along on my

# Race Report



battered feet until the road ran out, then flipped my head torch back on and proceeded on the rougher path as fast as I could.

I could see Brian and Stephen's head torches not too far ahead, I'd clearly closed the gap and I could no longer see anyone behind me.

I arrived at the foot of the next steep climb, Brian and Stephen some mere metres in front of me, sadly the reason for this was that they were about 10m above me and moving slowly up the climb. I poled my way up and caught them at the top. I looked down and saw at least two head torches starting the climb.

Usually, at this point in a night section, I'd try and bring out my mad competitive side to move me forward by making a target of not being caught by anyone behind, I felt utterly broken. I managed to maintain the same walk/jog pace as Brian and Stephen moving across a long straight section. I told them that the next bit dropped into a Wold where the eye would be drawn to following the lie of the land sticking to the floor of the valley. The correct path followed the fence line up the other side, down again then back up before a very long drag to the CP.

We dropped down to the valley floor, the steep descent being very painful on the feet and predictably, Brian and Stephen pulled away from me up the other side. I was now in a trance, this was turning into a grim death march, something I really didn't want to happen.

I could see the lights of the CP from almost 600m away, I saw Brian and Stephen pull further in front and it was all I could do to just keep on moving. I kept motivated by reminding myself I only had all but finished the race, I just needed to keep on top of the cut-off times. I was muttering "Just keep moving" to myself over and over again.

I knew part of this was that it was almost 4am, I'd been awake for over 24 hours, this was the natural part of the day when I would be at a low ebb. As I pushed up the bank to the CP, I remember seeing a dog in a high viz jacket near the field edge and a marshall wearing what appeared to be a great coat.

I was glad to find that this was no hallucination upon my arrival and I was greeted into the CP by Paul Atkinson with words of encouragement at 19h:59m. I replied with my more realistic assessment of things, which was essentially,

I've got 9 miles to go in four hours and I'm not going fast enough. I need to get a move on.

I walked straight through the CP, ignoring food, drinks and any temptation to stop. A marshall came over and walked with me, offering me food, offering to run back, get it and bring it to me, but I declined. I told him I had what I needed in my pocket and I'd eat when I'd caught some time up. I could tell he knew I was acting against all perceived wisdom, at this point I was in the stubborn, pig headed, thick skinned rhino mode that Natalie hates so much. I was going to catch up on time and finish this, no matter how much it hurt.

## Flixton Wold – Muston (7km)



As I left the road and back onto the muddy path down to Raven Dale, I counted four head torches ahead of me on the same path and on the ridge at the other side of Camp Dale, I could see a line of six or seven.

My own head torch was starting to fade rapidly but I was using my poles to drive me along but I couldn't get my hand torch out. I tried to close the distance to those in front, I still felt like I was getting little or no speed for a lot of effort. The state of my feet was starting to concern me, so I started repeating a mantra of "Your feet do not hurt" over and over again. It didn't really work, but it focused my mind onto a task.

It seemed to take forever to reach the bottom of the valley where the path turned right, but I'd closed on a pair of lights in front. I reached into my pocket and took a good swig of baby food on board and had a good drink as I walked across the valley floor and started up the steep hill on the other side.

Once on top of the ridge, which in the summer had been covered in sunflowers, I got a run on, it seemed to be drizzling again, which I was entirely indifferent to. I looked behind and saw a pair of head torches and by surprise, the competitive me came out and I got moving to try and get away. I was soon at the top of the steep descent off the ridge and started to launch myself down it in pursuit of the runners I could see in front. I hadn't gone far before I

realised that the surface was both rutted and slippery as hell so I slowed and took it easy.

At the bottom, I got a jog on, I was now almost at a gate that meant I'd joined Stocking Dale, which was part of one of my regular 10 miles routes I like to run when I am staying in Filey.

As I turned left into Stocking Dale, I was caught and overhauled by Keith Wise and Nicola Burston. I took a walk break, marching on as fast as I could manage, I now had very familiar landmarks to gauge progress and this helped.

I was almost on top of a group in front and I reckoned that if I got a run on across the field as we exited Stocking Dale, I might catch them. After that, even with a fading head torch, I'd be on a farm track and could move faster.

The plan almost worked and at the far corner of the field, I caught the group and overtook one of it's number as the path became the farm track. I was fast walking now, with some renewed energy behind a pair of runners. I was waiting until we got to the top of this hill then I was going to motor down into Muston. I took more food on board and more drink. I also remember adjusting my clothes and feeling a nasty pack sore on my back, "bugger it, I'm nearly done" I thought and pushed on to the road crossing at Folkton Brow.

We crossed the road together. I had forgotten that once over the road, the path continued to rise for a short while into the field, I continued walking and the pair in front pulled away. As I crested the hill, I got a run on, 25m, 50m, 75m, closing the distance on the pair in front, looking up for the electricity pylon that marked the point where the path cut through a hedge, easy to miss and continue on down the field if you weren't alert. I saw it and the pair in front cut through just ahead of me.

I stopped to climb the small mound into the field, it felt like a superhuman effort. Another swig from my bottle and running again. I caught the pair in front at the gate to the next field. My poles were now stowed and the hand torch out. My head torch almost useless, so I turned it off. From experience, I knew that with a few minutes rest, I'd get a little bit of time at full brightness when I turned it back on.

The path down the field was muddy and rutted, each step hurt my blisters but I pushed on, keeping somewhere close to the pair in front. On a normal 10 mile run this tends to come around the 5 mile mark. I can run Folkton Brow to Muston in around 12 minutes, this time it took me nearly 30 minutes.

I was grateful that the farmer had taken down all of the wire fences that separated this field into sections, as I didn't have to slow for the gates and I hoped it also meant that there were no cows in the field. I could now pick out the gate at the bottom of the field with my torch and I was on the final flat.

I noticed the pair in front change tack suddenly. I also

noticed strange dark lumps on the ground ahead. I flashed my torch on them and belatedly realised I was right in the midst of a herd of cows. I did a jog trot as carefully and quietly as I could, I'm always nervous of cows. The cows in this field once blocked me from entering one of the gates and I had to hop the barbed wire fence to get around them.

I eventually got out of the field and into the short wooded section, the head torch went back on and thankfully threw out enough brightness to get me to the road into Muston, where I turned it off again.

I passed Roy MacDougall somewhere here, but I only have the vaguest of memory of speaking to him. I walked along the kerb into the village and got a shuffle-like jog on past a group of crew cars waiting for their runners. I dug my poles out for the steps into the next field and checked my time. I'd hit Muston at 21h:47m. In my head my mind was screaming "HOW LONG DID THAT TAKE YOU!!!!?"

Rational James kicked in and worked out 7 km in 1h:48m with 7km of mostly tarmac to go. I had 2h:13m to cover a distance I'd just done in 1h:48m, surely I would make it...

## Muston – Finish (7km)



I climbed up the steep steps out of Muston onto the short field crossing before the main road between Filey and Scarborough. I was wondering how much the steps on the way to Filey Brigg would hurt if those few steps had caused my legs that much pain. I was caught mid-thought by Keith Wise overtaking me, he must have stopped to meet Kristy in Muston, I tried to keep up with him, we crossed the road together, before he pulled ahead of me climbing over the muddy hill in the next field.

Descending the hill was slippery and treacherous, I was determined not to fall and injure myself this close to the finish. Eventually I made it out of the field and noted that the path was now marked with glow sticks.

I was caught by the Abbott/Dayne/Pickering group as we turned right out of the field and walked to the point where the Wolds Way turned left directly through Filey to the

# Race Report

Brigg. We turned right for our lap of the town.

Andy, Joanne and Jude pulled away from me quickly as they jogged up the hill away from Filey. I walked using my poles and only ran when I reached the top of the hill. I managed to run all the way down it, over the road and back onto the Centenary Way towards Muston Grange caravan park. This track is mostly a gentle downhill all the way to the golf club, so I ran (or did what passed for running) as fast as my legs would move. Soon I needed to turn the head torch back on, it was only giving a tiny pool of light.

There were more glow sticks marking the path and I pushed on down the hill. I was vaguely aware that my watch had just beeped at me with a different noise to its usual lap beep. I ignored it and pushed on.

Over the railway line, past the donkey field, more glow sticks and another weird beep. I looked at my watch and tried to read its face. "Low Memory" it said, I tried to remember what happened when the memory got full, I reckoned I was only an hour from the finish, my watch was showing 22h:29m an hour and half left. I decided to wait until I was on the prom to work out what to do with the watch, I pushed on. Now at the top of the steps each step down excruciating and finally, finally I was on Filey prom. I stopped my watch. At least the activity would be saved, then I restarted it. I remembered that if the memory was full, it started overwriting any unsynced workouts with the new one and promptly stopped it again.

Time to go old fashioned, I looked at the clock face, 06:43. That's 1h:17m to 8am and the race started about 5 minutes late.

The wind was blowing off the sea and it was high tide. Water was crashing against the sea wall and waves were breaking over the top soaking me with spray. I could see head torches going out and back along the Brigg. I knew from over a decade of holidaying in Filey that even at toddler pace, stopping at every kiosk and attraction, it should only take 45 minutes max to reach Coble Landing, so I walked, just soaking in the grey, wild dawn and the fact that I was going to finish this race.

I passed all the closed seafront cabins, enjoying my solo promenade on broken feet, tired legs and a hungry body. I reached the bottom of Cargate Hill and saw some runners turning to go up. I moved on further and reached the steps at the bottom of the Brigg at 7am. I climbed the steps onto the Brigg painfully and met several runners coming the other way, including Matthew Swan, Brian Cutmore and Stephen Gibson. I remember Brian telling me that I had a full hour to go.

I walked painfully up the slippery path then along the cliff top and down the next set of painful steps, this was mentally very, very tough. I'd had to walk past the finish and now I was heading away from the finish and up and down stupid, painful steps.

Across the yacht club slip and up the next steps, slowly and painfully, another runner coming down, I had barely enough energy to acknowledge him, but forcing myself to, we exchanged Well Done's then he was gone, on his way to his finish.

I was now crawling up towards the Brigg proper, I could see a tent by the Cleveland Way trailhead, just past the Wolds Way (Hessle 79 Miles) signpost, I started trotting, then had to walk. I heard a familiar voice from the tent. It was Rod Collier. I'd last seen Rod exactly 24 hours before collecting drop bags. I checked my watch, it said 07:15. I said to Rod "45 minutes to finish?" and he told me to get a move on. I turned and ran down the hill passing another runner, an early morning dog walker then down the horrid torrid steps onto the slipway, passing a very broken looking runner coming up them. Did I look that broken? Possibly, probably.

I jogged across the slip and hauled myself up the next steps on my poles. I started trotting down the Brigg and saw Andy Nesbit and Emma Giles coming the other way, big beaming smiles and Well Done's exchanged. I was so pleased to see they were going to finish, as I reached the top of the steps leaving the Brigg, the best surprise of all, Dave Cook and Dee Boubarda. I thought my eyes were playing tricks, when I'd last seen Dave at Wintringham, he was all but hypothermic. Now here he was about to finish. When Kristy said he was OK, I thought she meant he was OK but had retired.

Seeing Dave gave me a huge boost. If he could come back from that and almost catch me, I could bloody well finish strong too. I passed another broken runner on the steps and stumbled out onto Ravine Road, then bobbled along Beach Road. I saw a marshall at the bottom of Cargate Hill, I asked him how long to cut off and he told me a good half hour, I crawled up Cargate Hill, crossed the road and got a short trot on.

I passed the window of our B&B and looked inside, no sign of life. I shuffled on, heard footsteps pounding behind me, a pair of runners and their crew sprinting, actual sprinting and they were gone. Simon Middleton and Chris Price hurtled past me and on to the marshall I could see in the distance at the corner, I followed them about a minute later, the marshall telling me where the front door to the Sea Cadet Hall was. I stumbled in, stopping the clock at 23h:41m:31s!

I'd done it! Someone cut my tracker off and I was directed to some seats, my medal and T-Shirt was presented to me by Karen Dove, about 5 seconds before I decided to collapse on the floor. I couldn't even collapse properly as my knee had painfully seized. I had just got back onto the chair when Natalie appeared all smiles and smothering me with kisses.

My brain was starting to shut down a little, all the adrenaline was bleeding away. I know people brought me

food and looked after me. I remember it being around 8am, breakfast time at the B&B but I wasn't hungry, I just wanted to lie down. I told Natalie to go get some breakfast while I just let my body adjust.

While I was there, I got to see Andy, Emma, Dave, Dee, Lauryn, Sean and Peter finish. It was a great feeling seeing people who'd been part of the adventure complete it themselves.

When Natalie returned, I was more alive and I hobbled back to the B&B for shower and sleep.

## Final Thoughts

From getting onto the coach at Filey, to arriving at the finish and being looked after, this was a perfect event. I think that speaks absolute volumes for Jon, Shirley and all of the people who work hard to put Hardmoors on. Especially when you consider that this was the inaugural running of the race.

If there were teething problems, I didn't see them and from a runner's perspective, that's the most important thing.



Thank you to everyone involved in the organisation, running and support of this race. Thanks to everyone I ran with, you were all awesome and I hope I see you at future events. Gatherings like this only serve to remind me of and reinforce the lifelong friendships I've made through trail running and Hardmoors events in particular.

*Well done to all involved, you rock!*

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Amy

# SOX 3-Day Trail Run 2018

Sonja Otto



The weekend of the 10th to 12th of August played host to the SOX 3-Day Trail Run, an event that is widely considered as the most diverse 3-day trail run in South Africa. SOX, short for Southern Cross Trail run takes place on the Garden Route, with most of the route laid out within the South Africa National Park's protected property.

The first day of this stage race is run on pristine hiking trails in the mountains, between the Fynbos (literally translated as 'Finebush', the natural shrubland vegetation unique to South Africa). Day 2 takes place in the tranquillity of the lush, indigenous forest and Day 3 takes runners along the stunning Garden Route coastal paths with a brief beach run and an exciting river crossing on a 60m floating bridge across the Touw River, a highlight for many of the runners. Or be brave and swim across! Due to the sensitivity of the area, the entries are limited to only 500 runners. There is also an option of a single day Trail Run Circles in the Forest which forms part of day two, the Forest Stage of the SOX 3 Day Trail Run. The Circles in the Forest route is sandwiched between the Outeniqua mountains and the Indian Ocean and offers a unique mixture of indigenous forests with Cape Fynbos and temperate forest hiking paths with 3 distance options, a 10km, 17km or 30km route.

We'd like to share some feedback from one of the runners, Allison Lamb,

"The Southern Cross 3-day trail run has been on my bucket list for a while."

### Day 1 - the Mountain day

The 1st day was the mountain day and while the SOX

runners ran up to the single track higher in the mountains, the SOX Lite crew meandered up and down the undulating jeep track along the foothills, passing giant ferns and streams. I had a very chilled run, walking the hills and running the flats, thoroughly enjoying quieting my monkey mind. This day had a fast, downhill finish which required lots of concentration not to experience a speed wobble and fall flat on my face. Joy of joys at the finish line was vetkoek for lunch, which I practically inhaled, and then hopped onto the bus to go back to the race village.

### Day 2 - the Circles in the forest day

An even earlier start to this day took us deep into the Millwood forest. Today's route took us on gorgeous single track over ancient tree trunks; rock hopping through streams, with a very muddy uphill finish. Burgers, coffee and beer at the finish at Millwood was a very welcome second breakfast and the early finish meant there was lots of time to explore the Wilderness and its vicinity in the afternoon. In hindsight I wished I'd booked the sports massages on offer as calves and quads were tired from the day before and by late afternoon, I was pretty stiff.

### Day 3 - The Coastal day

I woke extra early and I was really nervous for the last day. My legs were complaining at the unaccustomed abuse (I really must do back-to-back run training for multi-day events) and I needed to coax another 16 km out of them. This was soon forgotten as we started running for the first 6km along the beach during low tide. It was simply

spectacular running, with cliffs to my right and the ocean to my left. Some technical rocky sections took us down to Wilderness beach and around the lagoon. Boardwalks along the river led us to the Wilderness National Park with a monster climb to the viewpoint (luckily, I had loaded up on jelly babies at the water point just before this so I was in good spirits). Then a Pont crossing where some poor tourists, who just wanted to get across, landed up getting stuck ferrying a never-ending stream of runners. Finally a flat, grassy track to the 60 m floating bridge across the Touw River to Ebb-and-Flow National Park. What an epic finish! I ran across the river to a high five from Hano and a medal from Sonja.

I loved everything about this race from the times I was alone inside my head, to the inspirational stories from people I met along the way, turning a corner and seeing Sonja and Hano always smiling and high-fiving. Feeling tired and then finding a well stocked aid station where a handful of jelly babies, cheese and onion chips, a salty boiled potato and I was hundreds again. Reliving it all again at the evening photo and video show. Put this race on your bucket list! Enter at [www.soxtrail.run](http://www.soxtrail.run)

## EVENT INFORMATION AT A GLANCE:

EVENT TYPE:	3-day stage trail run
DATE:	Friday 9th – Sunday 11th August 2019
VENUE:	SANParks Ebb & Flow Rest Camp, Wilderness, Western Cape
FORMAT:	3-day stage trail run with a 1-day option the Circles in the Forest
FOCUS:	The event offers you the ultimate in trail terrain options. Run on pristine hiking trails in the mountain on day one, experience the tranquillity of the lush, indigenous forest on day two and finish with day three, along the stunning coastline of the Garden Route. Family friendly with a kid's zone.

WEBSITE: [www.soxtrail.run](http://www.soxtrail.run)

FACEBOOK: [www.facebook.com/SOXTrailRun](https://www.facebook.com/SOXTrailRun)

INSTAGRAM: [www.instagram.com/soxtrailrun](https://www.instagram.com/soxtrailrun)

QUERIES: [janine.swart@csm.com](mailto:janine.swart@csm.com)

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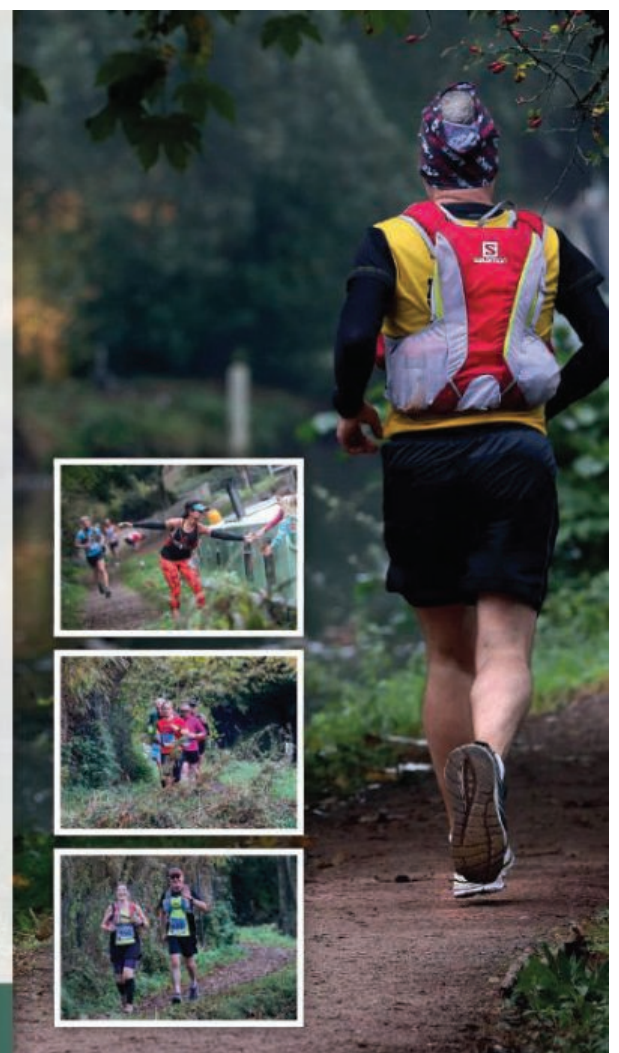
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## Jackpot 100 Mile race

Kit Kakadelas Brazier



The Jackpot 100 Mile race celebrated its 6th year. I have run every year at Jackpot and it is one of my favorite races. This year was probably the best ever. I ran the 48 hour race this year which started on Friday, February 15, 2019. The race started at 8 am. Before the start of the race we gathered for a big group photo and last minute race announcements. The Race Directors, Ken and

Stephanie Rubeli are really supportive of ultra runners and make sure all the details of the race are perfect for the best race experience ever. Sadly they cannot control the weather, the winds and rain took a toll on the runners. We had some pretty heavy winds on Friday that continued into the night, then we got rain.

What is so special about Jackpot are the runners and volunteers. Since we

run a 2.5 mile loop 40 times you get to know the people on the course. You get to see the elite runners and have the opportunity to talk to so many people you end up with numerous best friends. Sharing stories and listening to other runners makes for plenty of enjoyable laps.

The course runs around a beautiful park that has a lake and a multitude of birds and ducks of different species. You can also see the lights from the strip in Las Vegas and in the distance you can see the snow capped mountains. The sky was mostly clear until the dark clouds rolled in and the rain came. Being in the desert you need to dress warmly because it gets cold at night. The aid station had everything from chips, to hot chocolate, Top Ramen, ravioli, candy, potatoes, fruit, all different types of drinks. It was truly a banquet. The T-shirts are designed by Stephane, they are so amazing and unique, the best designs ever. The medals and buckles are also incredible and crafted with so much detail. There were quite a few of us that ran through the night and kept each other going in those early hours. It was always nice seeing someone's flashlight in the distance and then when the sun came up I couldn't believe I was still moving.

Of course I was walking but I didn't quit, I kept walking. By 8 am the next morning I was at 75 miles. The elite runners and other 100 mile runners, marathoners and 6 hr runners also started the next day - so there were 250 more friends to make. To be in a race where there are so many cheerleaders helping you reach your goal is a lifetime memory. Everyone wants you to finish and reach your goal. The love and positivity from this race are something I will always cherish. This race truly defines the ultra running community. I will be 67 next year and plan to toe the line once again.







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# Jackpot Ultra Running Festival

Jennifer Hatcher



Photo courtesy Run2Improve Photography

What Happens In Vegas Stays in Vegas has been the infamous tag line for the tourist industry in the area for over 15 years. When you run the Jackpot Running Festival this slogan no longer comes into play for most. We go home with sore feet, legs and parts of our bodies hurting that we never even knew we had. We also go home with the memories of lasting friendships made sharing mile after mile. There is something about ultra running that connects us with each other no matter what our backgrounds are. We are equal irrespective of our pace or finish times. We encourage each other, tell jokes and stories for many reasons. We want to know each other and we also want to help each other succeed and keep each other moving forward no matter what.

This year was my fourth year participating in The Jackpot Ultra Running Festival, Ken and Stephanie Rubeliare are the race directors. I have participated in over 130 marathons and Ultras since 2012 and must say they know how to host an event.

I drove over from Hurricane, Utah on Thursday afternoon to pick up my packet and I stayed at the Fiesta Henderson casino that evening, which is only about 3 miles from the venue. I woke up Friday morning and headed to the race

site. The 48 hour run starts on Friday morning at 8am. I arrived at the race venue about an hour early and there are so many areas on the course to set up your own personal aid station. The course is so close to the parking lot, if bad weather is predicted or surprises you, which it has done in the past, you can always use your vehicle as your personal aid station.

Speaking of weather surprises this event can bring all sorts of weather. My first year was in 2016 in which the daytime temperatures were in the 70's, to some 70 may sound pleasant but out west where that sun is hot and there is no shade it can feel 20 degrees warmer. Ken and Stephanie are always prepared for any kind of weather, when it's hot be ready for snow cones and popsicles as you pass their main aid station during those higher temperatures to help cool you off. Fast forward to 2017 and we were treated with a storm the weather channel actually called 'Lucifer'. This storm brought 40-50 mph winds and heavy rain pretty much throughout the entire event. Late in the evening of the first night the course actually had to be re-routed due to flooding. Another example of how wonderful these race directors are, they come up with a solution for any diversity while keeping the runner's safe.

Now back to this year's event, it was predicted to be cold and super windy with 25-40 mph winds. My race began at 8am and for the first 2 hours it was actually pleasant. Many of us were discussing how we were hoping the forecast was wrong but we jinxed that immediately. Within 10-15 minutes of discussing this with others on the course in came the brutal winds! They were relentless, and completely drained me. I have been battling some nerve issues in my right leg and foot for the past year and not sure if it is stemming from the damage done prior to my L4-S1 Spinal Fusion in mid June of 2015, in the past couple events it seems to hit me around mile 20 of a run. I decided to just power walk this event and it actually kept the unbearable pain that I've been experiencing at bay. It's funny how some volunteers can read your mind when you come through the aid station. Most of the time they are used to me coming through with a smile and a joke or two but I was so cold it was hard to even make eye contact. I was asking Lee if they had anything hot like grilled cheese and as I said it he was already holding the container with freshly made grilled cheese towards me. I had been thinking about it for 10 minutes leading into the aid station, it was really like mental telepathy. By 1am I was completely frozen and my body was ready for a rest. I was signed up for the 48 hour event and I knew I had plenty of time to complete my goal of 100 miles. I had only hit 52.50 miles but decided to head to the Marriott where I had a room for the evening. I took a shower, kicked up my legs on some pillows and was in and out of sleep for about 6 hours. My body core had gotten so cold during this first 17 hours I found my teeth chattering through the night as I tried to get some rest. This didn't help my mind from wandering as I reclined, trying to convince myself that 52.5 miles was great, "heck you just did 50 miles last weekend on the some semi technical trails in a lot less time so you're good.....this is a timed event, there is no DNF so whatever you finish is a finish.....if you get back at 7am at the rate you're going now you will be going through another cold night", the mind tends to try to talk some of us out of our real goals.

I got back to the venue around 7am again to another brutal cold and windy morning, and all the other events were going to start in about an hour. Off I went, no longer trying to talk myself out of things instead catching up with all those others that started 23 hours before with me. It's funny that when we get with others that have been out there with us we realize every single one of us is battling with the same little guy or girl on our shoulder telling us we have done enough, its cold and windy, my feet hurt, I have too many blisters, I'm proud of what I have already accomplished. Then we start talking about who ran through the night, who got rest, and mostly how freaking cold and unbearable the temperatures and winds were.

Around mile 68 ish I was surprised by a friend who was a huge influence on me as a 17-18 year old. I had not seen her in 33 years and we lost touch for 30 of those years. She



even showed up with fresh McDonald's French fries! If you haven't had McDonald's French fries during an ultra it is a must have. I knew I had plenty of time to finish the event for my 100 mile finish so it was worth it to me to lay down on the concrete under a pavilion and kick my legs up in the air and visit for about a half hour or so. That was super uplifting for at least one lap.....but then I started

spelunking into the pain cave and power walking beside many others down there with me. Some caves are beautiful but the pain cave is not one of those. We try our best to pull each other out but then there are times we just stay together and crawl a little deeper. I don't remember ever being so deep in the pain cave as this year. I think the wind and the cold made it much worse than the wind and the rain in 2017 even with a storm called Lucifer. At times I wished I had my caving helmet, harness and rope to attach onto anything to keep me from going in any deeper. I finally saw the exit but still had 12 more miles to go. These would be the longest 12 miles of my life but the nice thing was there was a warming tent in which we could stop during each loop and get ourselves warmed up a bit. I did this on a few laps but then convinced myself it was best to just keep moving forward and be finished. Finally the last two laps were in sight. As soon as I finished I headed to the heating tent to try to get a little rest before a 2 hour drive home. Female winner of the USATF 100 mile Road Champion Race Connie Gardner was getting some rest as well as a few

# Race Report



others. I couldn't rest in a chair so I got myself down onto the floor so I could try to kick my legs and feet upwards to get the blood flowing again. This didn't last long so here I am trying to crawl off the floor, getting up was more of an accomplishment than finishing 100 miles. I remember Connie peeking up from under her cover and asking if I was done, I remember saying it's hard to rest on the floor so I'm going to try to rest in my car before driving home. She asked where home was and I told her. It didn't register with me until the next day that it was Connie who was in the tent talking to me. She also set the female course record that day.

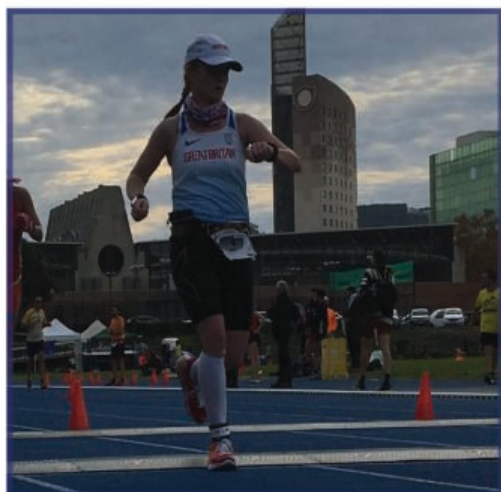
The best things about a short looped event is that all runners see each other so often. It doesn't matter if they are elites or back of the packers, everyone encourages and treats each other like equals. When someone sees another suffering they are so supportive and speak positive words hoping to help them along. It works! I'm the type that is usually smiling but there were a couple times when I just held my head down watching my feet take one step forward at a time. Trying to keep the wind from blowing into my eyes making them more tired and I would hear, "Keep it up Jenn", "way to hang in there", words from folks I barely knew as well as words from the elite runners taking the time to encourage all.

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A group of runners participating in a marathon on a paved road lined with trees. The runners are wearing various athletic gear, including hats, sunglasses, and race bibs. The scene is bright and sunny, with a warm, golden light filtering through the trees.

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## Lone Star 100 Race Report

By Alyson Kirk



Franklin Mountains State Park is only a fifteen minute drive from my in-laws' house. My husband and I often visit El Pasoin in the fall, winter, and spring to visit family. We love Franklin Mountains State Park and have hiked North Franklin Mountain (the race highpoint) many, many times. I always thought this place would be an awesome venue for an ultra event. In 2017, we noticed that race director

extraordinaire Rob Goyen held the inaugural Lone Star 100 here. I thought to myself, "It's on!!!" Full of excitement, I talked my husband into running it too.

Somewhat to our surprise, this race was tougher than we anticipated. Steep climbs, rugged terrain and the gnarliest limestone hill imaginable near the start/finish is repeated six times. It's a great place to hold a race in February with generally



warm mountain temperatures, and for anyone who likes lots of elevation gain/change, this race is for you. This race is unforgiving, technical, and definitely not for everyone. After running it the first year, finishing as the overall women's winner, I thought to myself, "Never again, that race was just too hard and rugged."

A few weeks later I caught myself with the all-too-familiar ultrarunner's amnesia, thinking about running it the following year and that "maybe it wasn't all that bad." A few months later my husband and I are signed up for the 2019 event; funny how that happens.

The 2019 event was the exact same course but my race experience was different. I ran the 100 miler and my husband ran the 100k. My plans were no pacer or crew - only drop bags for the race. I liked the 2019 raceway more than the 2018 race. I was fitter and faster and it didn't seem as hard as the year prior. TROT had just added a 200 mile event this year, which I can most simply say, is insanity.

When I would run by one of the 200 milers I was in awe of what they were undertaking. I finished the 2019 event the women's winner again, taking roughly 1:21 off my time from the previous year. My husband John kicked butt in the 100k and finished 2nd place.

I did make one mistake in this year's race that I paid for dearly. Never try something new (especially nutrition-wise) on race day. I battled digestive issues for the duration of the last 33 plus mile loop. Ugh!

The 2019 weather was perfect. I felt like I really lucked out given the previous days' weather. Rob and the TROT team put on a great race and some incredible volunteers



are out there supporting the race. The course is pretty unique. The race tours some incredibly harsh yet beautiful desert terrain and the views from the summit of North Franklin, visited three times during the day and night, are hard to beat. One thing you can almost always expect on this course at some point during the race is there will be wind - lots of wind.

Until next year Lone Star!



# 16 - 22 Settembre 2019

# Farm Daze 24ish – A Roadie Braves the Trail

Amy (Van Kampen) Mower



Getting Prize

I recently completed the longest race of my life, 144 hours at Across the Years in Phoenix, Arizona. It was a huge race for me, I'd prepared for it all year in 2018 with training of 110-130 miles and a focus on multi-day. After finishing the race and recovering for a few weeks, I found myself re-examining my approach to ultrarunning.

ATY was big, goal oriented and focused. It appears I set an American age group record there (we shall see, once the course is audited). It took almost everything out of me. I had been signed up for 6 days at the Dome in August but after ATY I really started thinking about what I want out of Ultrarunning. Big goals are great, records are fabulous but they are all consuming and take so much out of you. I realized at the moment, what I really wanted was fun and passion. I wanted new, I wanted adventure, I wanted freedom, discovery and camaraderie. Sure, I wanted to test myself, if I can win or do well at something, that's great but at the end of the day that's not why I do this. I do it for the self discovery, for the relationships and for the experiences.

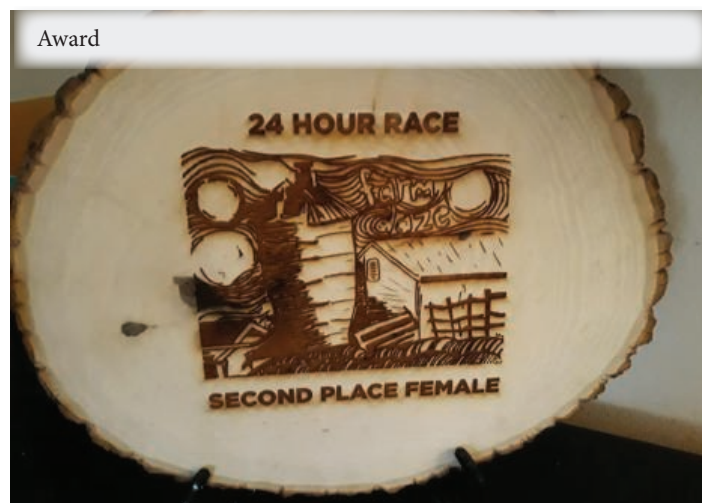
For a few weeks after ATY I was in a funk, running seemed pointless and hard. I was having trouble figuring out my focus or goals, or what I wanted to get out of this whole thing. My next race I was signed up for besides a couple of hundreds in the spring was 6 Days at the Dome. As much as that might be a major possibility for big miles and a chance to run with some elites, the idea of an indoor track race did not ignite anything like passion in me.

After mulling on the whole "why do I do this" question, I ultimately decided to drop out from the Dome and focus on the new, different, and fun.

Enter... Farm Daze 24.

I'd known about this race through BJ, my husband, he is friends with Andrew Snope one of the co RD's. I looked it up online and immediately fell in love with the race. The picture on UltraSignup was of a barn which I later discovered was the Hunter Cattle Company in Brooklet, GA.

The race description said: "Bring your friends and come hang out country backwoods style at the THIRD annual Farm Daze ultra! This race is a labor of love from local ultrarunners who want to share a weekend with friends and family on a beautiful property while enjoying some good brews, BBQ, and live local musicians... oh and some RUNNING !..... LIVE MUSIC will be performed on stage, on course, Saturday afternoon into the evening." The course was described as, "a 2ish mile trail loop crossing through grass pasture and shaded woods with a few roots but not



Award



Bandstand



technical. The trail is flat and wide enough to pass at most points. “

Now, I'm not a trail gal, as anyone who has followed me knows. I've done a few here and there, one completely by accident at Locomotion 12 last spring. The description of the race and the pictures were captivating and all of a sudden I found myself with an event that got me excited. Specifically because... it was NOT designed to be a race to set records, it was designed to be low key, pretty, and most importantly, fun. I needed that. There was this super sweet kick-ass buckle for the 100 that I was REALLY hoping I could snag despite the race being on a trail. (I like shiny things and this had both gold and silver along with a cow's head in the middle)

All of a sudden, I found myself looking forward to an event again...

There was a week or two earlier in February when my ability to participate appeared to be in jeopardy. Two weeks post ATY I developed an acute left achilles tendonitis, which migrated to my left hip and then to my right hip where one day it suddenly became disabling. Two weeks prior to Farm Daze my sports medical guy ordered me to cease and desist from running for a week and indicated he thought it would take 4-6 weeks after the week off to get back to my regular training volume. I said, “um... can I do my race next week?” He looked at me like I was an



Buckle



FD Woods

idiot and said a 24 hour race was right out. Unless I wanted the tendonitis to keep rearing its ugly head for the next 6 months. I was resigned to give up the race, however after the week of no running when I started back up the achilles issue seemed completely resolved and after several days back I decided to go ahead with the race regardless.

My husband BJ was also signed up for the 24. We headed south on Thursday night with the intention of getting in five hours of driving and arriving midday on Friday to socialize a little. We arrived at the farm around 2pm on Friday and it was hot. Having come from DC where we had just experienced a snowstorm three days earlier I wasn't heat adapted and I found myself sweltering in the 82 degree Georgia sun. Fortunately race day was predicted to be cooler and cloudy. The farm was picturesque, BJ and I took time to walk the course so I could be prepared for the trail.

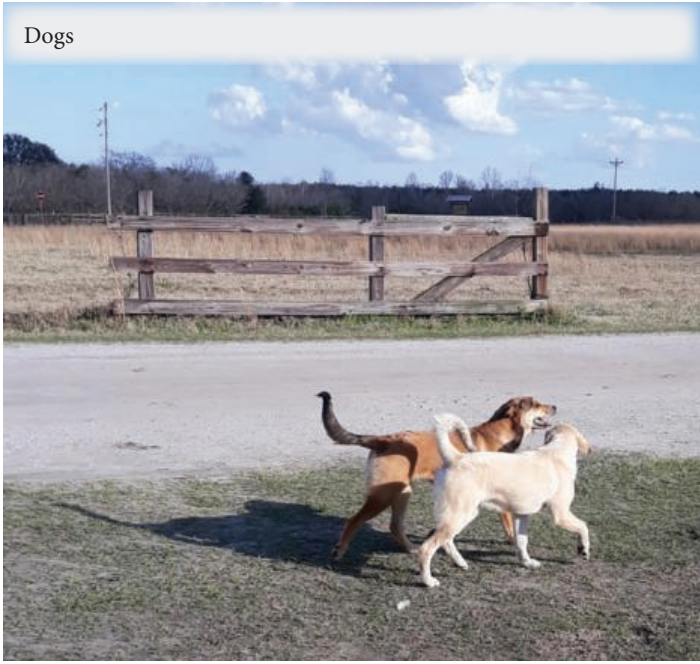
As noted, I'm not a trail gal, so rocks and roots intimidate me. The first part of the course looked pretty reasonable and non-technical for this road gal. When we got into the woods where I saw some (to me) scary looking roots and then a short roller coaster section of little rooty ups and downs. There was also a narrow series of 'S-curves' through the woods with a hole in the ground and a stump that was just begging a foot to slam into it.

I was captivated by the course but also pretty certain that the 100 mile buckle was out of reach. I figured I'd be lucky if I started out doing 12-13 minute miles. Andrew Snope was more optimistic about the possibility of hitting 100.

We had opted to stay in a hotel instead of on site (camping

# Race Report

Dogs



looked like fun but I have a really hard time sleeping in a tent on day one of camping and I was hoping for a good night sleep prior to being up all night). So we went back to Statesboro to check-in, we grabbed some fantastic barbecue and then headed back to the farm for the evening activities. I really enjoyed hanging out watching the beer mile and socializing combined with eating marshmallows by the bonfire.

Saturday morning dawned drippy and cool. As is almost de rigeur by now, I had my hotel waffle, cooked lovingly in the hotel waffle machine, drowning in syrup. I managed to not overeat (always a plus... not always successful). We arrived back at the farm around 8am, set up our gear, and started trotting around the course promptly at 9am.

I figured the first lap would tell me all I needed to know about my ability to navigate the course trail and it did. I was thrilled that my mile pace was about 11:30... I've even been known to pull that off at the beginning of a road race. The sections I had been worried about on our walk through (where I'd been wearing flip flops) were surprisingly navigable, I hopped over the roots with ease, trotted squishily through the one muddy section, found myself delighted by the little 'S-curve' section and enjoyed the rollers. For the next few hours the more technical parts of the course were those I enjoyed the most. Many of my miles were in the 11's, I was delighted with one or two in the 10's. After about 4-5 hours, I started feeling it in my legs, hips and ankles which were not used to the trail action and I became tired, still managing to maintain 12-13 for a while.

During the first 6 hours, I spent one loop with a boy about 10 years old named Josiah. His dad was running the 6 and Josiah was aiming to complete the longest run of his life which was 12 miles. He called me "ma'am" every time he answered one of my questions and was very complimentary about my pace and my goals. He was a great kid and I

really enjoyed that loop with him. (He got his 12 and likely more!)

Also within that first 6, I got to enjoy one of the grass-fed burgers from Hunter Cattle Company. Which was... Yum.

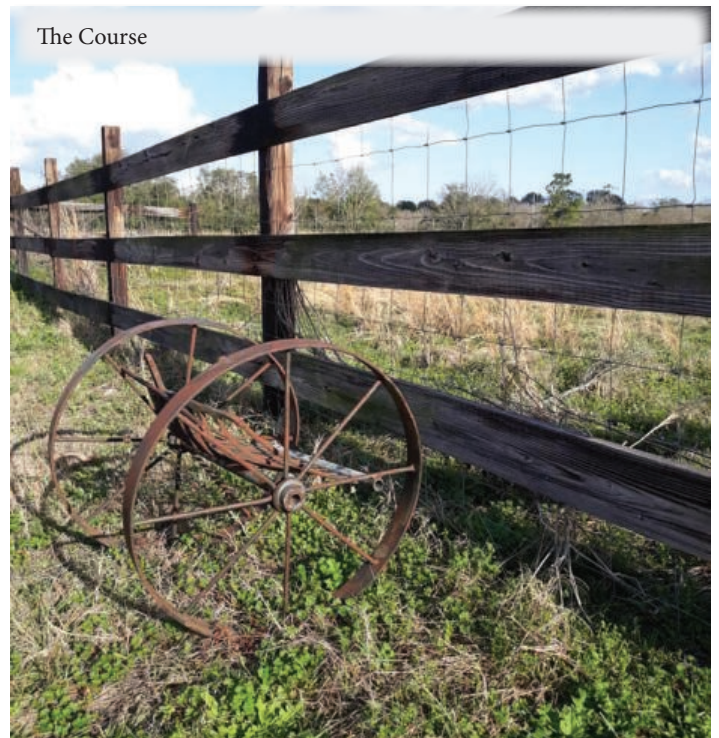
Afternoon – not much specific to comment on. Just kept running, enjoyed the trail. Ran into BJ here and there...

The mental challenge came when dark was approaching. I've never spent a night on a trail, my longest trail race was a 12 hour that ended probably right around when it got dark. As the darkness approached I snagged my headlamp from my bag to be prepared.

Dark came somewhat suddenly and it was astounding to me how quickly I had to slow down. My 12-13 turned immediately into 14-15. After my first dark loop, where I believe I was at about 48 miles, I thought seriously about calling it quits at 50 miles. Given my recent bout of being broken, I figured nobody would blame me for being conservative about stopping. After ATY, I was still having some challenges mustering up the willpower to keep going long and strong, the drive just didn't feel like it was there. I told BJ I was thinking of stopping at 50...

I did the next lap and as I entered the woods from the grassy area and started trotting up the little hill, I saw something completely captivating. The woods, in that one section, were completely lit up. There were colored lit balloons, little glow balls on sticks, colored Christmas lights, and lights emanating from a light projector that made that little section seem magical. I felt like I was in some sort of alternate world like Candyland, or in a Dr. Seuss story. I realized that, in fact, I was about to enter the real heart of the race. If I kept going I could pass through this magical glen over and over all night.

The Course



Second to last lap



I kept going.

At this point a lot of people were walking, so even though my pace had slowed substantially, I was still pretty happy with my ability to largely keep trotting. I only had one fall and it was pretty benign, stop, drop, roll, and pretty much right back up on my feet, flexing my bruised hands. There were a couple of points where the mist got so bad that I couldn't see at all, I wear glasses and they were covered with little droplets. One lap was almost completely a walk. On another lap I discovered I was off the path and when I got back on I discovered I had gone back in the wrong direction for a couple hundred feet. At least a couple of times I wandered off to the right and had to find my way back to the course.

My normal wake-up time during the week to get out for my run is 3:30am, so somewhere around that time of night in an overnight race I start to get a mental boost that morning is coming. I expected the sun to start rising around 6am and I was really hoping my pace would improve once the lighting was better. For that buckle, I was counting on it. The mud was getting more and more slippery and with my trail tired legs I was now pretty cautious of even trying to run on the most technical parts of the trail having caught my foot a couple of times.

My entire goal at this point was to hit the 100 before the 24 ran out. Farm Daze is unique among 24 hour races in that it allows runners to start their last lap before the clock hits 24 hours. This feature has generated significant controversy and conversation in various Facebook forums and the Ulltra List, but since I wasn't going for any sort of a record, nor was I counting on this as anything other than a fun run with friends, all that feature meant for me was potentially a little bit more time to snag my buckle.

The sun did not even think about starting to rise until close to 7am. It was foggy, cool and misty and that last hour in the dark when I was waiting for the sun seemed to take forever. What I really wanted was to take off my damn headlamp. I normally wear a Black Diamond sprinter,

which is super bright and lightweight, it has a rechargeable battery and only ever lasts about 5-6 hours, so I had bought a new Petzl which had regular batteries. It was also heavy on my head and was starting to make my forehead sore and irritated. Not to mention, I don't think the light was as good as my Petzl.

Light did, at last come and what a difference it made. All of a sudden I was moving more quickly and confidently again. I downed a Starbucks espresso shot and was looking forward to eggs and hash browns at the aid station.

According to my calculations I was going to hit the 100 sometime shortly after the 23 hour mark. I double checked with Tim Waz the timer to make sure that loop would get me my 100. Looked like yes...

I had some time and I dallied a bit at the aid station, got me some bacon, eggs and hash browns and let folks know I was starting out on my last loop. With tired legs I didn't see any reason to do anything but walk. Andrea, the female lead, was so far ahead of me that there was no chance of catching her so there wasn't a lot of motivation to move fast. I spent some time with Meghan Wayman and her friend Tanya. It was so nice to just relax and talk to some people. I grabbed my phone from BJ coming around the aid station so I could snap some pictures of the course. BJ spent a little time trying to convince me to do one more lap, I demurred. It's always a great lap when you get to the point where you can just relax and enjoy the course, the scenery, and the people.

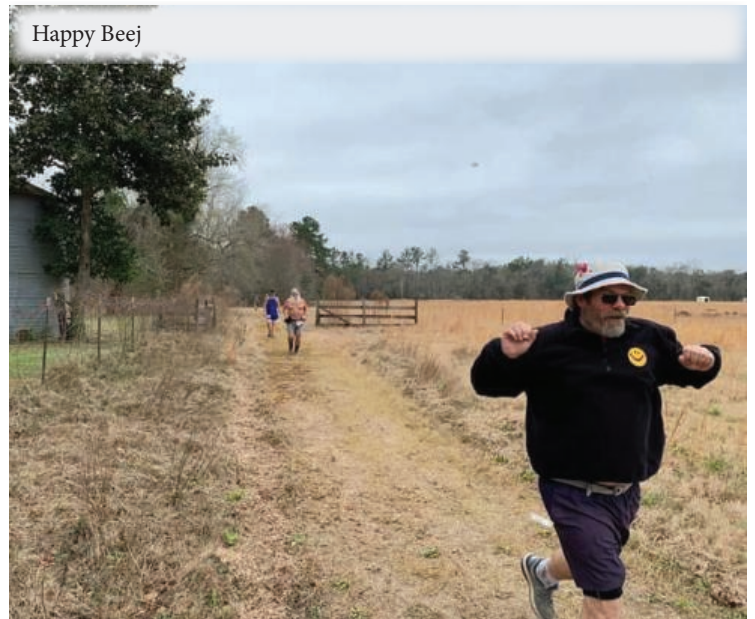
About three quarters of the way around the lap, Meghan and Tanya talked about doing one more. I looked at my watch, and even though I had said this was my last lap, clearly there was time. I sighed, and told them I'd see them at the end and I started an easy jog again to get one additional lap over the 100 mile mark. I pulled through the finish with about 12 minutes to spare. They told me at the end I had time for another lap (as previously noted, I just had to start the lap before the 24 hour mark), but I chose to be done. I stretched and waited for the finishers and winners to come in. I came in second female, with 102.7 miles, and 5th overall.

What can I say about this race. For starters, it was all about fun. Another racer's FB race report said, "If you don't like fun, don't do this race". Yes, that. As I had expected from the pre-race web site pics, it was a beautiful and peaceful venue with a combination of gentle and slightly more challenging (for me) terrain. A pond, farm animals, woods, a babbling stream, and live music added to the sense of the party. The race directors are happy gentle souls and great runners themselves. Tim Waz provided outstanding timing including regularly keeping runners apprised of their progress. It was a wonderful way to reinsert myself into the trail scene and I will definitely be back.

P.S. BJ got himself 40 miles on his first post surgery race since LAVs. Sweetness.

# Race Report

I started running at age 29, after I quit a 2-pack-a-day smoking habit. I was worried about gaining weight, and so I committed to 30 minutes of regular exercise 3 days out of 4. I began running longer distances in 2008, when I joined my brother David and his wife Cindy in training for the Army 10-miler. I learned something pretty amazing - which is, to learn to run longer, you have to... run longer. Wow. What a concept. The 10 mile training was so exhilarating that I wanted to keep going, so I signed up for a February marathon. My sister-in-law had told me about the Jeff Galloway run-walk method, and I thought I might be able to finish a marathon if I followed that sort of a plan. It worked for me - and I used it to complete another 5 marathons over the next several years. I ran my first full marathon without walk breaks in June of 2014. I completed my first "ultra" marathon at the CanLakes 50 miler in scenic upstate NY in October of 2015. Since that time I've completed 29 ultras, including 3 100-mile races, 5 24 hour's, several 12's, 48 and 49 hours respectively at ARFTA, 2 72 hour races, and 1 6-day. I was notified last week of my acceptance on to the 2019 Spartathlon team, which is my "A" goal for this year. Presently I'm running 100-130 miles a week and setting my sights on more and possibly longer multi-day events.



*Petite sœur de la Transe Gaule,  
demi-sœur de la Mil'Kil,  
cousine de la Gégé...*

# MI MIL'KIL II

★ **500 KM** ★  
NON-STOP

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# BATTLE OF HASTINGS



**JULY 6 - 7TH 2019**

**ULTRAMARATHON: LONDON TO BATTLE**

July 6th 2019

Start: 9am

100 mile course

2247 m of elevation.

30 hour time limit.

75% trail/25% road

**Website: [www.1066.run](http://www.1066.run)**

# The Challenging Perspective of the Arrowhead 135

Tim Hardy



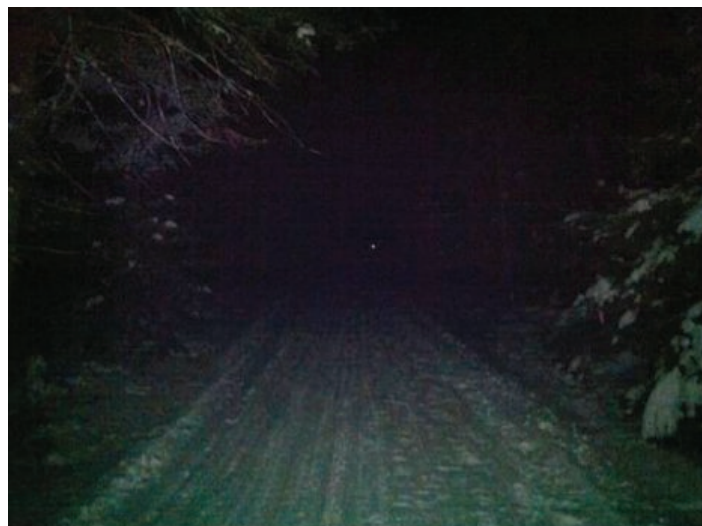
Arrowhead Near Mile 120 (Courtesy of Writer)

The Arrowhead 135 Mile Ultramarathon is an extreme winter event, the coldest in the United States lower 48 and also one of the longest ultramarathons in the country. It is a 'human powered' trail race that follows the Arrowhead Trail from downtown International Falls, traversing northeastern Minnesota east by southeast during the coldest part of the winter calendar, and finishes at Fortune Bay Casino in Tower, Minnesota. Arrowhead is a three category event that includes a fat-tire mountain bike division, a foot division, and a cross country ski division. This 135 mile point-to-point race presents each racer with unique challenges that are only found in a few similar, far north, deep winter events. Speaking candidly, not every proficient long distance ultrarunner is going to be able to complete the Arrowhead 135 without doing a lot of challenging, race-specific training.



Arrowhead 135 Maps Sections Link (Courtesy of Arrowhead 135)  
[http://www.arrowheadultra.com/images/stories/general/arrowhead135\\_various\\_maps.pdf](http://www.arrowheadultra.com/images/stories/general/arrowhead135_various_maps.pdf)

I have not run Arrowhead since finishing the foot division race in 2012, but I follow it avidly every year online just as I did this season. I also spoke with the Race Director Ken Krueger and Arrowhead veteran Nathan Marti at length the weekend after the race. Early in Arrowhead's history there was a line on the race page that said Arrowhead was about strength, endurance, solitude, and survival. Those characteristics were required again this year, the race's fourteenth, and one of its coldest years yet. Calling this year one of the coldest in race history is no mean feat when the nightly temperatures almost always drop into the negative 30s during both nights of the race, year in, year out.



Arrowhead Trail at Night (Courtesy of Writer)

Every racer, no matter what their category, is required to have specific survival gear, equipment and no less than 3000 calories with them at all times, including when they cross the finish line. Runners and Skiers nearly all pull their gear behind them on some form of sled. Between the mandatory gear and extra items most racers feel they need, sleds weigh on the average between thirty-five to forty-four pounds. The weight and drag of the sled means completing Arrowhead requires upper and lower body strength, added endurance training, long distance ability and resilience other long races do not require.

The race team puts each competitor through a rigorous gear check the day before the event to verify that they have met the gear standards. The race director team of Ken and Jackie Krueger verifies that each racer meets the prerequisite qualifications to participate in the race through their registration processing. The race website, [www.arrowheadultra.com](http://www.arrowheadultra.com), provides required racer prerequisites and the list of mandatory gear. Krueger said they will most likely be adding hand warmers to that list before the next season's race.



Chris Moroch (Courtesy Scott Rokis-reference Arrowhead 135 Team)

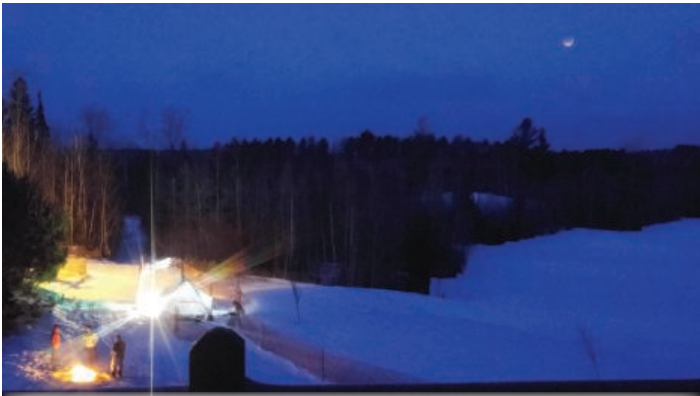


Melgeorges Checkpoint  
(Courtesy Scott Rokis-reference Arrowhead 135 Team)



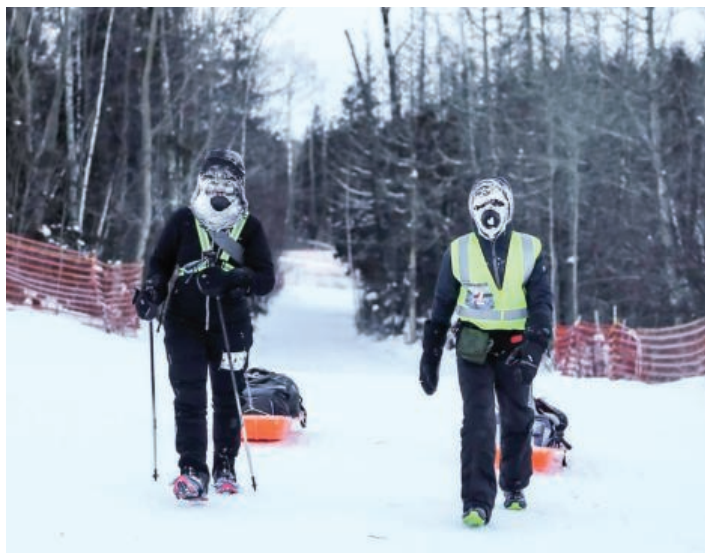
Sled and Gear (Courtesy of Writer)

This year's race was the fourteenth annual and started at 7AM on January 28th at Kerry Park in downtown International Falls, and ended 60 hours later on January 30th when every racer had to be across the finish line by 7PM at Fortune Bay Casino, in Tower. There are only 3 checkpoints on the course and each racer must reach these points and leave them before specific time cut-offs or they are out of the race. The Gateway Store at Mile 35 within



Sulky Checkpoint  
(Courtesy Wendy Spartz-reference Arrowhead 135 Team)

# Race Report



Norby & Leuwerke Finish  
(Courtesy Scott Rokis-reference Arrowhead 135 Team)

14 hours from the race start. The race cabin at Melgeorges Resort on Elephant Lake at Mile 72 within 30 hours and Surly Checkpoint at Mile 110 within 51 hours.

The race added an unsupported category in 2017, with the main stipulation for unsupported racers that they obviously have no crew support, and even more significantly, they are not allowed to go indoors at any of the three checkpoints. However, if the checkpoint crew has moved indoors due to extremely inclement weather, the unsupported runners check in and leave the building immediately. ‘Supported’ racer is also a bit of a misnomer too. The racecourse heads due south for about 8 miles from International Falls where it reaches the Arrowhead Trail and makes a hard turn to the east. Once the route crosses Route 53 the course is extremely remote for its duration, traveling through the great northern woods of Minnesota. Racers often hear wolves howling at night not far off the course, as I did the year I ran it, including a litter of kits somewhere close to the trail during the second night. I also saw a huge Lynx cross the trail approximately fifteen feet in front of me during the second night. It is a wild race. The only times that racers are near the vestiges of civilization are in the immediate vicinity of the Gateway Store, Melgeorges Resort, or a couple of small road crossings. The course itself is mostly flat to within a couple of miles of the Gateway Store and for its last 20 to 23 miles after the road crossing around Mile 114.

Once racers have left Gateway and until approximately Mile 114, they’re constantly either climbing and hauling their sleds uphill or staying ahead of the sled on the downhill descent. The average temperatures for the race are usually somewhere in the single digits or low teens during hours of daylight and the drop into the low negative twenties to mid negative thirties late at night and in the early pre-dawn hours. It’s so cold that any moisture in the air will often crystalize and float in the air, reflecting in your headlamp. For this year’s race, the temperature never climbed out of



Ryan Wanless Finish (Courtesy Scott Rokis-reference Arrowhead 135 Team)



2019

	Place	First	Last	City		Age	Gender	GP	Time	Rank
☐ undefined - 13										
results	1	Scott	Hoberg	Duluth	MN	40	M	1	36:09:00	78.58
results	1	Jovica	Spajic	Zemun-Belgrade	SPA	32	M	2	36:09:00	74.3
results	3	Parker	Rios	Brookfield	WI	52	M	3	38:23:00	79.26
results	4	John	Storkamp	Hastings	MN	39	M	4	43:07:00	89.92
results	5	Nathan	Marti	Courtland	MN	42	M	5	44:50:00	75.57
results	6	Faye	Norby	Saint Paul	MN	37	F	1	48:34:00	80.54
results	6	Jeff	Leuwerke	Saint Paul	MN	37	M	6	48:34:00	76.07
results	8	Ray	Sanchez	Sacramento	CA	52	M	7	49:33:00	82.95
results	9	Brian	Kutz	Minneapolis	MN	32	M	8	49:58:00	64.05
results	10	Helen	Scotch	Bend	OR	41	F	2	56:05:00	86.96
results	11	Chris	Moroch	Statesville	NC	40	M	9	56:16:00	68.32
results	12	Patrick	Sweatt	Nashville	TN	31	M	10	56:36:00	70.59
results	13	Ryan	Wanless	Sioux Falls	SD	40	M	11	56:58:00	60.3

negative numbers even during the day and that took an even higher than normal toll knocking racers out of the event. Sixty-three racers started in the foot division and another four started as cross country skiers. Only thirteen people finished the race on foot and no skiers finished at all. Out of seventy-eight bicycle division starters, only forty reached the finish line.

The race has volunteers patrolling up and down the course on snowmobiles pulling cargo sleds once the race is a few hours old through the race's duration. They keep an eye out for racers that are in trouble or are just ready to drop out of the race. They deliver those folks to the nearest checkpoint and were very busy this year even though the trail conditions themselves were very good. Some of the toughest ultrarunners in the sport and Arrowhead veterans alike, failed to reach the finish line this year. Nathan Marti was the fifth place finisher for the second year in a row in 44:50:00, and has now finished this race three straight years, described this year's race as, "Scary cold."

Scott Hoberg and Jovica Spajic crossed the finish line tied for first in the outstanding time of 36:09:00. 2019 was Scott's second Arrowhead victory. Faye Norby was the first place female, and tied for sixth place overall with Jeff Leuwerke, with a time of 48:34:00. Helen Scotch was second place female, and tenth place overall in 56:05:00. Jeff Leuwerke won the Unsupported Division, and was the only Unsupported racer to reach the finish line. Parker Rios (38:23:00), John Storkamp (43:07:00), Nathan Marti (44:50:00) rounded out the top five. Storkamp has won Arrowhead four separate times between the race's inaugural year in 2006 and as late as last year. Sarah Lowell is the only woman to win Arrowhead outright, accomplished in 2007.

Race Director Team Ken and Jackie Krueger have no

immediate plans to make any major changes to the race format any time soon. Arrowhead race operations are vast both in terms of its distance and the operational week it takes to execute the race. Ken pointed out that Team Arrowhead can use several more volunteers and would have no trouble putting three times as many people to work as they had for this year's race. Arrowhead 135's proceeds support four separate charities: The Special Operations Warrior Foundation, Animal Ark, Minnesota, The Borderland Humane Society, and Together For Good, with links to all at [www.arrowheadultra.com](http://www.arrowheadultra.com).

Arrowhead 135 is an event of epic distance, adventure, and achievement. According to Arrowhead Team research, only 173 unique individuals have crossed the foot division finish line in the fourteen year history of the race. It is a challenging and worthwhile goal that requires Strength, Endurance, Solitude and Survival.



Arrowhead Swag (Courtesy of Writer)

# Contributors



**Abi Summerfield**, based in Swansea, South Wales. I started running in 2014, and now mainly participate in trail runs, triathlon and aquathlon. I like unusual events and have done few adventure races too. I love the social aspect to running and have developed some lifelong friendships through my local running group Pecyn Blaidd.



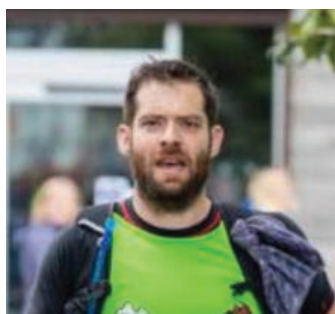
**Amy Mower** is part of the 2019 Spartathlon team and is currently running 100-130 miles a week. Over the past twelve years she had completed twenty-nine ultras and many other distance races. Not bad for a woman who started running after quitting a two pack a day smoking habit. Amy's website: <http://amyvkrunningaddiction.blogspot.com/>



**Alyson Kirk**. I am a 36 year old woman and a Colorado native. I am married to the love of my life, John Kirk. John and I live life everyday with passion and authenticity. If we are not on the summit of a mountain we are likely running an ultra-marathon or rock climbing.



**James Campbell**. Husband, father of four and former rugby player juggling life with taking part in multi-sport, ultra distance running and cycling events since 2012. Based in the North East of England training and racing in East Durham, the Yorkshire Moors and the Yorkshire Coast. <https://jamescampbell78.wordpress.com/>



**Alan Giles** is still quite new to the world of unltra-running, but plans on being around for a long time to come. He is proud to come from Cornwall, and uses the local landscape to enjoy runs with his dog Dorothy. Woof!



**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.



**Garth Reader** is a 50 something ultra-runner/ stage racer hailing from the mountains of northern New Mexico. Garth's running resume includes Desert Rats (2012), MdS (2013 and 2015), G2G (2014), Fire and Ice (2016), The Spine (2017 and 2019), RTP Patagonia (2017) and Alps to Ocean (2018) amongst many others. Garth also supports the sport having been the race commissioner for the Grand to Grand and Mauna to Mauna ultras. He maintains a web site at [ultrastagracing.com](http://ultrastagracing.com) and is a Raidlight US Ambassador.



**Nick Grahame** is an Orpington based ultrarunner with a good few ultras under his belt including the UTMB event the 2018 Orsières-Champex-Chamonix (OCC).



**Justine Flett** began her running career early 2016 by supporting her partner Rob through C5K. On completing her first parkrun a few weeks later, she said to anyone who would listen, “I don’t even like running”. Fast forward 12 months to February 2017 the first marathon was ticked off. What followed over the next two years was an impressive 56 marathons or better (20 ultras). The highlight of which was her first 100 mile endurance event completed in a little over 28 hours.



**Jennifer Hatcher** has run a marathon/ultra in all 50 states in a 2.5 year period. She is a 3 time Ironman finisher with her first 3 marathons being during the Ironman triathlon. She has finished five 100 mile running events. Originally from Portsmouth Ohio she moved to Hurricane Utah at the end of 2015 where she resides with her two dogs and cat. She is an avid hiker and backpacker who loves exploring



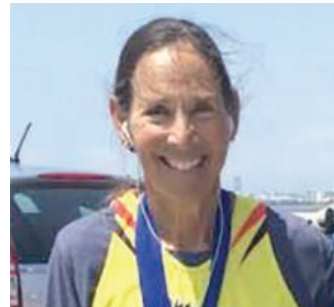
**Kate Percy**, Food for Fitness guru and Founder of Go Faster Food Ltd. Back in 2000, Kate radically altered her family’s diet to help her husband, Mark, who was struggling in his training for the New York Marathon. Mark’s performance was totally transformed, and the whole family’s energy levels soared. Kate didn’t last long watching from the sidelines. She started marathon running herself and caught the running bug! Since then, Kate’s been on a mission to give people great tasting food which puts a smile on the face as well as the right type of get-up-and-go energy! Her best-selling Go Faster Food recipe books are used by Olympians, elite and amateur athletes. Food guru for Athletics Weekly, in-house chef for 220 Triathlon Magazine, Kate also runs an Eat-Like-An-Athlete education programme and has just launched her first food product, Kate Percy’s Go Bites®; 100% natural, bite-size energy balls.



**Stuart Lamb** Originally from Derbyshire, Stuart Lamb, 61, has been a life-long walker and enthusiast for the outdoor life. Since completing Wainwright’s Coast to Coast in 1981, Stuart has had a strong interest in Long Distance Walking and first completed the 19thAWW in 1982. His second completion was thirty-one years later in 2013 on the 50th AWW Marshal’s Walk. Assisted by his wife Judith, Stuart has organised The Across Wales Walk on twenty-six occasions, the first being in 1985, and then every year since 1996.



**Tim Hardy** is an ultrarunner living in Marietta, New York with his wife, their three dogs, one cat, and four horses and they lure their three grandchildren and daughter over as often as possible. Tim served in the US Army for twenty years and has completed a combined seventy ultramarathons and marathons, including the Arrowhead 135 and Badwater 135 in the same calendar year, and the Last Annual VolState 500K in July 2018. Tim is the race director for the Green Lakes Endurance Races 100K and 50K trail races.



**Kit Kakadelas Brazier** “I am a grandmother of 21 kids, I gave birth to 9 children, I started running in 1972 for UCLA and have been running ever since. I was supermom of the LA marathon because I had the most kids. I have run Boston and 83 other marathons and ultras. I have run five 100 mile races. I was in the top 10 for the 100 mile in my age group in 2017. In 1977 I was the 7th fastest woman for the 50K in 5:20. I love my family and I love to run!!”



**Wendy Whearity** 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 GUOCR (2017), 1st female - 3rd overall Crawley 24hr – (2017).



Leonie Ton  
photo by Alan Young