



# ULTRARUNNING WORLD

M A G A Z I N E

ROAD, TRACK & TRAIL MULTIDAY & ULTRA DISTANCE NEWS

// ISSUE 30







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**E**ndurance is the ability of an organism to exert itself and remain active for a long period of time, as well as its ability to resist, withstand, recover from, and have immunity to trauma, wounds, or fatigue.

#### Wikipedia

“All the great persons of the world, whatever had been their mission in life, proved their greatness by this one quality: endurance. The enduring personality is like a ship that can stand storms and winds under all conditions, the ship that saves itself and others”.

#### Hazrat Inayat Khan

The Spring Equinox is almost here, the light is returning, races are returning. With **Punk Panther’s Welcome Ultra** looking like the first event on the calendar, the world is definitely a brighter place.

How is our own personal reset going? **Susan Lister’s** Yoga article gets us back to fundamentals with reconnecting ourselves to the Earth, which is very appropriate at this time.

**Naomi Moss** also gets down to basics and illuminates us on what it’s like to live with Crohn’s and there’s ways and means of not letting it prevent us from our running.

**Debs & Dawn**, our South African friends are working towards running the **13 Peaks Challenge** in the Cape Peninsula area and this month they’ve been focussing on consistency.

Northern ultra legend **Sharon Gayter** has been running significant mileage all winter using a multitude of virtual events as her inspiration and on Christmas Day 2020, took on **Cockbain Events The Hill**. That’s a 160 miles... in 48 hours.

We’ve shared more race reports from Hardmoors events than any other series, by a long way. Dan Walker has the scoop on what’s going on the North York Moors.

Across the pond (where there’s been well over a 100 ultras in the US already this year), **Gary Dudney** brings news from the **Rough Falls 100** in Kentucky at the beginning of December.

And just a little farther south, **Arron Patrick** and **Emily Verschoor-Kirss** went to **The Black Toe Run** for 12 hours and 50 mile events in Tennessee.

Former World 100km and 24 hour champion **Edit Berces** brings words from the Master himself as **Yiannis Kouros** turned 65 recently.

This month’s book review is **Lizzy Hawker’s** 2015 publication, “**Runner – A Short Story About A Long Run**”.

In the Ultrarunning World **Hall of Fame** this month is British Ultrarunning great, **Hilary Walker**.

We weren’t able to squeeze in Recent Races and Upcoming Races sections in this issue but they will definitely be in issue 31.

#### The House:

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- Helen Hayes

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Book Reviews

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- Katie Wright and crew on way to a win at the Tarawera Ultra in New Zealand. Photo courtesy of Kunal Kumar [kunal-kumarphoto.com](http://kunal-kumarphoto.com)

##### • Back cover

Ed “The Jester” Ettinghausen at the Grandmaster 100km Ultra. Photo Curtis Gillespie.

## Ultrarunning World March 2021

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Send inquiries, original and previously unpublished race reports/articles to the email address above. Last dates for article submissions: April 14th, May 14th June 14th. Please include some accompanying photos (if you have any) with articles/race reports, a 40-50 word bio, and a headshot for the contributors page. More details for submissions on request. Thank you.

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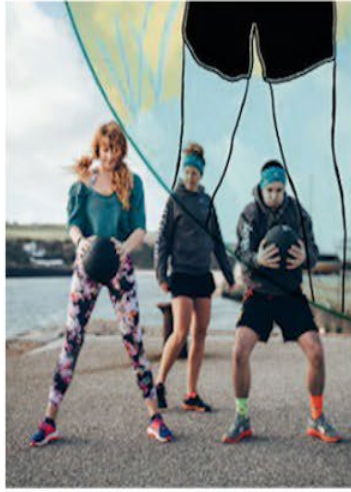
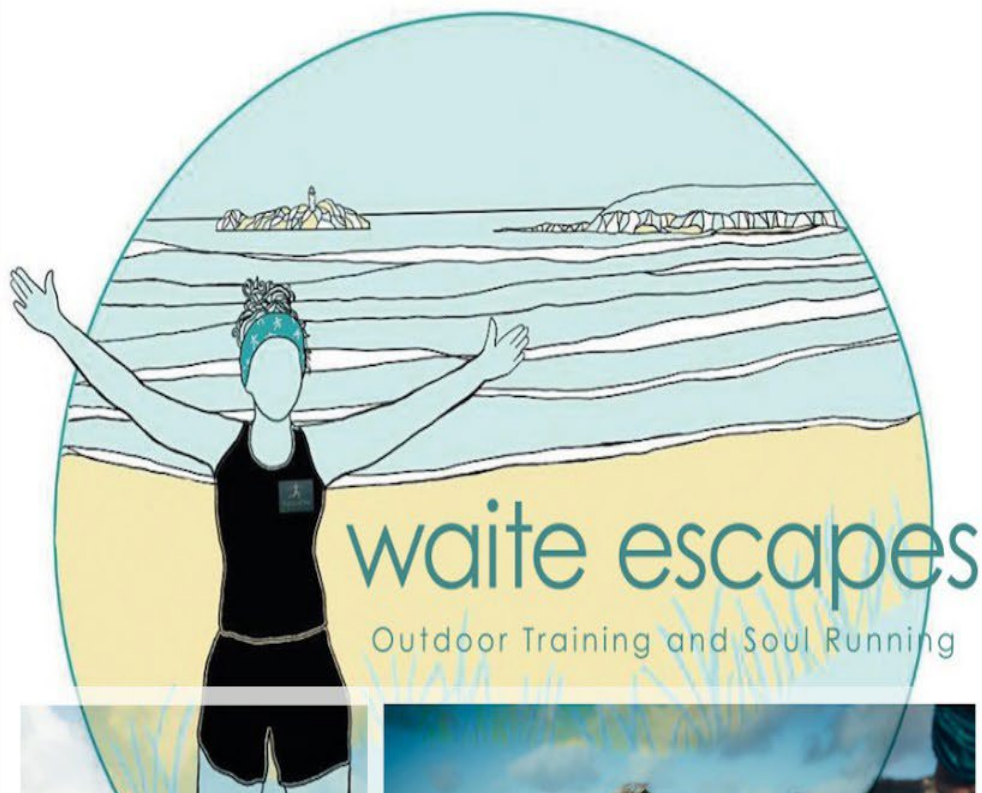
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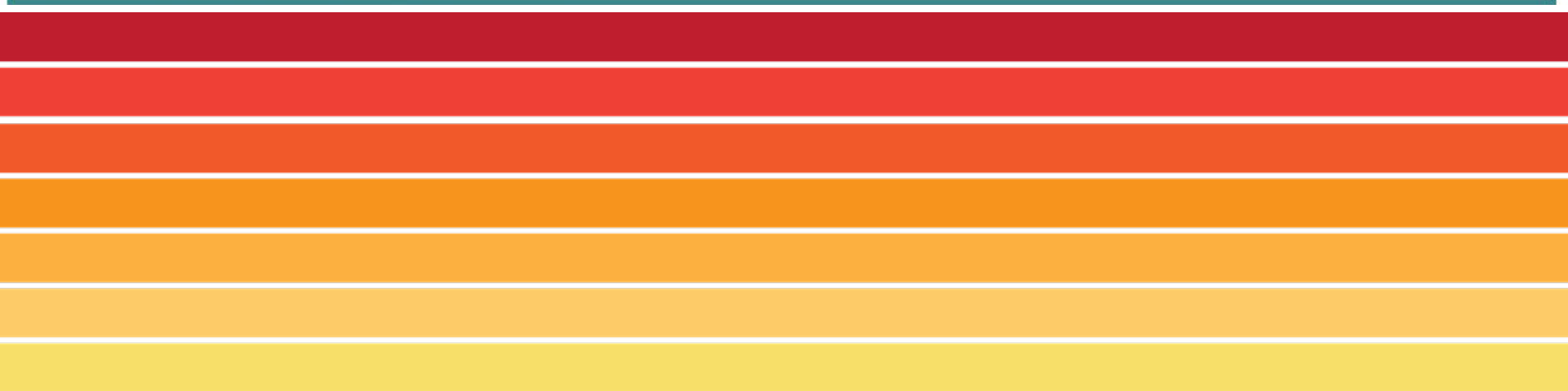




Let me introduce myself, I'm Tracy Waite, a personal trainer based in Cornwall. I specialise in fitness and wellness, feeling well through movement. I believe that by using our bodies well, we can truly feel happier.

During the waite escapes I will be focusing a lot on self-care and wellness. Life gets so busy, stress often takes over. We become so absorbed with what life throws at us that we often forget who we are. Let's use this time together to explore who we are again, to practice scheduled 'us times'. At the end of the day, if we cannot recharge and find strength in what's around and inside us, then how can we possibly pass this on to those close to us?

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After the success of the Global Solidarity Run at the end of August 2020, the 2021 IAU 6H Virtual Global Solidarity Weekend returns on the third weekend of March (20th – 21st). The IAU is “very happy to see again a great number of participants including 350 runners from 32 teams. There are 28 Women and 32 Men Teams that bring us to a total of 350 runners.” Said Jacek Bedowski, IAU Director of Communications and Jacek discusses the run on the IAU podcast, [Global Solidarity Run](#).

Also on the IAU website was the sad news that Dutch Ultrarunner Mieke Hekkers passed away on February 22nd, 2021 at the age of 57 after a struggle with cancer. Mieke made her debut as an ultrarunner in 2008 when she ran 50 km at RUN Winschoten. Three years later she was selected for the national team and took part in the IAU 100 km World Championships in Winschoten, Netherlands. She was subsequently selected to represent the Netherlands on 3 occasions (2011, 2013 and 2015) at the IAU 24 Hour World Championships. [Rebecca Gartrell](#) was running across Texas on February 7th when she was killed by a hit-and-run driver. Rebecca has a long history of running ultras including Ultracentric, Snowdrop, The Franklins 200 and Vol-State to name a few. [Runners World](#) has more details.



As part of the Black History month celebrations, a 6.02 mile loop in Central Park has been named in honour of Ted Corbitt by the New York City Parks Department.

Born in South Carolina (January 31, 1919 – December 12, 2007), Theodore ‘Ted’ Corbitt was an ultramarathon pioneer, author, and physiotherapist. Throughout his illustrious 50-year career, he ran 199 marathons and ultras setting an M80 age group world record in 2001 at 6 days. In 1952, Ted became the first Black American to represent the United States at the Olympic Marathon in Helsinki, Finland. He was the co-founder and first president of the New York Road Runners, a member of the inaugural class of inductees into the National Distance Running Hall of Fame in Utica, and a pioneer of race course measurement. (Photo courtesy [Mitchell Silver NYC Parks Commissioner](#))







### The Science

Some interesting writing related to ultrarunning:

**Exploring Perceptions of Irrational Beliefs on Motivation and Performance in Ultra-Marathon Runners...** a Mixed Method Approach by [Dr Bruce Donovan Calder](#)

**Being tough; it's within all of us without being mental!!!** by [Prof Andy Lane](#) a professor of sport psychology at the University of Wolverhampton.

### Tech

Wired magazine reviews the new sports watch from Garmin that offers 80 hours in full GPS mode and a whole year in basic battery saver mode: [Garmin Enduro review: a year-long battery, but there's a price to pay.](#)

STRIDESENSE, the first product by Scottish tech start-up Attis is a state-of-the-art fitness tracker enabled with 3D motion tracking technology. The lab-grade product consists of five motion tracking sensors, which are placed around your legs and waist in secured pockets in provided STRIDESENSE leggings and connect via Bluetooth to the app. The product will be the first fitness tracker on the market that measures your whole stride – not just the movement of wrists or feet. Instead, STRIDESENSE measures movement across 10 specialised running metrics to provide specific, personalised feedback. Included in-app is StrideMotion technology – a new form of motion tracking that captures the data from a runners' leg movement and displays it in a 3D visualiser on your device. This allows the user to get direct, visual feedback on their performances, alongside metric scoring data in and post-run and exercise advice to help runners reach their best. Founder and CEO of Attis Fitness, sports engineer Tim Elizondo from Glasgow, thinks the product will “change the fitness tracker market for the better. We believe STRIDESENSE is the future of running technology. Having used other fitness trackers, I felt what was on the market just wasn't helping me improve my running. The data provided post-run was simply telling me little about my performance and more to the point, by measuring metric data from my wrist or feet, they weren't capable of giving me the whole picture of my runs. I struggled with recurring injuries and became frustrated at not understanding what was causing them, or even how to correct it without professional analysis and insight. I realised a tracker could do this, saving runners time and money”.

Check out Stridesense on the website at [Attis Fitness](#).





[The Aussie Runner Podcast](#) covers the Australian running scene via trail, road and track. Presented by Damon Roberts & Jeremy Francis.

[Peak Endurance](#) Isobel Ross on all things endurance, mainly running! You will hear from athletes, experts in the field and also from Isobel on all topics designed to help you reach your endurance goals!

#### Book

2019 Australian Ultra Performance of the Year Award winner Kay Bretz has achieved yet another dream – finishing and publishing his first ever book, *Turning Right – Inspire the Magic*. It hits the shelves on March 30. Bretz received his AURA award for his 24hr World Championship performance in Albi, France where he ran 259.670km and came 12th overall in a field of 346 athletes. Review by [Kate Dzienis](#).

#### Movies

*The Secret Marathon* - a filmmaker and first time marathoner, Kate McKenzie joined legendary marathon mentor Martin Parnell to train and travel in secret to join the brave Afghan women who are standing up for equality and freedom, taking part in the Marathon of Afghanistan. [The Secret Marathon Official Trailer](#).

Earth Talk: [Journey with Lizzy Hawker](#) - a recording of a live online Earth Talk with ultrarunner and adventurer Lizzy Hawker, with the story of her journey along the Great Himalaya Trail. Beautiful, rough, hard and unforgettable: 35 days and 1000 miles on foot alone across the Nepal Himalaya.

Catflap Chats Podcast [Ep62 - Lowri Morgan](#) - I can only say 'WHAT A MINDSET'! They told her she couldn't, so she did. What makes someone tick, that has run a 150 mile Amazon Jungle Ultra Marathon? Or a 350 mile Arctic Circle Ultra Marathon? Listening to Lowri was inspiring.

[Shoephoria Rebecca Rushton](#) - Think you Know Everything About Blisters?... **THINK AGAIN!**

[Lighthouse in the Dark](#) retells the story of Welsh ultrarunner Rhys Jenkins's brutal 870-mile Wales Coast Path record attempt and unpacks the concept of mental resilience, showing how it can be used to help us break through our limits and achieve the impossible. Coming Spring 2021.





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# Happy Feet

Let's talk about feet! If you're an ultra-runner the chances are you don't consider yours to be very pretty. You've probably lost a toenail or two over the years and possibly had other injuries. We spend a lot of time chatting about trainers and even socks but if we don't look after our feet first, all of that becomes irrelevant.

In our yoga for runners class, we always try to take time to look after our feet.

There are 26 bones and 32 joints in your foot, and they keep busy moving us around while sustaining, absorbing, and distributing a large amount of our body weight.

If we have a less than perfect posture (most of us) and/or we get tired and sloppy (perhaps at the end of a long run) our foundation can become uneven and this can cause problems throughout the body.

Here are 4 easy exercises you can do to improve foot strength and flexibility and increase your range of motion, all of which can help prevent injuries.

## 1. Practice standing:

Stand in your bare feet in front of a mirror. Lift your toes off the ground and place them back down again slowly. If you can, try to place the toes down one at a time, big toe first. Try to spread the toes as they land. Look in the mirror and see the effects on your ankles and knees. Notice any effect on the arches of your feet.

Pay attention to your weight distribution, move around until you feel even weight across your foot. Check the fleshy part just below your big toe, below your little toe and the heel.

## 2. Massage your feet:

Sit down on the floor and lift your right foot onto your left leg. Massage the foot with both hands. You don't need to be gentle here, especially in the plantar fascia area. Take some time with this and give your feet some real love. You can use some essential oils to make the foot feel even more special. Our feet work hard for us and we don't often take time to appreciate them. Gently move the toes apart to give some space between them and slowly interlace the fingers of your left hand between the toes and shake hands with your foot. Repeat on the other side.



3. Tennis ball:

Stand up and place a regular tennis ball on the floor. Place your foot on top of the tennis ball and slowly roll your foot around. Try to get every bit of your foot with the ball. Take your time and enjoy the massage. Press down on the ball to give a firmer massage. When you get to the plantar fascia press as hard as you can handle (unless you already have pain or inflammation in this area, in that case spend more time rolling around about the plantar and do not irritate the inflammation). Include your toes and sides of your feet. Take time to place your foot down and notice how different it feels afterwards before moving on to the other foot.

4. Foot stretch:

Sit back on your heels with your toes tucked under. Rest your hands on your thighs and sit up tall. Try to space your toes and ensure all of them are contacting the mat or floor. You may have to take hold of the toes and spread them deliberately.

*By Susan Lister*





# RUNNING ULTRA'S WITH CROHN'S

By Naomi Moss

I'm 24 miles into a 45 mile ultra and happily soaking up the atmosphere, chatting to fellow runners and enjoying the beauty of the mountains and woodland trails that surround me.

There is however a recurring thought in my mind and a deep sensation in my gut that I just cannot ignore... I need to POO!!!

My stomach begins to gurgle like I have just consumed a gallon of water and its sloshing about my interior with every stride I take. My gut throws out a few punches in the direction of my lower abdomen...ouch that hurts! I untie the waistband on my running tights due to an intense bloated feeling around my stomach. I look like I'm five months pregnant and I'm feeling a constant pressure in my lower abdominals. Thankfully nobody can see a larger than life gut as I have winter running layers on and a windproof jacket. My immediate response is to scan the landscape around me for an appropriate location to relieve this pain.



I spot a tree and sprint at it like it's the finish line of a 10km race...am I going to make it?????? I do, and within seconds of arriving at this open air bathroom I release the contents of my stomach out the backdoor so to speak and have instant relief, ahhhhhhhhh!

This cycle is repeated on two more occasions during the race, the last one ended with me thankfully being on an actual toilet (heavenly) at an actual CP but there is not a lot left in me to expel and I notice a fair bit of blood in my stool this time. This doesn't scare me as I have been here before many times.

I have been eating and drinking little and often but I am highly aware that I have lost more calories than I have consumed. My gut continues on its mini assault course without a thought for its surroundings. A fellow runner looks at me concerningly as he listens to the gurgling sound coming from my general direction. Is that coming from my stomach? Yes, I tell him. Damn, that's loud he replies with a low-level chuckle to himself. Needless to say, he didn't hang around to chat much more.



I finish the race and feel mentally spent and physically overcome with relief. I love to spend time at the end of an Ultra congratulating others and listening to their experiences about the race. As the blood flow returns to my stomach and my body begins to find its norm, my only thoughts are if I need to be sick or if I need the loo again, grrrrr!!!

The above explains a little about my experience with running an Ultra as a Crohn's sufferer.

I was diagnosed with this particular IBD (Inflammatory Bowel Disease) 35 years ago after a severe flare up caused me to drop 22lbs in weight over a very short period of time. I was hospitalised as I could not keep food down, had a high fever, was suffering from severe migraines, vomiting, joint pain and diarrhoea. They initially thought I had meningitis but more tests showed small bowel Crohn's Disease.

Crohn's is a lifelong condition and comes with different levels of severity. It is inflammation of the gastrointestinal tract from mouth to anus but more commonly affects the small or large intestines. Mine affects the small intestine which is divided into the duodenum, jejunum and ileum.

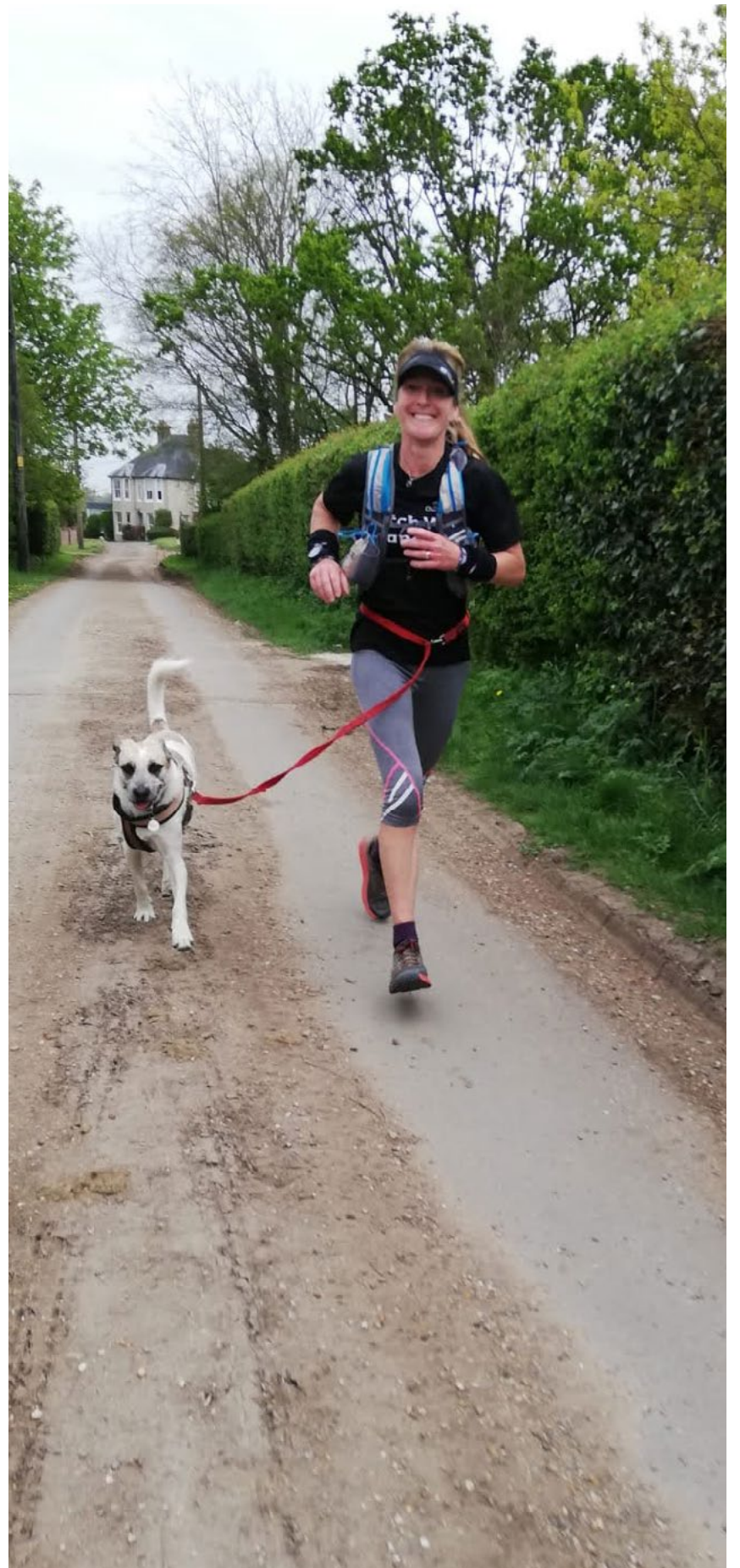
I have known people that have had part of their small intestine removed or are on medication for the rest of their lives due to the severity of their Crohn's. I count myself extremely lucky that I have a milder version which I have learnt to cope with over the years.

Symptoms include chronic diarrhoea, abdominal pain/cramps, weight loss, fatigue, blood in your stool and rectal bleeding. Other non-intestinal symptoms include inflammation of joints or eyes, fevers, mouth ulcers, migraines, loss of appetite, anaemia and malnutrition.

Small intestine Crohn's can also inhibit the absorption of nutrients from the food I consume, which on occasion in the past, has left me depleted or lacking in essential nutrients. This was monitored in my earlier years by regular blood tests and investigations. I know that in severe cases malabsorption can lead to malnutrition.

I have been on a vegetarian diet since I was 14 years old and not because of Crohn's. I consider my diet to be well balanced and like most I love a well-deserved treat but often I pay the price within an hour or two if I have over indulged. I guess I have learnt what my gut can handle and what it can't. The following is what triggers a flare-up for me and how I get through them.

I can go for 4-6 weeks between flare-ups and my symptoms can include many that were listed earlier and sometimes just one or two of them. Mine start with a bloated stomach and a rock-hard core and I don't mean I get a nice strong looking six pack! This is followed by headaches and a tiredness which makes me feel like I could just fall asleep while standing. A colourful variety of diarrhoea almost always hits which on occasion can lead to haemorrhoids and polyps.





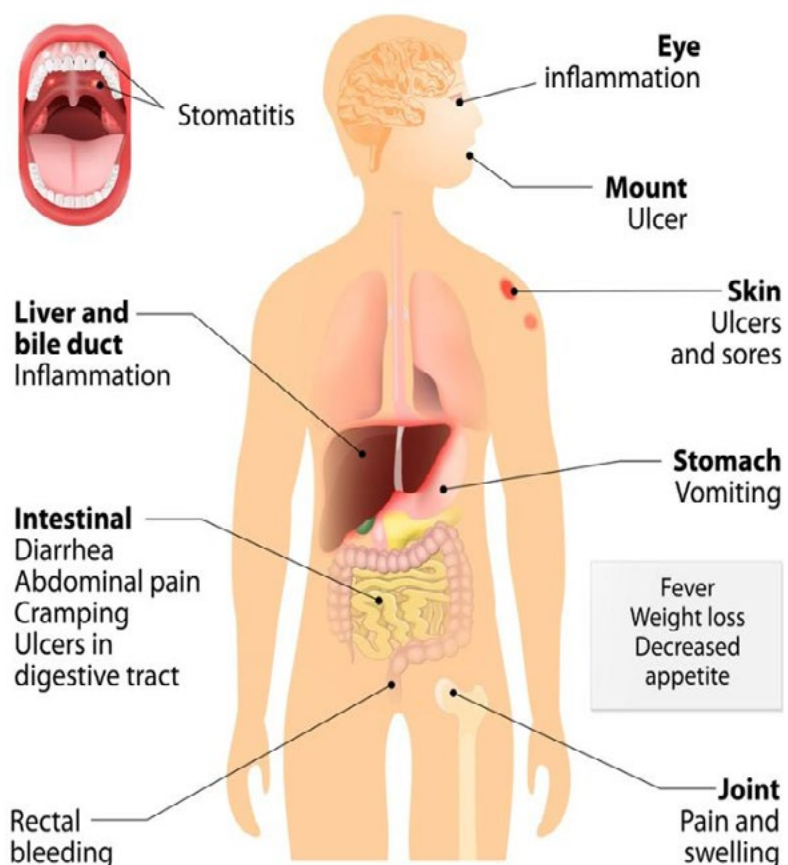
My weekly training plan consists of anywhere between 45-80 miles per week depending when my next race is and what distance it will be. Along with this I aim for 3 strength/conditioning/calisthenics sessions per week and a Yoga or Reformer Pilates class. During harder weeks in my training, I am more susceptible to a flare-up, especially when intensity and duration are combined. For example, when I do a long tempo run of 10+miles or a long progressive run of 12-15 miles, I can pretty much guarantee that I need to pack toilet paper because at some point, normally within the last 4 miles, I will need go to the toilet or will experience major stomach cramps/pain.

A flare-up can also be triggered by eating too many wheat products, sugar, cheese, apples, grapes, mixed beans/pulses, coffee or having these foods at the wrong time of day. Most of the above foods are fine in moderation unless I'm already in the midst of a flare-up, at which point, I can't face eating anything as it just makes my stomach more distended and uncomfortable.

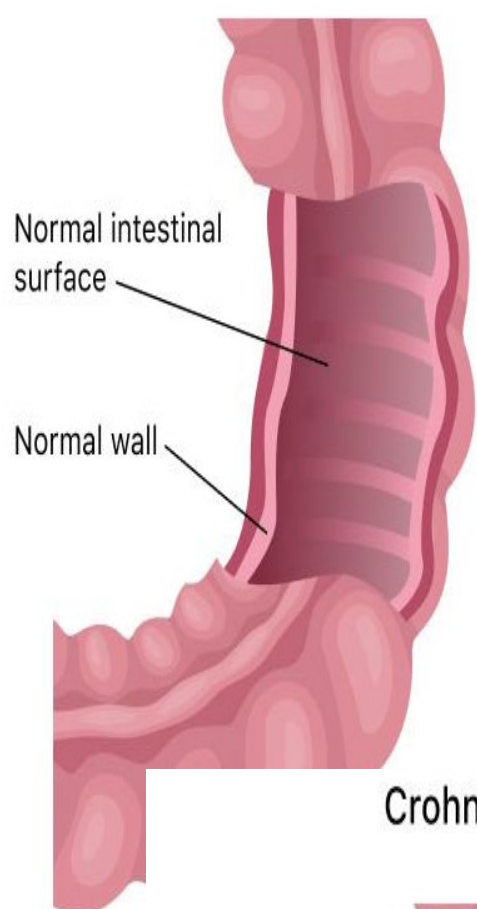
Stress and worry can also bring about a flare-up for me.

The one massive thing for me during a flare-up is to MOVE. I truly believe that movement such as walking, light running, Yoga, Pilates or a light mobilization/stretching session can be of benefit. It aids digestion, increases blood flow, takes

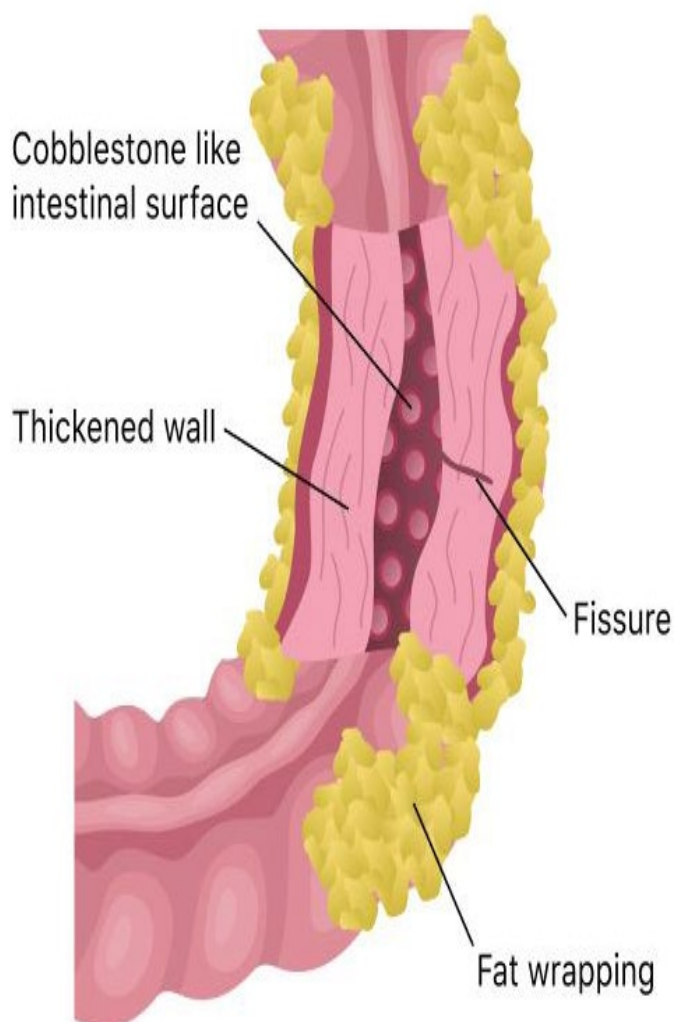
## Crohn's disease



### Normal Intestine



### Crohn's Disease



my mind away from the discomfort and improves my mind-set.

This rang true for me on a recovery run I did recently. There was no way I wanted to run the 6 miles on my plan but after 2 miles my headache cleared, my tummy settled and by the time I'd finished I was in considerably less pain and a much happier runner/wife/mum.

All the above are my experiences with my type of Crohn's and how it affects me. It is very individual and what works for me one day may not work on another. I can run with Crohn's and it has definitely made me a more determined runner for sure.

My safeguards for race day or long training runs.....

Always carry toilet paper and wet wipes.

Save sugary foods until the later stages of your run. Drink to thirst.

Limit fibre & Caffeine intake the day before.

Plan your long run routes around the odd toilet facility.

Walk and eat/drink when you feel rubbish, it will pass one way or another .

Listen to an audio book or music to take your mind off the discomfort.

**Be proud of your RUN!**

More info can be found [www.crohnandscolitisfoundation.org](http://www.crohnandscolitisfoundation.org)

Instagram account - [naomimosruns](#)



# W I N T E R

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# CONSISTENCY

By DebsandDawn

Debs and Dawn continue to train consistently. They are both under Coach Neville and the key with any training is consistency, consistency and consistency! Yes, there are MANY other aspects to consider, but if you are not consistent, no matter how good your program or sessions are, you are either going to fade, possibly over or under train which could also lead to injuries. Debs is mainly running roads at the moment and running some great mileage weekly. She regularly does gym sessions, especially as this is her main work, she is one fit and well rounded runner. Dawn is regularly running both road and trail, ticking along week by week. She did a 5 km time trial recently and this past month has been doing three gym sessions a week as part of an ambassador program. Additionally Dawn is enjoying weekly obstacle training of which she feels the benefits all round, especially with grit and “vasbyt”, an Afrikaans word meaning “hanging on for dear life!!”

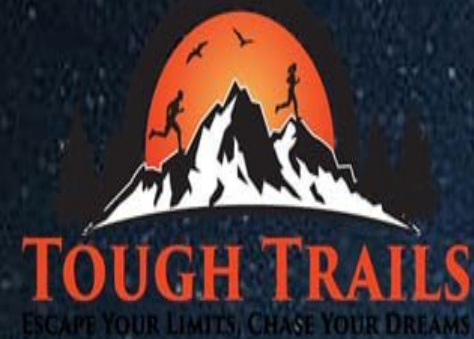
Dawn has a beautiful Drakensberg trail run coming up in mid March while Debbie is training during a whole weekend with obstacle courses. The key is variety, keeping them motivated, running regularly and also spicing it up with some different exercises. Why not? They both feel the benefit of using and developing different muscles, and the mind, in unique ways and this will only benefit Debs and Dawn in the long run and on their trail run towards 13 peaks.

“We are aiming for 13 peaks in May. Great weather and at this stage we want to go ahead and really enjoy it, test it out and see how we go. We are not placing pressure on ourselves for a specific time and we are going to use this time to get others involved to make it a team effort event.”

In terms of nutrition and hydration. Debbie is pretty easy going and does not take anything specific. The one thing she says is an absolute must is a chocolate milk after a hard run. This is her go to. Otherwise generally, Dawn helps her eat and rehydrate a little more. Dawn enjoys USN rehydrate before and during long runs as well as using their muscle fuel as a recovery. Currently, Dawn is trying some Nuun products which she is excited about. In the end, it is important to have an eating plan, especially for the longer trails, and a recovery in order to be up for the next big adventure.

Debs and Dawn plan on a get together in Joburg in March, so more adventures, plans and some training TOGETHER will take place!





# DARK SKIES YORKSHIRE DALES NIGHT TRAIL RACE



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AND THE SKY LIT UP WITH BILLIONS OF STARS

DISTANCE: 30 KM

ELEVATION: 2770 FT

PLACE: SETTLE

DATE: 27<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2021 (TBC)

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**5.-11.07.2021**







# THE HILL – 160 MILES IN 48 HOURS

By Sharon Gayter

*After my planned (world record) event in early December got canceled I had to find an outlet to have another run.*

Cockbain Events did a few events that I considered. Running home for Christmas looked good, 410 miles, but work was going to get in the way for this so I thought a weekend of running The Hill would be best. The rules were between 2.5 and 2.9 miles with a minimum of 100m (328 feet) of climbing, start time must be 8pm and a 48 hour limit for the 160 miles and you must not stop for more than 30 minutes at one time. After much recceing my route ended up being 2.7 miles with 350 feet of climbing. This route was good as it was out on the edge of Guisborough with 50/50 of tarmac and trail.

After much poor weather I decided it would have to be attempted after Christmas, but then the big announcement from Boris cancelled Christmas and our planned trip to Cambridge. A look at the weather forecast and there was not a good 48 hour window of weather.

On Christmas Day our friends made us a Christmas dinner that arrived at 2pm and mulled wine too! It felt like a depressing Christmas, the first time since moving from Cambridge to the North East over 30 years ago that I would not see my sister (and her large family). I pondered with Bill, storm Bella was set to hit on Saturday night and snow and ice possibly on Monday and Tuesday. Bill also felt better being home when I attempted this and so I raided the freezer for bean stews and soup, I filled up lots of flasks with hot water, I also made some sandwiches to load into my VW campervan. I packed a bag with just about every long sleeved shirt I owned, about 5 sets of hats and gloves, 3 x waterproof tops, 2 x waterproof bottoms and a down jacket.

I parked at Sandwood Park, the road at the bottom of the loop. My plan was to keep moving almost all of the time, only stopping to collect food and drink and change clothes. I had a timer that I could set for 20 minutes if I did need a short nap. The longest non-stop run I had ever done without sleep was the Ocean Floor Race, ironically a 160 mile race across a desert that took 50 hours and 5 minutes. It was hovering around 2 degrees and still very cold as I set out at 8pm.

The loop started off with approximately 200m tarmac road, turned right along a footpath with many potholes for another 200m and then turned left onto the dead end road to Hutton Village. Initially the incline was very gentle and started to increase the nearer to Hutton Village I got. This was easy to run, but at the base of the village I forked right onto the footpath on a steep incline. I walked the next section and after a few strides I could see the path glistening and became brighter as sections of leftover snow appeared and my feet slid back a few centimetres on the frozen ground. I kept to the edge of the path trying to step on patches of uneven ground that had more grip. After hitting a cross track towards Hutton Village, the leftover snow was now a blanket of 2-3 inches of frozen snow that was uneven and very slippery in places. The route was now slightly downhill but was lethal in places, I walked after nearly falling over a few times. A short steep hill followed to a mound where I did a U-turn and returned to that point before I turned right down a steep track to Hutton Village, this was a bad section of sheet ice that was difficult to negotiate without falling.

Through a gate and I was back on the tarmac in Hutton village that was lit by street lights, but still covered in snow and ice. There seemed to almost be a line of a micro-climate here as at the base of the village where I had turned off previously, the tarmac was ice and snow free and was easy to run. So a slow and steady pace back down the gentle incline and to the van. I had practiced at a slow pace on the route and estimated around 35 minutes for the loop but I was a little slower than this with the snow and ice. I pondered whether or not to continue as the underfoot conditions were so poor on the top track and rang Bill as I headed out on my next lap. The temperature was due to rise to 6 degrees by midnight and so I decided to continue for a few hours to see if the conditions would improve.

I had a tracker sheet in my van that listed the number of laps and approximate time and distance. After three hours I returned to the van, picked up a sandwich and poured a coffee in a travel mug and walked around the 400m bottom loop while eating and drinking and placed the mug on

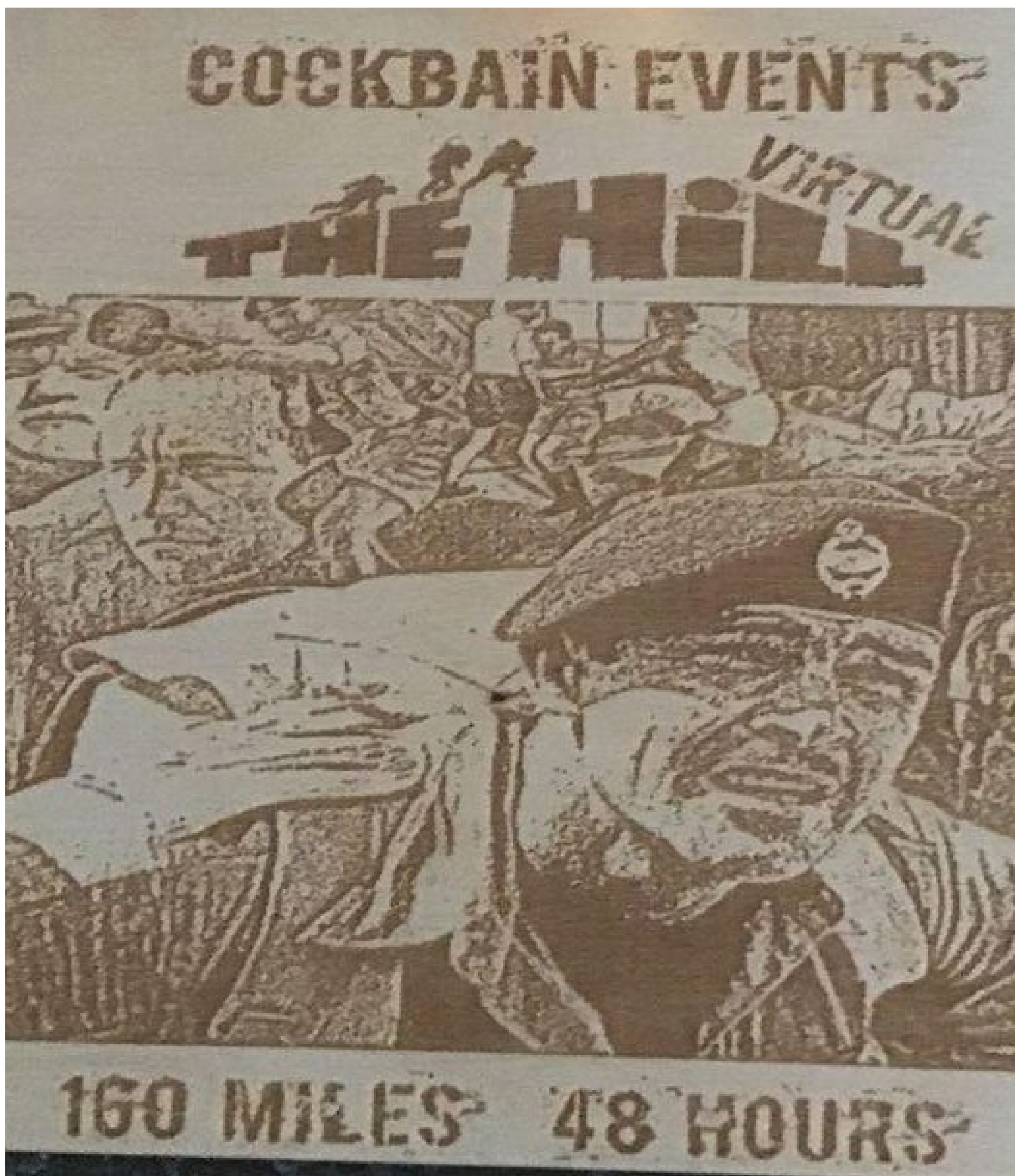


the verge where I could find it on my return. The ice was receding up the hill and by midnight the steep incline was now much improved and it was a section of around 0.5 mile on the top track that remained covered in snow and ice, with a 300 metre stretch that still needed walking to avoid falling. Hutton Village also improved so that this was runnable and seemed to maintain pace better now.

Throughout the night I maybe saw just two cars returning to Hutton Village on this quiet road, two ladies in Christmas suits walking back to the village and one cyclist that scared the life out of me with no lights! At around 2pm I was aware of my base layers being damp and returned for coffee and a sandwich and changed my base layer, hat and gloves. The temperature had risen to 6 degrees according to my phone. It was amazing thinking this was Christmas day and a very unusual way to spend it. I texted Bill approximately every three hours when I returned to the van to let him know I was okay and how it was going.

It was 8am, after 12 hours and 52 miles I used the hot water to make a double portion of instant porridge, again eating it on the 400m loop and to place the bowl on the verge for collection. The day dawned very overcast, the wind was already picking up and was quite gusty. I was feeling surprisingly good. The pattern of running the tarmac and walking the uphill trail right from the start was working well. Although I could feel my quads, the reality was that my pace had been slower than planned due to the snow and ice.

It was now Boxing Day and I checked my phone regularly to see when the rain and wind of storm Bella was going to hit. Instead of being 4pm until 5am, it had changed from 6pm until 4am. Great, only 10 hours of a storm. Bill came out for a walk with our dog, Baxter. He walked the loop with Baxter, so I passed him a few times, he walked two laps before returning home.







By midday there were many cars parked on the Hutton Village Road as it was a popular spot for accessing the North York Moors for exercise. It is only a narrow dead end road but it did become congested at times as the line of parked cars restricted access. I was much happier now that it was daylight, I could take my head torch off and had not felt sleepy at all. I had a couple of portions of soup that was still hot enough from the flask, still mainly stopping approximately every 3 hours. Bill came out again just before dusk to say hello.

It was just after 6pm that the light rain began, but by 8pm it was driving sideways at me with branches flying and pretty wild as storm Bella took hold. The cars had long since gone and I had the route to myself. The main thing that I have issues with late at night is the behaviour of merry people leaving pubs, but lockdown and closed pubs now meant I could feel much more safe out in the dark on my own. I always feel safe in the hills, but not close to town, the weather would also have prevented others from venturing out.

I was now reduced to walking some of the tarmac road to Hutton Village as the small incline was tiring. The steeper incline at the track was now draining. The top track only had one small patch of snow and ice and was all passable. I was dressed in full waterproof top and bottoms and had to change all my clothes on every three hour return to the van.

By 24 hours I had covered 96 miles. I had my heavy walking Gore-Tex jacket on now with three layers underneath. I pondered whether or not to continue; 100 miles was a good figure. Although fatigued and with stiff quads there was really nothing wrong with me, it was whether or not I had the desire or motivation to continue. For some reason I really wanted this, I wanted to push myself and wanted the feeling of satisfaction of completing a challenge in the absence of finishing a real race.

I thought back to the Hardmoors 160 in August that I bailed on very early; how might this compare to that race? That started in the evening and went into darkness, but I had strained my back early on. This event was a planned route, I knew where the potholes were, which side of the road to run on to avoid cambers, which sections to walk, which to run, and food and drink were almost track side. Although my current route was not inspiring countryside with spectacular views, this somehow felt easier with regular walks in every single loop and I always managed to run from Hutton Village to the van. I had nothing to think about in terms of navigation, nothing to carry apart from a head torch and phone. I wore the same Altra shoes for the entire 160 miles.

Although it was pretty wild out there, the trees around Hutton Village trail gave some protection and the strongest gusts were mainly between the van and Hutton Village

on the lower, more open section. I had not even thought about being sleepy as I think the wild weather was keeping me very alert, although I was now walking significantly more.

I needed more substantial food, around this 24 hour mark, at 8pm I stopped to heat a bean stew while boiling a kettle to fill a flask. I sat while I ate the stew and put the timer on to make sure I didn't stop too long. I still managed to leave the van within 12 minutes of stopping. The wind was howling through the trees and made it pretty surreal to be out on such a night. The good news was that who else would be out on

a night like this! Bill rang frequently to check how I was.

The rain and wind began easing at around 2am and on my break at 4am I changed my complete kit yet again as the rain was soaking through my arms and down my neck.

The day dawned cold again and I was caught out a couple of times at Hutton Village on black ice where I avoided falling. After 36 hours I was nearly up to 140 miles. I had not stopped to sleep at all and was still very capable of a slow jog down the hill from Hutton Village. On the steeper hill I was reduced to an awkward walk as my quads were so stiff now. Finally, the sun came out and a pleasant day arrived as the cars started to park up again. I was irritated by people getting in my way, but in reality it was me feeling tired and a little unstable on my feet due to the sleep deprivation. I saw many faces of people I knew throughout the weekend, some more than once on the same run. I only stopped twice for short chats to those I knew to tell them what I was doing.

It was strange but now daylight had arrived, I finally started to feel drowsy and was almost on autopilot. I just wanted it over now and had less than a marathon left but it felt like an age to finish this off. It was a slow battle watching the clock tick by as I could finally work out how many laps to the finish and updated Bill when he rang. With around 10 miles to go I was running on empty and needed to stop for another feed of a bean stew. The last lap felt good and it was very satisfying to achieve my goal, I was still capable of a slow jog down the hill now that the end was in sight. On arrival at the van, just after 2pm on Sunday 27th December 2020, Bill had walked out to drive me home. The van was a mess where I had dumped wet clothing and empty containers. Once home it was in the shower and I was in bed by 2:30pm.

By 6pm I awoke and had beans on toast. I could find only one small blister. I checked my phone, Bill had rung me 18 times! The stats were 160.15 miles, 22,408ft of climbing, total time 42 hours 02 mins and 35 seconds. It worked out that I was the only person to complete this challenge in December and a nice wooden medal arrived some time later (at no charge). Thanks Mark Cockbain!



# THE HILL STARTING 8PM CHRISTMAS DAY (FILLED THIS IN EVERY TIME I RETURNED TO VAN)

<i>Laps</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Food</i>
1	2.7	20:00	
2	5.4		
3	8.1	21:55	Cake/ coffee
4	10.8		
5	13.5		
6	16.2		
7	18.9	00:20	Sandwich/tea
8	21.6		
9	24.3		
10	27	02:30	Soup/ coffee
11	29.7		
12	32.4		
13	35.1		
14	37.8	04:45	Sandwich/tea
15	40.5		
16	43.2		
17	45.9	07:00	Porridge/ tea
18	48.6		
19	51.3		
20	54		
21	56.7	09:20	Cake/ coffee
22	59.4		
23	62.1		
24	64.8	11:30	Sandwich/tea
25	67.5		
26	70.2		
27	72.9	13:20	Soup/ tea
28	75.6		
29	78.3	14:50	Soup/ tea
30	81		

<i>Laps</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Food</i>
31	83.7		
32	86.4	16:45	Sandwich/ cake/tea
33	89.1		
34	91.8	18:20	Bean stew/tea
35	94.5		
36	97.2		
37	99.9	20:15	Sandwich/tea
38	102.6		
39	105.3	22:00	Malt loaf/tea
40	108		
41	110.7		
42	113.4	00:05	Sandwich
43	116.1		
44	118.8	02:20	Soup/ tea
45	121.5		
46	124.2		
47	126.9	04:15	Malt loaf/tea
48	129.6		
49	132.3	06:30	Porridge/ coffee
50	135		
51	137.7		
52	140.4	08:30	Sandwich/tea
53	143.1	09:35	Cake/tea
54	145.8		
55	148.5		
56	151.2	11:35	Bean stew/ coffee
57	153.9	12:40	Snickers/tea
58	156.6		
59	159.3	14:02	
60	162		

## TOTAL AMOUNT EATEN.

8 HALF SANDWICHES, 2 SOUPS, 2 BEAN STEWS, HALF A MALT LOAF, 3 SLICES BANANA AND WALNUT LOAF, 2 CUPS PORRIDGE, 1 SNICKER, 3 X MILKSHAKES, 750 ML SMOOTHIE, 15 CUPS OF TEA/COFFEE.

[Sharons lap data in a pdf](#)



# TREES NOT TEES

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Looking to make your race more environmentally friendly?

With Trees not Tees, give participants the option of planting a tree if they don't want a race t-shirt. All for no extra cost to you!

Join the movement @ [www.treesnottees.com](http://www.treesnottees.com)

## ***Ultras are setting the pace with 'Trees not Tees'***

As ultrarunners we often seek out nature at its purest, traversing mountain passes or strafing through woodland trails. As ultrarunners, we also like to think we're more environmentally conscious; many races have done away with plastic cups, and when training we have a 'leave no trace' attitude. However, the sport we love has a greater impact on the environment than we would like to admit; every gel in plastic wrapping, every new piece of gear we didn't really need, leaves its own trail behind in the environment.

One project working to counter this is Trees not Tees, who have a growing presence within the ultra running community. As the name suggests, Trees not Tees enables race organisers to offer runners the chance to say, 'I don't want my t-shirt / medal, plant a tree for me instead'; it's really that simple. On average over 20% of runners are choosing the green option, each one helping avoid the pollution of another 2KG of ECO2, which is created when a new t-shirt is produced, all for nothing if they end up in a drawer or in landfill.

For every runner who chooses the green option, a tree will be planted in the UK as part of their sustainable reforestation project, The Future Forest Company. Each runner also receives a personalised e-certificate, with a photo of their tree, the species and what3words location. Organisers just pay Trees not Tees what they would have paid for the race t-shirt, down to a base of £2.50 per tree.

It's really that simple, as James Elson from Centurion Running points out:

"There's literally no downsides. We are helping to arrest the climate change issue, helping rewild areas of the UK, providing the option for runners to get something really wonderful when in the past they may have just taken a t-shirt they didn't need. Everyone's happy.

If a runner has finished a long-distance event and it's their first one, they can still take a tee, but for a lot of our runners they're returning year after year, so they really don't need another t-shirt."

Centurion Running were one of the first to launch Trees not Tees across all of their events this year and have already helped plant 335 trees, as well as helping promote the project with other races. In the trail space, organisations such as Big Bear Events, Hardmoors, Great Owl Running, Scafell Sky Race, SVP100, Camino Ultra, Freedom Racing, UK Ultra, The Salomon Serpent Trail, Dragon's Back and XNRG have all implemented Trees not Tees in recent months, as well as partners such as SI Entries helping spread the word to their races.

If you'd like to find out more, check out Trees not Tees on Instagram @treesnottees, their website on [www.treesnottees.com](http://www.treesnottees.com), or get in touch via [hello@treesnottees.com](mailto:hello@treesnottees.com)



# A ROUGH FALL AT THE FALLS OF ROUGH

Text & Photos by Gary Dudney

*Course Description: 12.9 mile loop repeated eight times for the 100 mile and four for the 50 Mile. Mostly single and double track trail with many significant, short but steep climbs made challenging because of slippery mud, rocky sections, and below freezing temperatures. The Falls of Rough area is hilly and forested. There are several stream crossings but all can be crossed dry.*



The online run up to the Falls 100 Mile is second to none. The race website is packed with detailed info including a lengthy pre-race briefing video that is just one of three offered by Race Directors Greg Milby and Jeff Proctor. A series of emails keep you up to date on race prep and weather conditions and guarantee that you are well forewarned about the challenges you will face on race day. Greg helpfully suggests in the video, for example, “to leave your Sunday go to meetin’ shoes at home.”

Greg and Jeff, by the way, seem friendly and approachable, but they also seem pleased as punch about the prospect of putting runners through the wringer. They mention the below freezing temperatures at night, the rugged and rocky trails, the numerous steep climbs, and the certainty of mud on the course with the possibility of epic volumes of mud should the weather not cooperate. The race has a liberal 36 hour time limit, yet in its first two years only 11 runners managed to finish the 100 mile event. In relatively good weather this year, only 19 out of 49 starters made it to the end. Belt buckles at the Falls seem reluctant to leave home.

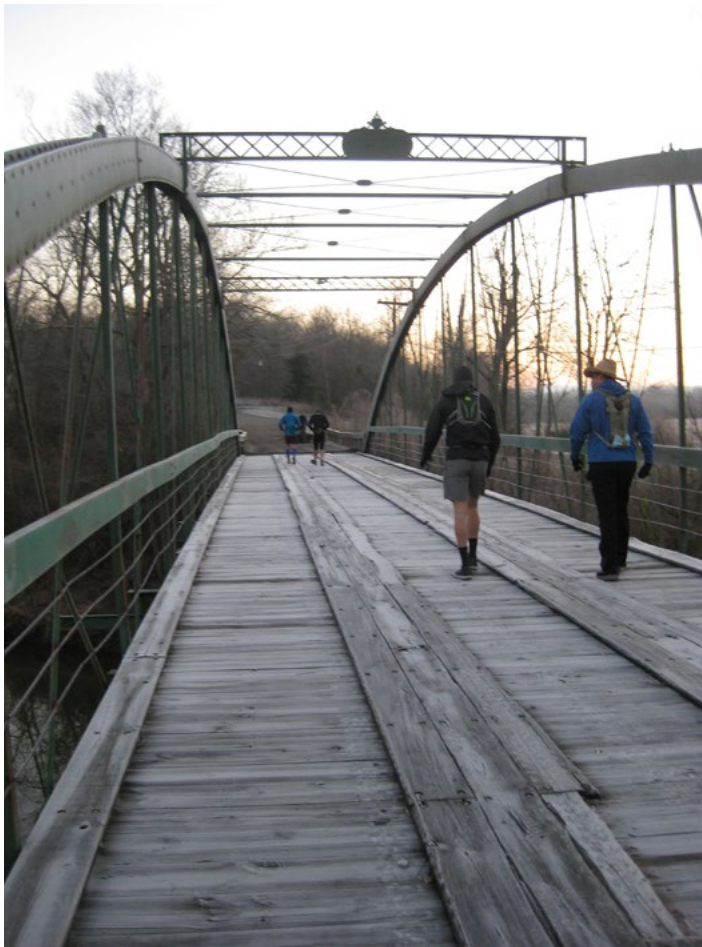
There are shorter races, though, that offer you the opportunity to experience this tough course without taking on the whole 100 mile monster, that is, a 50 Mile event, a marathon and a half-marathon. Runners in the shorter distances, who are not up against quite so awesome a challenge as the 100 milers, seemed to have a little better attitude so they lightened up the mood for the longer distance people.

The start/finish area at the Falls of Rough Resort is peaceful and bucolic. An asphalt road lined on both sides with split rail fencing rolls up and down through fields of manicured green





*FALLS 100 Mile (12/5/20)*  
*Falls of Rough, KY*  
*Elevation Gain: 15,700 feet*







grass. When you arrive at the packet pickup, the Green Farm Mansion comes into view, and just beyond is a picturesque abandoned mill on the banks of the Rough River. A stately old iron bridge with a beautiful green patina crosses the river just next to the mill. A plaque above the center of the bridge reads in old timey lettering, "1877 King Iron Bridge & MFG. CO. Cleveland O." The Falls of Rough refer to rapids that existed back in the 1780s when surveyors first visited the area. The land was initially owned by speculators who bought and sold property without ever visiting it, including one owner of 5,000 acres, a certain George Washington. In the mid 1800s, Willis Green bought the property along the Rough River, built the original Green Farm mansion, and developed the mill works.

Beyond the bridge are a row of resort cabins and the start/finish area, so with each loop, runners come across the bridge to check in, supply up, visit the warming tent, and then reluctantly cross back over the bridge and begin another loop. The course first passes by a large crew/camping/parking area called Pit Road where runners can recharge and visit their supply bags. Just down the way from Pit Road, a sign reading "Playtime is over..." points up a steep, rocky "staircase" where one of the major climbs of the loop begins.

There are a few sections of runnable road in the loop besides the start/finish area but most of the time the trail is rugged and hilly. The flat sections of the trail are plagued by mud which is not bad at first but deteriorates as many runners go through and the mud unfreezes. Places develop

where half the trail is slippery mud and the other half is an erosion ditch waiting for runners to lose their footing. Negotiating a muddy downhill slope, I put my foot on some icy grass that proved worse than the mud. I yelled as I went down hard and heard a couple of voices coming out of the night asking me if I was okay. Essentially, I wasn't.

Being the first week of December, the morning start was a frigid cold, 25 degrees, but the sun came out and it was really a glorious day although never actually warm. But the temp dropped a good ten degrees the second the sun hit the horizon about 4:30 PM and it got steadily colder as the long night wore on. I unfortunately cashed it in at 55 miles soon after my palm slashing fall left me bleeding and nursing a questionable shoulder joint.

The support for runners at this race was incredible. It had a very welcoming, family type atmosphere. The hard work the RDs had obviously put into this event and the superb runner support from the volunteers was very evident in all aspects of the race. One highlight, by the way, were the hamburgers and hotdogs offered at the start/finish aid station along with a big breakfast in the frosty morning on Sunday.

Prep for the race even included someone going out and power blowing the leaves off the trail where it snaked through the forest to uncover all the hidden rocks and roots and make navigation easier. There were also lots of great signs pointing the way and confidence flags right where they needed to be. Greg and Jeff seemed to be everywhere, answering questions at registration, cruising the course in a pickup, showing up at the big aid station out on the course, and when I quit in the middle of the night, they were both at the start/finish commiserating with me and asking me to come back next year.

Finishing this race, at any distance, is something worth crowing about when you get back home. Your running buddies likely spent a cold weekend on the couch while you went out and faced Armageddon. A visitor to the area in 1941 was said to remark to Jennie Scott Green, the last descendent of Willis Green to own the property, "I... am particularly attracted by the name of your post office..." "Falls of Rough." I should think only good things could come from a community that has such a perfectly unusual and delightful name." Well, this race is certainly one of those "good things."



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# The Black Toe Run

By Arron Patrick

Photos courtesy Arron Patrick and  
Misty Wong Photography

The course for The Black Toe Run is located at the Hardin family farm in the picturesque mountains of Watertown, Tennessee. The open pasture fields sit at the foot of the hardwood forest that beautifully covers the beast of a mountain waiting inside along with its relentless trails. The course is a 5 mile loop with roughly 1000 feet of vertical gain and loss. I would be taking on the 12-hour solo race.

The big red barn was the hub for all runners. After each loop was completed, runners wrote the time of day down on the board next to their name in order to track progress. This was also the place where the majority of people were hanging out, encouraging, passing on friendly jibes, and indulging in the delicious smoked pork and hot apple cider provided by Mr. Hardin himself.

The race would follow a traditional ceremonial speech given by the race director in which he ultimately encouraged all runners to make the most of the opportunity his amazing property was about to offer us. After a pledge, the first loop began and John Hardin led the runners out onto the course he had created.

The course itself begins and ends at the big red barn. From there it's a short 100 yards to enter the first patch of woods. A fairly simple single track, with the odd fallen tree, has you feeling pretty good about your chances on the day. At the end of the first section of single track you make your first





creek crossing, onto a gentle hill, across a field into the next patch of trees. More single track for the next half mile that gives you another boost of confidence about how the race may unfold. As you clear the treeline, adjacent to the nearby river, you abruptly stumble down to another creek crossing. A few stone hops across and you are into the big pasture. A gradual hill for the next quarter of a mile and then a further half mile until you hit the base of the major section of hardwoods. To this point you feel fast, and find yourself believing all of your goals are fully attainable.

Slowly but surely, the single track starts to meander throughout the woods, becoming progressively more rugged, and steep. Nothing crazy, but an adequate warm up for what is yet to come. The climb is consistent, even if the terrain underfoot is ever changing. Every now and again you hit a quick downhill spot, but never enough to find any kind of rhythm. Eventually, you find yourself running in between some really cool, but harsh rock formations, and an even more rugged section of the course full of twists, turns, and shelf-like climbs. This is continuous until you hit the steepest part of the course, which is about 2.5 miles into the loop, where the grade gets closer to 20 percent. After about 100 yards you clear the woods and see daylight. You've reached the summit of the mountain. You are almost 3 miles in. You take a deep breath, and believe that the hard part is now over. But you'd be wrong.

The fresh cut trail down the back side of the hill was soft but steep. This leads you down to my favorite section of the course. If you love technical downhill running like I do, the next mile and a half was fun. Long enough sections to really send it at pace, but some really short, steep mini climbs before you bomb it all over again. Up and down the twisting turns continued. No time to take a wrong step or a random tree root would trip you up and end your day. Bravery would be rewarded with a fast split on this section, but stupidity could result in a trip to the ER. Concentration was paramount, which uses up mental energy over a long race.

The final half mile starts out by crossing another open downhill field between the two sections of woods, before reaching a more technical single track that takes you through what seems to be an endless maze of Tennessee timber. Nothing of note in this section, but relentless nonetheless. Finally, you pop out of the woods, take a left turn and run along the pond back towards the big red barn.

Perhaps the biggest influencer in the Black Toe Run is the weather. The day started out almost perfect. High 30s,



little to no wind, and even a glimpse of sunshine popping up behind the nearby mountain range. The course was relatively dry, and it was truly runnable for the first 4-6 hours.

I've always edged on the side of overly aggressive, rather than cautious. I'd rather attack than let the race come to me. The goal for this race was to go after the course record of 62 miles. Considering this was only my 3rd ever ultra, and my first race not at the Murder Mile in Franklin TN, this was a pretty outrageous goal. (Check out the Mid-State Mile and TN Mile on Ultra sign up if you want an insane challenge) I was going after it from the gun.

The first 15 miles I was on record pace, but I had a sneaky feeling that it wasn't quite sustainable and made the conscious choice to dial it back a little. I ran these first few loops with my training partner and it was fun to explore together.

Between the 4th and 5th loop I had fallen back a couple spots in the field, but was very confident in my ability to hold this new pace. I was enjoying each loop, chatting to anyone I encountered, and had settled in for the foreseeable future.

The course record was pretty much out of sight, but the goal of winning my first ever race had become the priority.

The rain began to drizzle around the 6 hour mark. The drizzle through the trees turned those speedy downhills into something you had to think twice about barreling down. The newly cut-in trail sections went from fluffy dirt to squelchy mud and the big boulders you could push off, to jump down a quick drop, became slightly more precarious. Just enough to make you question each step.

It must have been another hour or so

until the wind really started to whistle through the trees. You could feel the storm rolling in and getting closer. Multiple runners made passing comments of "better get these loops in quicker before it gets bad." The sleet quickly followed the wind. The temperature dropped, and it was the first time I remember feeling cold at roughly 8 hours.

There was a brief moment where the course felt like it stabilized. It definitely wasn't as fast as it was, it didn't seem to be getting any worse. Until it did. The first of a few torrential downpours rolled in and battered the course. It was as if the clouds could sense the course needed some protection from the runners. The water soaked every portion of the course. The once runnable downhills became a slippery mess, and we all began to realize that things were going to be different. There needed to be a mental shift.

With 5 hours to go, I turned my focus onto my direct competition. I was told I was 25 minutes out of first place. My fire to compete started to burn as the hard rain began to fall, but there was no extinguishing this flame. I knew I could claw back that time as the course got tougher to navigate. It was shortly after when darkness began to set in. The wind began to howl. What was once the fastest part of the course in the open field became the place runners went to experience what it felt like to be inside a cold wash cycle in the washing machine. As you navigated the headwind and slashing rain, you longed for the treeline that would give you some respite.

The wind could no longer hit you as you climbed the mountain in relative shelter, but the frequent cracks and pops of trees reminded you of what was lurking in the field at the top of the climb. Climbing itself became more difficult as the muddy soup



flowed downhill towards you as if to push you back. At first you began to try and dodge the big puddles on the “flat” spots, but eventually you realized it was futile and succumbed to the sodden feet inside your filthy shoes.

The downhill sections simply became about surviving them. You held your breath, and hoped you’d make it through the section without taking a muddy bath or worse. Or like a few brave souls who truly embraced the suck, you sat down and slid on your behind, accepting you would end up there eventually anyway.

There were moments where it honestly felt unsafe. There were moments you questioned what the point was.

There were many conversations on the course about if it was worth going on for the full entirety of your race. This as we all came to find out, was the true magic of the Black Toe Run. Many began to succumb to the combination of the brutal course and its sidekick mother nature, and retired to their tents.

At the start of the 9th loop I was only 8 minutes back from the first place runner. My crew could see I was all in, and their excitement only stoked the fire. The next couple miles I dropped some of my fastest splits through the driving rain and wind. I kept thinking, “It’s pushing them back to me”. I dropped my chin, and powered ahead. Each slippery downhill, I was deliber-

ate, but aggressive. The mindset had gone from patience to predator. I was hunting, and every flash of light I saw through the dark woods could potentially be my prey.

The unique part of the ultra world is the fact that while you are competing, you find yourself being a cheerleader, and wanting all other runners to truly do their best. As I ferociously climbed, I remember praying out loud that the first place runner wouldn’t break. That if I was to win, it was because I had more to give on that day. I knew his resolve from previous meetings, and I knew chasing him would make us both better.

As I came out of the woods and rounded the pond, I gave my crew the obligatory yell to let them know I was back. “He’s here AP, lets go” cried one of my crew. The competitor inside of me said I needed him to see me before he shot into the woods to start the next loop. I knew this was the loop to make my move but I also knew so much could go wrong if I didn’t fuel correctly and rushed back out. He saw me, and descended into the darkness with an extra pep in his step. We both knew we were racing as agreed upon 10 hours earlier. With a fist full of berries and a big smile on my face it was finally time to race.

I couldn’t see my competition, but I knew I was running fast enough that I would soon enough.

It took a little over a mile until I saw the headlamp look back at me in the middle of the main pasture. As I closed in he turned, and laughed “Look at you! You’ve found your second wind” I gave him a fist bump to acknowledge he had made me work, and that I knew it wasn’t over. We both smiled while the wind and rain battered our joyful faces. This test is what we came for. I ran hard and scared for the rest of the loop. Each uphill I told myself I had to run because he would. It was time to finish the job I had committed to hours earlier.

By this point my watch had died so I had no idea of splits or distance. My attention was solely on where I was putting my feet. I crossed the open field between the two patches of woods and relaxed for a split second, and I got a quick reminder that I needed to concentrate. I fell hard. Thankfully there were no injuries besides bruising my pride, but nothing will refocus you more than a kick in the pants from a mountain you haven’t yet conquered. I humbly finished the loop.

The next loop went pretty quickly. My crew met me about 1.5 miles in and told me I was about 15 minutes ahead, and I felt confident with how much energy I had left that I was going to be able to maintain my pace. I felt I had done enough to win, but this is where







your brain starts to make you aware of what you have asked of your body the last 11 hours. Slight muscle cramps started on the uphill sections. A bit of fear set in on the treacherous downhill sections and made me slow down more than I wanted to. I started to debate whether it was even worth doing another lap after this one. I wasn't physically wrecked, but the adrenaline dump from racing the past 4 hours had subsided, and I hadn't given myself another objective. I knew the course record was gone, 'what's another 5 miles going to prove'?

As I rounded the corner I was hoping for jubilation from the crew, and congratulations telling me I had won my first race. I leaned on my poles while someone wrote my time on the board, my body language must have told people I thought I had done enough, and at one point I may have even said it out loud. Then, "Get back out there, you came to run" was called by one of my friends. "you've still got 45 minutes, go!". In most walks of life, we seek comfort, and people who tell us what we want to hear, rather than what we need to hear. I love the ultra world because I have found great people, who I enjoy being around because they challenge me, and won't accept adequate as good enough. I told the 6ft 4 giant he sucked, and I took off knowing I would lose miles from my total because I would miss the time cap of 12 hours. I really didn't care. It was the right thing to do, I hadn't suffered adequately yet. I was so glad I got back out there. It would end up being my slowest loop, perhaps because I fell two more times and got a bit banged up. Perhaps because I knew I would be a little late back, so why not enjoy the slop and rain a bit longer? The last loop felt a lot more like I was exploring in the middle of a monsoon rather than racing. As silly as it sounds, it was just fun. I had been hoping I had hit the 60 mile mark because I still hadn't thought to check the board for my total mileage, but either way I knew I had accomplished my longest time on foot and highest mileage in a race. It had been a good day.

True to the spirit of ultra running, the first person to congratulate me as I approached the barn for the final time, was the runner I had been chasing most of the day. It is characters like this that I love; genuinely good people, who want to compete with every fiber of their being, but also find joy in seeing others do the exact same thing. It's a hard thing to truly put into words, but in all my years in high level athletics there is truly nothing like the spirit of an ultra runner. Much like The Black Toe Run. They are unique, relentless, tough, and life changing to be around.







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# CLIMBING, CLAWING, CRYING:

MY EXCEPTIONALLY "NOT IDEAL" FIRST 50 MILE ATTEMPT

## The Black Toe Run Watertown, TN

By Emily Verschoor-Kirss  
Photos by Misty Wong Photography



### The Before

Last spring, after many of my training group finished their second 50k, we began exploring the possibility of increasing the distance. Following the reasonable guidance of Poncho Blanco, our Thursday group leader, I was committed to the mantra of "three per distance," meaning I wanted to complete three races or runs of each distance before increasing. I too felt the pull to consider the 50 mile distance, and our local training program was offering a 50 mile program for the first time. However, the race they targeted put them through what I feared would be too quick of a time period to prepare my body, and after pacing 55k at Dark Sky in May, I needed one more 50k distance before I could allow myself to increase the distance.

Last January, I volunteered at a local race for the first time, and had the most wonderful experience. The Black Toe Run is truly a spectacle of athleticism, grit, and perseverance, and I witnessed much of it first hand shortly after completing my own first ultra. Like many events I attend, I thought about how I'd like to race it some day.

Running a point-to-point or loop 50 mile course seemed incredibly daunting to me for numerous reasons. I thought about what time of year I do my best running (winter), and selected an event that I thought catered to my ability to complete 50 miles in a safe, relatively controlled environment. I chose the Black Toe Run. With a 5 mile loop format and a 24 hour time win-



dow, I was confident that due to its proximity to Nashville, the course support would be unparalleled. As a bonus knowing the race director personally assured both myself and my mother that no poor decisions would be made on my behalf come race day.

I trained for 6 months to have a steady build up in base mileage. I celebrated with my teammates when they completed their 50 miler in November. I got to play aid station captain for them at the turnaround, and it was such a joy to triumph in their accomplishments. In November, I returned to the site of my first ultra and completed a self-supported 50k training run with some of the most wonderful trail sisters a girl can ask for. I set a 50k PR by 20 minutes. In December, Aid Station Panda was back at it again to close out 2019 watching the Dirtbags complete our most successful year of trail running to date with an overall female win at Bell Ringer 50k. This core group truly means everything to me.

The last month of my training focused exclusively on loop based workouts to simulate race day. We are blessed with a 4.5 mile trail loop with just under 1k feet of elevation gain at PWP, which is as close to the race loop as I could get. I got discouraged by my own fatigue in the first few workouts, disappointed with my climbing ability as I knew that would be an incredible factor in my success with this endeavor. However, I trusted my body and I trusted the process and allowed the growth to occur naturally.

### The During

Many factors prevented this effort from being "ideal" (although, no ultra is ideal). Here are just a few:

**1.** Three weeks before the race, in my last week of really focused training, I got slammed by a gnarly cold. It messed with me mentally and physically. What a big ole middle finger to the end of my training. I had been feeling the fatigue and whatever this was really knocked me out. Not ideal.

**2.** Two days before the race, my grandfather had passed away. Although not entirely unexpected, I still found myself confronting emotions I had not experienced in my adult life. Not ideal.

**3.** In true Tennessee form, January weather is as unpredictable as it gets. This race in particular is notorious for troublesome weather. Last year, the entire course turned into a slip 'n slide in the early evening when rain moved through. I guess that's what you get when you hold an event in Watertown, right? In true Black Toe fashion, the forecast predicted a 100% chance of rain the day prior to and during the event, with temperatures dropping from the 50s and 60s to 30s and snow overnight. Not ideal.

I bolstered my running gear box with a second pair of Salomon Sense Ride shoes, rain pants, a new waterproof shell, and the best \$1.02 I've ever spent at Dick's Sporting Goods, a pair of size medium youth hot pink waterproof mittens. I packed 7 boxes of gear for this race, as if I was prepared to fend off the apocalypse. I was prepared for ten 5.25-mile loops, each with around 1400ft of elevation gain for a total of 52.5 miles and 14,000ft of ascent.

Before the race had even started, we were informed that the course had been shortened due to wash out and runner safety in the first 1.5 mile. This was, simply put, not good information. The first 1.5 mile is the only flat portion of the course, so we weren't cutting any elevation. Also, by cutting the course, ten loops would no longer get



me to 50 miles. It would be much later in the day that I'd calculate based on my watch data that 14-15 loops was my new endgame. Fifteen 3.5mi loops with 850ft of ascent.

The additional 5 loops I was now faced with completing was an immediate mental battle. I expected this race to be more mentally challenging than anything I'd ever done before, but I didn't expect to confront it so early. Not ideal.

I ran one loop while volunteering last year, so I knew that nearly all the climbing was in one, early part of the course. I fell into hiking mode, and started chugging along. The trail was gushing water. There was going to be no keeping my feet dry, but it was warm enough to shed my waterproof shell fairly quickly and cruise in shorts and a tee. Due to the flowing water, my Sense Ride lugs were being constantly cleaned and I found great footing and traction on the highly technical descent off the high point. I felt like I was in a rhythm, and I was having a blast.

I had a nutrition plan that was going to keep me on top of calories without having to consume large quantities of food. It all hinged on the new Spring Energy Speednut gel, which boasts 235 cal. Speednut just launched last week, so I didn't have a chance to train with it, but the allure of the high caloric quantity seemed like a home run. I tried it once after a training run a week before my race, and my stomach didn't love it, but I passed it off as a reaction to something else I'd eaten. Nope. I took in one Speednut, and thought I was in the clear, until I wasn't, and my stomach was wrecked from there on out. In my first 50 miler, I'd screwed up my nutrition with the first thing I put in my body. Not ideal.

Finishing my first loop, it became clear what the reality of the situation was: due to the trail and weather conditions, the time I anticipated per loop would remain the same, approximately 1:15 per loop. However, the loops were shorter and I had more of them to complete.

It was going to be a long day, and after I immediately bombed my nutrition, I did what Emily always does: I kept moving, but I stopped eating. I tried, but nothing tasted good and I was having trouble swallowing. I hit a low in the first 8 miles. How neat is that? It is in fact not neat, it felt absolutely terrible. I grabbed Keith and dragged him out on course with me. I needed major moral support.

Loop 3 is where I really began to understand the course. I knew which sections to hike, which sections to run, and had a really good course map in my head. Big climb to the left turn sign (what's up, fungi tree?), slight descent across two waterfalls (points for both beauty and excessive water), climb up to a high point. Halfway. The back half you tick off the five B's, landmarks that outline the descent. It's a decent haul to Butt Crack (rock for-







mation), Bamboo, then the “wet section” (which seems redundant, but if you ran this year, you understand the truth to this), bear left and climb to Big Log, and then a slippery descent past Bridge and Basin (talk about a straight up creek), before coming back home. Keith and I ticked off a few loops together, and I grabbed my poles. As soon as I had those in my hand, I couldn’t believe I had ever attempted a loop without them. I bounced back for a loop when I got in some calories and hot tea. My Opa brought out the sun for 30 minutes so we could catch the sunset at the top of the high point, because he knew I needed a boost more than anything. On a day with a 100% chance of rain, it was everything.

Keith ran with me until dark, and although I was moving as best as I could, the limitations of my progress were largely out of my control due to trail and weather conditions. It rained near constantly the entire day. I was swapping between two pairs of shoes, something I’ve never done before. I changed each time one got filled with mud and dirt to the point of blister danger. Putting on dry socks was useless as they stayed dry for perhaps 100 yards, but even wet socks and liberally using SNB Happie Toes was working wonders.

By about mile 22, I was getting severely discouraged by my perceived lack of progress. The temperature had dropped 30 degrees and the wet shoes and socks were getting colder and

colder. It was hard to come into the aid station and see all these people who were relaxing, done for the day. I was not done for the day, and I realized being around them was not helping. Becca took me aside, helped me cry it out, and sent me away with Jim. We had a great loop. I stopped worrying about what I couldn’t control, and focused on what I could. I wanted this, I would keep putting one foot in front of the other.

Physically, I felt remarkably good, probably because I wasn’t moving fast at all. I stopped looking at my watch because I knew seeing another 22 minute mile wasn’t exactly going to be a boost of confidence. Becca picked me up off the floor again and carried me through another good loop. I continued to struggle to eat but I kept grinding away. Keith and Jim each took one more turn keeping me company. Jim was the lucky winner of being there for my slowest 50k ever (12:07:36 what a boss). Keith got the honor of once again witnessing my longest run to date (besting the 34 miles from when I paced his first 50 in May).

On lap 9 I started getting sleepy, but once Jim and I calculated that I had 5 loops to go after we finished the current one, for some reason it felt doable. It felt achievable. It felt within my reach. I was happier on the trail than at camp because I felt like every minute I spent at camp was a minute I wasn’t using to get closer to being done. I

planned to zip through the aid station and head out for loop 10 with Jim. We were getting it done, but I was so tired. My body was fine, but it was the middle of the night and I was shocked that I wasn’t falling asleep on the trail. I told Jim that I promised I wasn’t quitting, but that I needed to pause and rest after that loop. I huddled up in a chair next to the fire and started shivering. It was so cold, and my feet were in wet shoes with wet socks. I had every blanket available around me and a fire in front of me and I couldn’t get warm.

### The After

I was exhausted from the effort, but my body still felt okay, and I still had the willpower to finish the distance. I just couldn’t go for 8 more hours. I couldn’t do four more loops. It wasn’t reasonable to ask that of myself, and even more, I simply would not ask anyone around that fire to go back into those woods with me. For the last two loops, I had said how I wanted to get the distance, but I didn’t care if it was on the course. In fact, I wish it wasn’t on the course any more. If I was able to run, I’d be able to tick off miles at a faster rate than 25 min/mile. I made the decision to finish my run on the gravel service road we had used as an entrance to the event when the bridge to John’s property was severely flooded from all the rain.

Folks took turns tipping liquids into me while I huddled, human trail angel Joy



brought me something to calm my stomach and a high calorie liquid to sip and soothed my spirit. She put me in her truck with her husband and human trail running superhero, Steve, who was resting because he already had enough of a lead that he could take a break until other runners caught up on his laps. That's hilarious. I probably spent an hour resting and warming up. I got out of the car, finally put on dry shoes (Nike Kiger) because I didn't need the traction from the Salomons. I bundled up and myself and my two trail companions headed out to get the last 13 miles done. What I did to deserve two dads running with me at 2am is beyond me, but I would have experienced a colossally different day had it not been for them. We battled for 5 miles until I needed another break. Keith was done, and I couldn't blame him for a second. He gave everything he could to see me do this and got called to put in much more than he bargained for.

As we came in, I turned to Jim and explained that I was going to get to 45 minutes and call it. I'd been moving for an insanely long time, and at that point, it wasn't about the number, it was about the effort. I was already proud of the effort, and I could not ask anyone to keep running with me. I took in a few calories and we just went out to send it. 2.5 miles to go, and I was going to do it. Just one more out and back on the service road and I could let go of everything I'd been holding on to all day and night. All the expectations I didn't reach. All the calories I couldn't eat. All the mistakes I made. All the gross underestimations of how Mother Nature can humble you at the snap of her fingers. All the things I thought I'd feel but didn't. All the things I never thought I'd feel but did.

At any other 50 mile race, I would've been done hours before, I would've completed the distance I set out to do, but I wouldn't have experienced literally everything that a person can feel during an ultra. I am a better, more compassionate, confident, and strong woman because of this race. To everyone and anyone who offered me a shred of anything between 10am on January 19 and 4:30am on January 20: I am grateful for you and I appreciate you more than words can describe. Thank you for telling me to cry and for running with me and for allowing me to struggle just enough that I knew I was never in danger of being unsafe, just in danger of growing more than I ever thought possible in an 18 hour stretch of time.

The Black Toe Run will not hand you 50 miles. You have to pry every single mile from that course with your own two feet and some serious mental willpower. This year the course only gave up 50 miles to a select few runners, and I was not one of them, but that's okay. I climbed, clawed, and cried my way through that course and gave that day everything I had.

#### Stats

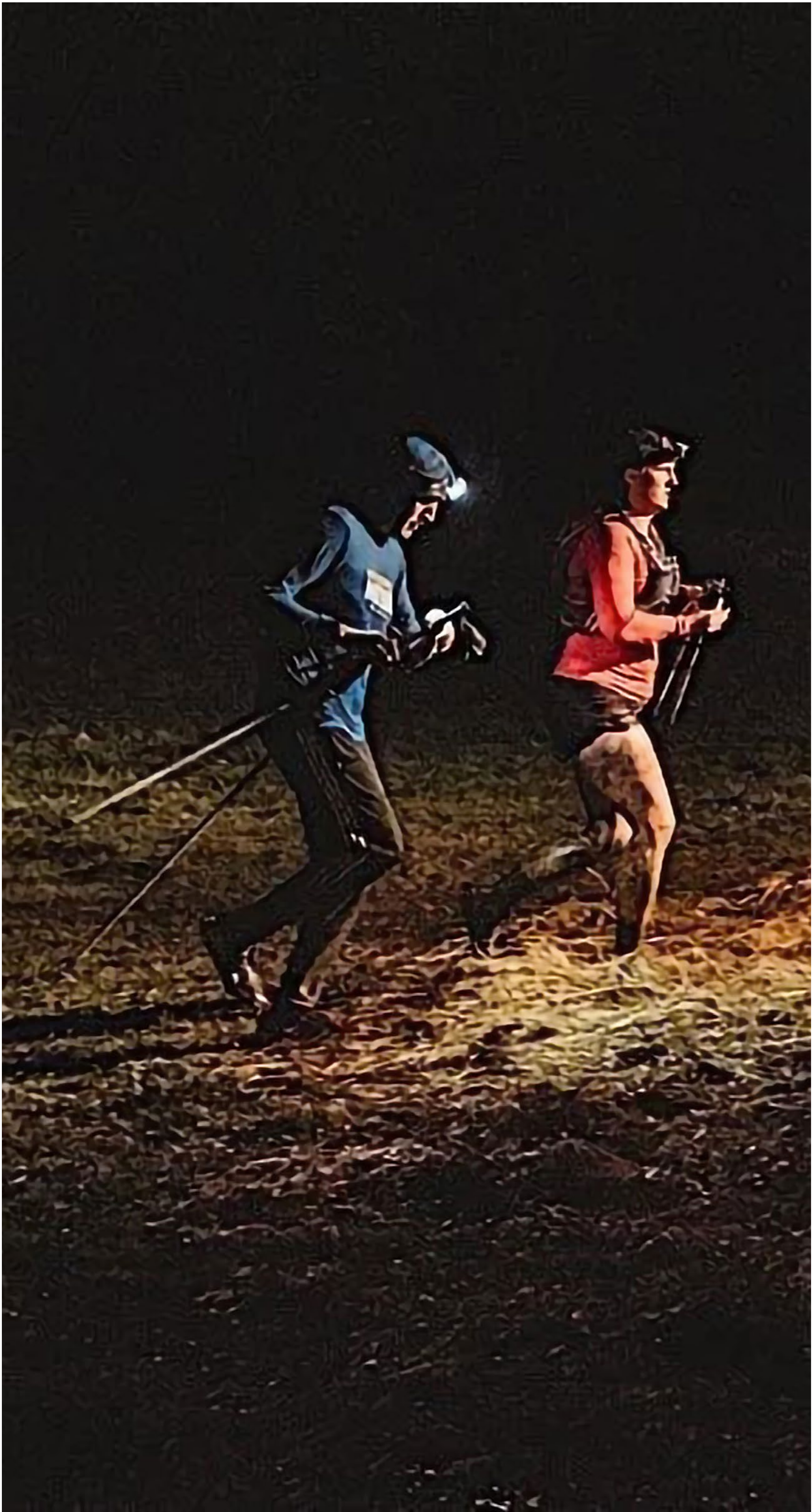
Total mileage: 45.04  
 On course: 37.16  
 Service road: 7.88  
 Total time: 18:32:59  
 Pace/mile: 24:42  
 Elevation gained: 9,488 ft

#### Crucial Gear

Salomon Sense Ride trail shoe  
 REI Traverse trekking pole  
 SNB Happie Toes salve  
 Outdoor Voices Hudson short  
 Under Armour HeatGear thermal tight  
 OR waterproof shell  
 Columbia youth mitten (best \$1.02 I've ever spent.)  
 Gu Roctane drink mix - Summit Tea flavor

[Misty Wong Photography](#)









*In 2008 Jon Steele organised something incredibly special for the first time, a 110-mile ultra-marathon on the North York Moors, in which his future wife placed first female. This was to be the beginning of something more than just another ultra-marathon, this was the beginning of a community.*

# What's So Special About Hardmoors?

By Daniel Walker  
Photos by Paul Elsley and Jon Steele



Over time the Hardmoors series would go from just one ultra-marathon to a series of races catering for five and 10K events all the way to the 160 mile Ring of Steele and the Hardmoors 200. In the words of one runner Lee Williams, "For me it's the different levels of challenges from beginner to ultra-runner. Each year you can have a new aim or challenge that keeps bringing you back for new amazing achievements. It can be a life journey to find your limit". When I started to run 4 years ago, I'd never heard of an ultra-marathon let alone considered running one. As I progressed into my running, I joined a local club. Some of the guys at the club had experience of the Hardmoors runs and I listened intently as they talked about their training for the 55 or the 160 which one guy was about to put himself through

These guys were driving 100s of miles over weekends to go and do recces for their up-and-coming races, so what was so good about them? Could it be the beautiful captivating North Yorkshire countryside? Is it the unity of running with like minded individuals? Could it be the weather's sometimes bright warm sunny days or hard face-biting hail which sweeps upwards from the hills below, hitting you under the chin as you press on through freezing wind? I will try to explain what makes the Hardmoors so special to me and hundreds of others.

The series is organised by Jon and Shirley Steele. They both love ultra-running. Jon told me he decided to stage the run on the North York Moors along the Cleveland way. The run was to be the first 110 mile route and extended the entire length of the footpath. This idea was formed because at the time there was a lack of 100-mile ultras. On speaking to Jon, he told me that at this



time, there were only about 11 such races... With this event being such an achievement, along came all the other Hardmoors Series.

When you arrive on race day there is something you cannot put your finger on to describe the atmosphere. It's more than race day nerves or a bit of apprehension about the distance or predicted weather. You are made to feel welcome, there are no airs and graces about the runs, there is no pecking order or indeed a clique as is sometimes found at other events. From the minute you walk into the Village hall for the race start you become part of the family that calls itself Hardmoors. The races begin as with all other events with a safety brief, the room falls silent when Jon and Shirley begin, with a clear respect by the runners for race directors. Shirley and Jon count each runner as one of their kids and whilst the events are tough, it upsets them when people do not finish, either through injury or time out or just unable to go on. One must remember at these times the Hardmoors motto "Always moving forward".



Not only is there mutual respect but there is a genuine feeling between everyone to do well, it's more than the parkrun meet up and handshake. It's the hugs from people who haven't seen each other since the last race, the genuine family atmosphere, the good-natured banter or friendly insults. It's a feeling of belonging, knowing that when you finish all who have come in before you will stop, clap and cheer as much for you as for the person who came first or indeed last.

On the run you will be met with the same enthusiasm from the marshals as from the other runners, big smiles; big hugs (pre covid), advice and always motivation. Most marshals are either injured runners, runners who plan on doing the run later or family and friends. They put themselves out in all weather and conditions to help and therefore have become known as "Hardshalls". Without these people most events, if not all, would not go ahead.

It's not all hardcore running from everyone though, there are a few traditions within the community like the Hardmoors 1000-mile club. This is as the name suggests a club for those runners who rack up 1000 miles of Hardmoors races. Not recces or DNFs but completed races. For the first 500 miles you keep an eye on those miles yourself. Once past this milestone you are entered into the 1000-mile list where your miles will be added on every race. Once the target has been achieved you receive your own number which stays with you for every race and is coloured yellow to show that you are in the club. You also receive a trophy and fleece.

As mentioned, there are so many events to choose from. The ultra runs start on New Year's Day with the 15/30. Next in line is the 55 which is set in March when the conditions can be horrendous so make sure you plan your kit sensibly and if someone jokes about ski goggles get some for the hail as you run across Blowworth crossing.

At the end of May the longest ultras take place, the 110/160 (160 and 200 take place in alternate years) these are the ones that sort the wheat from the chaff. September sees the 60 take place. This is my personal favourite as the weather is good and the sea blue, no navigation required, just keep the sea on the left and enjoy the views. If you have time you can stop in beautiful Whitby for an ice cream or bag of chips as you contemplate how you're going to tackle the 199 steps up to the abbey after 30 miles of running.

At the end of the year after all the planning and races have taken place or are in the planning stage for the next year, the Hardmoors team put on a Christmas do at Guisborough hall. This is an opportunity for everyone to dress up and let their hair down, reflect, drink and dance the evening away wearing something more grand than lycra, buffs and trail shoes.

In short, the Hardmoors team, the runners and everyone involved, make the events so popular because of the community atmosphere it generates. The genuine support from the top down to the bottom is second to none. It will keep you going back for more challenges, for more distance, for more of being part of a running family, which calls itself Hardmoors.







22nd Mongolia Sunrise to Sunset set to take place on August 11, 2021

The 22nd edition of the Mongolia Sunrise to Sunset (MS2S) charity ultra-trail run is planned for August 11, 2021. The race week will be from August 7-14.

Secure your spot and register now – pay once the race is fully confirmed in the spring of 2021.

Mongolia (November 17, 2020) – After the Mongolia Sunrise to Sunset (MS2S) 42km and 100km ultra trail run, held annually since 1999, was cancelled in 2020 due to Covid-19, the organizers now plan a comeback of the traditional trail race: The 22nd edition of MS2S is set to take place on August 11, 2021. MS2S, a member of the International Trail Running Association ITRA, is more than just a spectacular ultra-trail run – the participants enjoy a full week in the Mongolian wilderness. The race week is scheduled from August 7-14. Registrations are already open on [www.ms2s.org](http://www.ms2s.org) – runners and their friends and families can now register and secure their spot – the race is limited to 100 participants.

Registrations are open on [www.ms2s.org](http://www.ms2s.org) MS2S, one of Asia's first ultra-trail runs, offers an unforgettable running experience in the untouched Mongolian nature. All proceeds are used to fund environmental projects in Hovsgol National Park.

Payments will be required only once the travel situation in Mongolia is back to normal and the event is 100% confirmed.



# Yiannis Kouros turns 65

By Edit Berces

Photo credit: Attila Bércecs, FB Pheidippides Athlos

The Multiple world record holder Yiannis Kouros, a native of Tripolis in Greece, turned 65 on February 13, 2021. His endless list of world and course records includes astonishing performances in 24 hours, 48 hours, and in six day races. His most well known course records are not limited to the Austrian Danube Race in 1984, a three day stage race along the Danube (320 km in total time 23:16:15); Sydney to Melbourne in 1989 (1,011 km in 5:02:27:00), Athens to Sparta 1990 (20:29:00), Canberra to Sydney a 300 km Run for World Peace in 1999, Ancient Olympia to Athens, Delphi to Athens, Apollonian Run in 1999 (180 km in 17:15:00) or his Pheidippides Achievement, Athens-Sparta-Athens in 2005 (53:43:11).

His 303.506km world best performance is considered one of the world's least touchable athletic achievements.

Yiannis Kouros's definition of ultra-running emphasises the metaphysical aspect and rejects any fake record claims, shortcuts, or cheating. To demonstrate his unrelenting approach to his sport, his views are expressed in an article published by the Kouros Administration on the famous blue social media site:

"The great error against Ultra-running. Η μεγάλη πλάνη ενάντια στο Ultra-running by Yiannis Kouros admin.

It is a great error for some people to think - let alone to try - to state something that they do not know well, since they haven't experienced it in its essence and in depth.

Nobody without having mastered the subject of ultra-running should write any article or book that could describe its real aspects. Once again, it should be understood that this sport is not for the masses and therefore can't be perceived and, indeed, none should accept its expression from a fun-running attitude. Lack of great experience to go "beyond", something that is indicated only through great performances in official events – not in fake/dreamed/shortcut activities. Only the person who has gone through the real sport and not through fantasies, treadmills, traveling through US or Australian States, or through other countries or within their own... with family members as crew...!!!! Fun-running - easy way - nothing better than earthy - common issue, where any written or verbal expression will lack the real essence of "ultra".

I would say that ultimately it's not simply an error, but also hubris to the metaphysical spirit of the real term of "Ultra" to degrade it down to their feet, and made from their earthy approach, according to their weaknesses. But the greatest error and the biggest hubris towards the principles of fair play and athletic spirit happens when some articles or

books are referring to fakers and their unreal/not valid activities.

Why there is damage beyond unfairness? Misleading the public against the real term of "ultra" and encouraging others to seek easy ways: promoting shortcuts - cheating!

If we don't protect the sport from persons with a shortcut attitude and from clubs or organisations with a cheating history, the base of athleticism will be destroyed. Those who have published fake stories of fake persons and their fake activities have done great damage against real performing of running and its everlasting ideology.

What counts is actual performances, not collections... People that their performances do not count internationally, neither nationally and, in most cases, even neighbours are better runners than them, then, because of lack of self knowledge to accept the reality (that they belong to mediocrity/masses) they try easy ways (shortcuts and cheating tricks) like collections or treadmills: Everything that is not valid: Collection of events is not a sport, collection of km/miles also not a sport, running every day a marathon or 50k/mile also not a sport, patterns of sleeping or not sleeping and eating also not a sport, travelling solo with dad, brother/sister or/husband/wife also not a sport and taking part in events with extreme terrain or temperatures (just to so that they are tough), while they can't distinguish in official road or track events, are not valid.. All those manias indicate inabilities, no values and acceptance of inferiority. Moreover, they disguise or promote such manias, it turns to be criminal.

Any fun-runner who considers himself/herself a fun-runner is appreciated, as they have self-knowledge. But, any fun-runner who considers himself/herself ultra-runner is not just a faker but indicates and uses charlatanism as well in order to show off or to sell their emptiness.

All fakers and promoters/writers or publishers of liars, fake parameters and cheating are responsible for the execution of Ultra-running and its real representatives and for the execution of the fairplay in running and in life in general.

The archi-faker of California certainly is "the only person in the planet"... and of course not for what he CLAIMS: He is the only person in the planet who has lied so much and so obviously!

I suppose by now that people should understand at least this: Ultra-running is not just about running very long dis-



tances, about traveling, about collection of mileage/events or sleeping or eating patterns, not either by taking part in events longer than a marathon: Ultra-running is about performing with running on road or track only (not on machines/treadmills etc) very high and beyond earthy/common physical fitness. Why is that so? Here is an example: There are thousands of people who can walk more than 140km in 24h, there are several decades who can walk more than 100 miles/24h and there several athletes who can walk more than 200km/24h. How then somebody, who does lower than that, can prove that is an ultra-runner, when his performances indicates that he is not a runner, not even a fun-runner, as he covers less distance than a walker?

NOTE 1:

The persons who have approached me to include me in books/articles or interviews where fakers and their fake/short-cut/traveling or collections would be presented, are kindly requested not to bother me again, as they have lost the right to communicate with me, since they have thought to mislead the world with fakers and therefore to demolish the real mean-



ing of ultra-running by referring to their non valid activities and, in most cases, fantasies, or even obvious cheating, unless they get to know a) "what is Ultra-running" and b) get to observe that fakers/liars do not belong into that, but they represent charlatanism, which, of course is not a sport. c) Furthermore, whoever likes to be in touch, has to clean his profile from friendships or pages/magazines/sites/clubs/events where these phenomena belong, or are promoted, or are selling.

NOTE 2:

Friends and/or readers of this profile when they are thinking to make comments here, are kindly requested to avoid using words/phrases referring and, therefore, promoting events with falsification of history (like Spart-ath-london, Plataies-Delfietc), or persons (like the archi-faker of California and his followers who are mimicking the tactic of claiming sleeping and eating patterns with lies and fantasies as sport!!!) who are using lies and fake parameters and travelling through states as "running" (something that millions of people can do if they are given a vehicle...) in order to sell themselves, or clubs and organisations who are doing non valid events with history of numerous irregularities that destroy the athletic spirit.... as it is happening in most unofficial events in Greece (like a so called "festival" and "feasts" from fun-running clubs/attitude - invalid, or like a female ex marathoner who thought that by using wheels beyond feet she will become an "ultrarunner" and, of course she became... " a faker" as she entered the "club of charlatanism" !!!.

It is unacceptable for some people to have stacked on counterfeiting of Spart-Ath-Lon-don, and the quackery of other routes, such as Plataea-Delphi etc. and any anti-Hellenic, against the truth and anti-sportive are behind this and, therefore, all participants reproduce..."

Most of Kouros personal best performances represent the world's best performances.

Time races

- 12 h Road 162.543 km 1 3 . 5 4 5 km/h
- 12 h Track 162.400 km 1 3 . 5 3 3 km/h
- 24 h Road 290.221 km 1 2 . 0 9 3 km/h
- 24 h Track 303.506 km 1 2 . 6 4 6 km/h



- 48 h Road 433.095 km 9.023 km/h
- 48 h Track 473.797 km 9.875 km/h
- 6 days Road 1028.370 km 7.142 km/h
- 6 days Track 1038.851 km 7.214 km/h
- Distance
- 100 miles Road 11h 46min 37s 13.665 km/h
- 1000 km Track 5d 16h 17min 00s 7.338 km/h
- 1000 km Road 5d 20h 13min 40s 7.131 km/h
- 1000 miles Road 10d 10h 30min 36s 6.424 km/h

Kouros' autobiography is "The Six Day Race of the Century" (Εξαήμερο του Αιώνα) and was first published in Greek in 1995. His CD album "A Dozen Summers -Runner" was published in Athens in 2005.

Sources: The great error against Ultra-running. Η μεγάλη πλάνη ενάντια στο Ultra-running by Yiannis Kouros Admin on Tuesday, January 15, 2013 at 2:44am, Facebook.

The official Yiannis Kouros Website. The Deutsche Ultramarathon-Vereinigung.



A person in a green jacket stands on a dark, rocky mountain ridge in the foreground. In the background, a massive, snow-dusted mountain peak rises against a blue sky with wispy white clouds. The scene is captured from a low angle, emphasizing the scale of the mountain.

LIZZY HAWKER  
RUNNER

A SHORT STORY ABOUT A LONG RUN



## **Lizzy Hawker - Runner: A short story about a long run**

*Publisher : Aurum Press Ltd (2 April 2015) 288 pages*

*By Abichal Sherrington*

Yesterday I saw a poll on Facebook, Nik Barter asking that old chestnut, "What distance is an Ultra Marathon?" Lizzy Hawker's book answers that question, for some people.

In 2005 Lizzy Hawker stepped onto the world stage with her debut at the iconic European event, the Tour de Mont Blanc, a race circling the Mont Blanc massif, covering a distance of roughly 170 kilometres (110 mi) with 10 kilometres (6.2 mi) of ascent/descent, passing through parts of Switzerland, Italy and France. She went on to set a new 24 hour world record at the 2011 24 Hour Commonwealth Championships at Llandudno in North Wales and is the first (and only) woman to make the podium at Spartathlon taking third place overall in 2012.

The book is divided into three sections, a Journey of Discovery, a Journey of Exploration and finally a Journey of Re-discovery and Realisation framing the story in a spiritual context.

Lizzy's ultrarunning history began in 2004 with a Bob Graham Round completion and in March, the following year, was first woman at Jennor Park in Wales, the venue for the longest running UK ultra, the Barry 40. This was instrumental in her selection for the England Team at the Anglo-Celtic Plate held in Dublin a month later. The book begins in August that year with Lizzy at the start line of UTMB.

A Journey of Discovery is Lizzy's early period where she unfolds herself allowing her to see her strengths and weaknesses and these naturally lead to the second section where she is able to dive into her experiences from a solid platform of self-trust and self-confidence allowing her to explore her capacities and limitations which usher in the third section of the book.

The book shows that Lizzy is comfortable with being on her own, in tune with herself and her environment, she leads a simple life able to live without the mass of accumulation that surrounds most people today.

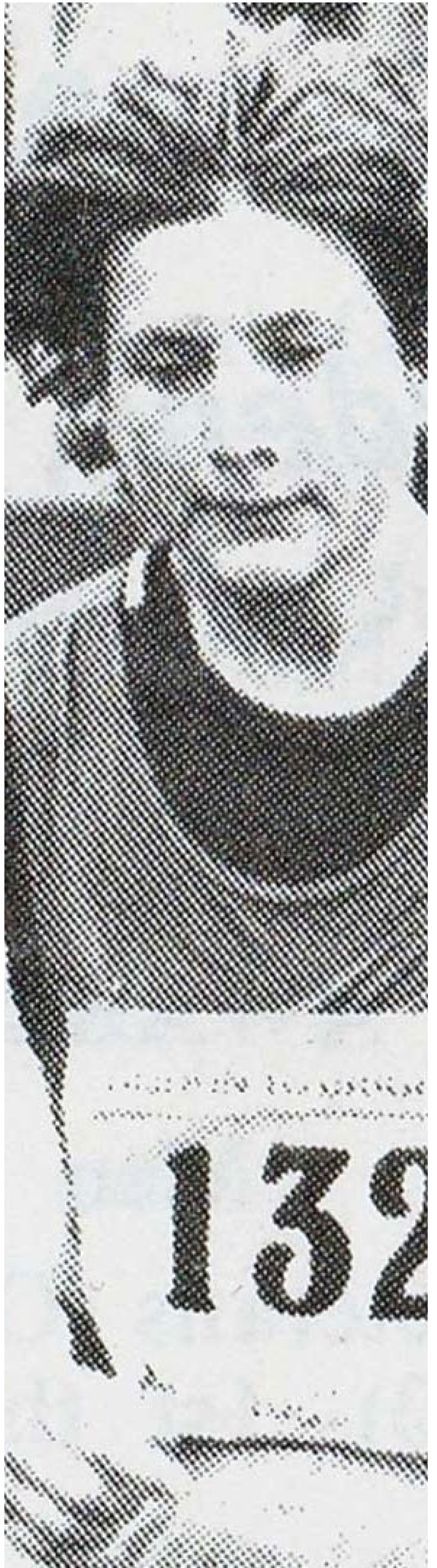
Just as few people know what it's like to live on the edge, few people allow themselves the time and effort to develop the state of mind necessary for these strengths and capacities to mature and this, for me, is how Lizzy offers an answer to the question posed on Facebook. It's not about distance, it's about a state of mind that develops as we consciously sink into the depths of our being and reconnect with our own truth, with that which we are. There, deep in our being are we able to let go of thoughts and ideas that can hold us back and allow us to focus on our journey at hand and bring forth that Truth which we are all in the process of becoming.

[www.lizzyhawker.com](http://www.lizzyhawker.com)





# HALL OF FAME.





Hilary Walker has a room full of trophies and medals, one wall a testament to her incredible ultra distance career. In 1993 Hilary was the best female ultrarunner in the world. Justifiably proud of these accolades, Hilary is one of those runners whose dedication and service to the sport led her to the role of General Secretary of the International Association of Ultrarunners (IAU). Here she contributes to the development and promotion of ultrarunning for it's runners on the world stage.

Born in 1953, Hilary wasn't especially enamoured with running, she played lacrosse and netball at school. Everything changed after a trekking trip to the Himalayas. She returned noticeably fitter, "running was the simplest way of maintaining fitness". In 1982, Hilary took up running and found the Serpentine running club near her home. In the early 1980's there was a surge of interest in running and the club provided a place to meet like minded runners and places to run and encourage each other.

With a PHD in radiation biology, Dr Walker would run to and from her work in the department of health. With a rucksack on her back, it was the easiest and natural way to travel. She joked in her no nonsense, straightforward manner "rucksack on legs". Easily recognisable. With this consistent training, Hilary became an international ultrarunner in 1985 and maintained this level of achievement until 1998.

Her training schedule was far sighted, she not only ran to work but realised that she would benefit in her running from mixing up her schedule with cycling and swimming, "...just a pair of powerful legs with not much on top."

Mixing the sports gave her a more balanced body. It also resulted in a swathe of triathlon and duathlon medals and trophies. These days her running ability has declined with age, she is 68, however, her swimming and cycling are strong. Starting these sports later in life were an advantage, less wear and tear.

"Don't put limits on yourself, you'll be surprised what you can do."

Let's celebrate some of Hilary's achievements; A multiple world record holder over a variety of distances and disciplines, at 24 hrs, 48 hrs, 100 miles and 200 miles.

First woman to go under 15 hours for both the 100 mile road and track. Broke the 48 hour world best with 227 miles Completed the Marathon des Sables in Morocco when it was little known.

600 miles of the Friendship Highway between Lhasa and Kathmandu over 5 passes at over 17,000 feet. A Guinness World Record.

Twice a Spartathlon winner in Greece.

Multiple winner of the London to Brighton road race.

First woman to become a council member of the IAU and went on to be the General Secretary.

Hilary has competed at the most 100km championships and over the longest period. After her Bronze medal at Rambouillet in 1989 (8:21:51) she competed a further 10 times. Her fastest time in the World Championships was 7:58:11 in Belgium in 1993, just before her 40th birthday. In the same year she ran her best 100k time of 7:50:09 in the IAU 100km European Championships.

By anyone's standards these are huge achievements and as a result, Hilary thoroughly deserves an inclusion in Ultrarunning World's Hall of Fame. One of the giants of the ultrarunning world.

#### Resources

[Video - Hilary Walker talks, runs, swims and cycles](#)







**Arron Patrick** is originally from Grimsby England but resides in Elkhart IN USA. He recently discovered ultra running and has been amazed at how the community has made such a positive impact on his life. Arron started ultra running to show his two children that chasing after tough challenges and competing at a high level was still possible if you are committed and willing to put in the work!

@arron\_patrick



**Dan Walker** Hi, I am Dan, since deciding to run a marathon for my 40th birthday I have since clocked up 24 ultras. The biggest being the HM110 and I am always learning from each one. Currently training to be a PT and owning a black lab I'm always on the move.

Strava: - Dan Walker

Instagram: [the\\_running\\_dan](#)



**Edit Bérces PhD**, is an associate professor at the University of Pannonia, Hungary. A former IAU 100km world champion and IAU 24 - hour champion, Bérces was the first woman on the planet to break 250km in 24 hours. Her world best performance stood for seven years until Japan's Mami Kudo appeared on the scene at the Soochow 24 Hour Ultra-marathon. Berces and Kouros won the iconic international 48-hour Track Race of Surgeres in France on three occasions in a row (2002-2004).



**Helen Hayes** lives in a small town on the East coast of Ireland. Surrounded by majestic mountains and the ever changing sea, there are ample opportunities for running, cycling and swimming. As a regular contributor to Ultrarunning World, Helen has an interest in writing and all things ultra. she can be found most days walking or running with her dogs on the beaches and hills.



**Emily Verschoor-Kirss** is a professional musician and unprofessional ultra runner based in Nashville, TN. She balances her crazy touring, performing, and teaching schedule with an above-average amount of time in the woods. Occasionally, she puts pen to paper and reflects on the hard things she and her horrendously supportive training bubble get up to. Follow Emily on Instagram [@emilyannevk](#)



**Gary Dudney** is a longtime columnist for Ultrarunning magazine in the USA. He's published two books on the subject of the mental side of running, *The Tao of Running* and *The Mindful Runner* as well as numerous articles in all the major running magazines. He's completed over 200 marathons and ultramarathons, including seventy 100-mile races. His home base is Monterey, California.

[Amazon Author Page](#)  
[My Website for Runners](#)





**Debs and Dawn** are on an adventure. In 2021 they hope to complete the 13 Peaks Challenge in Cape Town...and finish it in under 24 hours.

Debs is from Johannesburg and Dawn is in Durban – they met via Zoom through their coach and clicked straightaway.

Follow their progress on their [Facebook page](#).



**Naomi Moss** I have been running ultras over the last 9 years to a monthly training plan with my two dogs as my run buddies and have a keen interest in nutrition, strength and conditioning.

Ultra-runners blogs and write ups continue to inspire me and give me a huge incentive to want to push myself to achieve more and run further. I am NOT the fastest or the slowest runner but I am probably one of the most stubborn.

[Instagram-naomimossruns](#)



**Sharon Gayter** is a member of North York Moors AC and in 1994 completed her first 100km and 24 hour race, winning gold in the National Championships at both events. Between 1994 and 2011, Sharon represented her country on 27 occasions. In 2011 she took part in the world's highest race, La Ultra-The High and later set the 7 day treadmill record. Sharon wrote a book, The Clock Keeps ticking. Visit her website:

<http://www.sharongayter.com/>



**Susan Lister** is a back of the pack ultra runner and Yoga teacher. She provides a variety of online seasonal yoga classes including yoga specifically for runners. She loves to spend her time jogging around her local Scottish trails. Check out her website [Ananta Yoga](#) for more details.



