

GOYT VALLEY STRIDERS



NEWSLETTER June 2007

INTRODUCTION

I first started writing this newsletter back in early May. It is now early June and my introduction then seems worlds away from where I am now; roasting hot with my right calf resting on an ice pack!

...the original introduction

We're well into the summer now, although you wouldn't believe it if you were to look out the window at this precise moment; it's more like a wet Sunday in early March! Never mind though, we did have that dry spell back in April, we did didn't we?

As usual there has been a lot going on in the club over the past few months. The London Marathon has passed; Kevin is getting ever closer to his 100th Marathon, the club championship has been hotly contested and club membership continues to grow. Read more about all of these in this issue.

On a personal front I can now report that I am fully fit and back in training. Well training of sorts; having been injured in one form or another for months I thought I would be raring to go, however am now finding the motivation to actually do it quite difficult. It must be the weather, please; please can we have some sun?

Thank you for all the contributions and enjoy the newsletter.

Mark

Make Mine a Triple – Lighthouse, Mountain and Guinness (By Kevin Day)

A friend of mine ran the triple in 2005; when he told me that he was doing it again in 2006, I gave it some thought (about a second), decided I was up for the challenge and would give it a go. The triple consists of running 3 marathons in 3 different countries on 3 consecutive days. The first is Beachy Head (Eastbourne, England), the second Snowdonia (Wales) and the third is Dublin (Ireland). They fall on the last Saturday, Sunday and Monday of October each year.

In order to make sure I was extra fit for the challenge I put in no extra training! I did however plan to run a couple of other marathons as part of the build up. This would be a double marathon in May; the White Peak Marathon on the Saturday and the Isle of Wight Marathon the next day. I came through this first test with no problems and had a particularly good second half at the Isle of Wight.

Another little fitness builder I had decided to do was the Bullock Smithy in September. I decided to run this 56 mile off-road event with Steve Hennessey just 3 weeks prior to the start, somehow I came though in one piece!

Also on this years plan was the New Forest Marathon; it had been my first marathon way back in 1986 and I thought it might be nice to revisit it again 20 years on. However, I was also booked in to do the round Norfolk relays, a 17 stage 192 mile race, on the same weekend. A little extra planning was required! Thankfully I was able to run the second leg, which is 14.4 miles off road which would leave me with enough time to get to the New Forest.

The relay went well, but being a team event, I had to race at full pace and not hold anything back for the next days marathon. Pleasingly, the run at the New Forest Marathon went well and I was happy with the way my body coped with the two races.

My last double event before the Triple was to run the Windgather Fell race followed by the Macclesfield Half the next day. Both runs went well and I was now looking forward to all the pain I could inflict on myself during the three consecutive marathons attempt; I was sure I would get through the events but was not sure what shape I would be in at the end!

The big weekend arrived, but I got off to a slow start on the Friday. I was stopping the night at my friend Fu's house in Daventry, the traffic had been pretty bad on the journey down and I spent an hour sitting still at one point where the road was closed; I made it there in the end at around 9pm.

The next morning we got up at 4am; we had to leave at 4.30 to drive down to Eastbourne on the East Sussex coast. We arrived at about 7.30, where we met up with 5 other friends, Warren, Steve, Gary, Jim & Yin who were all doing the triple and travelling as a group together. Fu was just doing the last two races. My race plan was to take the first 2 runs easy; running the first in around 4.45 and the second in 4.15. This should leave me enough in the tank for a sub 4hr at Dublin.

The Beachy Head Marathon was the first race of the weekend. This started at 9am and is an off road race with the first 19 miles over the South Downs. You then have the Seven Sisters (8 hills) and Beachy Head to finish with, the race has a total ascent of 3500ft and the winning race time is 3:00hrs.

I started off nice and slow up the first hill which begins as soon as you cross the start line. My sprits were high and I was looking forward to a relaxing run; I felt good in the early stages and was running at a steady pace. The first check point was at 8.8 miles, I had a drink of water and a Mars Bar. As the course meandered up and down, I was running what felt like an even pace, the next check points were at 12.2 & 16.7 miles, the 16 mile check point is a bit of a picnic stop, with cakes, buns, sweets and numerous other goodies, but too many to mention here. I just had some water and a currant bun to eat; I left the food station with my bun in hand and set off up the next climb.

The next couple of miles consisted of going up hill before a final steep drop took you onto the Seven Sisters. The Seven Sisters were like being on a roller coaster, we went up and down, finally dropping to the last checkpoint before the climb up to Beachy Head. The course finished with a very steep drop to the finish and I crossed the finish line in 4hrs 41mins.

After finishing and getting changed I had some hot food; they like to feed you on this race! Once the entire group had eaten we made our way back to the cars for the drive to Llanberis.

We arrived at our hotel at around 10pm, booked in and went out to find some food at about 10:45. The only place open was the Indian so we dually obliged before going back to the hotel and into the bar for a couple of pints before going to bed at around 12:30am. The perfect preparation for a marathon!

We got up for breakfast at 6.30am; we had to collect our race chips from registration before going to Nant Perris (300ft) for the start.

The race started at 9:30am, the weather was good and I felt fine with no problems from the day before. The race got underway and I made my way up the Llanberis Pass for 4 miles to reach the top at Pen-y-Pass (1100ft). I had to slow my pace down going up so I would not waste too much energy. The next 8.5 miles were mainly down hill, until I reached Beddgelert (200ft) at 12.5 miles, the next 2 miles were a good climb to Pont Cae Gors (600ft), the route was pretty level until we reached Waunfawr (500ft) at 21.5 miles.

The next section was a serious climb to Bwch-y-Groes (1200ft) at 24miles, I did walk this section with all the other runners - normally I would run up it but it does take a lot out of you and I still had another race the next day. The next 1.2 miles were down hill to Llanberis (300ft), the last mile was around the town with another small climb before reaching the finish; I crossed the line in 4:13.

Once the group had finished and changed, we got into our cars and made our way to Holyhead, as we were booked onto the 5:15 ferry. The crossing was good and we arrived in Dublin at around 7:15. Once we got into the city we soon found our hotel and booked in. Soon after, we went out to find some food and managed to get into an Italian restaurant where I had a very nice pasta with a bottle of red wine. We turned in at around midnight, as we had to be up at 6am for breakfast.

The race started at 9am from the city centre, I didn't feel too stiff after the two previous days running. The course is not too bad, it does climb up and down a bit but it only climbs to a height of 50 metres. I got started and took it easy until I was almost through Phoenix Park at around 6 miles; then started to pick the pace up a bit. I went though 10k in 58mins, I kept the same pace going until I reached the halfway point in 1:54. I then increased the pace as much as I could and pushed on, I reached 20 miles in 2:51 and went through the last 10k in 47 minutes to run a second half in 1:46 and finish in 3:38.

I was tired from the 3 races but I felt good and had no stiffness or reactions from the races. Although the idea of running 3 marathons in 3 days sounds a lot, it's not as hard as you might think, because you have to treat it as one long run with a couple of extended breaks and not 3 individual races, so like any ultra distance event it's all about the pacing in the early parts. In reality I didn't find the triple any harder than running the Bullock Smithy as it was paced out in a similar way.

The following Saturday I had the chance to test how well I had recovered when I did the Langley 7, I got round in 47:56 which I was pleased with.

I enjoyed the challenge and would do it again and planning for the 2007 triple got underway in mid January with entry into the Beachy Head Marathon. Plans fell apart in mid February when we discovered that the Snowdonia Marathon had moved from the Sunday it has occupied for the last 24 years and for some strange reason is being held on the Saturday instead and so clashes with the Beachy Head race. So it's only a double this year; my accumulated time for the 78.6 miles was 12 hrs 32mins.

CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP

Name	Tigger Torr	Cloud Nine	Kinder Downfall	Eyam Half	Rainow	Total
Pete Hill	17	16	13	17	14	77
Andy Butler	19	-	17	18	20	74
Jon Robinson	-	-	19	19	19	57
Paul Hunt	-	14	7	14	12	47
Philomena Smith	-	15	9	11	10	45
Andrew Pead	-	-	20	20	-	40
Karl Smith	-	13	6	10	9	38
Alistair Fitzgerald	20	-	15	-	-	35
Steven Berry	15	12	-	-	7	34
Geoffrey Lawton	-	-	-	16	17	33
Julia Easter	16	11	5	-	-	32
Will Meredith	18	-	12	-	-	30
Bruce Smith	-	-	-	15	15	30
Alex Ledbury	-	18	11	-	-	29
Clare Hamer	-	-	8	-	16	24
Andrew McMaster	-	-	-	13	11	24
Stephen Sanders	-	17	-	-	6	23
Ivan Lee	-	-	10	12	-	22
Kevin Day	-	20	-	-	-	20
Steve Hennessey	-	19	-	-	-	19
Nicholas Cook	-	-	18	-	-	18
Julian Brown	-	-	-	-	18	18
Shaun Coram	-	-	16	-		16
David Guy	-	-	14	-		14
Jo Miles	-	-	-	-	13	13
Suzanne Shaw	-	-	-	-	8	8

For the main championship your best 10 races count towards your total score

In addition to the main club championship there is also the ladies championship too. Results so far for this are as follows:

Name	Tigger Torr	Cloud Nine	Kinder Downfall	Eyam Half	Rainow	Total
Philomena Smith	-	20	20	20	18	78
Julia Easter	20	19	18	-	.*	57
Clare Hamer	-	-	19	-	20	39
Jo Miles	-	-	-	-	19	19
Suzanne Shaw	-	-	-	-	17	17

For the ladies club champion your best 6 will count towards your total score. The person with the highest number of points wins (minimum of four races to count).

Details of future championship races:

Boars Head

Wednesday June 13 at 7:30pm
8m / 1322'

Boars Head Hotel
Shrigley Road North
Poynton
Cheshire

£3 on night only

Offerton 10k

Wednesday July 4 at 7:35pm

Woodbank Park

Turncrist Lane

Offerton

Stockport

£5 in advance / £6 on night

Round the Ressers

Wednesday June 27 at 7:30pm
5m

United Utilities Offices
Woodhead Road
Tintwistle
Glossop

£4 in advance / £5 on night

Peak Forest Fell

Sunday July 8 at 11:15am
6m / 650'

Peak Forest Village Store

Church Lane

Peak Forest

Derbyshire

£3.50 on day only

BEGINNER'S LUCK.

I can quite honestly say I had never won a thing in my life.

I started running twelve months ago in a vain attempt to keep fit (and escape for a little while each day) after having my two children. When I worked I didn't have a problem affording the extortionate gym fees but now I needed something a little cheaper – so running it was.

To be quite honest I never really expected to enjoy it that much. The first few times out the door were hard work and painfully short but it was all I had and I stuck at it. Then it gradually got easier and I began to smile!!

I entered a couple of races – one being the Shady Oak 10k. With myself and Alex not having many friends or family nearby, if I wanted to go to a race it would be on my own while Alex stayed at home to baby-sit. To be quite honest the whole thought of this terrified me (I am not a social animal). On 17th May last year I made my way nervously over the hill to a VERY wet Whaley Bridge and met quite a nice bunch of people from the Goyt Valley Striders. I finished the race with a smile on my face and went on to contact Mark a couple of weeks later to join the club!

I have always wanted to run the London Marathon, a very easy thing to say sitting in my chair watching the TV munching on a piece of toast. It became a distinct possibility when I entered the ballot last August followed by a very distinct impossibility when the rejection letter arrived on my doormat in December. I was gutted but remembered a small article in the club newsletter about there being a club place.

I contacted Mark and he put my name down. I was not very hopeful as I had never won a thing in my life – remember?

I was unable to come to the Xmas drinks party where the names were to be drawn out for the marathon place. I emailed Mark the next day to find out what had gone on expecting disappointment but I had the place!!! Did that mean I had won something at last? Technically no, not exactly - I was the only name in the hat!

Excitement soon turned to trepidation when a niggle in my hip I'd had for a while turned out to be much more serious the more the training miles clocked up. Before January was out I had spent £300 at the chiropractors sorting out a sacroiliac joint dysfunction. By mid-February thankfully the training was back on track, which is more than I can say for our bank account (I started running because it was inexpensive).

Finding time to train was a problem. I don't work but look after the kids full time. I worked out that I could run two mornings a week while my youngest was at the local playgroup but when trees started knocking down power lines in January and the heating broke down during early March my plans were thwarted. My friend Suzanne was invaluable looked after Rowan when I turned up at her door a number of times in my running gear looking flustered.

I sent poor Alex into work most Wednesdays at 4.30 in the morning so that he could come out early and take charge of the kids. That way I could fit a run in on a Wednesday afternoon too. Luckily he still does have a job!!

Long runs took place on a Sunday. It wasn't so much the time that became a problem but the madness and the boredom. I do prefer to run alone, it is my avenue to a bit of peace and quiet and supposedly sanity but my tolerance was certainly stretched to breaking point in the later runs when I was out for four hours or so in the pouring rain and my MP3 player had run out after two. I also foolishly tried to simulate the terrain I would be running on. We have very few flat paved areas in Rainow and so ended up running on the main roads through Macclesfield onto Poynton and towards Stockport (and back). People who I vaguely knew from the village would say "Was it you I saw running(replace with somewhere obscure a number of miles away)..... on Sunday?" when I replied they would give me the "are you mad???" look and follow with "had you run all the way from home?" I would inform them that yes I had AND I had to go all the way back again. Some would then back away as if I were afflicted with some strange disease, others would politely strike up a conversation as to why, but I could see that deep down they also thought I was mad.

Two weeks before the marathon I completed my last long run and settled down smugly into my taper. After a couple of days of taking it easy the virus struck. After a week of sweating, sneezing and hobbling around I was choking and had lost my voice (Alex was delighted). My taper of small pleasant trots around the village had come to an abrupt halt and a trip to the doctors led to a diagnosis of viral laryngitis and a word of warning not to take part in the marathon which was by this time only four days away.

I was very determined to go down to London as not only had I put all this effort in, but it was also our first trip away from the kids since they were born (my eldest is nearly six!!).

I walked around the marathon exhibition at EXCEL barking like a dog, each utterance would send 'athletes' diving for cover in all directions just in case they too were afflicted by my lurgy.

By Saturday evening I felt awful not being able to move my head with the pain and retired to bed in the hotel room at four in the afternoon. I rang home to say I was unlikely to be running and that I would be coming home in the morning.

I woke up at 5.30am feeling surprisingly well so ate breakfast as had been planned and set out for Blackheath, still croaking and coughing but feeling relatively human. By 8am it was already quite warm and clear blue skies hinted that it could be quite a difficult day.

I approached the tea-tent where I had arranged to meet Phil, Kevin and Peter for a team photo. I quickly spotted Phil and wished her luck and was introduced to Peter who I hadn't met before. She then turned to a very attractive Bavarian looking blonde dressed in red and white with some very dubious-looking accessories (especially in view of the task in hand.) I also noticed she had a rather heavy moustache (much worse than mine) and seemed to know me from somewhere – great outfit Kevin, anyone who hasn't seen the photo on the website I urge you to take a look.

We all went our separate ways as we were placed in different pens according to our estimated times. Until I had become ill I was aiming for anything between four and four and a half hours.

Now I think I was going to be happy to finish especially as it was getting much warmer. Before I started to run I took a look around and found myself standing next to a six-foot fairy with a bob in a pink tutu. Anywhere else I may have stared but I was to see far more bizarre things over the next few hours!

I was prepared for the slow start and it took a good 10 minutes to get to the start. I was frustrated however when the runners in-front of me first slowed down and then stopped at around the one mile marker, after all, I was aware that my stopwatch was moving forwards and I wasn't! After three minutes of walking I found the problem in the form of Lloyd Scott (remember the man in the diving suit). This year he was dressed as Indiana Jones pulling a huge rock behind him in an attempt to recreate the scene from the film. Whilst I am incredibly impressed with the work that he does I could not understand why he was not starting from the back with the other large costumes as I was sure there were runners around me and certainly ahead of me who were not going to be happy with a three minute delay to pass him.

At around the four-mile marker I found the 10-minute mile pacer from Runner's World. This meant I was on target for around 4:20ish and I relaxed into the pace. I saw Alex at around six miles and even managed a quick kiss!! (Sorry, is that too much information?) Things were going well and all coughing and spluttering had ceased although I was becoming increasingly aware of the sun on my back and the heat.

At around eight miles things started to go a little pear-shaped. My legs became heavy and I found it almost impossible to keep a pace up any form of incline. The 10- minute mile pacer slowly crept away. I knew I had to ignore him and carry on with my own race.

I could not understand the problem at first. I was well hydrated when I started the race and had taken on plenty of my own energy drink and water at the stations. The sun was still beating down on the back of my neck and I felt as though I was sitting in a furnace. I had done half-marathons before and never had a problem. I seriously considered dropping out and I did not feel well.

The solution became clear as soon as I approached the first of the showers – thank God for the showers!! I hate any form of sprinkler or hosepipe or indeed water being poured over my head since an incident in a swimming pool as a child. When the kids play in the garden in the summer I hide firmly away, so when I read in the official ‘bumf’ that there would be ‘4 showers around the course located at ...blah..blah.’ I thought I would find no use for them. I felt rejuvenated as the freezing cold water hit me and felt fantastic as it evaporated from my skin. I had clearly been overheating and continued to seek out every shower and pour water over my head at every water station (phobia cured). I backed off the pace a little and by mile fourteen I started to feel quite good!

The improvement in my health continued the further I went and from then on I found the whole experience really enjoyable. It is this part of the day that will colour my memories the most. I started to take in what was going on around me. The costumes, the colours, the crowds – Canary Wharf was amazing!! I smiled all the way back. The time no longer mattered as I had finally woken up to the fact that it was a miracle I was doing the marathon at all.

I could in the past quite honestly say that I had never won a thing in my life, but as I came along Birdcage Walk I felt ecstatic (must have been the endorphins – or could it have been the can of Red bull I downed on the embankment?) and when I was sure I could see the finish line (don't want to get it wrong do you?) I ran for all my worth crossing the line in 4:42:39 with my arms held above my head and a smile on my face - for I was indeed a winner!

Sarah Ledbury

FRA Fell Relays

Last year we had our most successful attempts at the FRA Fell Relays and this year we intend to repeat or better our efforts. This years relays will take place on 13th October and are to be held in Bowland.

The committee feel we can enter at least two teams; one in the Vets and a mixed team in the Open category. If you're interested then please let Kevin or Mark know.

There are six in a team and the legs are as follows:

Leg 1 (AS solo) – 4.7m 1,800', Leg 2 (AM pairs) – 7m 2,700',
Leg 3 (pairs/navigation) –approximately 7 miles 2,000', Leg 4
(AS, solo) – 4m 1900'

Buxton Carnival 5 Race

Saturday 14 July 2007

1:50pm Start

Entry £5 (from St Johns Hall, Holker Road, Buxton)

The call of the fells

Published courtesy of Nikalas Cook

Original article appeared in the Financial Times on April 14, 2007

About a year ago, I fell out of love with running. Living in central London my usual routes had become a chore rather than a pleasure. Loops around the parks seemed futile and contrived. The repetitive pounding on the pavement led to permanent niggling injuries. Even racing lost its appeal: I questioned the worth of slaving to shave a few seconds off my 10K personal best and lost all tolerance for oversubscribed running fields and exorbitant entry fees. Running wasn't making me a better person, it was making me a bitter person, who complained a lot about his sore knees.

A "lifestyle" move to the Peak District offered me the chance to rekindle my enthusiasm. I discovered fell running. This is exactly what it sounds like - you find a hill, fell or mountain and you just race up and down it. Sometimes a series of climbs are linked together for longer races but you still always have the same combination of hellish lung-busting climbs and exhilarating leg-sapping descents. Roads are avoided at all costs and footpaths only used if strictly necessary. In a single race you may have to deal with rocks, mud, heather, peat bogs, grass and even streams. Routes usually aren't marked, the taking of short cuts is encouraged and local knowledge is a distinct advantage.

In short, fell running is the anarchic, slightly eccentric cousin of the running family. It puts the imperative on self-responsibility, freedom and a good pie and pint of beer at the finish.

Before I discovered all this, however, there was some uncertainty. Although fairly confident in my fitness, would I be considered a southern softie in this bastion of northern athletic prowess? Choosing a local club, I shied away from the intimidating sounding Dark Peak and Pennine clubs and instead settled for the more friendly - and flat-sounding - Goyt Valley Striders.

In early training runs, I was surprised that I could keep pace on the climbs but was being left for dead on the descents. Running downhill fast over broken ground is a real skill and a true test of leg strength, taxing the muscles far more than running uphill does. "Switch your brain off and let your legs go," was the advice I got. With training, my legs rapidly got stronger and I was able to induce a lobotomised state at will, bypassing my fear and self-preservation centres.

After 10 weeks of running on the fells I felt as fit as I ever had. Running on the soft, varied terrain meant I was injury free and ready for my fell-racing debut in the Kinder Downfall Race.

Waking up, I was greeted by a crisp and clear April morning. A stiff wind whistled through the valleys, and I knew this would be much stronger at the tops. All the summits were visible, meaning that at least route-finding shouldn't be a problem. although ten miles over rough terrain, including 2,500ft of ascent, and most of it crammed into the first third of the race, might be.

As I laced up my fell shoes, I looked round and felt a moment of trepidation. I took in some of the leanest physiques and most muscled thighs I'd ever seen. Any last-minute doubts had to be shelved quickly as the 300 competitors jostled for position on the narrow street and, after random kit checks (everyone has to carry a map, compass, full body covering and a whistle), we were off. Setting what felt like a suicidal pace, the field fought for position before the route narrowed. Within 200 yards the gradient was having an effect and, never a good sign, I was suffering before the first two minutes had elapsed. After half a mile, the race settled into a more comfortable rhythm and I was relieved that people weren't streaming past me and everyone around seemed to be breathing equally heavily.

A brief flat respite followed by a steep descent, losing all the height we'd gained over the first couple of miles, brought us to the foot of William Clough and the start of the main climb of the day. In the claustrophobic confines of the narrow gorge, the air was warm and cloying, magnifying the draining effect of the increasing gradient.

Relief at reaching what appeared to be the summit was dealt a double blow by a gale force headwind and the sight of the runners ahead winding their painful way up another steep climb. Although hurting, I simply wanted to get it over with, so I attacked the climb.

Gaining about 10 places, my gamble paid off as my legs and lungs began to recover and I upped the pace over the undulating and bleak landscape of the Kinder summit plateau. Hopping from rock to rock I seemed to be gaining on the runners ahead and, encouraged by the sight of the place which marked the high point of the race, pushed on.

The descent was a pure adrenaline rush and, as I overtook people, my confidence grew. Reaching the valley floor, the final flat mile was an exercise in masochism. I even mustered a crowd-pleasing sprint, probably losing style points as I collapsed in a wheezing heap after crossing the line.

Finishing in a time of 1hr 24mins and coming 32nd out of 300 starters, I was pleased with my debut and within minutes was thinking about my next fell race.

North West Triathlon

I thought the Cheshire Triathlon might interest a few people. It takes place on the 19th September 2007 at Nantwich, South Cheshire. There are a couple of different races, namely;

Fun Triathlon

200 metre Swim - 20 kilometre Cycle - 2.5 kilometre Run

Sprint Triathlon

500 metre Swim - 20 kilometre Cycle - 5 kilometre Run

If I can get fit then I am quite keen to give it a go. I know Steve Hennessey is keen too. You can find out more and enter on-line at <http://www.fun2tri.co.uk/northwest-new/index.htm>. Who knows, we could have a team?

Away Days

If you recall we have designated that last Sunday in every month the Away Day Sunday. On this day we meet at 8:00am and run further away.

In order for this to happen we need volunteers to lead new routes. As soon as I'm fit I will, but this could be some time off!

Peter Hill and Steve Hennessey have agreed to lead the next two.

Peter's run somewhat contradicts what I previously said as it won't take place on the last Sunday in June, but on July 1st. Pete will lead people around the Peakers Stroll, which is 24 miles from Peak Forest taking in many hills around the Hope Valley. This is an actual race, so entry on the day will be required.

Race start time is 9:30am

Steve's run will start just outside Buxton and will take in Millers Dale. Turn up the last Sunday in July for this mystery tour!

LOST HOPE ON THE HILLS

It is New Years Eve, Andy and I decide to finish the end of 2006 with a big run. This would ease the guilt later on when we were downing beers like they had gone out of fashion. So on a slightly chilly morning we battled wind swept moors, over 'Lantern Pike', we drifted on up to 'Crown Edge', climbed over 'Burnt Hill' and then down 'William Clough' and back into New Mills. A personal longest time of two hours forty-five. I finished the year on a high and looked forward to what the year 2007 will bring. Maybe it was time to push up towards the top third of the pack. Things were looking hopeful.

The New Year started just as good and I finally thought things were slotting together quite well. I'd begun to enjoy longer runs and I was able to hold a good speed at the shorter runs. Andy Pead had indeed trained me well. A weeks training in Spain on the sand strengthened my legs even more. I was ready for anything, or so I thought.

I returned from Spain to a country covered in snow, not the 'Christmas card' scenic drizzle of snow, but the slushy, slippery, 'only an idiot would try and run in it', snow. I was that idiot. Most people would of taken a week off, not me, or Andy. We ran over past 'South Stack' one day and up towards 'Cracken Edge'. One second we would be ankle deep, then the next, without warning we would be up to our waists in the stuff, trudging through like Scott of the Antarctic, only in Lycra! At times I could barely feel my legs and at other times they were burning with the coldness. (Is that an oxymoron?).

We continued through the week undeterred by the Artic conditions with our complete devotion to training to carry us through, and then came the fateful Sunday when finally my luck ran out.

The route we had decided on that Sunday was the 'Terry's Race', with 'Shining Torr' added on for good measure. All was going well until the ascent onto 'Shining Torr'. The conditions were treacherous and the newly laid flags were slippery to the point that I struggled to stay on them. The wind was forcing me from side to side as I tried my best to maintain a straight line. By time I had got to the top and was descending I was heavily fatigued but still flung myself into the descent. In fact I was just pleased to be out of the wind, I could no longer feel my ears and I felt my nose was going to drop off with the coldness. By the time I had reached the bottom I realised from the numbness in my left knee that I had injured myself. I still had to carry on, and limping the last three or four miles seemed like an eternity, with fatigue and injury as my enemy. I prayed that the injury was not a lasting one, but as you all know the adrenaline masks the real pain you feel later.

That real pain did come the day after and I struggled to walk. To add insult to injury, it had rained heavily during the night and the sun shone brightly outside. Ideal weather for a run, someone up there was having a laugh.

One day turned to a week, one week turned to two weeks, then three. My hard pre-season training now well and truly out of the door. It finally got to the stage where I decided to try a few test runs. For the next two weeks I did a few runs of between 30 minutes and an hour, all at a painfully slow pace. I was frustrated to hell and back, but I was running. The knee pain was still there but I came to the conclusion that if I didn't start to run again, that my season would be over.

So now, I am two weeks off the Kinder Downfall race, I am still struggling to maintain the accolade of my early year efforts. I did do a good time at this race last year, however, I have not ran 10 miles since the injury and will probably take this race with ease. If I finish it and my knee holds out then I will have another few months to gear myself up for the season. Also, with the light nights ahead, I will soon be joining the club with the Tuesday/Thursday runs so all may not be lost yet.

RACE DAY: KINDER DOWNFALL

It is the race day and my nerves are all over the place. Andy Pead and me did the route earlier in the week and I struggled a little with it, but did it in just over two hours. It was the first time I had run 10 miles since January and I was looking at taking this race easy.

I started off and ran up the hill from the car park with Paul Hunt for a while, mentioning to him that I thought I was going to relax on this one. As I started to ascend snake path I kept a comfortable pace and this basically stayed the same until I got to William Clough, where I was behind a long line of people who were walking upwards towards the top of Kinder. Now there is one thing I am rubbish at and that's walking. Hannah forces me out of the door on sunny Sundays to walk places, which is usually me puffing and panting as Hannah romps over the hills. I have always found it easier to run, if you can. So (back to the script) by time I had reached the top of Kinder I was chomping at the bit to fly off, and that I did, face first into the dust, good start! When I picked myself up I had hunger in them their eyes, a mean streak had set in, and I had to show commitment.

Well I had to do something to cover up the embarrassment of falling. I flung myself into the run and this is the terrain I love. Rocky, challenging with that little element of risk

Notice I didn't say big element. If I'd been running on a narrow ridge I would have been gingerly stepping from rock to rock whilst blubbering like a little baby who's had their candy cane stolen. I had plenty of energy left because of the paced start and this gave me the confidence to put everything into the rest of the race. Coming down off Kinder I noticed another GVS in front, I didn't realise it was Alistair until I went past. As I went down hill I half expected him to whiz past at any moment, especially when I hit the road. As many of you are probably aware, I am not a roadrunner and this was very difficult right at the end. I had to make sure my knee didn't go but at the same time I looked at my watch and noticed I had a good possibility of beating last years time. I was on my last legs as I ran through the park near the end and went dramatically flying over into the wood chippings pit in the playground. I got up and dusted down the wood chippings and carried on towards the end, hoping that no one had seen me. As I past the finishing line, Peter's wife took photographs. She also pointed out my dramatic fall, and then Andy Pead came up and pointed it out also. So much for getting away with it.

In the end I did quite well and knocked four minuets off last years time, not bad for someone recovering from an injury. Now I just have to hope that I will get back into some normal training with Andy and get a decent baseline before the season really takes off in May. It looks like Mount Famine will be the next one on the 19th May, as long as I can get the Saturday off work.

Shaun Coram

Double Victory

On Saturday May 19th I took part in the White Peak Marathon an off-road race held over the Tissington and High Peak trails in Derbyshire. The route is from Thorpe near Ashbourne to Cromford Meadows following first the Tissington Trail to Parsley Hay, then the High Peak Trail to Cromford.

The trail is a firm compacted limestone and cinder surfaces on former railway tracks. The race plan was to run around 3:45, I was running with some friends and we run together until 20 miles. I did not have the best of runs as I was having some problems with my knees and tiring badly in the last few miles, but I finished in 3:53.

The next day I was running the Windermere Marathon and after reviewing the run from the day before I decided to try a brand new pair of shoes, as I was sure my problems were a result of the shoes I had run in.

When I arrived to register before the start a notice had been put up asking for those who had run the White Peak the day before to let them know, it turned out they had a District Double prize category.

The race started and finished at Brathey Hall near Ambleside, the undulating route runs anti-clockwise around the lake, passing through Hawkshead, Newby Bridge, Bowness-on-Windermere and Ambleside.

I set off at a comfortable pace to see what I could do, I had a 3:40 time in mind, The new shoes seemed to do the trick as although my knees still hurt they did not get any worse.

I pushed on and went though halfway in about 1:39 the second half of the course is a little hillier than the first but I pushed on, I felt strong all the way round and did not suffer like I had done the day before, I crossed the finish line in 3:26 in 85th place out of 912 finishers.

I was the first runner home that had done the Peak / Lake District Marathon double and the 2nd place runner was 25 minutes behind me, 20 or so runners did both races.

Kevin Day

UK and England Athletics

Following lengthy discussion within the committee it was decided to affiliate to UK Athletics this year. If you recall we mentioned at the AGM how the sport had been re-organised this year and affiliation subscriptions were being increased. At present we feel it is unclear as to how disaffiliating would affect the club long term and whether our needs can be adequately catered for elsewhere. The committee will continue to monitor the situation and report back in full at the next AGM.

The Shady Oak Tough 10K

The race took place last month and was a resounding success. BIG thanks go to Kevin Day and Steve Hennessey for all their hard work and ensuring that everything went well on the night. Last year Kevin managed to boost club funds with a massive £3 in profits. This year he surpassed all expectations by making a profit of £75; although I'm still not sure how the purchase of two tables at a cost of £90 doesn't affect the profit. Kevin Day is now known as 'Kev the Master of Spin'!

Training Tops

New training tops have been ordered from Running Bear and will be based on their Aer Top but branded in our colours. I'm chasing Tony Hulme up for the delivery of these, but you know what he's like!

Membership

Membership now stands at 55. Welcome to our new members Nikalas Cook, Nathan Porter, Geoffrey Lawton, Ivan Lee, Andrew McMaster, Bruce Smith, Emma Glen and Michael Vernon.

The Great Fitness Debate: (A scientific study-of sorts!)

In a crazy world of ever changing trends, we are all unsure if the life style we are living is any good for us. The media dictates what we should or shouldn't eat and what size we ought to be in order to live a long and happy life and then contradicts itself by stating the same things that are bad for you are indeed good for you in another article. We all are constantly confused, so I thought my challenge would be to approach these simple yet controversial subjects full on in a hope to set the record straight. So come with me, if you will, on a journey of scientific research to find out the truth and nothing but the truth of what is good for you.

Earlier this month Doctor G.Haystacks made a startling discovery, that most obese people are indeed overweight. This was met by a startling response from the media, who seem to think any girl over the weight of six stone is obese and any man that does not resemble David Beckham is fat. They carried out a scientific study on a contributory factor in heart disease.

They fed sixteen rabbits varying degrees of salt to see which would die of a heart related incident. They were shocked to find that the rabbits that had eaten nothing but salt died first. Doctor Ken Tucky stated that this proved that high levels of salt, especially if it is all you eat, will kill you. He then went on to add that on the plus side the rabbits that did have a salt diet, tasted much better, when cooked, than those that didn't.

On the flip side of the coin, in a popular running magazine a study was conducted to see if a high fibre diet boosted performance and encouraged long life. They had two marathon runners trial different diets. One marathon runner stuck to a diet of take-aways, beer and cigarettes, whilst the other ate only prunes and bran flakes. Over the course of a few months the man who ate the high fibre continued to have personal bests and high placings in races. Largely down to the waif thinness of the runner and the extra flatulence powering him on. The other runner did compete well and finished his runs, though found it difficult to improve. The survey was just about to conclude its findings in strong favour of the fibre diet, when the high fibre man dropped dead from malnutrition! Thus the survey showed that a high fibre diet did improve performance, though not long life. The other runner still continued to finish races, though never improve.

In another study, Doctor O.Read assessed the effects on alcohol and different sports. It was found of Fell runners that drank six pints before a race, some stood around wobbling and talking about Real Ale whilst some proceeded to hug trees and gaze at the sunset. They would have all finished the race if it hadn't been for that darn pub, just meters before the finish line. The same study was done with footballers supporters from two different teams.

After two pints they chanted obscenities at each other, four pints and they were throwing glasses at each other, five pints they started to fight and the police were called in. One did manage a sixth pint and ended up slumped over a garden wall with a traffic cone on his head whilst being sick. The others never got to the match; they spent the night in jail. This was compared to the sportsman that was a tee-total, who finished first in every race but had no friends!

In our final case study we explore the true fitness of the super '0' size models that adorn our daily tabloids. Are they fit or just plain thin? Doctor Bones set up a study, but none of the four super-models made it to the research centre. One of the models had fallen down a grid and was never seen again. Another had crumbled under the weight of their 'small doggie in a bag' and was crushed by the rat-sized, fashion designer pooch. The third came out of their house and saw a flash and instantly stuck a pose with her parasol and then was struck by lightning. She apparently thought it was opportunist, tabloid photographers. The final one wanted to go to a place called 'Old Trafford' in hope of picking up a footballer boyfriend.

So now it comes to the end of my study and I hope that I have clarified some of the myths that seem to circulate without no facts to support them. And what is the moral of this article you may ask? Was it to mildly amuse and entertain? Was it to confuse you more? Or was it to make you think before believing any of the trashy articles that you read in the tabloids, and to pick the life that makes you happy?

Shaun Coram

Application Form

If you want to join The Striders or know anybody who wishes to join then complete the attached form and send it to the secretary.

GOYT VALLEY STRIDERS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

SURNAME																		SEX	
FIRST NAME										DATE OF BIRTH									
										Day		Month		Year					
POSTAL ADDRESS																			
TOWN																			
COUNTY												POSTAL CODE ESSENTIAL							
DAYTIME TELEPHONE (STD ESSENTIAL)										HOME TELEPHONE (STD ESSENTIAL)									

I fully understand that I shall train and race with Goyt Valley Striders running club entirely at my own risk, and that the organisers of Goyt Valley Striders running club are in no way responsible for any injury, illness or loss that I may suffer or any injury that I may cause during any activity connected with the club.

SIGNED:

DATED:

If under 16, signature of parent or guardian

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