

STARTING LINES

BAILDON

== RUNNERS ==

MAGAZINE

DECEMBER 2015 ISSUE 2

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EDITORIAL TEAM TALK

Yippee, Santa does exist. Christmas is magical. It must be, because we have all got just what we wanted, a hangover and a family argument.

No, no. Come on now, don't be cynical. We mean a bumper edition of Starting Lines. It was top on all of your Christmas lists.

The club responses were overwhelming, the voices unanimous. "Please!" you cried. "Please don't inflict any more on us". We listened, we debated, we spent several sleepless nights and, after very careful consideration, we ignored you. After all, only 50% of our members left the club after reading the first issue so we clearly still have some work left to do.

So, by unpopular demand it's back! Welcome to the second edition of the club magazine. Anyway our reader (Kev's mum) insisted on a Christmas special.

So, what goodies lie inside?

Well, in our second edition, we have really scaled the heights. Mountains and fells dominate. It appears that Michelle Morris is not the only one who likes a challenge. Our very own Jim Barnet can run in the sky. Skyrunning, as it is known, is running up mountains and you can find out all about it, and how Jim got on, inside.

Turn up at any fell race and there is a good chance you will bump into Baildon's very own hardy perennial, Ian Hartman. I always feel a little happier when I turn up at a fell race and see Ian there. He is an inspirational figure, churning out the races in highly respectable times even as he enters his V65 days and despite over 30 years of fell running.

In this edition, Ian casts his long memory back to the first fell race he did and notes some of the key changes in fell running then and now and notes some of the individuals who would come to dominate the sport.

You may pick up on musical theme in Phil E Brown's (the E is very important, especially if you like cabbage -read his article), account of joining the world's friendliest running club – Saltaire Striders - not. His article certainly please, pleased us and we will definitely be giving him a ticket to write. We are hoping this is just the first of a Fab 4 articles, as he gives an account of beginning running as a member of Baildon.

Geraldine Reay offers up a race profile of the Abbey Dash and Kevin one for Dunnerdale fell race. There is a really touching, short piece by Elinor Newhouse – In Search of a Medal. This not only reminds us that achievement comes in many forms and at any age, but also that running can be a source of support, meaning and friendships to the people who do it.

One of the real joys of being in a running club is the range of people you meet and slowly getting to know them and discover their interests. Our second edition features several member profiles. They offer a way of getting to know club members, what makes them tick and why they run. We hope you like them.

Jim Barnet, for example, is clearly a man of impeccable cultural taste. The Wire, which he likes, is the greatest TV series ever made. So he clearly marks himself out as a man of some discernment. Admittedly, it is also fun watching some needy, hapless celebrity's desire for fame and fortune propel them to eat a Kangaroo's cock for our entertainment in "I'm a celebrity", but this might not be the pinnacle of human civilisation.

If you require slightly more than a Kangaroos cock, then we wouldn't want to leave you without food for thought over the festive period. We also have an opinion piece to digest. "What is Running?" is a short piece which encourages us to think about what running actually is and what it means to us. The range of running achievements illustrated in the magazine show that there might be more to running than meets the eye.

Finally, given all these rich pickings, there is one Turkey. We must offer our sincere apologies. Despite the best efforts of the rest of the editorial team it would appear that Diary of a Reluctant Club Runner has made it into the mag. Well, it keeps Kevin off the streets and out of the public's way, and that is best for us all. It is, of course, juvenile, prurient and humourless and we want nothing to do with it. We will try to sedate him before the next issue.

In the meantime, enjoy. We wish you all a Cool Yule and fantastic New Year and when it all gets too much, just get out and run.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the Editorial Team – Jim, Geraldine, Ben and Kevin.



WHAT IS RUNNING?

BY KEVIN BRAIN

When the intrepid stalwarts who first set up Baildon runners began pounding the mean streets of Baildon, no doubt the first topic of conversation was a philosophical reflection on the nature of running. I mean, the one thing I've noticed about being on the committee is that you are never more than an agenda item away from a Socratic Dialogue about the purpose of running.

Now, all joking aside, it is worth pausing for a moment on this question. After all, as runners we should surely know what running is. As a running club we should surely be able to define what the running bit of the club is. But this is not so simple. Of course, one can define it in biomechanical terms (would anybody like a go?) so that running is differentiated from walking or jumping or skipping. But this tells us little. Why? Because running is not just a mechanical action

Running is always and everywhere an activity which is contextually specific, done for a range of purposes and governed by the meaning given to it by individual runners.

It can be a means to an end, such as getting fit, or an end in itself, such as when running for the pleasure of it. It can be a way of testing yourself and your limits either alone or against others. It can be a way of escaping competition and testing, as when we run just for the sheer joy of it. One of the pleasures of running, for me, is that I can run just for myself and do not have to worry about being good or bad, first or last, winner or loser. It means nothing. We can use running as a way of connecting to the world or a way of escaping it. A way of meeting people and being sociable or a way of being on our own.

All of these things and more can be what running is for people. To make things even more complex we can try to define running by the terrain people run over and the distances they run.

Sprinting 100meters is not like ultra-distance running. Does this mean we need to define running more specifically by the terrain such as track, road, trail, fell? What then about distance? I know some runners who would not consider a 5K a proper run because it is just too short. I, on the other hand, get a nose bleed if I go over 7 miles. Over this distance and I have stopped running and started engaging in sado-masochism.

Doing a fell race is not like road running. Indeed, if you are like me, doing a fell race is not like running at all. It involves a lot of walking up hill and falling down hill. Doing a fun run is not like trying for a PB in 5K. Racing for yourself is not like running a leg with a partner in a relay and running for competition is not like

running for fun or fitness.

There are, to borrow a phrase from Wittgenstein, family resemblances between these things but nothing that fixes them as being one and the same thing. Rather, they are all ways of doing running. But, if this is so, is it then pointless to try and define running per se? Perhaps running is a term that describes a related set of activities which are defined by the ways in which they are practiced and can be many and varied: fell racing, ultra running, jogging, sprinting, fun running, meditative running etc.

This might seem like pointless idle reflection but now think seriously about the types of running, types of runner and range of motivations that exist in a club. Given how much these vary, the degree to which running can be split into sub fields and specialisms and runners can be split by distance preferred, terrain chosen and purpose of running, then the question "what is running?" and following from this "what is a running club?" becomes more complex.

Is this an issue? Well that depends. Running is not one thing. Nor is it an unchanging activity. New distances, new types of races, such as the "Tough Mudders" and changing attitudes as to what running is for, raise interesting questions for running clubs. What is the purpose or purposes of a running club? What types of running should a club support and what can it support? What sort of members should be honoured and why? What types of training and activities support the range of runners and their interests a club might have?

There are road runners with no interest in fell running and vice versa. There are club social runners with no interest in competition and runners who want the club to help them develop competitively. There are runners who would want the club itself to excel competitively and others who would want it to excel socially. There are runners who might want highly specific training or particular types of running to be emphasised and others who are content to just enjoy the experience of being a member of a club and running in whatever sessions the club puts on.

As our running club continues to grow and develop considering the question "what is running?" might just be worthwhile so we can respond to change, meet the needs of all our members and value the full range of ways in which they define running through their own ways of being.

What do our members think? What is running for you?

THE SKY'S THE LIMIT



BY JIM BARNETT

The first I'd ever heard of the term Skyrunning was back in the spring of 2014. I had only been running for less than a year, and was still basking in the afterglow of completing a triple of half marathons - something I had never dreamed possible before that fateful first Parkrun in August of the year beforehand.

It was mentioned to me by my good friend Craig, now of Calder Valley Runners, who along with three others had been there in my first 'half mazza' at Silverstone. "Sky what?" was of course the response, when it was put to me that I should join him and two others in northern Italy, to partake in the Limone Xtreme Skyrace. Of course, visions of cloud-hopping were at the forefront of my mind, but I soon realised

"From a philosophical point of view, it's very easy to explain. To me it means 'run free to the top of the mountain'....to be here, to see a beautiful mountain and say I want to go up by the simplest means possible using my legs and a pair of shoes. I think this is the biggest difference with other sports and this is the discipline that we launched in the 1990's."

Marino Giacometti - founder of Skyrunning



the reality of what it was all about when Craig pointed out the details of said activity - approximately 2000m of pure elevation, over 25km of rugged terrain. Suffice to say, my enthusiasm was lukewarm...the thought of climbing the equivalent of Ben Nevis-and-a-half - as quickly as possible - didn't sound like much fun to me!

As I whiled away the summer of 2014 in Asia, Craig and the other two lads, Ben and Joe, were busy hill training for the Skyrace, taking part in BOFRA's and FRA's alongside interval training on the slopes around Dovestone reservoir. As October approached, the 'runners itch' had returned within yours truly. I had of course, looked up Skyrunning in the meantime, and became intrigued that it had carved it's own niche amongst other, more well-known genres of running.

Fast forward one year and I was meeting the lads at Milan-Bergano airport. Craig, Ben and Joe were back for more, having cultivated their Skyrunning credentials with a trip to Montpellier earlier in the summer. They had been joined by Johnny of Stainland Lions, who was now here in Italy to take on the heights of Limone. Joined by Johnny's brother, Karl, and their mate Tom, we also had an unwitting support team who had come to take in the sights and sounds of Italy whilst drinking coffee on the banks of Lake Garda. As Tom had pointed out:

"Really, they're two words which shouldn't be put together."

"Yeah, I know what you mean - sky and running!" I had replied.

"No, Limone and Extreme..."

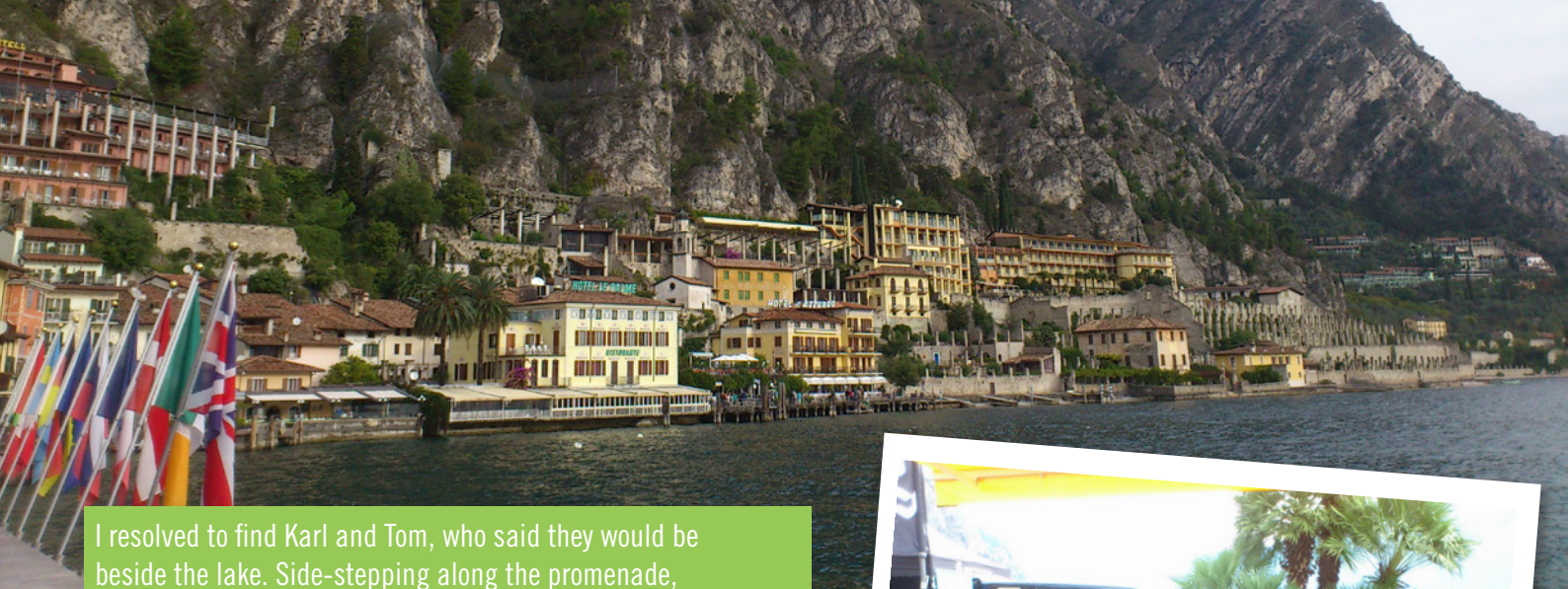
Touche.



Cometh race day, the usual pre-race shennanigans began. Luckily, the noon start time gave everyone the time and space they needed to carry out the necessary sequence of events - coffee, toilet, breakfast, toilet, prep, toilet, warm up. Then toilet. Anxiety arose as the race organisers announced that due to the rain, the highest part of the course would have to be avoided. Instead, we would be heading further down and taking on another 800m of elevation. Jeez. Oh yes, the nerves were taking shape, as was the funnel towards the start line.

I, of course, had completed shafted my prep. Having left all my stuff at the car, I spent a manic 20 minutes taping, applying, massaging and fastening, before legging it back down to the lakeside. Not to worry, enough time to do the dynamic warm up, but I was determined not to hold on to the car key - what if I didn't finish? Or got caught up on the mountainside? The last thing I wanted to do was possess the key to the car in my shorts, knowing full well that Karl and Tom might need it, let alone Johnny and Joe, who were bound to finish way ahead.





I resolved to find Karl and Tom, who said they would be beside the lake. Side-stepping along the promenade, through the crowd of runners and spectators, I caught no sight of them. “Ten minutes to go...” came the call in Italian, then English. Damn. I would have to start at the back.

With this, however, came the first unerring sense of calm I had had all morning. This wasn't a race for me, I realised. I had no expectations! All I wanted to do was finish, hopefully in one piece. I immediately relaxed, stopped sweating, and started to partake in a broken multi-lingual conversation with a fellow 'ultimo' (last one), who from the looks of the flag on his number was Portugese. As the race started to the sounds of “Song 2” by Blur, we trotted across the line to the delights of the crowd, waving and smiling, throwing out a few 'grazies' and high fives in the process, our moment of stardom complete...

Of course, this tactic had a double purpose, I was looking for Karl and Tom, without joy but without worries. If I didn't see them - que sera! There would be enough pasta going at the tent to keep them all going. We headed out of Limone, pass the crowds, about to embark on the ridiculous gradient of the first climb...when at last, they there were! Perched on a rock, the last outpost, I spotted them, stopped suddenly and in my relief and sense of relaxation, handed over the key and started to explain why I was at the back. A few seconds later, they politely advised that I shut up and get going - this was a race after all!

Looking back now, starting at the back was the best thing I could have done. This wasn't a sprint, it wasn't even a marathon, but it was going to be bloody hard. But having avoided the initial rush, I was now in a position where I shouldn't be. Hitting the climb I felt myself getting into rhythm. With a relaxed mind, I started the stop-start running and power-walking indicative of Skyrace climbs, hopping past others and cutting a few corners where possible. Occupying my mind with any distracting thoughts, I started to note the colours of the vests, the ruggedness of the terrain and the variety of languages. We weren't the only British for sure - I patted a University of Sheffield runner on the back, and spotted a couple of other club vests in the process, bemoaning the fact I'd left my own at home (will have it out for the Chevin Chase folks, don't worry!)



Pretty soon I spotted Craig ahead, with Ben on his tail. A few mini-sprints later I was side-by-side, just before the second refreshment stop. “Yorkshire, Yorkshire, Yorkshire!” I expressed as I caught up. “**** off! And don't sound so happy!” came the blunt response from Ben. As the “lol's” left my brain, it dawned on me that I was going great guns. I'd literally been overtaking people ever since the start, and was now purposely picking off people ahead - race mode! The rugged ascent had given way to a beautiful mountain trail, equal to the heaven that is God's Own Country, but unique in the fact it had the biggest vertical drop I've ever

witnessed a few feet away. “Keep focussing ahead,” I told myself, as an unlikely flat section allowed me to quicken my pace to the rhythm of ‘My Humps’ by the Black Eyed Peas (don't ask). Pretty soon we were about 6 miles in, albeit in a time lot longer than your usual 10K, but I felt good.

The refreshment stalls were well stocked, and not even a slight stitch from the cold mountain air could dampen my enthusiasm for the progress I was making.

An exhilarating downhill section followed, criss-crossing woodland reminiscent of Shipley Glen, albeit with more rocks. But as I galloped down this section, two doubts started to creep into my mind. One, the stones that had managed to sneak into my Roclites, under the heel. Secondly, the thought that such a descent meant an equal amount of climb was to follow. Uh-oh.

At the bottom, I mistakenly decided to skip the refreshment stall and carry on, race mode fully set in. This section, I learnt afterwards, was the start of the Vertical K, and I was gobsmacked to see the lead runners already descending. It wasn't long before I had to stop for the stones in my shoes. Except they weren't stones. They were blisters, full size ones too. I looked at my watch. 9 miles in. 6 to go. Nevermind, I thought - keep calm, and thank the lord for forefront running.

The next two miles was without doubt the hardest slog I'd ever come across. I don't know whether it was the blisters, the exposure, the lack of refuelling, or the severity of the gradient, but the Vertical K section was HARD. Mountain ridges, rope sections and rock scrambling - all designed to test the quads, core, calves and whatever other muscles that could be utilised to the maximum. It is hard for me to describe what thoughts were going through my head - it was purely one-step-at-a-time stuff. But what I do remember was the relief of reaching the top, with its limited supply of sugar cubes, dried fruit and Coca-Cola. Ney bother - anything would do at that point! I resolved to get down to the previous refreshment stop as quickly as possible, in order to stay warm and partake in some proper refuelling. Little did I know that the severity of the descent would be just as much, if not worse, than the ascent! I side-stepped down, saving the blisters from calamity, but costing myself places in the meantime. A funny part of me was expecting another climb, although I didn't know that for sure. The sound of an part-ambulance part-mountain-buggy approached...someone had suffered worse than the rest of us. Race mode had been replaced by survival mode.



At the refreshment stall I stopped for a good five minutes. This was the time to refuel and reassess. I got confirmation in pigeon Spanish that the next climb was about 600m, followed by another 100m after the technical descent. Up the final climb I trudged, as did others, but made progress. I saw some of my fellow competitors from previous and marked them down for their characteristics. The persistent guy in yellow, who went whizzing past me on the second downhill. The stoic Swiss, who was a strong climber. The Spanish couple, who never stopped chatting all the way around. The enthusiastic Peruvian, who at my request to pass exclaimed that it was worth the pain! The Italian kid, stopping for water that wasn't even his. I actually saw him crying at the end, probably out of relief, exhaustion or a mixture of both. Such a variety of people and emotions.

At the top I felt a relative sense of calm. Two miles out, I had calculated via my Garmin, and the blisters hadn't worsened. Granted, I would have to take it steady down the final descent, but the end was in sight. Rest assured I did exactly that, paying witness to some of the extraordinary downhill exploits of others as they went whizzing past. But come the end of the steep ascent, the competitor in me once again kicked in and for two reasons. Firstly, Craig had shown me a picture the previous night, of him finishing the previous year's race in 4 hours 46 minutes. I was approaching that time. Furthermore, the guy in yellow had just reappeared

behind me, and was approaching fast. Steeling myself to forget the blisters, I kicked in to race mode one more time. I hit the river section, a downhill path running adjacent to a rapid torrent leading to the lake, and decided to hammer it. 7:40 pace. 7:10. 6:40. I knew if I could sustain that for half a mile, I'd have both.

The sacrifice of such a strategy was that I didn't really pay witness to the crowds or scenery coming in, as I was too busy concentrating on my breathing. I did hear one English guy catch a glimpse of my name and in typical style call out, "Come on Jim lad, nearly there son!", but the only thing I had on my mind was the line. The finish line. And when it came - I didn't even see it! For the sweat was pouring across my brow, and I was already collapsing, stealthily picking up an Isotonic drink as I went down...

Ben came in at 5 hours 13 minutes, with two excruciating bloodblisters under his toenails which, when popped the next day, provided the most gruesome moment of the weekend. Craig, who had been suffering with his achilles, made it back in 6:22, and gave testament to the toughness of the course by expressing how happy he was to finish it. Johnny, who had suffered a fall on one of the peaks, made it home in a brilliant 3:44, within the top 100. Joe, who took a self-imposed half an hour nap at the top of the second peak, finished not too far behind in 4:34. I ended up finishing



283rd out of 507 finishers, in 4:44 - respectable for sure, and obviously at the top of the pile in terms of my running achievements.

Throughout the rest of the weekend, conversation obviously drifted to that inevitable question...what next?

Certainly I'll never take on as something as big as the Marathon des Sables - seeing Michelle's account of her time out there gave me a healthy dose of inspiration for the Skyrace. Likewise, the ultramarathon exploits of Mick and Jackie Cooper go to show that extreme distances and elevation are possible with the right training, discipline and determination. Like most I can only look on in astonishment at these achievements, but at the same time use them as motivation to push myself a bit further.

So as 2016 approaches, reassessment will once again come to us all. For me, I guess a marathon is the next logical step - although I'd like to keep building up to that, by maybe doing some of the metric distances. The Three Peaks Fell Race is the main one I've got my eye on, now that I've met the entry criteria.

The lads of course, are keeping their ears tuned for the release of next year's Skyrunning calendar, and I dare say I'll probably be keeping tabs with them. The Tromso 42km is being flaunted, but I'm not sure I fancy marathon distance at 4000m of elevation. Mind, I said the same about Limone...

*In the days following the event, Salomon produced a video called 'Fast and Light', which captures the true essence of Skyrunning. It is well worth a watch. Check it out at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=234&v=YMq4wE6KxmQ



Runner Profile

Jim Barnett

Name: Jim Barnett **Age:** 32

Occupation: By trade I'm a qualified Primary School Teacher, but as of the time of writing I'm 'on sabbatical' - officially, to improve my language proficiency, gain experience in international schools, and seek employment. Unofficially: to maraud around, drink wine, run a bit, see a bunch of new places and generally enjoy myself.

Position at Baildon (member, treasurer, club captain etc)

Just a humble member.

Date joined Baildon: November 2013

When and Why did you start running? My brother had attended a Parkrun in London and found out that there was one at Lister Park. I went along, loved it, and came back a couple of weeks later to beat my time. Coincidentally a few friends were starting out at the same time, so before I knew it I'd entered into the Silverstone half marathon a few months later.

Tell us a little bit about yourself: I'm Yorkshire born and bred and the youngest of three. Growing up I played the usual - played football, golf, table tennis etc. - complementing such activities with a whole load of darts and pool when I went to university. I wasn't a fan of cardio, but with age came maturity and I started to cycle and hike. The latter became a bit of a hobby - a few of us started 'fellbagging', if only for the post-hike meal and beer. Then I discovered tennis, which has become a bit of passion in recent years. And now running! I like to read, although can get caught up in current affairs and the news rather than books and fiction. My favourite author is Ken Follett, with his book 'The Pillars of the Earth' being the most 'can't-put-down' novel I've come across. I grew up with 90's indie, so generally gravitate towards that type of music, although I pretty much like and listen to all genres. TV-wise I love the episodic series which have become so popular. The Wire remains my favourite, with True Detective and Game of Thrones running it close.

Favourite books and Film/TV programmes: My favourite author is Ken Follett, with his book 'The Pillars of the Earth' being the most 'can't-put-down' novel I've come across. I grew up with 90's indie, so generally gravitate towards that type of music, although I pretty much like and listen to all genres. TV-wise I love the episodic series which have become so popular. The Wire remains my favourite, with True Detective and Game of Thrones running it close.

Tell us an interesting fact about yourself: I was once on the TV programme Eggheads, captaining a team of budding teachers from York St John University. It was a great experience, although I cringe at the haircut I had at the time, as well as the fact I got all three questions wrong! Still, was great to meet Daphne and co.

What three words would you use to describe yourself?

Oh god, err....(not those three). Let's go with independent, reflective and principled.

What three words do you think other people would use to describe you?

Ok, alright, semi-decent.

Why did you choose Baildon? In order to train for Silverstone, I was looking to join a club. Saltaire would have been easier in terms of where I was living, but I'd just joined Baildon C of E, where Charlotte Gibson was working. She suggested I come along to a Tuesday night session with Ian, which I found challenging and welcoming in equal measure. A few weeks later I joined.

How would you describe the running club to a friend?

The thing I like and appreciate most about Baildon is that despite my

relative inconspicuous, I'm always welcome when I do come along. The members are extremely friendly, the organisation is great, the training is always worthwhile and caters to all levels and abilities. I'm not sure you could get more value out of such a low membership fee.

How often do you run and for what time? I usually run two or three times a week, anything between 3 and 8 miles. Obviously this changes depending on what I'm doing.

Favourite type of running and why I've developed a bit of an affinity for off-road running, in particular trail running, although I've been getting into the fell scene too. Really appreciated lining up with the likes of Ian, Rebecca and Rob in the summer fell league and was determined to complete the qualifying six. Favourite distance has to be 10k - not too short, not too long!

Favourite run and why? Tough one! Pretty much love all the trails in and around Baildon. The woods that follow the beck from Tong Park are glorious in the sunshine; as are the numerous tracks through Shipley Glen.

Favourite races and why? I've got to say that Over the Odda has been my favourite over the last couple of years. Challenging, scenic, small-scale, varied - it's an absolute gem. Mind, the Boundary Way and Chevin Chase run it close.

Favourite bit of kit? Compression socks have been a revelation to me. I was struggling with my shins earlier this year and the socks have really helped in that regard.

Greatest running experience/achievement so far The Limone Xtreme Skyrace - of which you can read all about in this edition!

Worst running experience so far Haha, this one is easy - the Austwick Amble last May. Not for the race itself, or the 'Cuckoo Festival' from which it's held - but for the complete and utter lack of preparation I put in, which resulted in lots of slipping, an extruding stitch and a pedestrian effort. Definitely going back to put that right!

Running plans for the future As mentioned in the article about Skyrunning, I'd like to do a couple more of these. I'd also like to increase my distances off-road, and see more of the world through running. In the immediate future I'm focussed on the Berlin half-marathon and Yorkshire 3 Peaks for Spring time.

Most likeable thing about you I try my best, work hard, am pretty genuine and generous with my time and efforts. I also like to have a laugh as much as the next person.

Most annoying habit: To me - clicking my fingers, toes and everything else that cracks. To others - probably a lack of listening skills (or memory!) from time-to-time.

Superpower you would most like and why: Invisibility i.e. to be a fly on the wall when world leaders make their decisions, and to then reveal the truth Julian Assange style.

What advice would you give to a fellow runner? When the going gets tough - breathe. Get into a breathing pattern and focus on it! I always find this helpful in the tough moments, especially with stitches. I read somewhere that if you get a stitch, breathe in for three to-four steps and then exhale powerfully on the side that you're feeling the stitch. It takes a few hundred metres, but generally works!

Complete the sentence I run because... I run because... it's a microcosm of life - you can push yourself as much or as little as you want, feel the ups and downs, reset your targets, and come out better on the other side.

JENNY LANE

IS IN MY EARS AND IN MY EYES

JOINING THE WORLD'S FRIENDLIEST RUNNING CLUB

FOOL ON THE HILL

After years of running for fresh air, I'd started to take the noble sport a tiny bit more seriously. The 2014 Keighley 10k saw me record my best 10k time of the millennium and I wallowed, like a happy hippo in a jacuzzi, in the warm bubbly feeling of doing very well indeed. With my 50th birthday approaching, I wondered whether I might even be able to finish in the top three of my age category in a race one day, if I upped my game somehow. Reality hit home and hard when I heard that the Keighley 10k was only about nine-and-a-half kilometres after all and so the entire field was at home being happy hippos in a farty bath. Aint life grand?

Ahead of me that day (as usual) and barely out of breath (as usual) was my fellow Harden mum Kirsty Allen in her snazzy Barcelonaesque vest. "Join Baildon" she said, "they're really friendly and they like a drink". "Yeah, ok."

THE BALLAD OF JOHN AND GEOFFO

The website told me when I could turn up – Tuesdays seemed like a good bet. My first impression was how friendly everyone was. I even got a round of applause, just for being new - maybe I was the first new member for quite some time? I also discovered how much fun hurtling around a grass pitch can be – I'd not done that since being at school and I loved it. My hamstrings hurt for the rest of the week, but what a buzz.

I handed my cheque over to Membership



John (most members seemed to be called John at first, or Geoff) and I included an amount for a Barcelona club vest. It was only then I discovered that the Club gets its name not from where it's based, but because it's owned by Paul and Karen Baildon. But it was too late to do anything about that – they had my money now.

SEPTEMBER IN THE RAIN

In my first few months of being a member, I have to say I've improved. Speed work, intervals, hill-intervals, track sessions, warming up properly, stretching and tips from the coaches have all really helped me get a bit faster and a bit stronger, all by degrees. I'll never forget my first track session – it absolutely poured with rain and I accidentally got there 45 minutes early, ran for ages, assumed nobody else was coming and then had to do all the intervals when they did, just to save face. I am a complete plonker sometimes.

NOWHERE MAN

All this culminated in the prestigious (ahem) Porth Eirias 10k in Colwyn Bay at the end of our luxury caravan holiday in the October half-term. I bravely shrugged off the effects of man-flu to finish second somehow. Oh I

remember now, only 80-odd people entered. And the bloke who was second at the 5k turnaround point (the last time I saw him, he was streets ahead) literally disappeared without trace before the finish line. So in case you thought all these Beatles song references were a bit random, think again – they were all carefully building up to the intriguing, Reggie Perrin type mystery of the Nowhere Man. Anyway he was definitely a ghost.

TWO OF US

There's always a dark side though. There is another Phil Brown in the Club. This was very hard to take at first and I tried to persuade John Cawley to get rid of him. He listened patiently to all my valid arguments but in the end insisted I used my middle name to distinguish us. Not easy when your middle name is Edwin, but we live in enlightened times. Does the other Phil Brown actually exist? What would happen if we were in the same room together? Anyway, he's definitely a ghost.

WHY DON'T WE DO IT IN THE ROAD?

So thanks Baildon – thanks for welcoming me into the fold. Thanks to everyone who puts in their time and effort to make being a member such a pleasure, from the long-suffering (Ian told me to say this) coaches to all those involved in organising and admin, without whom ...

It's great to belong and I hope I'm still running around Yorkshire with you when I'm sixty four (I'm guessing you knew that was coming) with a little help from my friends. I'm stopping this now.

**BY PHIL E. BROWN
(THE 'E' IS SILENT, AS IN CABBAGE)**

30+ YEARS OF FELL RUNNING (& OTHER RAMBLINGS)



26 JULY 1983: LUMBUTTS, TODMORDEN

My first ever fell race. On a beautiful summer's evening, I lined up at the start of the Stoodley Pike Fell race. The race starts by the reservoirs just up the lane from the Top Brink Inn, joining the Calderdale Way for a few hundred yards before branching off left along the stone setts, heading for the Pennine Way for half a mile to the 121 foot monument. From here it turns west down a steep descent, to return via a muddy lane known as London Road and, close by, the Mankinholes Youth Hostel.

For someone who had only been running seriously for just over a year, the 3+ miles with 700 feet of climbing was a daunting experience, even though I had already completed three full marathons. Just four weeks previously, I had joined my first running club, Airedale & Spen Valley Athletic Club (ASVAC). In those days, athletics was elitist – you had to have a proposer and seconder.

The trip to Todmorden was the idea of Joe Toehill, our football club coach and an active race walker and distance runner, who introduced some of the football team to running and then to ASVAC. We didn't have a clue about specialist footwear. I probably ran in a pair of Hi-tec Nimrod running shoes which had cost about £25 (equivalent to about £80 today!).

Fortunately, it was a fine evening. Back in 1983, long before the internet and Garmins, getting results was a bit hit and miss. Some of our older club members will remember putting 20p in an envelope, writing your name and address on the envelope and, if all went to plan, receiving the results through the post a few weeks later. Not for us the easy access afforded by modern technology to race times, age grading, route profiles, metres ascended and descended, miles per minute and paces taken. However, we were more interested in getting a pint in the Top Brink Inn than faffing about with an envelope so I do not have any official results. Curiously, although The Stoodley Pike Fell race was first run during the 1970s and all results since have been archived by the Fell Runners Association, the 1983 race is not included. However, my trusty Timex, acquired a few months before the 1983 race, registered 22:56, a mere 5 minutes behind the then record of 16:49 set by Alan Sladen of Salford.

It was three years before I next ran this race and having now purchased some fell running shoes and run quite a number of fell races, my time was over two minutes quicker. The 1986 results make interesting reading when compared with this year's

AIREDALE & SPEN VALLEY ATHLETIC CLUB
APPLICATION FORM

To the Committee of Airedale and Spen Valley A.C.,
I hereby apply to become a member of the club, and agree to conform to the rules of the club and to pay the annual subscription. I am not a member of any other athletic club and I am an amateur as defined by A.A.A. Rule 1.

The Club Year starts Sept. 1st
If you have already been a member of a bona-fide athletic club, please attach written acceptance of your resignation. This will be returned.

To be completed by Applicant

Surname HARTMAN Christian Name(s) IAN
(Block letters please)

Address S. FOXHILL AVENUE, QUININGSBURY, BRADFORD
WILSON TERRACE, BRADFORD

Date of Birth 25/12/1951 Date of Application 26/6/83 Tel. No. 862 881911

Events which you intend to pursue ROAD RACES (10KM - MARATHON)

If you have competed previously (e.g., with schools or youth club teams) please give briefly your athletic history _____

Signature Ian Hartman Proposed _____ Seconded _____

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Hon. Secretary: _____ Ladies:- _____

results which you can find on the Tod Harriers or FRA website. There were 145 runners in 2015, 57 fewer than 1986, but there were far more vets this year (82 compared with 32). Fell racing appears to be a sport that rewards ageing. The V40s and V50s being particularly strong. It bursts with the great and the good of the fell running world. Many still putting in times which are nothing short of phenomenal.

The other major change in demographics over the last 30 years is the increased number of women taking part in fell races. This is illustrated by the fact that at Stoodley Pike the number has increased to 40 in 2015 from 14 in 1986. Five of these, including the winner, Linda Lord, were from Clayton Le Moors Harriers, one of the clubs which has pioneered women's fell running. Linda, whose sister lives in Baildon, and I believe was once a member of Baildon Runners, is still an active fell runner, winning the English Championship as a V60 in 2008 and 2009 and at v65 in 2013 and 2014.

Although I haven't run it for many years, as it is generally held a day before the Widdop Fell Race, the route has remained virtually the same throughout so I was puzzled to discover that the current men's record, set by Ian Holmes of Bingley in 2007, is only 18:10. This record replaced the record set the year before by Ian's clubmate, Any Peace's, of 1910.

Oddly, further investigation revealed that Andy had run faster than both his and Ian's 2006 and 2007 times. In fact, twenty

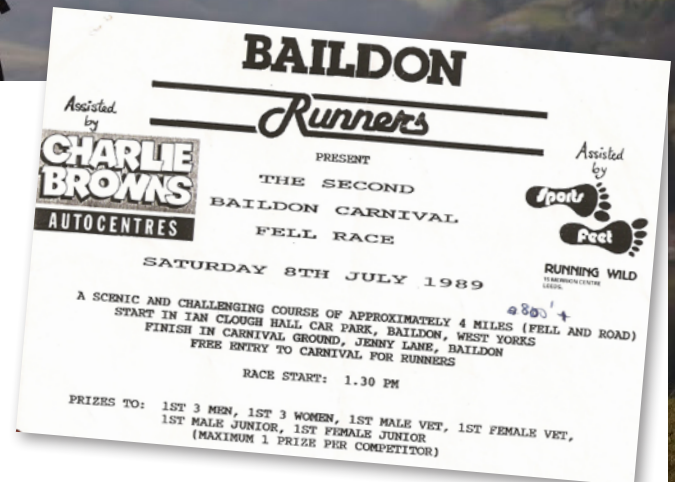


years earlier, as an U18, Andy had finished 5th in 17:42. Looking through the results for 1986, there are many runners from then who are still fell running. This includes at least two who were fellow competitors in the recent Within Skyline race, Harry Atkinson of Bingley (43rd) and Robert Hirst of Clayton (107th). This was also the year that Calder Valley Fell Runners, now one of the leading fell running clubs, was set up following a breakaway from Halifax Harriers. I joined CVFR in 1989 and many of my erstwhile club mates (from Gary Webb in 14th to Russell Arundale and John Riley in 142nd and 143rd were running one of their last races in the colours of Halifax in 1986.

Fast forward to Wednesday 5th July 1989 and I was back on the start line at Stoodley Pike having spent 1987 and 1988 living and working in South Wales. There were an incredible 293 runners and victory went to Sean Livesey of Rossendale, only 18 seconds outside the record. My first race in the red and white hoops of Calder Valley was rather undistinguished. 140th position with a time of 23:04 reflected the knee operation that I had undergone at the end of 1986 and the reduced amount of time available for training whilst in Wales.

A runner familiar to some of our older club members, Kath Drake of Spensborough was 1st lady (102nd overall) in a time of 21:50, while Harry Atkinson (25th) and Robert Hirst (136th) were again in the field.

Baildon Runners were represented by G. Hey in 52nd (20:43). Two other notable runners were the members of Pudsey & Bramley and Chumbawamba, Allen 'Boff' Whalley (13th) and Danbert Nobacon - real name, Nigel Hunter (89th). Danbert, more famous for tipping an ice bucket over UK Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott at the 1998 BRIT Awards than his fell running, now lives in the Pacific North West of the United States. The last time I met him was when he was performing at South by South West (SxSw) in Austin, Texas in 2007. In 2012 Boff published *Run Wild*, an account of his experiences as a fell runner. Touring and recording commitments have influenced the extent to which Boff now races but he makes an exception for certain races that are close to his heart, most notably the Will Ramsbotham Badger Stone Relays held in June on Ilkley Moor. Tragically, Will Ramsbotham, a key member of the powerful Pudsey & Bramley teams of the early 1990s, as well as an experienced rock climber, died in a climbing accident on Cader Idris, the day after winning the Cader Idris Fell race in June 1993 (for more details, see the



October 1993 Fellrunner in the FRA archives).

Three days later, I ran the (2nd) Baildon Carnival Fell Race in the colours of my Welsh club, Les Croupiers (Cardiff) as my Calder Valley vest was still sweaty. Victory went to Irish international, Dennis Quinlan, also coach and owner of Bingley Sports who had been 1st MV45 earlier in the week at Stoodley Pike. Jack Verity, now a stalwart at Saltaire Striders, but who had been a team-mate of mine at ASVAC before moving to St Bedes, finished 5th. G. Hey led home the 24 Baildon Runners, including Dave Crane in 42nd and Malcolm Sharp in 52nd. One final point, only two places in front of Malcolm was a junior, Rob Jebb of Bingley. Amongst many other achievements, Rob has since been British Fell Running Champion on three occasions and has twice taken the English Championship and was runner-up in the v40 category this year! Rob has been quoted as saying he was 'crap' as a junior and it just shows that you don't have to be great junior to have success at senior level.

Although that first fell race was almost 30 years ago now, I continue to run the fells, now flying the flag for Baildon and making new fell memories. Beware, if you too get bit by the fell bug then who knows, 30 years on from now you may still be running over fell and dale reminiscing over your first race. Perhaps, it will even be Stoodley Pike. If you pass me, be sure to say hello.

Message to Anna: Perhaps you might consider including the Stoodley Pike Fell race in the 2016 Summer Off-road Challenge.

BY IAN HARTMAN

Runner Profile

Ian Hartman



Name: Ian Hartman

Age: 65

Occupation: No paid employment - since retiring from work in 2013, I have served on the executive committee of the Fell Running Association (FRA) as the Statistician

Position at Baildon: Member

Date joined Baildon: July 2013

When and Why did you start running?: 1982 - 1st Bradford Marathon

Tell us a little bit about yourself

Family: Married with one son (35)

Other sporting interests: Played soccer & a bit of cricket when much younger – have supported Man City since the 1950s

Other interests: Listening to music & going to gigs, dog walking & drinking real ale (ideally trying to combine all three!)

Favourite book: No one favourite but like American literature of the 30s/40s/50s such as John Steinbeck (Cannery Row), Jack Kerouac (On the Road) & Joseph Heller (Catch 22)

Favourite band (type of music) Listen to all sorts of music including Folk, Rock, Country, Blues & Indie and don't have one favourite band but do have a favourite song – '715 (For Hank Aaron)' from the album 'Mission Door' by American singer-songwriter, Peter Cooper which is about Hank Aaron breaking Babe Ruth's Home Run record in Baseball but also has an underlying anti-racist message

Favourite TV programme and film Don't watch much TV these days except music programmes & documentaries & find it difficult to sit still long enough to watch a film

Favourite food: Eat virtually everything & like trying new things but particularly keen on spicy food such as curries

Tell us an interesting fact about yourself: I was born on Christmas Day at Oldham Boundary Park hospital – my mum advised me that I was delivered by Patrick Steptoe, famous for his work in the development of in vitro fertilization and the birth of the first 'test tube' baby, Louise Brown

What three words would you use to describe yourself?

Positive, stubborn & (rather too) cynical

What three words do you think other people would use to describe you? Enthusiastic, friendly, GSOH

Why did you choose Baildon? Nearest club to where I live

How would you describe the running club to a friend?

Friendly, sociable, caters for people of all ages & ability and encourages all members to take part in races

How often do you run and for what time? I try to take part in a race every week (48 to date this year) plus do 3/4 training sessions each week including a 45 minute aqua-running session in Shipley Pool most weeks & since July at least one cycle ride of between 45 minutes & 3 hours

Favourite type of running and why (e.g. road, trail, fell, track, obstacle courses, ultras: 5K 10K etc) Fell (especially when it's boggy as it slows down some of the faster runners) and muddy cross country races

Favourite run and why? Have spent many happy hours running up & down Baildon Hill as it's almost on my doorstep & I don't even have to get the car out

Favourite races and why? Love the races that the Woodentops organise from Penistone Hill – plenty of bogs, not too much travelling & reasonable entry fees – my favourite race is The Stoop as I generally run ok because the time of the year, distance & terrain seems to suit me

Favourite bit of kit? Pink lycra running tights!!

Greatest running experience/achievement so far Getting back into serious running in 2009 after hardly doing any running for 10 out of the previous 12 years

Worst running experience so far: All my DNFs whether through injury or other reasons are disappointing but the only DNF of my 18 marathons, the 1985 Piccadilly (Manchester) Marathon, was probably my worst experience

Running plans for the future: Keep going as long as possible until my legs/knees finally give up – I would like to complete the 3 Peaks race one more time & I have always wanted to run the Snowdonia Marathon but I think those distances are beyond my capabilities now

Most likeable thing about you: I can't think of anything

Most annoying habit: Best ask my long-suffering wife – she'll have a long list!

Superpower you would most like and why: Regeneration of my lower limbs

What advice would you give to a fellow runner? Always stay positive

Complete the sentence

I run because.... It's a drug I can't give up

Runner Profile

Elinor Newhouse

Name: Elinor Newhouse aka Ellie or Ell

Age: 65

Occupation: Retired Paediatric Nurse

Position at Baildon: Club member and member

Date Joined Baildon: I decided to join a running club in autumn '13 and contacted 3 local clubs, only 2 replied and I chose Baildon because they were very welcoming and had a beginners group.

Tell us a little about yourself: I am married with 2 grown up sons. One of whom is a fitness fanatic and runner.

When and Why did you start running? I have played golf for many years and have always enjoyed the feeling of running so could often be seen legging it down the fairway. I took part in a "Race for Life" event in 2013 after the death of my sister-in-law. I really enjoyed the race and decided to take up running as an extra activity. My runner son told me about "parkruns" and I started running at Lister Park in Aug 13.

Why did you choose Baildon? Baildon are a very friendly club and the runs are well organised with all abilities catered for. I normally run with them 3 times a week and with another club once a week.

Favourite type of running: I enjoy trail/mixed terrain running best but to date have never attempted more than 7.5mls

Greatest running experience/achievement so far: My best achievement so far is doing a sub 60min 10k at Wakefield.

Running plans for the future: My aim now is to get back to full fitness and complete more sub 60 10ks. I have no desire to run a marathon but may try a half marathon someday.

Tell us an interesting fact about yourself: I love wildlife and have been on many safari holidays in Africa, have been to Borneo to see Orang-utans and have been whale watching off the coast of Alaska.



IN PURSUIT OF A MEDAL A PERSONAL STORY

I took up the sport of running just before my 63rd birthday. "You must be mad" my family said, but I love it. I joined the Beginners Saturday Group and under the tutelage of Coach Ferris learned how to warm up, run and warm down. Despite my complaining, he even managed to get me running up hills – not my favourite.

Once feeling good enough to be called a runner I progressed to running on Thursday nights and the occasional Tuesday. Over the next 20 months my fitness and running improved. Early in the 2015 season I ran in 4 of the Summer Championship qualifying events and achieved another 10k PB. But then it happened. I heard those words no-one wants to hear – "you have cancer". I thought my running days were over. Following major surgery in July I amazed my Doctor by the speed of my recovery. 3 weeks post-op and I was shuffling (not able to run at that time) round the parkrun. But the weeks were passing by and I saw that Summer Championship medal slipping away. Bradford 10k came much too early in my recovery but I managed to trot round a parkrun to get my 5th race in. I only needed one more to obtain that coveted medal. If I was to achieve my goal I had to look elsewhere. There in the distance (literally) I saw Wistow 10k. Could I complete a run of that distance before the end of the season? I did - not a PB but an acceptable time. 6 races in the bag – a Summer Championship medal would be mine. To me it's as good as an Olympic Medal. I know that sounds a bit sad but I will never win any other medal.

What this missive is all about is YOU - my running buddies at Baildon who have given me support and encouragement along the way and particularly over the last few months. A very big THANK YOU to one and all. Roll on 2016



ABB EY DASH RACE REPORT

BY GERALDINE RAY

“I may be some time..” Said Captain Oates as he left the tent on that famous day in the Antarctic in 1912. This was a sentiment shared by runners far and wide on Sunday 15th November. Abbey Dash Day.

I had been diligently googling the BBC Weather forecast in the days leading up to the race, hoping (with all fingers crossed) that they would decide not to give us the gale force winds and torrential rain they had been promising. Of course everyone knows the BBC forecast is always right so I wasn't hopeful! The day dawned, well as far as I could tell it did. The sun was well hidden behind thick cloud and the wind was lashing the rain against the windows. Great. Oh well there was still hope. The BBC promised that by 9am the wind would drop and the rain would stop (ever the optimist!). Either that or we would all be battling 40 mph gusts of wind, not good if you want a PB, or even just to finish the race.

I set off early to tackle the part of the race I get most stressed about... parking in Leeds. This is something I normally avoid by catching the train, however, being on a Sunday the trains don't start in time for the race. You would think with 12,000 people descending on Leeds city center they would put an extra one on. Anyway, I followed the flow of confused drivers (one way plus road closures is too much for some of us!) and somehow found myself in a car park, phew! I donned the obligatory bin bag to keep me dry until the start and headed out into the weather.

The flow of damp runners carried me towards the start and a sea of mud. By this time, amazingly, the rain had all but stopped and the wind had relaxed to a more normal stiff breeze. Maybe the BBC were right after all! I ditched my bin bag in a convenient bin ready to huddle for warmth in the pen. At this point I bumped into a group of Saturday runners doing their first 10k. This is the nice thing about the Abbey Dash, although there are 12,000 people, Baildon is well represented so you see club mates around the place which makes it feel friendly. We wished each other luck and headed for the warmth of bodies huddled in our pens.

The start time arrived and before I knew it it was our turn. We headed round the corner for the start line in a flurry of discarded

bin bags and last minute nerves and started to jog for the start line. And then we were off!

For those of you haven't done the Abbey Dash it's a pretty flat out and back course, towards Kirkstall Abbey. The elite runners appear scarily fast to a round of applause as we reach the 2k mark (well they did start first!). I look out for Baildon vests on the other side of the road and spot a few of the faster runners (sorry I didn't cheer but breathing seemed more important at that point). At the half way point I'm feeling good as I round the turning point. There's a queue at the drinks station (honestly us British will queue for anything!) so I keep going, avoiding the sea of plastic cups on the road, and spot a few more Baildon Runners on the way back. This time I manage to shout a few words of encouragement. The last mile approaches and I'm now finding it tough going but I plod on up the slip road (I really don't need any kind of hill at this stage). Then I round the corner and look ahead for the finish line ready to time my sprint... but where is it? The road stretches ahead, runners all around me, spectators cheering at the sides... but no finish line in sight, not even a simple flag. I keep on going for what seems like forever and eventually I'm over the line and collecting my water and tee-shirt. I bump into a couple more Baildon Runners, well done all!

Now all that is left to do is head back to my car... now where was that car park and what level did I park on? I manage to find it and my car, pay and join the queue of cars leaving. Or perhaps I should say, cars wanting to leave. 45 minutes later I reach the car park exit and join yet another queue of cars to get out of Leeds. Never mind, my post-race buzz (and half a packet of Fruit Pastilles I found in the glove box) get me home and I reward myself with a lovely hot shower and an afternoon on the sofa. Ah, this is what racing is all about! Oh, yes and the joy of running, PB's, free t-shirt and all that stuff!

Well done everyone who took part, we all deserved a medal (well at least a pat on the back) for heading out of the house on a day like that. Look forward to seeing you all there again next year!

A photograph of two male runners on a hillside. The runner on the left is wearing a yellow tank top and black shorts, with a race bib number 90. The runner on the right is wearing a blue and red tank top and black shorts, with a race bib number 50. The background shows a vast landscape with a town and hills under a clear sky.

Runner Profile

Ben Watson

Name: Ben Watson

Age: 39

Occupation: Graphic Designer

Position at Baildon: Member

Date joined Baildon: October, 2013

When and Why did you start running? I started running in 2012. I only really started to keep fit after playing football for 25 years. I started going to Parkrun and grew some confidence to join a running club. From there, the running bug just took over and I am really enjoying it.

Tell us a little bit about yourself:

Family: Her in-doors and I have a little boy Frankie aged 4.

Other sporting interests: Bradford City season ticket holder.

Other interests: Taking the boy football training he is also improving at his running (one for the future Baildon)

Favourite book: The Old Man and the Sea, Ernest Hemingway (Nice and short) currently reading Killing Pablo after watching the TV series Narcos.

Favourite band (type of music) Morrissey (The Smiths) I have an eclectic taste.

Favourite TV programme and film: Narcos and Amelie

Favourite food: Sunday Roast

Tell us an interesting fact about yourself: I won the lottery

What three words would you use to describe yourself? Hard Working, Honest, Good time keeper (Is this a job interview?)

What three words do you think other people would use to describe you? Lazy, Untrustworthy, Always late (see above if this isn't an interview)

Why did you choose Baildon? Kirsty Allen recommended the club

How would you describe the running club to a friend? Really friendly and a good social club

How often do you run and for what time? 4-5 times a week for about 1 hour

Favourite type of running and why: Fell running love running up and down hills in the mud

Favourite run and why? Club Run Hawksworth - Derry Hill. Views and hills.

Favourite races and why? Over the Odda. It's always sunny and it's a great running course, hills, views the lot.

Favourite bit of kit? Inov8 trailroc

Greatest running experience/achievement so far: Winning the Turpin trophy at Winter League.

Worst running experience so far: First winter league (wrong footwear)

Running plans for the future: Carry on getting PB's

Most likeable thing about you: You tell me?

Most annoying habit: Not answering questions

Superpower you would most like and why: Superhuman Endurance so I could beat Mal at a race.

What advice would you give to a fellow runner? Run, Forrest, run!

Complete the sentence

I run because.... At first I feel like why am I doing this. Then when I finish I know why I ran.

Diary of a Reluctant Club Runner

May/June/July

What a great summer. I did something I have never done before. I scored twice a week with Gail. In one unforgettable week, I scored five nights on the run with her. I used all the lead in my pencil and we ran out of rubbers, but eventually we got through.

We ended up being really good at it, but who would have thought doing the cricket scoring for my kid's cricket team would be so hard? For the first few weeks we were stumped.

Having sat through numerous kid's cricket matches in early summer, I lost three fingers to frostbite and developed trench foot. I figure out why Britain got an empire. The English invent a game which has to be played in summer, and requires 5 days of dry sunny weather to play. Bizarrely, the most successful county at this game is Yorkshire. A place the sun has not visited since 1976. In fact, Bradford was the first choice of the Dark Lord Sauron for building Barad Dur, but he couldn't get planning permission and went to Mordor instead.

Where was I? Ah, yes, gaining an empire. Well the English got an empire because they were looking for somewhere they could play cricket. Off they set, searching for sunny lands, with little rain and lots of indigenous people they could meet, kill or enslave and then nick their land for cricket pitches.

I can't think why I failed my history A level.

July/August

Holiday time. We go to Paris for Gail's 50th. She has a great time. She went to Rome. We then go on to the south of France. We are in St Jean de Luc near the Pyrenees. I got to the tourist office to find out if there are any running routes in the mountains.

As luck would have it, one of the assistants, who speaks perfect English, tells me she is married to a runner – a mountain runner - and he is in the back. I wonder why they store mountain runners in the back. She calls him out and he

offers to take me out on a light run. "Sounds great", I say, "Where is the route?" He points to the Pyrenean Mountains on a map and says "there".

"Only a small climb", he says.

"How much", I say

"Maybe a 1000 metres climb and then back down. We run about 15 km in total. A light run, just over an hour. Okay?"

The whole of the staff in the tourist office are now looking at me. Every English person in there is looking at me. They think I too must be some kind of elite mountain runner. The reputation of the Baildon club is on the line here. No, more than that, English fell running. No, even more than that, the reputation of every English man and woman who has ever run is now on the line. Land of Hope and Glory starts playing in my head. The greats of British running: Bannister, Coe, Ovett, Cram, Farrar, Joss Naylor, Ian Homes, Quentin Lewis (who?), stand behind me. I know what I must do. Lie through my teeth.

"A 1000 meters", I say. "Shame, I was looking for something a bit tougher. That's more of a jog than a run. Normally I like to run into the death zone

He looks confused. He clearly realises that the death zone is the phrase used for the oxygen deficit environment over 8,000 meters, where no human being can survive for long. He is trying to figure out where the 8,000 meter peaks are in England.

"But there is no death zone in England" he says

"Clearly you have never been to Keighley" I say, as I quickly make my escape.

September

I enter a new age running category. I turn up at a race with dreadlocks, joss sticks and healing crystals. It turns out that I had misunderstood new age category. >>>



Kevin arrives for his first new age category run

I'm pleased to see that entering a new age category has not affected my form at all. I'm still shit.

I decide that I will do 50 races at 50.

I do my first fell race as a 50 year old, Thievely Pike. If you have not done this race, recommend it to someone you really, really, dislike. It is a 4 mile race that has a brutally steep, if short, starting climb. You know the type that rams its fist down your throat, rips your lungs out and throws them on the floor for you to stare helplessly at. After the climb it levels out to reveal great views along the valley line. Or at least that is what I was told. Unfortunately I was lying on the ground asking someone to put my lungs back in. I staggered, crawled and eventually slithered like a snake up the slope.

It has a fantastic downhill which some run down like graceful gazelles in full flight. They are poetry in motion, majestically gliding through the air. They reach the bottom with barely a hair out of place. I, too, ran it like a gazelle. A gazelle that has drunk 8 pints of special brew then started a fight with a pack of lions. Down I went, tumbling head over heels all the way, bouncing off rocks, rolling through prickly heather and skidding through mud. I arrive at the bottom with barely a hair left in any place.

I am denied a prize by a blatant piece of discrimination. But for one small thing, very small some might say, I would have been the first female Vet 50.

October

I continue my devastating fell form. This time it is Great Wherside. It's clearly an oxymoronic name. You know, like when mafia dons are called names like Nice Guy Tony or Smiley Malone in headlines like Smiley Malone brutally murders rival don Nice Guy Tony by ramming his head into a wood chipper.

Well, think of Great Wherside as being the racing equivalent of Smiley Malone and me being Nice Guy Tony at the end of the wood chipping. What a race. 2 mile of unrelenting climb and then a gung ho, mad as hatter on crack cocaine descent, that surely only a suicidal maniac would run at full pelt. Guess what I did?

Shortly after regaining consciousness, I decide to do another fell race.

November

Three fell races. First, Cop Hill. Surprisingly, there is not a

single policeman in sight. I get around – 3 pints of larger and 2 packets of crisp- I think this is the wrong type of round. Everybody else seems to run first and then go the bar.

The next race is a proper fell race. It must be, it is in the Lake District and Joss Naylor, no less, describes it as a minor classic. Dunnerdale fell race is a great race. Set in a beautiful little valley it has nearly 2000ft of ascent and descent in just under 5 miles. Mercifully it ends by a pub.

I am running with some friends. They have been calling me coach. I think this is because of my wise guidance. It turns out they just think I'm really slow. Slow coach.

One is doing her first fell race. I have been training once a week with her for the past few weeks. So when is the time you want to take a friend for their first fell race? Yes, you guessed it, on the weekend when the tail end of a hurricane hits the Lake District and whole areas are about to be flooded. Brilliant planning.

Miraculously, just while the race is on, the weather holds. It is cold and rainy, but clear. We all get round and my friends do really well. They go the pub ahead of me. I think they are getting a round in. You know, to thank me for the coaching. But no.

When I get to the pub they are talking with another runner. It turns out there is another Kev. As my friends tell me constantly, not only is he tall, good looking and athletic, he is a brilliant runner. He is younger than me, runs ultra distance runs for fun, did Dunnerdale in 47 minutes, (after already having been for a run in the morning), and is running a 30K race the following day. They talk at length with him and my brief moment of coaching fame has gone. He does not seem to be impressed with my 4 hour time for the Dunnerdale. I hate him.

As my friends leave the pub with Other Kev, I cramp up and collapse in the foetal position while trying to tie my laces. It takes the pub landlord and two assistants 3 hours with a crow bar to loosen me.

My friends leave me. They have Other Kev now.

So, to my third fell race in November. At least this time I can walk to the start from my house. Harrier v Cyclists is a great race for showing just how bad a runner I am. Not only do most other runners breeze past me but I get over taken by people running up hill in full cycling gear and carrying, yes carrying, a bike. Talk about taking the piss. This is like a jockey running round a race course with his horse on his back and still beating all the other jockeys.

December

I plan a couple of races in the calendar. I am now way behind my schedule for 50 at 50. If only I was Other Kev I would probably have run my 50 races by now. Woody Allen once said, "my only regret in life is not being born somebody else." I wonder if he had met Other Kev as well.

Never mind, at least my kids will like me at Christmas. I can't wait to see the look in their eyes when they open their eggs box. I'm not sure why they wanted an eggs box but they have been constantly asking for one. They look confused when I ask if they want Santa to leave the eggs in the box. "Stop being an idiot dad", they say.

They will be so chuffed. "Please dad, please can we have an eggs box?" they ask constantly. Well, Dad comes good on the day. Bet Other Kev hasn't got the latest organic, locally sourced, free range eggs box for his kids! Hold on a minute... .s#!t, I think I have made a terrible mistake.



DUNNERDALE FELL RACE A MINOR CLASSIC

When no less a fell running legend, nay running God would not be too strong a term, than Joss Naylor calls Dunnderdale a “minor classic” then you know you are in a proper fell race. For those of you who don’t know who Joss Naylor is, he is the one on the book cover. When you have a book written about you then you are good. When you are known across the running world as a legend then you are very, very good and when you have your own nickname – Iron Joss – you are the best. So bow down and listen to what Joss says about Dunnderdale (though I might have made this quote up!).

“Oy. It is a minor classic you know and I know because I’m a legend and made of Iron. Though I do go rusty in the rain.”

I feel torn. I want to tell you all about this truly great race but also I am loath to recommend it to fellow club members. Loath because it is the only race I have ever achieved a first place at. Yes, me, the running equivalent of a dead sloth, first in a minor fell classic; twice, in fact.

For the past two years, I have been the first Baildon runner to finish at Dunnerdale. Admittedly I was also the last Baildon runner to finish. For all I know, I may be the only Baildon runner who has ever finished Dunnerdale.

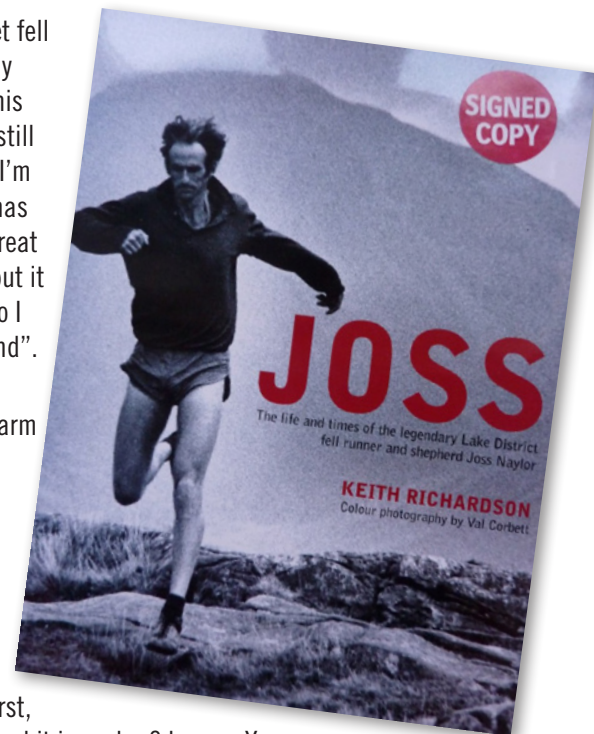
So why is this race a minor classic? There are no huge Lakeland peaks here. You will not bag any 3000 footers on this route. No near death rock scrambles, no scree landslides to bury yourself in, no classic race name dropping to boast about. What you have instead is a genuine Lakeland fell race that offers everything a fell race should without needing to announce itself by punching you in the face screaming “I’m a classic, I’m a classic”. Although, come to think of it, I have announced it as a minor classic!

As one elderly vet fell runner said to my friend. “I love this race because it still lets me pretend I’m a fell runner. It has everything the great fell races have but it is only 5 miles so I can still get round”.

That is part of Dunnerdale’s charm and appeal. It is small but boy will it be money well spent, (as I said to Gail on our first date).

If the worst comes to the worst, you can walk round it in under 2 hours. You can have all the challenges of a Lakeland fell race secure in the knowledge that it is possible to finish even if you are not a great runner. But make no mistake, this is a full on fell race. It has everything packed into it. The racing equivalent of the TARDIS – it might look small from the outside but once you get in to the race the full demands of fell racing open up.

It has its killer climbs, adrenalin pumping descents, valley top paths where you can run like a trail runner, rocky ups and downs to pick your way through, running lines to find



and, if the mist comes down, lose, bogs to sink into, rocks to fall over, rain to drown in, fog to get lost in, cold to freeze in, wind to get blown over by and, just occasionally, sun to be completely confused by. Although I think the sun is just an old wives' tale.



This tricky technical descent is great, especially if you are a spectator.

Dunnderdale is the most southerly and westerly fell in the Lakes and it is beautiful. It has classic Lakeland scenery but just in miniature. The little valley that the race runs round is quite and picturesque but has peaks to hit and the climbs are steep. The biggest, Stickle Pike, is 371 meters high and then Great Stickle comes in at 304. This may not seem a lot but wait until you have to run up them.

The race is organised by Black Combe runners who are based in Broughton. Cunningly, they have arranged for the race to start and end by a pub. This adds to the torture. Not only can I not go in before the race starts, when I eventually finish the race, it turns out last orders have gone and they won't serve a man in a running vest, suffering from frostbite, banging on the door at 2 am in the morning, no matter how much he cries.

An AS 8km fell race with 550 m of ascent, the club describe the race in the following way:

Dunnderdale is a classic short race round the tiny but rugged fells between the Lickle and the Duddon valleys. The scenery is superb, the course is tough and varied, you get a pie and there's a very nice pub at the finish.

I say 550 meters but, according to my fellow runners with Garmins, you actually do close on 2000ft of ascent. For the distance covered – just under 5 miles according to the same runners – this is a lot of ascent.

The Race Route



The race is run in the first or second week of November so expect any weather and have full waterproof body cover, a compass and a whistle just in case.

The race registration is in Broughton Mills Community Hut. Here you can leave your gear and shelter from the elements before stepping outside for the race start. The hut will be crowded but Black Combe members handle the registration and flow of people well and run a slick operation. Not only do they do this well, they also manage to persuade enough of their members to brave the elements standing at check points, ticking of runners as they pass and offering words of encouragement such as "don't worry, now you have frostbite on your nose you won't feel the pain in your hands and feet or 'Do all Baildon runners use that crawling on all fours while retching running technique?'" Note to Ian Ferris, club coach, it turns out Ian that this is not the best way of running on the fells. We need another drill.

On return, you can go back in the hut where a hot pie and a drink will be generously handed out. I got two pies to put my feet into. Just five hours later they had defrosted (my feet not the pies!).

After starting on the road outside the community hut the race makes its way round the valley. There are 4 checkpoints on route: the Knot, Raven Crag, Stickle Pike and Great Stickle marking each of the high points hit on the race. You return to the start to finish in a field by the hut.

The start on the road is deceptive. There is the usual good will and bonhomie of runners mingling together, and then the sudden sprint off at the front that seems to mark all races. But the on road start is deceptive because you can run, at least for 100 meters or so. It even appears to be going down at first. Easy and so kind of the Black Combe club to pave the route on the fells. But then the road starts to climb.

As we go up runners start slowing and falling back others move forward. All around you can hear the sounds of breathing getting heavier, the sounds of straining and struggling rise and the road goes ever up. Both times I have run this race my legs were burning at this point and my head was beginning to droop lower and lower. This year I had the benefit of knowing how I would feel. It turns out that knowing you will feel shit at this point just means you have no honeymoon period at the start of the race before you actually feel shit. This is not an advantage.

As we hit the top of the road there is a slowing and clustering of runners. I realise we have just come to the start of the fell. I look up. God, help us, we haven't even started the first fell climb yet and I'm knackered. More to the point it appears that Black Comber stopped building the road at this point. There is just open fell from here on in. Already I can see the leaders half way up. I don't know why the leader decided to show me his half way up but at least it is the last time I will see it. The next time I see the leaders is back in the hut at the finish. They seem to be running up the hill. This is odd because I cannot move my legs at all. Other people around me seem similarly to be wading through treacle. Slowly we trudge up to the Knott. Mercifully, we hit this first peak quickly. I look behind to see people slowly winding their way up. It looks amazing and, tired as I am, I am suddenly hit by the beauty of it all; the sheer, utterly amazing, beautiful majesty of being on the fell.



The first climb to the Knott. Form an orderly cue please to get Knotted.

There is no reason to do this. No reason for the pain. No glory to be won, prizes to be gained. No one to impress, no legacy to leave; and yet the sheer in-the-moment-beauty of the experience is everything. This is why I run. Well, why I crawl, stagger and wheeze my way up a hill.

On the route goes to the next trig point, Raven Crag. I pick my way round rocks and turf. I think there is a path here but I am not sure. Down we go and then up again. Not a huge climb but it feels like it. God this is hard. It is the scale of it all, so much bigger and more dramatic than local fell runs. What was I saying about the running experience? Well, forget that. I feel sick and my legs have seized up. It is cold and wet and I want to stop.

But I know I can't now. I have come up to this race with friends; they think I'm a runner. They are doing the race too. The dad of one of my friends is marshalling. He runs for Black Combe. He is expecting to see me. On I go. Next checkpoint at Raven Crag and then, thankfully, we go downhill on a proper descent. I love downhill. I know it well because it is the direction my life has been heading for years. It is the only bit of fell running I can have a go at. I almost break into a run at one stage and then we level out and I come to a steady crawl. We are heading toward the road at the top of the valley head and then to Stickle Pike and the return.

Gail, my long suffering partner, has said she will be waiting at the road. It is chucking it down. I can't really see, the rain is in my eyes and I'm dog tired. Then I make her out, a huddled figure in a blue raincoat. I run over and give her a big sweaty kiss. "Fuck off" she says in a deep voice and throws a punch. I stagger off and pass another blue raincoat." Kev, Kev ", the raincoat shouts, "Why did you kiss that bloke?"

Too late now; on I run and then hit the climb to Stickle Pike. This is the highest point in the race at 371 metres. The climb is short, steep and brutal. Surely everyone must walk this, I think, as people run past me. Somehow I make it. I touch the trig point and then fall down some rocks in a spectacular display of how not to descend. Now I have a long valley top run to the final

checkpoint, Great Stickle. I know I'm on the return and I gaze across the valley and smile. I can see Great Stickle and I know it is a steep technical downhill after that.

Past the final trig point; now for the downhill. This is going to be tricky because it is both steep and treacherously wet and slippery. I love it. This is the only time in running I ever get to pick people off. I know they will overtake me again when we level out. They do, but for a brief moment I get to experience the freedom of letting go (I don't mean farting) and hurtling downhill.

We hit the bottom, a flattish section follows but each slight dip and rise now feels like a mini mountain. Then we go in to a forest with a rocky and root strewn short descent before the road run in. I say run in. I mean the limp-walk-crawl in. I see the hut and think I have finished. Cruelly, the organisers make me run up a road and round into a field. It might only be another 300 meters but it feels like a mile. I rarely harbour murderous thoughts but I could now happily kill the marshals.

I run through the finish and it is done. I feel tired and sore, cold and wet, relieved and disappointed. I often feel disappointed when I finish (no possibility of any innuendo there!) because I always hope before the start of a race that, just for once, I might actually find I can run. I never do.

I finish in 57 minutes. It is almost impossible to believe that the men's record for the race is 35 minutes and the women's 43. While this may be exceptional, there is no end of runners who run this race in under 45 minutes and more still under 50 and 55 minutes. I'm always amazed at just how bad I am and then, slowly, I remember why I run. I think about being on the fell, I laugh at my inability to climb and the foolish vanity of worrying about whether I can run or not. Who cares? I have just run a minor classic. If I can do it, anyone can and that is a beautiful thought. I know my friends will complete the race. They do and this is the best feeling of all. They really have achieved and I am chuffed for them all.

Also, Gail arrives with some good news. The bloke I kissed wants to take me for dinner. Result.



Note the bloke on the left is not Other Kev (see Diary of a Reluctant Club Runner) – He is Pete. He is an all round nice guy, formerly a great footballer and a naturally talented sports man (or so he tells me). Next to him, feeling his bum, is Nem, his wife. Nem's dad is in Black Combe and he ran the race last year at 70 escorting my better half, Gail, around. They get married next year. She ran it as her first ever fell race. She is missing from the picture because she refuses to be seen in public with me. Next to Nem is Anna. Injured last year she came back with us this year and completed Dunnerdale as her first ever fell race. A brilliant performance, especially when you think that she ran with me as part of her training. Surprisingly, she didn't use the crawling on all fours retching technique I have mastered. Between Anna and me is Tamsin. She did Dunnderdale last year as her first ever fell race and this year knocked over 10 minutes off last years' time. I think she wound her watch backwards when she had finished. Think I will try that. Seriously though, anyone who has ever run knows how difficult it is to make that kind of improvement. Well done to them all. Pete is a member of Saltaire Striders but we will forgive him this once.

A (NOT SO SERIOUS) ROUND UP OF THE YEAR

Another year goes by and we all have one less to live. Cheery thought isn't it? I do like to start on a positive.

What a year it has been for Baildon. The club has grown, there have been miraculous achievements in a wide range of events and challenges and new members have brought with them new interests, talents and infectious enthusiasm. I dislike them already.

Of course, there has been one stand out achievement that cannot go unmentioned. Yes, the launch of the magazine, Starting Lines. So popular has this been that I have been inundated with requests. Mostly that I leave the club. The members clearly think my writing talents need a bigger canvas.

Seriously though, the standout superhuman achievement was Michelle Morris completing the Marathon De Sables. Accidentally left in sand pit as a toddler, Michelle grew up with superhuman powers such as the ability to talk to camels, survive without water for four and a half years and make perfect sandcastles in gale force winds at Blackpool.

But Michelle is not the only superhuman at Baildon. There must be something in the water here. There are ultra-distance runners galore now. New members such as the Coopers and McMillans do not consider anything under 50 miles worth getting out of bed for. Mick recently was first Vet 50 in the Lakes 3 x 3000ers ultra 80 Kilometre race. You wouldn't think 50 vets would have entered but there must be a lot of sick sheep on the fells.

Runners like Jim Barnet insist on flying all the way to Italy to run up mountains. Such dedication to luxury holiday destinations and all the wine and pizza you can eat should not go unnoticed. Worse, he insists on making us live every step of his Skyrace with him by writing up his experiences in a jaunty 7 million words article.

A real highlight of Baildon is the every growing strength and depth of the women runners. This is not just about performances at the top but across the entire range of runners, as a read of Elinor Newhouse's article will show.

Who could forget that err, what was it? Yes, that thing over Baildon with the ladies team where everybody got sweaty, muddy and knackered. Yes, the Winter League final race. A brilliant course and a brilliant performance from Baildon Women's team saw them take first on the day.

The range of races and events Baildon runners take part in is staggering. Each individual runner has their own achievements to be proud of. Their own personal goals reached and obstacles overcome. Literally, for some of our runners, as they take part in the latest running craze on the block, obstacle course running.

Whether it be finishing a race with a broken leg (I assume it was her own), putting in a brilliant first marathon performance (Liz Caven), or while ill (Dan Cob), making a brilliant return from injury (Q – he is so good he only needs an initial) or quickly establishing yourself as Best Newcomer and one of the running elite at Baildon (Michael

Malyon), the year has thrown up some great achievements.

Michael has proved a fantastically talented addition to the club and gives the "big beasts" among the male runners some challenge. Jenny Guard has done likewise for the ladies and, in fact, the men. Her recent marathon time was of such high quality I am beginning to suspect that she is really Paula Radcliffe in disguise.

Lee Kaznowski has had a great year and made staggering improvements and Jim Wheldon continues to rip it up for the over 60s, gaining age category awards in several races and ably accompanied by Ian Hartman. Both of these won summer championship awards.

There are, of course, many other runners we could mention. Mo Farrar, for example, has had a great year but he hasn't been to any club events or runs so sod him. Other notable events include retaining the Washburn Valley Mixed Relay Team Winners award, the ladies team coming 3rd in the Yorkshire Vets in September, the ladies Vet 55 team coming 3rd in the same relays, Kirsty Allen, once a famous actress and star of Cheers, now bringing up a family in Baildon while turning herself into the bionic woman, at least in a running sense. Denise Johnson and Debbie Bland continually turn out great performances and, oh, well, everybody except me, in fact, is just bloody great and I am going to cry.

As ever, the real improvements and success are always for each individual runner who manages to get out running at all and keep it going. Especially when no light is shone on them and no plaudits achieved. I always think that it must be easy to do something if you are good at it and always complemented – I say think this because never having been good at anything or complemented, I don't really know – but the real victories in running seem to me to lie in the doing of it. We all have our own personal triumphs and tragedies when we run. We all run to the best of our ability no matter what that might be. The slowest of runners is still doing the fastest run they can do. This is real achievement.

So well done to you all. Now I really am crying. That is what happens when you write a round up shortly after chopping up a load of onions for tea.

Finally, we cannot fail to congratulate Alan Clements for deservedly winning the Turnip Award for his sterling work in supporting the club over many years. He has already named it John, although he said he would have preferred a Swede. Can't think why. Perhaps the pictures help.

Swede



Turnip

