



WINTER EDITION CHRISTMAS 2009

Champions Again! Next Stop, Europe!

Cross country has been pretty much dominating the club headlines recently. The success of our ladies team at the Liverpool XC Challenge was as welcome as it was unexpected, but most importantly it simply emphasises what Les Croupiers has always been about – participation, and wherever possible, in numbers. All credit to Katie Beecher, Libby O'Duffy, Jen Salter and Liz Ashton for making the long trip north to Liverpool and competing in monsoon-like conditions, and subsequently winning the UK nomination for the first time in our history for the European Clubs Cross Country in Bilbao on 6 / 7 February. Let's not forget our leading male runner, the flying Aussie, Chris Discombe, also made the long trip to compete by travelling on the team bus – that's commitment for you.

All this of course came hard on the heels of our successes in the Home Countries Masters XC at Perry Park, Birmingham. Like the XC Challenge, the standard of competition was of the highest order, and the weather, as so often recently, was atrocious – wet and windy. In the 22 year history of this event, Welsh successes, either on an individual or team basis, have been very few and far between, so it came as a huge bonus when the Welsh W40 and M60 teams struck gold. Libby O'Duffy and Sandy Johnston both produced inspired performances to be scoring members of those teams, and in Sandy's case the additional honour of the individual bronze medal (just 12 seconds behind the winner) – the first member of the club ever to achieve such an honour.

Of course for most of us the cross country season means the Gwent League, and it's been great to see so many Croups turning out and putting the club top or near the top of the various team competitions. What's also been really enjoyable is travelling as a unit on a team coach to Bath and Taunton – not only does it take away the effort of driving, but more importantly simply being with everyone else has been great fun. Two more fixtures in the Gwent League in the New Year for your diary – and both on Saturday:

Saturday 13 February, 2010	Penlan Leisure Centre, Brecon
Saturday 6 March, 2010	Blaise Castle, Bristol

If you don't want to wait that long before competing over the country once more, there's the ever popular Cardiff Cross Challenge on Sunday 17th January 2010 at Blackweir. Entries close on 9th January, and entry is FREE to anyone who is qualified via South Wales Region. For more details: www.cardiffxchallenge.co.uk

Finally, the Welsh Cross Country Championships will take place on the weekend of 20 / 21 February, at a venue yet to be determined. Don't forget that it was this fixture last winter that provided the springboard to our current team success.

Christmas at Les Croupiers

Christmas Day falls on a Friday this year, but that means of course that with both Christmas Eve and New Years Eve falling on a Thursday, the final club night this year will be on Thursday 17 December, with the next Thursday club evening being not until Thursday 7th January 2010. Don't despair! There's still plenty of opportunity for social bonding with the greatest club on the planet! On the evening of Sunday 20 December from 6.30 PM onwards you are cordially invited for a little pre-Christmas cheer at O'Neills off St Mary Street.

And so to 2010

Parkrun continues every Saturday at 9.00 AM, so we hope to see as many of you as possible each week, whether competing or helping on the administration. Some additional festive goodies may be on offer on 19th December and Boxing Day. The Cardiff Parkrun series is now approaching its 100th consecutive fixture – what an outstanding contribution it has made – both to ourselves but also to the running community in general. A massive thank you to Phil – who in turn I'm sure would like to thank every one of you who has helped make Parkrun such an resounding success. Don't forget also that the traditional New Year's fixture – Old Father Time – will be on Sunday 3rd January, starting at the traditional time of 1.00 PM. Entries to John Griffin – entry fee £6. Please turn up and support if you don't intend to run. Most clubs might host two fixtures in a calendar year – we will already have hosted two in 2010 by the time most of you return to work after the Christmas break. I think you'll agree that's pretty impressive.

New Year Bash

Our hardworking Social Secretary, Clare Johnson, has organised a New Year Bash at the Gate, Keppoch Street, Roath on Friday 15th January (7.00 for 7.30 PM). There will be a three course meal and disco and tickets are available from Clare at £17.50.

Club Championships in 2010

The ACE Fixtures and Rankings edition will be available in the New Year – and thanks to everyone who has in any way helped in putting this information together – most notably Jeff Aston, Dave Weeden, Mike Davies and Graeme Donnen. This will include the various Club Championship fixtures for 2010 – which are currently in the process of compilation. Some advance information.

Long Course: first four fixtures:

Sunday 10 January – Richard Burton 10 km

Sunday 24 January – Handicap 10 miles

Sunday 31 January – Lliswerry 8 miles

~~Sunday 21 February – Pontypridd Reverse 10 miles~~ REMOVED

Short Course: First race will be the St. David's Day 5km – to be confirmed.

Off Road: first three fixtures:

Saturday 9 January – Kymin Winter Mountain Run, Monmouth

Saturday 13 February – Gwent League 4 – Brecon

Sunday 21 March – Forest of Dean Half Marathon – entries now open: early entry advised!

Club Handicap 10 miles / AGM: Sunday 24 January – not to be missed!
Many club awards from 2009 Championships made – and often half the winners aren't even there! It's as bad as losing a jackpot lottery ticket!

London Marathon 2010

The London Marathon hits 30 next year – the same age as the club. London has always been a major focus for us, and the draw for four club places from 14 applications was very eagerly anticipated when it took place on Thursday 26 November. Congratulations to the successful candidates Tim O'Sullivan, Richard Brewer, David McDonald and Wouter Poortinga. First reserve, should any other club place come to light, is Andrew Sedgmond. Good luck to those fortunate enough to come out of the hat, and indeed, thanks and good luck to all other applicants – we wish you all well in your marathon aspirations.

2010

LONDON MARATHON TRIP

3 Days – 2 Nights in a Four * Central Hotel

The Hilton at Paddington

(Inc. Full English Breakfast)

All in price, inclusive of travel = £137.00

Deposits of £25.00 (now due). Balance First week of March.

Contact :- Mel James on 01656 720579

mel.james@tiscali.co.uk

Brief Itinerary

Sat

Leave Cardiff A M To Registration for race Book into Hotel

Sun

Early Breakfast Coach to race start

Mon

Coach for use to sights etc. Leave afternoon for home Arrive early evening

Every Runner Counts*

Some of you may not be aware, but several years ago we held a competition to choose a club motto. The winning entry was 'Every Runner Counts'.

We have never (to my knowledge) shown this on our literature or kit but it has never been more appropriate than for our Senior Ladies Cross Country Team during 2009.

At the Welsh Championships in Builth Wells in February, they narrowly beat Aberystwyth AC, primarily by getting our 4th and 5th finishers on that day ahead of the final Aberystwyth athlete. This gave them the Welsh title.

On the back of that they were invited to compete as a team in the UK Cross Challenge in Liverpool in November. In this event they would be competing against the champion clubs from each of the other home nation countries. The winning team would then represent the UK in the European Clubs Championship to be held in Bilbao, Spain in February 2010.

At the UK Cross Challenge (an extremely muddy 8.1k course in Sefton Park) we again triumphed as a result of the finishing position of our 4th athlete.

The ladies are off to Spain for a well-earned trip to a high class event. I am sure you will join me in wishing them all the very best in that event. It may be that there will be more success by making 'Every Runner Count'!

Jeff

* The winning entry for the club motto was submitted by Dave Walsh.

Notes

I have deliberately not mentioned individual athletes as these successes were for team events.

There is a well known sub-title to this article – 'You have to be in it to win it!'

Les Croupiers Ladies at the European Clubs Cross Country Championships

When I learnt of the fantastic news of Katie, Libby, Jen and Liz at Liverpool and our subsequent selection of representing GB at the European Clubs, I immediately wondered how often we'd achieved this in the past. It was our team win at Builth Wells at the start of 2009 that set this particular chain of events running – ten years exactly after our last Welsh XC victory in the quagmire of Colwyn Bay, 1999. That particular triumph led to our most recent excursion in the European Clubs XC – at Salamanca, Spain in February 2000 – when our team was Wendy Edwards, Edwina Turner, Kim Ripley, Julie Scholey and Glenda Edwards.

Previous to that, our very first Welsh XC title in 1988 led to representation the following February in the Algarve, Portugal. I managed to find a report on that first honour in an old edition of ACE, written by Beccy Richardson. However, the distinguishing factor is that whilst on the first two occasions we were representing Wales, in Bilbao we will be representing Great Britain – so this is truly a ground-breaking event.

We have also been represented on the road by our ladies in the European clubs – our first venture being in May 1987 over 15 kilometres in Cassino, Italy when our team was Eryl Davies, Sue Neal, Veronica Singleton, Beccy Richardson and Carolyn Llewellyn.

This distinction was repeated in 2003 after we took the Welsh Half Marathon team title at the Craig-yr-Aderyn event in North Wales. This time the European clubs 15 kms was held on 7 September 2003 in Moscow, and our team was Tammy Thomas, Heidi Williams, Wendy Edwards (now Boon) and Julie Scholey.

8th European Club Cross Country Championships – Algarve, Portugal – Sunday 5 February 1989

“Well, what a great weekend!” This was the sentence quoted by us all to describe the weekend on the 5 February when Sue, Edwina, Veronica, Anne, Jane, Carolyn and I participated in the European Clubs Cross Country Championships in Portugal.

It all began on Friday 3 February when we all met at Cardiff Bus Station. Veronica and Carolyn made a last dash to the ladies before embarking on the coach. Both returned in hysterics. Veronica went into the toilet without paying and when she came out, she was met by a mad toilet attendant screaming abuse! In the meantime, Carolyn took advantage of this distraction to sneak into the toilet without paying as well. The toilet attendant screamed various uncomplimentary remarks at Veronica – something about people not paying for the wonderful service offered, people like that made her sick etc., and she demanded 10p! Veronica was very cool, declined her offer and with a very nifty side step, escaped. Then it was Carolyn's turn. Unfortunately, the eagle eyed attendant had spotted her going in for nothing. With a shout of glee, having let one through her clutches, she pounced on her next victim. Carolyn was subjected to the same abuse as Veronica, only worse. The toilet attendant insisted Carolyn had to pay her 10p plus “10p for your friend”. Carolyn was very patient, trying to find an escape route but when the attendant physically barred the exit, there was nothing for it but to push her aside and run! “Was this going to be the beginning of an eventful weekend?” we all thought.

At Heathrow, Sue, Veronica and I went off for an easy five mile run around the airport. Avoiding the runways – we warmed up and set off, with the stares from many other passengers in the departure lounge. This helped occupy the time as the flight was about three hours late.

Apart from us all trying to convince Edwina that not all aeroplanes crash, the remainder of the journey went relatively smoothly – until we landed in Lisbon!!

We were to collect our luggage and catch a connecting flight to Faro. However the air traffic controllers were on strike, so Carolyn was informed to seek out the Birchfield Harriers' Manager as we were going to travel with them by coach to the resort. This she did but we were informed that we were going to be put up in a hotel overnight. "Great", we all thought, "we can get to see a bit of Lisbon". How wrong we were!

Meanwhile, Sue and I naively thought that we would eye up the opposition and consequently started a chat with one of the lady Birchfield Harriers. The conversation went as follows:

Sue: "Have you been running long?" Answer: "Yes, about 12 years, started off on 3000 metres but was told that I would be better suited to marathons".

Beccy: "How many miles do you run a week?" Answer: "80 to 100 miles".

Sue & Beccy: "Oh! What is your best marathon time?" Answer: "2:34, four years ago"

Sue & Beccy: "Oh!and half marathon?" Answer: "71 minutes at Bath last year".

Sue and Beccy: Oh!didn't Veronique Marot win that?" Answer: "Yes, we came in together".

Sue & Beccy: "Oh! what's your name?" Answer: "Sally Ellis"

Sue & Beccy: "Oh! Oh! Oh! Shit!"

Then thinking aloud: "We haven't got a hope in this race against such class athletes – never mind!" Sally Ellis has since been selected to run in the World Cross Country Championships and came second in the English National Cross Country Championships.

Eventually, we were taken by taxi to the hotel. This was situated about 20 minutes from the airport but in the middle of nowhere. We were not going to see Lisbon at night after all. After settling in our rooms, we all met up for dinner. Casually dressed in jeans etc. we were given a table not far from the kitchens. "So what?" you think.

The vegan – Veronica, and vegetarian – Jane, eventually managed to make the waiters understand their dietary requirements but ended up with a plate full of lettuce. The rest of our meals were OK, but nothing compared with the amazing culinary delights that were passing our table from the kitchen. It was evident that as were the guests of Portuguese airlines, we were only getting the very basic food. We finished our meal and got up to leave, walking out the same way we came in – logically through the restaurant. Immediately we were surrounded by the equivalent of four "Manuels" shouting, "No, no, this way, this way!" A little bemused, we all about turned, only to find that we were being hussled through the kitchens! It transpired that as we were not "properly dressed" we were not to be seen in the restaurant. "I bet Grete Waitz doesn't get treated like that" we all thought.

Up at 5.00 AM to catch the 7.00 AM plane to Faro. At about 9.30 AM we arrived at our destination – Aldeia das Acoteias. Fortunately Jane (Coker, pronounced Coke-r not Cocker as in Pepsi an in joke) had been on her holidays to the resort the previous year. This proved extremely useful as she ended up being tour guide, pub and club adviser.

The weather was glorious – about 17 degrees and like a warm summer's day back home. We all went for an easy run around the course and took delight in all the almond trees in full blossom – the Almond Blossom Races – invite only though to that one!

The apartments were great. Sue, Carolyn and I shared one, Veronica, Edwina and Jane the other. I pulled the short straw in my apartment and ended up sleeping in what can only be described as a “coffin”. It was a pull-out box under the sofa.

Apart from the usual total disorganisation, delay, waiting and lack of race information that we've all come to accept now when running in these European events, the Saturday was relatively relaxed – apart from the antics of Edwina. During the course of the day, Edwina managed to lose her handbag, only to find she had left it in our apartment, lose her key and then purse and so it went on! The amusing thing was that all these items were either staring her and everyone else in the face or where she had originally left them, i.e. in her apartment, and then she telephoned Wayne to get the Welsh International rugby score - and was horrified to get a telephone bill for £19. All the other calls home, on average, cost between £5 and £7 We all tried to analyse what may have gone wrong, only to discover she was chatting about the flight over, the day, the game, the weather, the place....shall I continue?

RACE DAY

On waking – all our immediate reactions were “I need the toilet, I'm nervous, legs don't work, how are we going to fare against all the other world class athletes?”

The course was set out on lush green grass and through some woodland. The first two events were the Almond Blossom, male and female races. We all watched in awe as Jill Hunter led the race, but were disappointed when she was literally pipped at the post by Albertina Dias, of Portugal in 16:46. It transpired that losing the race by 1 second also bst Jill a car! The male Almond Blossom race had Steve Cram participating. It was great to see such world class athletes in action.

Then came our turn. The temperature was about 18 degrees. It was just like a warm summers day. We warmed up and packed all our kit away. Each club was allocated a race funnel – we were number 16, and standing next to Birchfield Harriers. Like good sportswomen, we wished them luck – a little surprised at this gesture they returned the remark. “Don't you do that sort of thing at these events?” we all thought. Then the gun went off and the agony began!

It seemed like we had barely taken a foot forward and everyone else was halfway up the field. So early on, we knew we were probably going to be the last team home, but we all gritted our teeth and were determined to go for the girl in front. The Swansea Harriers and Cardiff Athletics club supporters gave us encouragement. Feeling the heat, we all finished knowing that we had done our best on the day. The results were as follows:

1. Albertina Machado	16:37				
72. Beccy Richardson	19:36	85. Sue Neal	20:18	101. Veronica Singleton	21:28
105. Jane Coker	22:55	108. Edwina Turner	24:04	109. Anne Mould	24:28

It must be noted that these are the official times. Sadly, mine is the only correct one. It would appear that cumulative seconds were added on to anyone over 20 minutes. This we believe is because of the prestigious Almond Blossom race and prize money / sponsorship related to it. Anne completed the 5000 metre race elated because she had run it in just over 22 minutes. She was the last lady home and had beaten the time of the last lady in the Almond Blossom race, who finished

the course in 23:02. In the eyes of the organisers, future promotion of the Almond Blossom (track only) race could not be overshadowed by better performances in the European Club Championships!!

And how could I forget this! Prior to the start of the race, Carolyn was collecting all our kit together and bunging it in her bag. A tall, really lush 6'2" (at least!) blonde, eat your heart out, Scandinavian approached her to ask whether we had seen his running kit. Carolyn turned red, we all quickly drew lots to see who could have the 'honour' of handing it back ... it would appear that it had been scooped up in our anxious plight to get ready for the race.

After the race, the second lady, Maria Curatolo of the Italian Fiat Sud Formia team, was going round handing out picture postcards of herself. This must be the ultimate in pose – she scowled at me for refusing such an opportunity!

The rest of the day was spent relaxing, with a quiet drink in the evening and early to bed.

Rise and shine Monday morning, we were all up and off on varying long runs, taking in the rugged countryside and unspoilt coastline alike, seeing the Algarve the way it should be seen. Next, a visit to Albufeira, the 'Blackpool' of the Algarve (minus the amusement rides). As we ate a barbecued lunch, basking in the sunshine, we spared a second to think of our compatriots back home in a British winter!

The rest of the day was relatively uneventful until we all got onto the cocktails and joined the Swansea Harrier lads. To cut a long, eventful and fun-filled evening short it would best be described as the night Les Croupiers ladies did not sleep along with the Swansea lads!

To explain. As our flight was very early Tuesday morning and we had to meet the coach at 5.30 AM, some of us, namely Carolyn, Sue, Veronica, Jane and I decided we may as well stay up. Veronica and Jane succumbed to the call of their pillows, but Sue, Carolyn and I didn't bother. Apart from drinking endless cups of coffee, munching toast cooked over a gas stove and chatting, the rest of our hilarious antics with the mad men from Swansea remains unprintable! It was fun, and boy, were we shattered the following day!

At Lisbon airport, Sue, Jane, Veronica and I managed a 5 -6 mile easy run from the terminal. Unfortunately, the scenery was extremely dull but as we were so knackered we probably wouldn't have appreciated it if it wasn't. On our return however, we had to persuade the security guards to let us back in. We threatened to rub our sweaty tee shirts in their faces or flash an armpit if they didn't let us pass. Needless to say They did.

To conclude, we all found the experience of competing against world class athletes extremely exciting, challenging and a great motivation for our own future programmes. The trip was an outstanding success and we would all like to express our gratitude to everyone in the club for their encouragement, help, guidance and support. Be assured we will all continue to show that Les Croupiers ladies are true champions!

Beccy

Postscript: Older members will no doubt remember Beccy Richardson. She later married Stuart Cameron and they subsequently moved to Dublin where they live today. However, Beccy was right about this event being a great motivation – just two months later both she and Sue Neal recorded lifetime bests of 2 hours 50 minutes at the 1989 London Marathon, spearheading Les Croupiers ladies to the bronze medals.

Mick McGeoch

British & Irish Masters Cross Country International
Perry Park, Birmingham
Saturday 14th November, 2009

The 22nd annual British & Irish Masters Cross Country International was held in wild weather last weekend, but the wind and torrential rain did not detract from some magnificent performances from the Welsh Team. Pride of place must go to Austin Davies (M45) and Griff Owens (M60) on their magnificent individual victories. To anyone who has seen Austin perform on the country recently, this should come as no surprise – a magnificent sixth place the previous week in the Gwent League was a sure sign of things to come. Given that he was competing in the combined Age 35-49 race, to place 4th amongst an international field up to ten years his junior was a sensational achievement, and his margin of victory over runner-up Ben Reynolds (England) was a comfortable 28 seconds. If Austin's gold was predictable, Griff Owen's win in the M60s was a revelation. Griff has been away from the international scene for many years now, but a recent age group win in the North Wales CC League and a very quick 37:39 in the Birchwood 10km showed that Griff's old form was returning. What many people didn't realise was that Griff finished 6th in the inaugural Masters CC International, held in Moss Valley Park, Wrexham, way back in 1988 – some pedigree indeed, given that Griff's team mates in that all-star gold medal winning Welsh M40 quartet were Tony Simmons, Alun Roper and Dic Evans.

To give an indication of just how difficult individual male gold medals have been to come by – Wales has 18 individual titles in 22 years, and this was the first time since Wales hosted the event in 1993 that more than a single gold has been achieved in the Men's events.

However, there were three individual bronze medals to celebrate also, thanks to tremendous performances by three super-consistent athletes who have been on the international scene for many years – Marilyn Kitching (W40), Sandy Johnston (M60) and Emyr Davies (M65).

The achievements of the Welsh teams are, if anything, even more noteworthy, as history has shown that team golds have been a very rare commodity – particularly as the strength and depth of the event has grown dramatically. The previous 21 editions have seen just 3 Welsh Male and 4 Female Team titles, yet here Wales won the ultra competitive W40 title by a single point from the Republic of Ireland, with England five points adrift in third. No praise can be high enough for the magnificent quartet of Marilyn Kitching (3rd), Ann Thomas (4th), Libby O'Duffy (7th) and Denise Sanders (9th).

But more was to follow as the Welsh M60 squad decimated the opposition through Griff Owens (1st), Sandy Johnston (3rd), Dic Evans (8th) and Dickie Bowen (10th). This gave Wales 12 points and a decisive ten point margin over the English. There were more causes for celebration as the M35 team took silver, and there were a haul of 6 team bronzes through the F45, F55, F60, F65, M45 and M65 squads. However, it wasn't just the medallists who were heroes – so too were those who backed the scorers up and took decisive points from the opposition, and also vital were the reserves who travelled to support the team in case of any last minute withdrawals and who contested the Open Race. Thanks also to family members and supporters who all rallied to help the Welsh cause. Finally, a huge vote of thanks to two inspirational Team Managers Ali Whitelaw and Bernie Jones who masterminded the whole operation. It was an occasion to be proud to say you were Welsh and you were there – but then again – it always is.

Welsh Results:

F35: FOURTH (8.Isabel Redfern; 11.Emma Parry; 16.Sharon Leech; 17.Tammy Lewis-Jones)

F40: GOLD (3.Marilyn Kitching; 4.Ann Thomas; **7.Libby O'Duffy**; 9.Denise Sanders)

F45: BRONZE (6.Cath Wheeler; 13.Caroline Jones; 14.Susan Davies; 17. Lindy Eynon)

F50: FOURTH (12.Ann Saxena; 13.Alison Whitelaw; 14.Budge English; 16. Fiona Davies)

F55: BRONZE (7.Sue Ashton; **11.Edwina Turner**; 13.Margaret Docking; 15. Sue Hughes)

F60: BRONZE (**6.Ann James**; 8.Shelagh Adkins; 11.Maggie Oliver; 15.Gwyn Howells)

F65: BRONZE (5.Brenda Jones; 7.Cynthia Cooper; 10. Pauline Thomas; 12. Carol Farrington)

M35: SILVER (4.Huw Evans; 9 Andy Walling; 13.Paul Griffiths; 17.Paul Halford; 20.Matt Gurmin; 21.Paul Talbot)

M40: FIFTH (14.Darren Rowlands; 20.Chris Williams; 21.Lee Jones; **23.Phil Cook**; 26.Gary Norgrove; **28.Lee Aherne**)

M45: BRONZE (1.Austin Davies; 8.Peter Coles; 13.Rob Sheene; 16. Nick Frost; 20.Stuart Penny; 22.Mike Robbins)

M50: FOURTH (5.Ifan Lloyd; 14.David Davies; 17. Steve Davies; 18. Russell Owen; 24. Graham Jones; 26. Ian Webb)

M55: FIFTH (8.Jim Woodcock; 10. Kevin Hesketh; **11.Mick Tabor**)

M60: GOLD (1.Griff Owens; **3.Sandy Johnston**; 8. Dic Evans; 10.Dickie Bowen)

M65: BRONZE (3.Emyr Davies; 11. Peter Roberts; 12. Peter Moody; 15. Ken Buckle)

M70: FOURTH (9.Len Tew; 14.Dave Hughes; 15.Peter Norman; 16. Syd Wheeler)

Please see the link below for all-time results of this fixture since 1988.

Shortcut to: <http://www.bmaf.org.uk/results/xcintalltime.asp>

NB This report was originally written for Welsh Masters and Welsh Athletics.

Mick McGeoch

NB. In addition to the above (highlighted) athletes who competed for Wales, Maria Zubizarreta, Julie Scholey, Gill Murphy and Rob Jones competed in the Open Race.

Summer's Long Gone/Coming Soon

This year's Masters' Track and Field league followed a familiar pattern as previous years with Newport dominating the men's league and Rhondda winning the ladies' league.

Once again, a small group of 'highly trained' athletes from the club exploited the hard work of a cold winter and a wet spring to finish a creditable fourth in the men's and second, the highest position for some time, in the ladies' leagues.

2009 Men's League			2009 Ladies' League		
Pos	Club	Points	Pos	Club	Points
1	Newport	80	1	Rhondda	80
2	Rhondda	66	2	Les Croupiers	54
2	Port Talbot	66	3	Newport	52
4	Les Croupiers	47	4	Cardiff	44
5	Brecon	39	5	Pembroke	40
5	Yeovil	39	6	Llanelli	30
7	San Domenico	33	7	Swansea	24
8	Swansea	31	8	Aberdare	12
9	Cardiff	21	9	Brecon	10
10	Neath	15	10	Carmarthen	
11	Llanelli	14			
11	Wrexham	14			
13	Clevedon	10			
13	Pontypridd	10			
13	Bridgend	10			
16	Bournville	6			
17	Forest of Dean	3			

A reminder that league points are only gained by the club if you are a member of the Welsh Masters' Association.

So please join well in advance of the start of the season to ensure that registration is completed before the first fixture (May). The association have also introduced a reduction to the fee if you enrol before 1st March 2010.

For further information about the Welsh Masters Athletic Association, and to register for next season, please log on to:

www.welshmastersathletics.com

Enjoy the preparation ... and the participation.

Mike Davies

Runners for Hire

This year has been rather similar to last year. During the summer I went down with an illness and ended up with my airways filled with mucus. For weeks I then coughed up mucus. This felt frustrating and affected my performance. I thought things cleared up until I went on holiday camping in Shepton Mallet. I got up early in the mornings to go running. I participated in a fun run for charity. However a group of us didn't know the definition of fun and still took the running seriously. It was then that I noticed that my performance wasn't as good as I would have liked it to be. This was confirmed three days later at the Merthyr Police 10k when I found myself struggling to get below 3:40 per km. On a good day in training I normally do sub 3:30 minute kilometres. Normally in 5k races I can easily run it in under 18 minutes (3:36 per km). I wasn't too happy with 38:06 for the 10k. I knew this wasn't going to augur well for the Bristol Half-Marathon.

On 6th September, I made my way to the start of the Bristol Half-Marathon. My first mile was at a leisurely pace of 6:37. I then sped up and maintained a 6:10 mile for another three miles before slowing down. At a few points in the course I spluttered coughing up mucus. I ran the course in 1:23:06, my worst performance in 5 years. I was glad to have run it in sub 84 minutes otherwise it meant that I struggled to sustain a sub four minute kilometre pace. Shortly afterwards I trained with the Cardiff AC for a kilometres session and struggled to run the kilometres in under 3:40. It felt depressing. It's amazing what difference 10-15 seconds make.

During the summer I promised my landlady, Nia, that I'd run the Cardiff Half-Marathon for her charity "Care for the Family." They were struggling get to find runners within their own workforce. Since she knew that I could easily complete a half-marathon even in relatively bad health I became a "runner for hire." I had to be careful about fund-raising, aware of the fact that many of you guys had sponsored me to wax my legs and I'm planning to go on missionary in India, which I will not ask you guys to sponsor me for. I was pushing my luck. Nick Dukes made it clear that one fundraiser a year is enough. I understand that. I aimed to raise a £100 and that was it. I wasn't planning to milk my connections for all its worth, like I used to as a student.

I lent Nia my castles t-shirt for her to model a suitable t-shirt for the charity runners. I also had to supply her with running photos of myself to add to their justgiving page. Nia kept me informed about her training colleagues. A few had done long distance races but it was many years ago. I think they were nervous about the prospect of running a half-marathon. It took some of them a long-time to decide whether to do it or not before dropping out. I take it for granted being able to run half-marathons but for any first timer it feels daunting.

On the Saturday night, I drove over to the museum and found a place to park my car. I wasn't going to take any chances. Who knew what it would be like on the day? I was a bit worried that someone might vandalise it. I was also nervous because I still had a cough and producing mucus. I had not felt particularly well on the Friday night and had a temperature. I was still determined to go ahead.

On the Sunday morning I made my way to the start. We had the photo shoot on the museum steps before I then ran off to stretch. In the crowd I bumped into someone from

my university running club. During the course, I ended up running with Lyndon Tudor-Maisey. I spluttered a few times and then sped up. I knew after four miles that I was likely to run it in 83 minutes. The final stretch felt protracted, especially after running along North Road, knowing full well that I was going to turn back. I guess the final mile always feels like the longest. I had no energy left for a final sprint. Sure enough I ran 1:23:21. I felt disappointed that there weren't any t-shirts this time. I was quite intrigued by the anti-age cream for men. I guess that's more useful than anti-cellulite cream.

As soon as I removed my chip, I jogged over to my car and drove home. I then showered and changed and jogged over to church. It's always been my annual challenge. It's now the fourth time I've pulled it off. I arrived at church with about seven minutes to spare. The minister congratulated me at the start of the service. The church treasurer also ran the Cardiff Half-Marathon. My day wasn't over. I came back to the church in the afternoon to help with the Youth Service. In fact, this was exactly what I did after the Bristol Half-Marathon. I was able to get by but my feet were sore and my legs did ache. There's no rest for the wicked.

I was given some dark chocolate in gratitude of my efforts. It may entice some people, but it takes a lot more than chocolate to entice me to do anything. I ended up raising £105.

A few weeks later, I attended one of the Monday night sessions. Phil got us doing kilometres. I ran six reps. All of them were under 3:30. It felt a big relief to have clear airways and to return to "normal" performance. I was worried that I'd have to train up and regain lost speed. Whenever I tell people I have asthma, they struggle to believe it. Although I've not had an attack for 10 years it still plays up in other ways. The mucus tends to be one of them.

If anyone wants information about Care for the Family, their website is:

www.careforthefamily.org.uk

Daniel Harris



The Sodbury Slog

I know I wasn't at Bath this year. In fact the only time I've attended Bath for Gwent League was two years ago. I apologise for my absence but if it didn't clash with the Sodbury Slog then I would have happily attended. Why do I bother running the Sodbury Slog?

To be honest I probably wouldn't have bother running the Sodbury Slog if it weren't for the fact that I studied at Bristol University, just like Nat Lane and Matthew Collins. Eight years ago I was a 19 year old fresher (come to think of it, it does feel scary that I'm now half Mick's age). The club captain sent an e-mail around encouraging us to attend the Sodbury Slog. I was just starting to get used to running more than 6 miles. I was aware that it was more than 8 miles. I still took the plunge. It is always on Remembrance Sunday. Back then it was on 11th November. However as it was 2001, 9/11 was still fresh on everyone's minds. There were also disinfectants as a result of the foot-and-mouth crisis earlier that year. I soon establish that this was one of the club's highlights of the season, along with BUSA and the University Half-Marathon, which no longer exists. After I graduated, the Bitton runners introduced fancy dress to the race. This year the club captain chose cops and robbers.

I crashed out at the dub captain's house on the Saturday night. Two other graduates stayed over. The Sodbury Slog is great for reunions. It's on these occasions that I become Dangerous. Unfortunately the old school were pretty lame this year and the turnout was as thin as Phil's hair. Only three of us attended. A lot of the regulars weren't able to make it. It was a shame. We watched the "David and Goliath" boxing match in a nearby bar. The bar was packed.

On the Sunday morning we made our way to the union, where two minibuses were awaiting us. I introduced myself to the students as Dangerous. It feels like an identity. On arrival we waited for the captain to get our numbers. We found a warm room and put donned our costumes. I didn't realise that the police hat made me look like a stripper or was more appropriate for a gay bar until I put it on. I had also bought a truncheon and handcuffs. We had some photo shoots, where I handcuffed some of the students as they were the robbers. It was a good excuse to handcuff some girls.

As I went for a warm-up it was bitterly cold and windy. I had stripped down to my shorts and vests. I knew that extra layers weren't going to help. In the crowd I spotted Adam Abraham. As I approached him I saw Matt Hopkins. Both of them were quite alarmed. This may have been because of my truncheon.

When we finally set off, the Bristol team had a fast time. I was cautious and kept a steady pace. The thing is that they always the change the route. This year, many of the regular features were taken out. In some cases, I found myself running the usual routes backwards. Some of the hills were taken out. There were a few other surprises. There was a pit of water after one of the fences. I've run this enough times to know that if you see

water, be careful. It's there to trip you up. There were still the ploughed fields, which sapped your strength. There's always the tradition of running in a river. This year the river was very shallow and narrow. I felt confined between the muddy banks. During the course there were jelly beans on offer with the water. I have to say, eating a mouthful of jelly beans and running is too much multi-tasking for my liking.

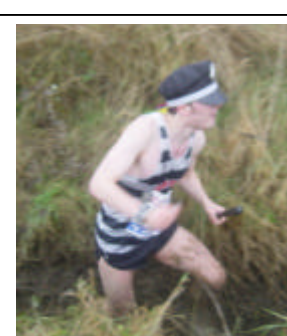
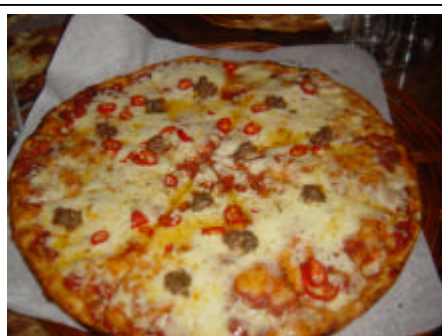
On finishing I forgot to stop my watch until a few minutes later. As it turned out my time was 1:05:04 and claimed 63rd place out of 1000 runners. On picking up the goody bags, I had a quick massage, which revealed that my legs and backs were quite sore.

As part of the tradition, we went to Pizza Provencale. The thing about Pizza Provencale is that they serve 16" pizzas. I do miss that restaurant. It's the thing I look forward to the most. My challenge is to eat a whole 16" pizza on my own. This year three of the students took up the challenge. I finished mine at a leisurely time of 19 minutes (I once ate it in under 14 minutes). The students still had at least two pieces to get through. I then finished off other people's crusts just to rub it in. The students did eventually finish their large pizzas. I gave them a lot of encouragement. After paying my share of the bill, I then set off. I didn't fancy dessert. I'm on a diet!

Daniel "Dangerous" Harris



A den of thieves.



Rab Mountain Marathon Sept 26th / 27th 2009

After an enjoyable Highlander MM the Les Croups off road team of Tim and Graeme, Nick and myself were keen to do another event – the Rab fitted the bill. It was to be held “somewhere in the North”, therefore easy to get to and would be a good warm up event for the OMM in October.

A week before the event it was announced that we would be heading for the Howgill fells near Sedbergh. Lifts were arranged, hotels booked and then disaster struck, Nick wrecked his legs and couldn't run. Despite emailing around no one wanted to be my partner- I 'm not that bad really!

Rather than miss the event I decided to try the Solo class which is an option at the Rab and Nick came along for the fun of it (and did most of the driving). The experience was brilliant despite not having a sherpa to carry my tent and cooking stuff as well as all of the normal kit.

My plan for the weekend was to get to the overnight camp in the 6 hours allowed and find as many control points on the way without getting too lost or tired. It took a little while to get used to the map scale on Sat (comment from Nick later – Where on earth were you going at the start!!).

Fortunately the weather was hot and sunny and the ground was either runnable or vertical. I couldn't resist one detour to a high scoring point which involved a brilliant run down a gentle spur and then a not quite so brilliant run back up again, but it was worth it for the view!

Amazingly I was in joint 1st position with 3 others in the Female over 40s (Solos and Pairs) after Saturday so there was no pressure on Sunday especially when we woke to find the cloud down!

After the usual steep climb up out of the camp I kept low to avoid the cloud. I made good progress and with 5 hours to fill decided to add an extra loop, this almost ended in disaster as it was a long way back to the finish! Luckily the last two controls were taped so it was a case of switch off the brain and leg it, I reached the finish with 5 mins to spare. After our free meal at the legendary Wilfs, we headed for the M6 and had an uneventful trip back to Cardiff.

Conclusion- The Rab is a well-organised friendly, low-key event (only 500 competitors). It has a score format so you decide how many or how few of the controls you want to visit and how you get to them (the prizes are good too!).

Definitely one for the calendar next year!

Caroline Dallimore

Three !!

Here we are again; The Little Ones are on another expedition. Three marathons in three days. I've booked the bed & breakfast, hotel, flight, parking. Lolo sorts out our nutrition, and keeps me supplied with mints along the way.

We set off just after 2 pm for Eastbourne. The sat nav (best invention ever) says 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ hours, I add half hour for a rest, plus 1 hour for going on the M 25.

Lolo sorts out "eats," we sort out our kit, then settle down to watch the X Factor with a couple of pints (we must stay disciplined, as it's going to be a long weekend. Oops - what have I found at the bottom of the bag - another two cans! (We'll have to dispose of them, as it's a waste of energy to carry them back to the car). *Little Lolo: Are we alcoholics? Na An alcoholic can be defined as somebody who you don't like, who drinks as much as you do...* To ensure we rise on time, we have about three alarms set.

Up at 6 (well lolo is, and while she makes coffee and plaits her hair, I have a $\frac{1}{2}$ hour lay in). We have muesli (I don't do muesli usually, but it's better for what we are taking on), scrambled egg and beans for breakfast.

The start is only a mile away. But *Alan always has to make things exciting, and as we're halfway to the start, he realises he's left his bottle belt behind, so he runs back to get it, while I carry on to the start, carrying both kit bags.*

Race one: this is a trail marathon over the south downs and the white cliffs of Dover (known as the seven sisters). They allow 750 runners, 750 joggers and 350 walkers. It is very hilly and mucky; we did this three years previously. We did either side of 5 hours then. I'll be happy to finish around the same time.

The horn blows & fireworks shoot up - we're off! The start is literally straight up a grass hill. I've decided my tactics are to walk up the hills, then run down, without forcing it. I didn't turn my Garmin on soon enough, so I had no idea how far into the race I was until I got to the drinks station. The first station, reached in 1:20, a mere 8.8 miles; is that all? The drink stations are brilliant; tea, coffee, cut up mars bars & bananas. As you get further into the race they even have soup, which I diluted with some cold water. The scenery wasn't all that great with low clouds, and a mist, wind blowing, but not cold, with intermittent rain.

At mile 18-19 is the start of the seven sisters. In the beginning the weather was fine; you could look out to sea, and the sea was a pale bluey green along the shore changing to a dark blue as it went further out. It was also the last time I passed a walker, 'how have you got this far just walking' I was thinking, so now and again I asked; they started early, some by as much as 2 hours.

The last check point was at about the 22 mile mark, the clouds were really low, you couldn't see any more than 50 metres, I was just following the guy just ahead and assumed he was doing the same, but when I passed him there wasn't anyone in sight! It was quite scary as you couldn't see the cliff edge, I hope my "orrible girl" is OK!! I thought. *It was indeed quite tricky for the 'Orrible Girl; I couldn't even see the person in front of me, and once or twice I strayed off the course. The screaming wind drowned out the shouting*

of the marshals, but some kind fellow competitors helped me back on course. Such is the camaraderie of Ultra, a far cry from the 'cattiness' of track.

The last mile is a gentle descent; I could hear someone just behind me. I wasn't having anyone pass me now so I picked it up just enough for him to not pass me. At the end is the same steep hill that we had at the beginning, going down I had to be a bit more careful than usual. Apparently I'm like a child (*Aw, love 'im!*) with arms flailing. Finnish time 4:59, five minutes better than last time. Loretta's time 4:39, 20 minutes on me. (We have a little competition between us, best of three, and accumulative time). *I was chuffed with this run; 15 minutes off my 2006 time, and in much worse conditions, and 20 minutes of daylight ahead of The Little Sod. He'd have to work his colourful socks off to pull back that deficit. Game on!*

After a massage, and jacket potato with beans supplied by the organisers, it's off to Brentwood.

Race two: this is a one mile loop in a park; it looked the better of the two that was on offer to do. The other one was in Brentford Surrey.

This was a small event, with a limit of 100 each for the 10k, & ½, and full marathon, though only about 50 entered the full. The weather was better than yesterday just a little windy on the top of the hill. The start was a little distance from the loop, it wasn't long before we could see this was a glorified cross country with a 100 metre steep climb just after the start, then turn right; after a bit there was a gentle climb on a camber, turn right going down rough gravel back onto the grass, then after turning right there was another climb about 300m. I decided I was going to use the same strategy as in Beachy Head. We started together for about three laps, then when I stopped telling Loretta to "walk" on the hills, she went away. *Having taken it really easy for the first three laps, especially walking the hills, I began to warm up, and get into my running I was also keen to maintain the position I had in the little competition we had going. I figured that if The Little Sod was going to walk the hills, I'd probably win this one too. But, as the saying goes, pride comes before a fall. My gentle, trotting rhythm was abruptly halted when my foot went down one of many rabbit holes, and although I didn't fall down, I gave my left knee a sharp twist. After that I found it impossible to get the rhythm back; having lightweight road shoes on this cross country didn't help, and the slightest bump in the ground sent a sharp jolt through my knee, so I had to be really careful, especially on the downhills. I contemplated quitting, but the F-word (Failure) drove me on, but as a race, I knew this one was over for me. At 10 miles I spotted Loretta, I was catching her. By the end of the next lap I passed her. I estimated the next time I'd pass her would be about lap 22-23. Sure enough there she was, struggling down a short descent. The way she was going down was as though she was sitting on a chair and using her feet to shuffle along, I felt awful about passing her, but she still had 20 minutes on me. By the time The Little Sod had lapped me for the second time, I was close to tears, trudging along nursing my knee, every sinew in my body aching, feeling sick with the pain and mental effort. Three laps to go, and the long finish climb was taking longer, probably because, in the beginning, I set a rule to myself that I wasn't going to walk until I got to the pole with some tape on, then start running again by the pole near the top, but now I was walking all the way to the top. I was still passing*

runners; there were a group of three guys who were also doing the triple. I thought, 'I'll have to have a look to see how they do in Dublin'. Two laps later I've finished, medal over the head, grab your t-shirt, what amenities are there! Public toilet, a masseur, a tent with tea & coffee (help yourself). They've run out of milk, oh well, I'll force myself; they also had some home made fruit cake; it was gorgeous, I must have had at least three slices while I was waiting for Lolo to do two more laps. As she come into the finish I can see she's in some distress, *You're not kidding...* she's hurt her knee, so we look for some kind of first aid for an ice pack, no nothing, I get Lolo to sit down, and I give her her coffee that I made for her when I finished, 'cause by the time she finished, it will have cooled down enough. *Easily, that's the most pathetic marathon of my life, five painful hours and one minute. As I was unable to run properly with my baddy knee on that terrain, I wasn't even sweating at the finish; my hair and kit were completely dry. I was annoyed with myself and very disappointed.*

Off to the car for a change of clothes, bung running stuff in the bag with yesterdays kit, sat-nav, (even though I know that I have to get on the M25, follow the airport signs). Off we go, a nice easy uneventful 2 hour drive. Apart form Lolo having a paddy about the course. *Apparently, all the course information said that the race was multiple laps around a park. Expecting something like the Parkrun, I wore lightweight road shoes instead of trail shoes. However, at the beginning, I saw runners in trail shoes; they obviously knew something I didn't. Poor Alan got it in the ear, anyway.*

At Heathrow we check in, and as we're early, they offer us an earlier flight, great.

We walk around looking for a restaurant that has noodles or pasta. We go for a bar doing spag-bol, (the guy didn't know what that was either) and a Guinness (to replace depleted iron of course...

Going through security I'm bleeping like a good-un, they wave their magic wand over me, what's that! A watch for running, put it in the tray, what's.... running medals, he takes a look and asks about them, when I tell him what I've done, and what I'll be doing I get that phrase that makes me feel good - "you're mad". When we get to the gate it seems we've missed our flight, never! 'We called your names,' they said, but' we didn't hear it, what are we going to do? You'll have to book in at the end of the corridor," I was told. "Right Lolo 'you sit here, and I'll go and sort it out. " *I was glad of the respite, as my knee was really stiff and painful now, and I was walking like a drunken sailor.* After a lot of tapping on her keyboard and a phone call it's sorted, we're going out on our original flight. We've now got nearly two hours to kill, and we can't go back through security so we went to the only thing that was there 'a bar;'

"Oh dear, Lolo, they haven't any Wicklow Spring Water! Never mind I just happen to have some in my bag,"

"Eeeheeee!" she replies.

At the hotel we meet up with our friends who we've met up with for the last two years, they got our numbers for us. And we go to the bar (whaaat! - where else are we going to sit) for a chat. *I ask for Alan to get some ice from the bar for my knee – oh, dear, 'Pain Behaviour,' this is not good. I*

realise I'm going to need a miracle to get through Dublin. I tell Alan that, if I'm in pain in the morning, I'll have to pull out. By what happened to poor Maria Zubizarreta, I knew it was not worth running a marathon injured, and risking my long-term running health. By the time we go to our room its just after midnight. Alarms are set for 6am.

Race: 3. our breakfast comes just before our alarms go off, muesli again; bloody rabbit food. *You Philistine – you don't know what's good for you!* We have looked at Lolo's knee, And it's swollen, *and it bloody hurts*, so we decide it's better for her not to run. Back to bed we go, and 7 o'clock comes.

“Aren't you going? Lolo asks me.

”I don't feel well, and my legs are all stiff.” I complained.

Last night, in matching burgundy silk pyjamas and nightie, The Little Ones looked quite the It Couple; very smart. In the cold light of morning, between my knee and Alan's hangover, we were more like The Shit Couple. 7:40 comes - sod it - I'm going, 'You're stiff because you've just done two marathons, your head is self inflicted,' I told myself, 'and I've got a reputation to keep up.' In 10 minutes, I've changed, put three numbers on (one on the front, the previous two on the back), and out side the hotel waving a taxi. Alan is the original Last Minute .com ; if he was a sprinter, he'd have his own little bed behind his starting blocks, so he could snooze while everyone else is fanning around, false starting.

By the time I'm at the start area I'm all positive, my strategy is run 10 minutes, walk 1 minute. *I was proud of My Boy for shaking off the attack of Lazyitis; it takes more courage to go forward with a hangover than without one (the fact that I was not hung over was quite worrying really, as I had imbibed a similar amount of Guinness, so does that make me an even worse alkie than him?), and we all know he likes a challenge!*

I'm standing in the middle of the 4 & 4 ½ hour pacer “I'll be happy with that,” me thinks. It's a gorgeous day, the gun goes off , and it takes about a minute to cross the line, first mile in 9 minutes, and I'm right behind the 4 hour wall of people. My watch bleeps a minute later, I've done this run/walk method before, so I don't feel daft walking so soon. For the first three miles, I'm in the 4 hour area, and because of the wall of runners behind the pacer I think someone is trying to tell me something. Whenever I started walking I tried to notice who was around me, to see how they or I was doing, but in a big race its hard, for you have hundreds passing. 10K in 1 hour through Pheonics park, I do a little calculating, 4x10k and a bit = 4:15/20. I'll be happy with that. I've had many “well done's” just before half way; a female runner said “I wish I'd thought of that” referring to the numbers on my back; as she did Brentford the day before. I asked her what the race was like. She said “it was awful - very hilly, very uneven under foot”. I reckon I picked the right one yesterday. I let her go on. Another drink station, only this time the road looks like a rainbow; red, blue, yellow, of lucozade sports drink This is one of my pet hates, especially when a third world country like S. Africa, as in the Two Oceans Ultra marathon, can invent drinks that are in hand sized sachets, while we waste so much water and plastic! Ah well, you never know, in a couple of hundred years, when we've destroyed our planet, the remaining inhabitants could be digging in our waste dumps for bottles of water.(OK my mind's going - it's amazing what goes through your head just to get through!)

20 miles in 3:20, and by now I'm finding any other excuse to walk; water station, first-aider with vaseline, hills, though they haven't put too many hills in Dublin, so it's a good coarse for a P.B. When I spot a guy who has a label on his back saying 'done all 30' (of which there are 29, one of which is female) I look at him, and he looks as though he's been running forever.

22-23 miles I start recognising the backs of t-shirts of other runners, like the guy who had his iPhone on his arm, and he had it on speaker phone, it sounded like they put the band in a squashed biscuit tin! I'm beginning to get emotional; 'cut it out you're burning electrolytes' I can hear Lolo saying, in my head. I get to the 25 mile mark, the clock says 4:04. Right, lets go - 11 min to do 1 mile & 385 yards, (as any of my friendly rivals know if I'm with you in the last mile you don't stand a chance (*Another reason he's The Little Sod*)). I picked the pace up, and the crowds were cheering. The runners were being made to run through a narrow funnel, with a few 'beep, beeps,' as I had to do a little bumping & weaving. In the home straight there's the female ever present, she looks good. As I sprint over the line the clock's showing 4:16 & a few seconds. "YES!" MdS, here I come, as I walk along to collect my medal, and I'm being a real sappy sausage! Off to the twenty-seventh mile (where else) to bask in all our glory with like minded runners.

I would like to thank the genius that got me through this: Loretta, which I actually have done, and muesli.

26	Alan Mann	Wal	M50 266	01:00:57 10km	02:07:40 Half Mar	03:03:56 30km	04:15:00 chip time	04:16:08 gun time
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P.S that's a negative split of 20 seconds.

How impressive is that! Most of us can't manage a negative split; never mind after having run two tough off-road marathons the previous day. It is testament to the courage, humour and patience that make the seemingly impossible a reality. I was gutted that I could not accompany The Little Sod on the final leg of our journey so, unable to rest, I amused myself in the lovely hotel gym on the cross trainer, then a bit of yoga, then a swim. I had an afternoon nap, then hobbled down to the bar to order a Guinness and await the arrival of Big Tiny Small and Mighty, the Greatest All-Time Classic Little Sod. And there he was, and his pint of Guinness was almost as big as him! We met up with some friends from previous Dublins. Tom Cheatam, who had run a respectable 3.38, and his folks, were celebrating with us. Although my journey on foot had come to a premature end, I had made the right decision, and I was already healing - or was that the Guinness healing the pain in my knee....?

I was also grateful to be fit enough for the small matter of an audition for ITV 's Britain's Got Talent, to showcase my humorous poetry. Thanks to my friends at Les Croupiers, who had allowed me to practice (thank you), I was feeling positive and confident about it, especially when, despite numerous pints of Guinness, I was able to recite word-perfect in Dublin.

Both The Little Sod and I are back running now, although I am possibly a bit more obsessive, as usual, and are preparing for the Cornish Marathon on November 15th.

Keep on Running,

The Little Ones



A Nice way to run an autumn marathon - November 2009

The last article I wrote for ACE was in November '07 after the club trip to Florence in Italy where I was (unusually) the top Les Croupiers runner in a time of just over 3 hours! How times have changed with 14 runners going to Berlin this year and 6 runners going under 3! Florence sticks in my mind as it was one of the few times that I've beaten a certain runner from Barry (not Mick). Read on to see the significance!

Having run Paris this year with regular training partners Martin Williams and Ben Farag, and with Dave Coles showing a renewed interest in running outdoors we 4 started to consider our options for an autumn challenge. We all agreed that a late autumn fitted better with our respective schedules than Berlin however in the end we agreed to go our separate ways. Dave opted for Venice where his sister lives as he had not done it before. He recorded a fabulous p.b. of 2:51:36 and was 2nd MV50. I did Venice in '08 (2:55) and really enjoyed it however did not want to go back so soon. Ben opted for Frankfurt as his brother lives nearby. Unfortunately he did not manage to better his Paris time of 3:03. I've a good friend who lives there however as that friend had spent a week visiting us in September and as I'd also run Frankfurt before, I ruled this one out. I settled instead for Nice, primarily as the weather conditions looked reasonably promising for early November and it was cheap and easy to get to from Cardiff. An added bonus was that one of my Sunday morning training partners from the days when I used to run from Lauriston cottage, Wimbledon has an apartment out there. Once Simon heard that I was travelling out there, he offered me accommodation and in the end he and his wife Sherill also came out for the weekend. Many thanks to both for their kind hospitality.

Thursday 5th November

Evening: Pack (bag 1), repack (bag 2); BAD idea – see below!

Friday 6th November

4am alarm (no need as hardly slept)

4:30 depart for Bristol

4:45 Panic attack – did I leave passport in bag 1? Pull over in Magor to check. Panic over. Proceed to Bristol.

7:30 Easy Jet flight Bristol to Nice, no problems; bus from airport to town centre, met by Simon

12 noon: Run out (west, in direction of marathon start) and back along seafront

Afternoon - Walk to old town and port, admire sailing yachts in town for Louis Vuitton race. British team called Origin One included Ben Ainslie, Olympic gold medallist.

Evening – meal in local restaurant with Simon and wife Sherril who had arrived on BA flight from Heathrow which had Roger Moore on board!

Saturday 7th November : Monte Carlo

7:30 am easy run with Simon, seafront in opposite direction.

Breakfast then walk / bus to Monte Carlo for sightseeing around casino, port and castle. One can but gaze and wonder at the wealth and opulence, not too much else you can do unless you own a yacht!

Light lunch (and beer) then back to Nice to watch England v Australia in local pub (another beer).

Evening: Dinner in Simon and Sherril's apartment (Pasta, Ham, couple of bottles of wine and finished off by birthday cake). It had been Simon's during the week and as mine fell on the day of race it seemed a good way of getting the carbohydrates in and finish the cake! We were joined by the owners of another apartment, Tom and Josette. Tom is a former 2:36 marathoner however I'm glad to say the conversation was not just about running!

Sunday 8th November: Race Day

6 am: Breakfast (Porridge)

7:30 am walk to start, accompanied by Simon and Tom. Tom joked that he had said a prayer last night as contrary to the forecast all week, the wind had dropped to a light breeze. The prediction had been for a strong south westerly – not what you want when the course is exactly that direction! Thanks to Tom who is obviously well in with the man above!

Note: For a 'big' marathon, the second biggest in France, the toilet facilities were not what might have been expected. On the days before the marathon, we remarked on how few portaloos were in position however assumed that more would appear on the morning on the race. They did not. Let's just say that the beach was used in much the same way as the bushes in the Tiergarten in Berlin (by both women and men)

The course hugs the French coast and is largely flat with two hills (a) short and sharp about 17km and (b) longer and more gradual about 27km. It is not as scenic as one might imagine as it runs mainly along a wide dual carriageway however there are views of the sea at various stages.

The race itself went fine for me with relatively even splits (1:26:28 and 1:29:30) and a chip time of 2:55:44 giving me 183 out of 7,875 finishers. The difference was not too bad considering the longer hill was in the second half. I was passed by a tall strong athletic looking guy accompanied by a motorbike a couple of km from the finish. This turned out to Stephane Diagana, former World Champion and European record holder for 400m hurdles who finished with 2:55:03. I was slowing at the end however I was keeping a little in the tank as I was not sure where the finish was. My initial delight at running better than expected was tinged with a tiny touch of annoyance a couple of days later when I saw that my chip time exactly equalled that of the aforementioned runner from Barry in London!

At the time I had other concerns, mainly to do with getting back to Nice to pick up my bag and then back out to the airport in time for afternoon flight. Directions to train station were noticeable by their absence however once there, I got a train immediately and so was able to have a shower and lunch (and well earned beer) with Simon and Sherrill in 'local' again before catching bus to airport for flight back to Bristol. All in all, a good weekend and a marathon that I'd recommend for those that fancy a late autumn event.

Gerry Crispie

Results

Men: 1-3 were Ethiopian: Adeola ROBA 2h10'17", Gebo Burke 2h10'18", Gemechu LEMMA 2h10'19".

Women: Ethiopian Merima MOHAMED 2h33'56", Kenya KURKOR 2h50'26", Franco-Swiss ANNEN-Lamard 2h57'27".

Needing Inspiration?

Have you ever listened to a speaker who has really inspired you? Perhaps their belief and their message was almost evangelical in content. In 1991 I had the opportunity of attending a running forum in Newport organised by Mike Rowland, where the main speaker was Arthur Lydiard. Born in 1917, Arthur was 74 years old, but he spoke like a man of 24. Some people are just so passionate about their subject that it is infectious. Arthur was the New Zealand Marathon champion of 1953, but it as a coach that Lydiard is best known. Three of his athletes won medals at the Olympic Games of 1960 in Rome – Murray Halberg (5000 metres, gold), Peter Snell (800 metres, gold and Olympic record) and Barry McGee (marathon bronze). He was also a prolific writer and is often thought of as the father of Long Slow Distance. His influence is still very much felt in endurance running training schedules of today.

One of his best known books, “Run to the Top” was written in 1962, and as such it is important to put things into context. The longest Olympic distance that women were permitted to run at that time was 220 yards, and Veterans Athletics didn’t exist. Endurance running was pretty much the sole preserve of young men. That said, the following chapter from “Run to the Top” must have provided inspirational reading for middle aged would-be athletes of the time. Arthur’s passion for the sport and lifestyle required still really shines through. I hope you are similarly inspired.

The Myth of Middle Age

Are you entering middle age? Are you thinking back on an inactive life? Have you spent all your years sitting down in a clerical or physically easy job? You interest me. Possibly because I am now middle aged myself, I feel you are a class of person I’d like to help. The fact that you have spent your late twenties and thirties out of sport is no argument against doing something fairly simple about regaining your youthful vigour. It is not too late to stop the waistline spread.

You might feel that you are past it. Most people do. But they’re wrong. It can be a lot of fun if you are willing to make the initial effort – which is not difficult – and the improvement in your general health will startle you. It can help you to grow old much more happily and a lot less obviously. Many people try to exercise their way back to their former youth, but they don’t have enough knowledge of their own bodies to spend their time usefully and do the proper exercises.

I believe that any man under fifty with a sound heart can get back the lost years. All he has to do is get up half an hour earlier, go down to the nearest park and jog for five to fifteen minutes. Provided he did this regularly and freshened up afterwards with a shower or bath, he would be more than compensated for the loss of time in bed. There is a grey-headed Aucklander who runs up to five miles before breakfast every morning, frequently joining Barry McGee on his early run. He has no thought of increasing his distance or decreasing his time. He just enjoys that gallop and he’s bucking out of his skin, clear-eyed, firm-fleshed and much readier to tackle the day’s work.

Once the middle-ager started to feel the effects of his initial jogging it would not be many weeks before he could comfortably run ten miles, even if he thought he could not run at all when he first started. This is exactly what athletes do when they are conditioning – toning up the system, removing waste fats, clearing out the arteries and easing the work imposed on the heart.

The man who runs regularly in middle age will take a new interest in life. He will subconsciously start watching his diet and his general health habits. Like the young athlete, he will find that his pulse rate will slow down and all effort will become much easier.

I am not merely guessing on this. Already in New Zealand I have interested a number of middle aged men in steady running and they are already feeling the benefits of their new activity. Some of them were never serious runners or athletes.

There are many men intelligent enough to be very successful in business or at making a lot of money who are surprisingly ignorant about looking after their own health. They throw their whole life's work away by the time they are fifty, because they no longer have the physical capacity to match their mental effort. In other words, they have had it when they should still contrive to look at the world through young men's eyes.

The man who looks after his health as well as his bank book is really well off; and, if you want to look after your health, all you need is a simple daily schedule.

Perhaps you are reluctant to appear among your neighbours in shorts and sandshoes. Their mockery, I admit, can be a distraction. Well, get in your car and drive to a park or to some area where you won't be recognised. Don't let the neighbours bluff you out of this. Mind you, once they see you are serious and that it is doing you good, they will probably be out to join you.

To start with, jog for five minutes at an easy pace, as long as it is above a walk. Increase to ten minutes, then to fifteen minutes and, as the muscles become accustomed to the work, to half an hour or so. You can expect sore leg muscles to start with but don't let them deter you, either. The only way to overcome the soreness is to keep on running to your daily schedule. As it always does, your body will react and reinforce any weak parts by building stronger muscle there.

In the evening, try skipping in just the same way as you have approached your running – a few minutes at first, then a gradual increase in time and tempo. Skipping is one of the best ways I know of getting rid of the surplus fat. When you can skip for half an hour, mix in a fast one minute burst every three or four minutes, just as a runner injects speed periods in parts of his training running. Any loosening exercises are recommended, too, remembering that the main aim is to keep weight down and the body supple.

Men who spend time working out in gymnasiums are not always getting the desired results. They are not forestalling old age and coronary thrombosis. Consider it this way. The legs form a comparatively larger part of the human frame than any other parts. Therefore, when you are using your legs you are exerting a lot more effort than when you do exercises involving only the arms. So your heart works faster, the blood courses through your veins and arteries faster and the desired results are achieved faster.

When an athlete sprints, his heart pumps blood at a rate of eight gallons a minute. That should make you realise what a wonderful organ it is and how rapidly the blood circulates through the system. But it won't flow like that if you don't keep your body in tip-top condition.

Tennis, squash and football are all right because you are required to move fast and you give all parts of the body exercise; but for middle-agers the violence of movement required can be too much. You don't get any real benefit from lifting weights and other static exercises. Running is easiest of all, because you can do it alone and in your own time at your own speed. Any man who conditions progressively as I have suggested would find it well within his power to run many miles, even if he had not participated in active sport for many years.

But before you start, get a doctor to examine your heart. If he says it can stand extra work, go about it steadily. Don't be too ambitious at the start and you can only do yourself good. You can learn to run twenty miles if you want to, if you could know before you started how much better you would feel, I am positive you would want to. Quite apart from the physical benefit that comes from regular running, you will experience a mental uplift merely from the awareness that you are now a fit man. You will have an immense advantage over the man who isn't.

Mick McGeoch

The 2009 off-road championship

Thanks to Jeff Aston here is an update on the status of the 2009 off-road championship.

These are the podium positions after the Sleepwalker Night Race 20. The Merthyr Mawr Xmas Pudding race may of course change the leading runners in each category.

	Senior men	Races	Points		Male masters over 40	Races	Points
1	Terry Caveney	7	343	1	John O'Shea	7	243
2	Clive Osmond	7	334	2	Mike Murphy	7	227
3	Steve Williams	5	270	3	Tim O'Sullivan	4	163
	Male masters over 50	Races	Points		Male masters over 60	Races	Points
1	Mike Davies	7	139	1	Jeff Aston	5	50
2	Graeme Donnan	7	138	2	Rod Jones	4	39
	Senior women	Races	Points		Female masters over 35	Races	Points
1	Kate Beecher	7	300	1	Julie Scholey	9	249
2	Sara MacBride Stewart	6	285	2	Gill Murphy	6	231
3	Liz Ashton	4	226	3	Jemma Nurse	4	191
	Female masters over 45	Races	Points		Female masters over 55	Races	Points
1	Caroline Dallimore	8	147	1	Clare Johnson	5	49
2	Mal Rowson	4	105	2			

For an update following each race in the championship series, please refer to ACE online. You can access ACE online via the link to ACE on our web site.

The 2010 off-road championship

Remember that 5 races count. The 5 highest scores for an athlete will be used to consider them for an award. However the athlete must complete at least 4 races for an award to be made.

Confirmed races for 2010:

- Kymin Winter Race:** (4 miles) 2pm Saturday 9 January, Monmouth
 Registration at Monmouth Boys School Sports Centre from 1pm, 4 miles and 1150 feet of climbing. Marked route on Kymin's woodland paths and tracks. Entry £3.00 on the day for affiliated athletes. More information available from rod@rodjonesmountain.fsnet.co.uk or phone 01600 772400. The race is organised by Rod Jones, one of our very own, so deserving of our support.
- Gwent League 4 cross country:** Saturday 13 February, Penlan Leisure Centre, Brecon
 As usual, I'm including this Gwent League race so lots of club members get a start on the off-road championship.

- **Forest of Dean Half Marathon:** (13.1 miles) 10am Sunday 28 March, Parkend
The deadline for entries is Sunday 28 February, but this race fills quickly so enter early to avoid disappointment! No entries on the day. A new course for 2010. A firm favourite with Les Croupiers runners; highly recommended.
- **Porthkerry Plod:** (5 miles) Sunday 18 April, Porthkerry Country Park in Barry.
This race is organized by Andrew Palmer from Penarth and Dinas Runners, a local club, so let's support this one. Short race, varied course, well organized, nice T shirt and it's very close to Cardiff. In Barry so nice weather unlikely.

Highly probable:

- **Coytrahen Canter:** (3km) July, Coytrahen, nr Bridgend (organized by Mel James)
- **Pentyrch Fell Race:** (6.5 miles) April, Pentyrch
- **Magic Roundabout:** (10km) May, nr Hay-on-Wye
- **Tintern Trot:** (6 miles) Thursday 1 July, Tintern in the Wye Valley
- **Machen Mountain Fell Race:** (10km) Monday 30 August, Machen, nr Caerphilly
- **Sospan Multi-terrain 10:** (10 miles) November, Pembrey Country Park, Llanelli

Under consideration:

- **Drovers Run:** (6 miles) March, from the Eagle pub in Brynna
- **Sugar Loaf Fell Race:** (7.2 miles) April, Abergavenny
- **Offa's Oror:** (20km) April, Tintern in the Wye Valley
- **Sirhowy Challenge:** (10 miles) May, Crosskeys, Ynysddu
- **Cader Idris Fell Race:** (10.5 miles) Saturday 29 May, Dolgellau
- **Llanwonno:** (5 miles) July, nr Ynysybwl
- **Mendip Muddle:** (20km) 11am Sunday 10 October, Charterhouse (wherever that is!)
- **Merthyr Mawr Xmas Pudding:** (6 miles) December, Merthyr Mawr nr Bridgend

Definitely not in the race championship for 2010:

- **Cosmeston Relay** (change needed, not a full on race against each other)
- **Sodbury Slog** (clashes with Gwent League and not so popular with Les Croups these days)
- **Roman Run** (most of it is on road)
- **Sleepwalker Night Race 20** (tendency to run in groups and safety issues)
- **Cleevefold Race** (clashes with the Forest of Dean Half Marathon, which is a firm favourite)

Please let me know which races appeal to you the most; use the forum on ACE or let me know at the club. Also let me know please if you are interested in running the Cader Idris Fell Race in May, regardless of whether it's in the championship. I'm happy to organize a minibus if required. Great race – Tim, Geoff and I ran it this year (well, walked much of it in my case!).

Be safe. Be fast.

Graeme Donnan

Gwent League 2009/10 points

Open			Newbridge Fields	Claverton Down	Hestercombe Gardens	Penlan	Blaise Castle	Total	Ranking
Catherine	Beecher	30	167	152				319	1
Libby	O'Duffy	35	165	137				302	2
Maria	Zubizaretta	35	131	124				255	3
Cath	Tailby	35	129	114				243	4
Cheryl	Hudgell	30	132	101				233	5
Liz	Ashton	30	112	88				200	6
Gill	Kellam	45	105	86				191	7
Julie	Scholey	50	106	63				169	8
Judi	Rhys	45	93	76				169	9
Sandra	McCloughlin	40	87	74				161	10
Jen	Salter	35	144	0				144	11
Edwina	Turner	55	77	59				136	12
Yvonne	Bullen	45	74	60				134	13
Caroline	Dallimore	50	76	57				133	14
Claire	Beatty	30	116	0				116	15
Jane	Ash	35	62	49				111	16
Gill	McCue	30	56	48				104	17
Loretta	Daley	40	90	0				90	18
Anne	James	60	86	0				86	19
Sue	Neal	55	49	37				86	20
Jan	Hall	45	0	69				69	21
Jenny	Hughes	35	0	65				65	22
Gill	Murphy	55	38	26				64	23
Clare	Johnson	60	33	23				56	24
Angela	Neal	50	24	20				44	25
Eirian	Arwyn	55	22	18				40	26
Karen	Phillips	40	19	17				36	27
Mal	Rowson	60	27	0				27	28

ran/finished	184/181	174/166				
Les Croupiers	734	628				1362
B	457	321				778
C	331	175				506
D	39	0				39

F35

Libby	O'Duffy	35	114	89				203	1
Maria	Zubizaretta	35	99	81				180	2
Cath	Tailby	35	98	80				178	3
Gill	Kellam	45	81	66				147	4
Judi	Rhys	45	74	59				133	5
Julie	Scholey	50	82	48				130	6
Sandra	McCloughlin	40	69	58				127	7
Edwina	Turner	55	63	44				107	8
Yvonne	Bullen	45	60	45				105	9
Jen	Salter	35	105	0				105	10
Caroline	Dallimore	50	62	42				104	11

Jane	Ash	35	50	37			87	12
Loretta	Daley	40	71	0			71	13
Anne	James	60	68	0			68	14
Sue	Neal	55	39	26			65	15
Jan	Hall	45	0	53			53	16
Gill	Murphy	55	31	16			47	17
Clare	Johnson	60	26	14			40	18
Angela	Neal	50	18	11			29	19
Eirian	Arwyn	55	16	9			25	20
Karen	Phillips	40	14	8			22	21
Mal	Rowson	60	21	0			21	22

ran/finished	116/114	93/90				
Les Croupiers	494	378				872
B	358	248				606
C	269	135				404
D	107	28				135
E	13	0				13

								0
Gill	Kellam	45	45	43			88	1
Judi	Rhys	45	41	39			80	2
Julie	Scholey	50	46	32			78	3
Edwina	Turner	55	36	29			65	4
Yvonne	Bullen	45	34	30			64	5
Caroline	Dallimore	50	35	28			63	6
Sue	Neal	55	24	20			44	7
Anne	James	60	39	0			39	8
Jan	Hall	45	0	36			36	9
Gill	Murphy	55	21	12			33	10
Clare	Johnson	60	16	10			26	11
Angela	Neal	50	10	7			17	12
Eirian	Arwyn	55	8	5			13	13
Mal	Rowson	60	12	0			12	14

ran/finished	58/57	53/52				0
Les Croupiers	207	180				387
B	130	99				229
C	30	12				42

								1
Edwina	Turner	55	18	15			33	1
Sue	Neal	55	15	11			26	2
Gill	Murphy	55	13	8			21	3
Anne	James	60	19	0			19	4
Clare	Johnson	60	11	6			17	5
Mal	Rowson	60	8	0			8	6
Eirian	Arwyn	55	5	3			8	7

ran/finished	21/20	17/17				0
Les Croupiers	76	43				119
B	13	0				13

RACE RESULTS RACE RESULTS RACE RESULTS RACE RESULTS RACE RESULTS RACE RESULTS RACE RESULTS

Banstead parkrun 121 : 19.09.09

Andrew Russell 20:03

Cardiff parkrun 84 : 19.09.09

Lee Aherne	16:37	Richard Bullen	17:21	Richard Wilder	17:33
Stuart McIlroy	17:40	Calum Cheshire	18:03	Richard Self	18:18
Mick Tabor	18:57	John Diffey	19:18	Shaun Connor	19:41
Alun Jones	19:51	Jane Coker	20:18	Nick Williams	20:50
Tim O'Sullivan	21:02	Cath Tailby	21:10	Sian Evans	22:35
Paul Morris	22:38	Yvonne Bullen	22:59	David Furness	23:12
Des Davies	23:35	Caroline Dallimore	23:52	Sasha Macken	25:59
Gillian McCue	26:00	Sarah Dawes-Clark	26:15	Tony Dorsett	27:02
Stephen Williams	27:06	Alan Bladen	27:34	Errol Alexis	28:06
Joanne Gamba	28:11	Julie Scholey	28:37	Eirian Arwyn	39:57

Anglesea Marathon : 20.09.09

Terry Caveney	3:16:48	Alan Mann	3:37:04	Stephen Williams	4:12:48
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Berlin Marathon : 20.09.09

Alex Fritsch	2:30:24	Stuart Crees	2:35:20	Nick Dukes	2:46:07
Phil Cook	2:51:43	Mick McGeoch	2:53:47	Dave Headon	2:57:56
Philip George	3:04:25	Katie Beecher	3:06:54	Brian Richardson	3:13:28
Libby O'Duffy	3:14:02	Jeremy Forshew	3:24:36	Cheryl Hudgell	3:31:26
Firouz Mal	3:46:08	Sarah McCarthy	3:54:59		

All Access 5k : 20.09.09

Steve Spiers 18:07

Cardiff parkrun 85 : 26.09.09

Julian Baker	17:24	Richard Wilder	17:55	Richard Self	18:36
Mick McGeoch	19:23	Alun Jones	19:46	Nick Williams	20:19
John Plain	20:39	Des Davies	22:37	Gillian McCue	25:12
Errol Alexis	27:13	Julie Scholey	27:41	Alan Bladen	28:01
Tony Dorsett	28:24	Eirian Arwyn	38:34		

Roundshaw parkrun 11 : 26.09.09

Mark Palser 17:46

Swansea Bay 10k : 27.09.09

Lee Aherne	33:42	Jamie Nutt	35:52	Richard Bullen	35:56
Martin Williams	36:13	Matthew Hurford	37:11	Stuart McIlroy	37:25
Gareth Morgan	37:57	Mick Tabor	38:16	Sandy Johnston	38:45
Nick Rees	39:09	Mike Murphy	39:11	Peter Kellam	39:13
Marcus Coles	39:24	David Proud	39:30	Gerry Crispie	39:53
Shaun Connor	40:55	Steve Owen	41:03	Adam Morton	42:00
Liz Ashton	44:04	Jeff Aston	44:16	Alan Mann	44:36
Julie Scholey	45:47	Judi Rhys	45:48	Loretta Daley	46:10
Yvonne Bullen	48:22	Matthew Townsend	49:43	Chris Morgan	51:57
Gillian Murphy	56:06	Hannah Davies	56:25	Tony Dorsett	56:33
Alan Bladen	57:30	Joanne Gamba	57:58	Sarah Dawes-Clark	58:31
Annie Conroy	58:32	Mal Rowson	59:30	Maria Carr	1:15:36

Bridge Inn 5k : 29.09.09

Paul Coker	18:55	Jane Coker	20:05
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Cardiff parkrun 86 : 3.10.09

Lee Aherne	16:40	Nick Dukes	16:43	Calum Cheshire	17:33
Mick McGeoch	17:51	Richard Self	18:28	Katie Beecher	19:25
Elio Lepore	19:29	John Diffey	19:32	Shaun Connor	19:40
Jen Salter	19:43	Marcia Migay	21:04	Martin Peters	21:04
Nick Williams	21:25	Jeff Aston	21:33	Rod Perons	21:56
Julie Scholey	21:58	Loretta Daley	21:59	Des Davies	22:55
Jenny Hughes	22:56	David Furness	23:03	Alun Williams(2)	24:09
Gillian McCue	24:48	Carys Davies	28:08	Alan Bladen	28:23
Joanne Gamba	29:56	Eirian Arwyn	40:00		

Oldbury 10 mile : 4.10.09

Stuart McIlroy	1:02:47	Kellinu Portelli	1:12:53	David McDonald	1:20:26
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Race for Literacy 10 mile : 4.10.09

Steve Spiers	1:03:08
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Liverpool 10k : 4.10.09

Dennis Murphy	42:44
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Beach Ford 5k : 10.10.09

Steve Spiers	18:37
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Cardiff parkrun 87 : 10.10.09

Dave Coles	17:49	Andy Cleves	19:02	Lyndon Tudor-Maisey	19:05
David Proud	19:06	Dave Headon	19:23	Brian Richardson	19:27
Shaun Connor	19:36	Alun Jones	19:38	David Lloyd	19:50
Scott Hemmens	19:51	John Diffey	20:07	Paul Morris	20:19
James Horner	20:48	Martin Pinnell	20:57	Alan Mann	21:24
Julie Scholey	21:51	Richard Sewell	22:08	Stuart Crees	22:15
Chris Discombe	22:16	Terry Caveney	22:21	Jerry Cleall-Harding	22:23
Mick McGeoch	22:24	Jen Salter	22:29	David McDonald	22:35
Libby O'Duffy	22:37	Alun Williams(2)	22:42	Michael Rossiter	22:54
Des Davies	23:04	Claire Beatty	23:23	Mel James	23:36
Alan Mason	23:43	Loretta Daley	23:48	Kellinu Portelli	23:50
Ralph Davey	23:50	Chris Morgan	24:08	Sara MacBrideStewar	24:09
Liz Ashton	24:12	Jemma Nurse	25:23	Martin Williams	25:24
Richard Self	25:24	Gillian McCue	25:32	Ben Farag	25:41
Errol Alexis	27:57	Clare Johnson	28:25	Caroline Dallimore	28:25
Alan Bladen	28:45	Kerry Francis	30:13	Geoff Wright	31:11
Eirian Arwyn	42:01				

Birmingham Half Marathon : 11.10.09

Scott Howell 1:21:49

Cardiff parkrun 88 : 17.10.09

Nick Dukes	17:35	Stuart McIlroy	17:46	Richard Wilder	18:25
Sandy Johnston	18:57	John Diffey	19:04	Paulo Simoes	19:09
Scott Hemmens	19:22	Terry Caveney	19:51	Martin Pinnell	20:27
Marcia Migay	21:02	Nick Williams	21:31	Claire Beatty	22:12
Andy Cleves	22:14	Martin Williams	22:21	Des Davies	23:05
Jemma Nurse	25:01	Eirian Arwyn	43:09		

Cardiff Half Marathon : 18.10.09

Lee Aherne	1:13:21	Stuart Crees	1:14:26	Nick Dukes	1:14:51
Martin Williams	1:18:39	Dave Coles	1:19:00	Jamie Nutt	1:19:09
Mick McGeoch	1:20:00	Steve Spiers	1:20:42	Lyndon Tudor-Maisey	1:22:52
Richard Self	1:22:53	Daniel Harris	1:23:21	Matthew Hurford	1:23:35
Gerry Crispie	1:23:51	Katie Beecher	1:24:34	Nick Rees	1:24:50
Matthew Hopkins	1:25:14	Libby O'Duffy	1:25:34	David Proud	1:26:40
Marcus Coles	1:26:42	Mike Murphy	1:27:03	Shaun Connor	1:27:28
Jen Salter	1:27:45	Alun Jones	1:28:45	Jeremy Forshew	1:29:11
Andrew Russell	1:29:18	Andy Cleves	1:29:30	Shayne Sawyers	1:29:33
Paul Morris	1:30:14	Steve Owen	1:30:30	Tim O'Sullivan	1:32:35
Kellinu Portelli	1:33:36	Richard Boon	1:33:48	Graeme Donnan	1:33:52
Alan Mason	1:34:07	Rod Perons	1:34:50	Helen Jessop	1:35:36
Liz Ashton	1:35:51	Jeff Aston	1:35:59	Gerry O'Beirne	1:36:07
Adam Morton	1:37:17	Jenny Topalian	1:38:06	Firouz Mal	1:38:10
Neil Tatnell	1:38:44	Judi Rhys	1:39:14	Gill Kellam	1:40:47
Michael Rossiter	1:41:21	Sara MacBrideStewar	1:43:11	Joanne Tucker	1:43:37
John Thomas	1:44:00	Sarah McCarthy	1:44:13	Martin Peters	1:45:18
Adam Abraham	1:48:21	Alan Mann	1:49:21	Stephen Osborne	1:53:11
Gillian McCue	1:54:35	Mark Farrar	1:55:05	Tim Cummings	1:55:46
Frank Williams	1:56:06	Clare Johnson	1:56:19	Gillian Murphy	1:57:44
Tracey Newman	2:02:57	Errol Alexis	2:05:51	Hannah Davies	2:07:41
Joanne Gamba	2:09:11	Alan Bladen	2:09:26	Sasha Macken	2:09:29
Annie Conroy	2:09:58	Kerry Francis	2:11:29	Ali Gunn	2:19:55
David McDonald	2:24:39	Maria Carr	2:44:22		

Dartmoor Vale Marathon : 18.10.09

Stephen Williams 4:04:59

Cardiff parkrun 89 : 24.10.09

Martin Williams	18:14	Richard Wilder	18:20	Stuart Crees	18:25
Rob Jones	18:40	Mick Tabor	18:55	Elio Lepore	19:04
Gerry Crispie	19:23	Matthew Hurford	19:26	Paulo Simoes	19:59
Shaun Connor	20:10	Paul Morris	20:44	Martin Pinnell	20:48
Adam Morton	20:59	Richard Sewell	21:31	Des Davies	23:39
Aelwyn Blythe	24:29	Richard Crawford	25:46	Mark Engstrom	25:47
Mal Rowson	28:39	Tony Dorsett	29:02	Alan Bladen	29:23
Geoff Wright	29:42	Eirian Arwyn	36:04		

Brighton parkrun 106 : 24.10.09

Jeff Aston 21:26

Beachey Head Marathon : 24.10.09

Loretta Daley 4:39:00 Alan Mann 4:49:00

Great South Run 10 mile : 25.10.09

Richard Bullen 1:00:17

Venice Marathon : 25.10.09

Dave Coles 2:51:27

Torfaen Half Marathon : 25.10.09

Lee Aherne	1:12:37	Scott Howell	1:18:51	Mick Tabor	1:23:56
John Diffey	1:25:04	David Proud	1:25:38	Jenny Hughes	1:34:42
Tim Cummings	1:43:19	David McDonald	1:48:49	Chris Morgan	1:54:19
Linda Jensen	1:55:20	Mike James	1:57:17		

Brentwood Marathon : 25.10.09

Loretta Daley 4:28:00 Alan Mann 5:01:00

Frankfurt Marathon : 25.10.09

Ben Farag 3:13:14

Snowdonia Marathon : 25.10.09

Mark Palser 3:10:19 Liz Ashton 4:10:14

Stroud Half Marathon : 25.10.09

Andrew Russell 1:33:37 Jane Ash 1:50:51

Dublin Marathon : 26.10.09

Scott Hemmens 3:19:24 Gerry O'Beirne 3:38:28 Alan Mann 4:15:00

Cardiff parkrun 90 : 31.10.09

Nick Dukes	17:00	Rob Sage	17:40	Stuart McIlroy	17:58
Martin Williams	18:12	Richard Self	19:01	Simon Nurse	19:14
John Diffey	19:19	Paulo Simoes	19:29	Shaun Connor	19:40
Jen Salter	19:52	Paul Morris	20:03	Adam Morton	20:03
Terry Caveney	20:09	Philip George	20:17	Alan Mason	20:42
John Plain	21:05	Michael Rossiter	22:22	Jenny Topalian	23:25
Des Davies	23:39	Jemma Nurse	25:07	Gillian McCue	25:55
Joanne Gamba	26:59	Errol Alexis	27:41	Tony Dorsett	28:34
Geoff Wright	28:51	Eirian Arwyn	36:59		

Great Pumpkin Chase 5k : 31.10.09

Steve Spiers 17:52

Cardiff parkrun 91 : 7.11.09

Richard Wilder	17:40	Ben Farag	18:49	David Proud	19:12
Shaun Connor	19:24	Scott Hemmens	19:31	Rob Jones	19:37
Paul Morris	20:16	Martin Pinnell	20:37	Marcia Migay	21:09
Nick Williams	21:24	Richard Sewell	22:11	Mick McGeoch	22:39
Alun Williams(2)	23:33	Des Davies	24:12	Gillian McCue	24:26
Richard Crawford	25:45	Tony Dorsett	28:08	Carys Davies	28:10
Julie Scholey	30:26	Richard Self	30:58	Maria Zubizarreta	31:03
Christine Faulkner	32:51	Eirian Arwyn	37:31		

Nice Marathon : 8.11.09

Gerry Crispie 2:55:44

Yorktown 10 : 8.11.09

Steve Spiers 1:01:15

Cardiff parkrun 92 : 14.11.09

Richard Wilder	17:55	Rob Sage	18:09	Katie Beecher	18:52
Brian Richardson	19:14	Gerry Crispie	19:25	Scott Hemmens	19:31
Alun Jones	19:36	Brendan Jones	19:47	Paul Morris	19:50
Shaun Connor	19:58	John Diffey	20:19	Martin Pinnell	20:22
Marcia Migay	20:47	Adam Morton	21:09	Jen Salter	21:17
Richard Sewell	21:38	Tim Cummings	22:00	Michael Rossiter	22:26
Jenny Topalian	22:47	Frank Williams	23:51	Gillian McCue	25:30
Sasha Macken	25:47	Mark Engstrom	26:17	Geoff Wright	28:24
Tony Dorsett	28:35	Bill Fear	28:39	Anne Donald	30:03
Christine Faulkner	32:21	Eirian Arwyn	38:30		

Richmond Marathon (USA) : 15.11.09

Steve Spiers 2:58:12

Jersey Half Marathon : 15.11.09

Lyndon Tudor-Maisey 1:23:47

Cardiff parkrun 93 : 21.11.09

Chris Discombe	15:47	Nick Dukes	16:56	Dave Coles	18:00
Stuart McIlroy	18:20	Ben Farag	18:35	Richard Self	18:39
Matthew Hurford	18:42	Sandy Johnston	18:51	Richard Wilder	19:09
Paulo Simoes	19:19	Gerry Crispie	19:21	John Diffey	19:22
Jen Salter	19:27	Andrew Russell	19:34	Adam Morton	19:35
John Magee	20:01	Paul Morris	20:04	Maria Zubizarreta	20:06
Brendan Jones	20:14	David E Williams	21:14	Liz Ashton	21:53
Richard Sewell	22:00	Steve Lewis	22:10	Martin Pinnell	22:14
Mark Farrar	23:41	Loretta Daley	23:59	Des Davies	24:11
Gary Bodman	24:33	Ralph Davey	25:03	Geoff Wright	28:04
Tony Dorsett	28:17	Errol Alexis	28:30	Anne Donald	29:26
Sandra Caveney	31:58	Jemma Nurse	31:59		

Finsbury parkrun 4 : 21.11.09

Jeff Aston 22:52

Cardiff parkrun 94 : 28.11.09

Stuart Crees	16:56	Mark Palser	17:09	Philip George	18:10
Dave Coles	18:16	John Diffey	19:10	David Proud	19:16
Alun Jones	19:20	Paul Morris	19:54	Adam Morton	20:01
John Magee	20:09	Gerry Crispie	20:11	Marcus Coles	20:16
Sandy Johnston	20:17	Alan Mason	20:49	Cheryl Hudgell	20:58
Marcia Migay	21:05	David E Williams	21:32	Nick Williams	21:48
Richard Sewell	21:57	John Plain	22:08	Gary Bodman	22:12
Michael Rossiter	22:13	Mark Engstrom	25:39	Bill Fear	27:19
Geoff Wright	28:35	Tony Dorsett	28:46	Alan Bladen	29:11
Gwenno Williams	30:35	Christine Faulkner	31:40	Kellinu Portelli	35:09

Action from the Welsh Masters 2009 – Alan Mann and Howie Brown



With grateful thanks to Mike Davies

Stop Press: Peter Morris was among the Top Three in the “Unsung Hero” category in the Wales-wide BBC Sports Personality of the Year for a lifetime of service to schools athletics.