

Black Combe Runners
Newsie



Autumn 2007: the where
did the summer go? issue.

Captain's joggings

Well, since April when I last wrote to you all we have had one of the wettest, gloomiest summers on record but has this deterred the BCR brigade, not a bit of it, the club is most definitely bright – it seems brighter than I have known for many a year. The beacons of light have been set off by a resolute band shooting off to recce routes in all weathers in preparation for forthcoming Championship races.

Their endeavours have been paying off in dividends, how fast they ran depended solely on their ability and how well they trained and prepared. Every improvement in distance and speed was their very own but it was a shared ambition to be together putting every step and breath to the race in hand. The merry band of Peter, Will, Sue, Andy, James and Karl with Hazel latterly have attended virtually every fell race and shared the enjoyment of the chase to the line. Memorable results have been recorded as the ultimate results in the fell championship will show, for once it will not be a one horse race.

On the roads, we have also been evident in numbers, although not as enthusiastically due to work, injury or illness. None the less history was created at the Hoad Hill 10k when Sue was the first woman in the club's history to beat all the club male entrants with a blistering time of 41.56. I am quite sure there is plenty more to come there. With our newest recruit Rob Johnson recording a 43.35 in Blackpool, the established 'elite' are going to have their work cut out in the future, and that will do the club no harm at all.

Congratulations to Kara who completed her first road marathon in May, choosing Windermere, possibly one of the hardest debuts, Martin Jones also took advantage of this resurrected race of the 1980's.

Our ultra athletes know that the challenge of running up mountains, down hills and over trails are takes courage and demands a rare mental and physical fortitude. So immense well done to Mike who took on the Tour de Mont Blanc 95 mile race again after last year's disappointment of withdrawing at Champex (75 miles), overcoming the arduous course to finish 676th out of 1500 starters with blisters to prove it. Good luck is extended to Karl, the Black Combe



Penny, high on showbiz and heading up the Combe

hamster who is attempting to complete 100 miles in 24 hours around an athletics track in Tooting – that's 400 laps. I bet he wishes he could run as fast as Jeremy Warriner of USA who just won gold in 43.46 seconds then it wouldn't be so tedious.

I wish to send many thanks to our longstanding unassuming member, Rob McKeever, who on our behalf has been compiling our first club publication, currently being printed. It is a super book comprising of 72 pages which I hope you will all buy and enjoy as much as I have enjoyed proof reading the final drafts. It is a fascinating collection of articles of our club's history in humour, verse, with numerous colour and black photographs of members past and present. An ideal Christmas present! Listen out for the review on Radio Cumbria – the broadcast date will be posted on the website forum soon.

I mentioned beacons of light earlier, well we shone prime time to tv viewers in the BBC North West region last month – see the article later in this edition. I can't over the number of people who have rung me or stopped me in the street and said : " Did you really run up the Combe?"

Well, we did and the atmosphere was terrific so this joggling malarkey can't be all that bad – til the next time – keep joggling on my friends.

The next newsie will be thinner than this one and out just before Christmas, to get back on schedule. It will include details of the winter league and a photographic review of the year, so get your pictures (and stories) to me (will@spanner.org) **by December 7th!** I'm sorry this one is so late.

Cover picture: Pete Tayler on his way to 26th place at Borrowdale.

Club news

There's more going on than just a run on a Tuesday night. Val brings us up to date.

Broughton Juniors

We have 23 young runners in Broughton Juniors aged 9-15 years and a waiting list of keen youngsters wanting to join.

It is great to run (try to keep up with them) and train with juniors. I cannot believe how eager they are. We have now split the juniors into 2 groups as the older runners are running faster and longer than the 9-11 year olds. Most of the training we do at juniors I take along to ladies training.

Lecky, Sel, June and I all enjoy our Tuesday's with the juniors and watch them improve and learn new skills and techniques. It is worthwhile and rewarding. If any of you BCR's feel you could help with juniors please let me know as without these juniors, fell running could die. Look around the field next time your at a race and take note of the age of the runners, mainly oldies (over 40) Most winners are in the vet categories. We must try and keep fell running alive by encouraging the youngsters.

Fell coaching

Lecky and I are both on the waiting list for Fell Running Coaching. UKA have informed us that they are currently undergoing a feasibility study re: their tutor training arrangements. This is due to take until the end of July so there may be no further development of FMR2 until after that. IPenny, Val and Karl are all qualified road coaches. edl

Training nights

I started the ladies training sessions in January this year. To my amazement lots of ladies turned up at the Victory Hall. The first session was a bleep test. This involves running lengths of the hall within a certain time. Each length (shuttle) has a beep that sounds and runners need

to be at the end of the length by the time the bleep goes. The shuttles start off really easy and get progressively faster. Sue Hodgkinson and Tracey Binks hold the record for the most levels completed.

We met alternately at the Victory Hall and Eccle Riggs from January to March, then we met usually in Broughton Square or Kiln Bank Cross. Unfortunately we cannot have the Victory Hall until January so it's going to be a long cold dark couple of months training outside.

The training is open to BCR men if they want to come. Peter Grayson is a regular.

There is a regular time trial that tests whether runners have improved or not. All the ladies and Peter Grayson have improved their times, even me! So the training must work. The time trial is run over the same hilly circuit in Broughton Park. It's a great feeling when you see your times have improved and the training has paid off.

Some sample sessions

The pyramid session is a 200metre circuit with hills that we run once, then take a small rest, then twice with a small rest then three times with a bit more rest but not too long, then again twice and then once. Then the session is repeated on the same circuit but in the other direction. Sue Lomas was quick to point out that we would be running around the circuit 18 times!!! and felt she couldn't do it. With encouragement and sheer determination she managed it no problem.

Hill Reps usually involve a shallow hill of 150 metres in length and a hard steep hill of 100metres in length, each hill is ran 3 times in quick succession.

The sessions are based on a 3 week cycle starting off easy week harder week the third week is HARD. Hope to see a few new faces attending.

Happy running from Valdaree!

Contacts

Race results to Penny (771202, pennu@aol.com) or Mike (716772, mpberry@hotmail.com). Official-type proposals for discussion to Andy, Our Leader, on a Tuesday or gittins.andrewj@virgin.net. Photographs, ads, announcements and newsletter stories to Will on will@spanner.org, or on a Tuesday night. General hot air and chatter that somehow doesn't get spent at the Blacksmiths can be taken to www.bcrunners.org, where you will find a 'forum' link and lots of continuing discussion.

Superlong

Sue's first couple of fell races went quite well, so she tried something a little bit longer.

Before Ennerdale, the longest race I'd ever done was nine miles, and so you can understand why it put such fear into me.

You don't know what you can do until you've done it, and my objective at Ennerdale was just to get round. I didn't really care about time as long as I made the checkpoints, and so I finished in a reasonable time, but feeling like I hadn't really tried.

Encouraged by this, I thought I'd have a little run round Wasdale and put a bit more effort in this time!

When I entered it wasn't in the champs, and so I wasn't stressed about finishing it at all, just keen to push myself a bit more. It was almost an experiment, I think. I did a couple of recces, and six days before decided to do the only bit I'd never done before, which was the descent down the nose of Lingmell. This proved to be a very wise move.

Race day was a bit grim – grey, damp and chilly with low cloud on the tops, but I just wasn't nervous at all. Seatallan was always going to be a bummer, and it was. The stream crossing was more like a fast flowing river crossing and I half expected to see a white-water raft coming down it. Then it got wetter. It was a long and boring bogged down slog all the way to Scoat Fell. By the time I got there I was desperate for a bit of firm ground, but then began the dance of a thousand wet rocks. I must have slipped about once a minute, but unbelievably didn't fall once. My nerves were taking quite a battering with it though – the level concentration was immense.

I reached Pillar in three hours, and then it dawned on me that still had three hours to go, including Gable and Scafell, and I was tired. My mood became as black as the sky. I was fed up of slipping, and felt like I was putting a lot of effort in and getting nowhere, so it was nice to see a friendly face and a bottle of Lucozade at Black Sail. On the Ennerdale there'd been quite a few cheery groups basking in the sun at Black Sail, but on Wasdale poor Hazel was the only one there, looking very cold and lonely.

"You're fifth lady" she informed me, just as another lady ran past. "Sixth lady, but you'll catch her no trouble".

With my breather curtailed, I set off (scowling) in pursuit of the mystery lady. The narrow trod round Kirk Fell was very churned, and it felt like I was trying to run in treacle - maximum effort, minimum speed. Everyone bunched up here, and I ended up in a gaggle jostling of runners, with no-one really able to pass. (Or maybe it was just me jostling?) Wendy Dodds appeared from nowhere and tried to overtake, but I was having none of that, and she may have seen the back of my elbow. Jo and John Taylor were waving bananas near to Beck Head, but I wasn't feeling sociable, and Wendy Dodds was breathing down my neck so I had to go on. Keeping the pressure on was becoming tiring and there was nothing I could do to catch the mystery fifth lady who pulled away up Gable.

I hated Gable. It went on forever, and I hated the descent with a passion. I'd rather run down Gamlin End all day than run down those wet slippery

rocks. I knew I was shockingly slow and was very frustrated with myself for being so. When I emerged from the cloud at Sty Head, Wendy was in front by quite a way.

I don't quite know what happened next, but I seemed to cheer up at the prospect of only having Scafell to do before I could have a sit down, so I looked in my reserves, found a finishing sprint from somewhere, and thought then would be the right time to use it. Between Sty Head and Broad Crag, I reckon I took about 10 people, easily (including WD and mystery lady no.5). All of a sudden I felt great, until Scafell that was, when it started to go a bit pear shaped...

The cloud was dense on the top, and I had to ask the marshal which way to go. He told me to follow 'that man', which turned out to be a bum bit of advice, as 'that man' was no homing pigeon and had set off in a random direction. I followed blindly for a bit and then luckily the cloud opened to my right just for a second, and I saw the line of cairns we should have been following, peeling off to the right of where we were. Now I might jostle a bit, but I'm not that mean, and I shouted 'that man' back. When we got back on the path, we were with another runner who was already insisting it was wrong. I was sure it was right, and then began a very bizarre descent. For three people who'd never met before, we were bickering like siblings about where we were and where we should be. Rather worryingly, I seemed to have the most knowledge, having done one recce the week before. I assured them it was right, and that we turn

off in a bit, but not yet, but they just wouldn't wait would they? Deserved all they got.

When I got to the bit where I was sure we should turn off onto the grass, the other two were long gone down the path. I was sort of sure, but unsure, and stopped some walkers to ask exactly how many runners (aside from tweedle dum and tweedle dee) were descending on the path. Loads, they assured me, and they all looked really good, so I'd better go that way too. (That made me wonder how I looked? Underdressed and inept probably). We then had a discussion about where we all thought Lingmell would be if we could see it, but it wasn't very fruitful, and I think everyone was relieved when another runner turned up.

"Do you know where you're going?" I asked, and he gave the magical "I'm local" reply. The poor guy had bad cramp and was trying not to cry out

as he ran, so he was a bit slow, but I was grateful for being put on the right path, and after a few minutes I descended under the cloud and the sun came out. I was almost euphoric at that point. I could see the campsite, and it was downhill on grass all the way in the sunshine. Wonderful. Then Wendy Dodds passed me. All that mincing on wet rocks and arguing, had removed the advantage of my early sprint finish. Fair play to her though, she could really run downhill and I had not a hope of catching her and didn't even try.

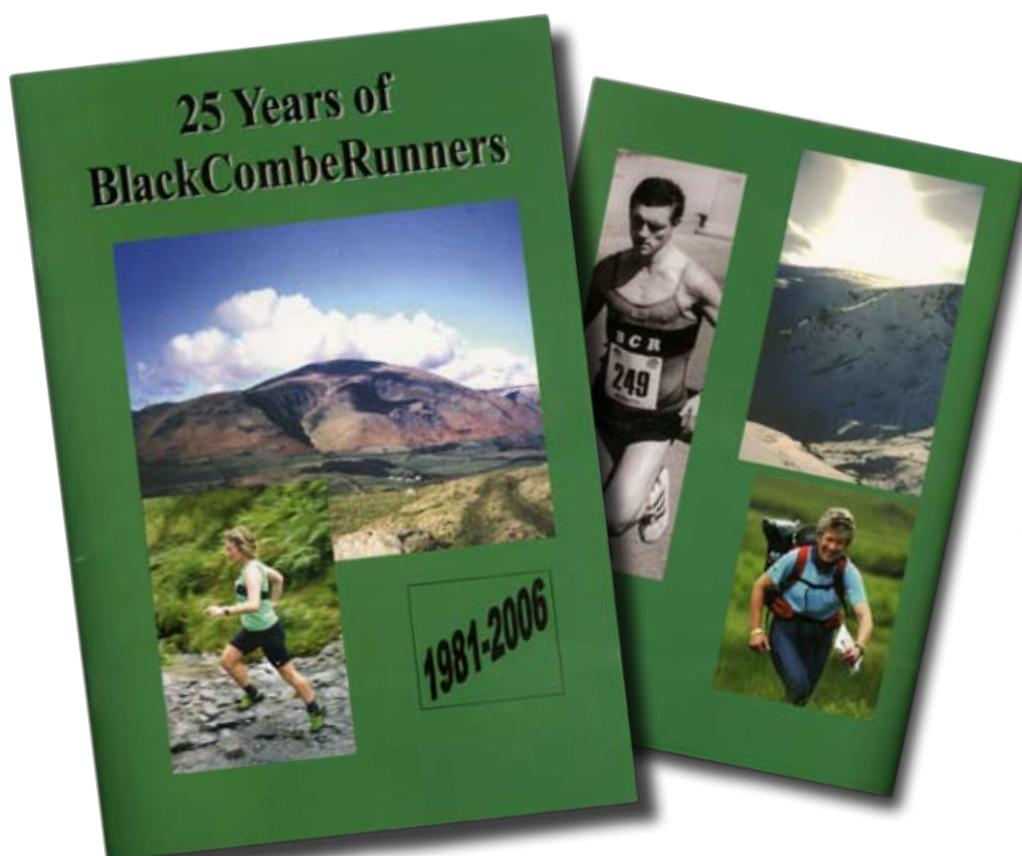
So I was 59th overall out of 105, and sixth lady in 5hrs 42mins. Not bad for a beginner.

There's a bit of speculation about which is harder, Wasdale or Ennerdale. I'd have to say Wasdale, but I'm not sure if it was because the conditions underfoot were so bad on the day, or whether it's just rougher. On Ennerdale, the problem seemed

to be lack of water, but Wasdale was so wet I could've just taken a long straw, and drank whenever I liked. Wasdale also seemed mentally tougher. The two biggest hills were in the second half, and I never really got the sense that I'd turned for home that I got at Green Gable on Ennerdale. Or perhaps it was the extra effort I was putting in which made it intensely tiring – 5% extra speed probably took out 30% more energy and it was frustrating.

But if you're not satisfied with my woolly speculation, I could give you some hard facts. On Ennerdale, the top 50 runners had an average time of 4.51, but on Wasdale, they had an average of 4.57. Sorry you had to read pages of subjective waffling for me to get to the point!

[We are forbidden from printing Sue's picture because of the one they keep putting in the Mail every time there's a fell-running story.](#)



25 Years of Black Combe Runners

Thanks to months of hard work by Rob McKeever, the BCR book can now be bought from the Mountain Centre in Broughton, Tinner's Rabbit in Ulverston, Greetings in Millom, the Newfield, Pete Bland or Penny every time she sees you. It's fascinating and motivating and very well put together: well worth your £5.

Tour de Mont Blanc

Sorry, that's the The North Face Ultra Trail du Mont Blanc: a hundred miles around the alps, or Wasdale four and a half times with extra climbing. Mike was there...

This year's event – the 5th edition – took place on 24th-26th August 2007. The challenge is to complete the 163 km (102 mile) route with 8900m climb, within 46 hours.

Having dropped out two thirds of the way round last year, I hoped to be better prepared this year (by doing more long events) and I also wanted to rest up more before the start! I also decided to go at a steadier pace, as my legs had seized up after 65 miles the first time round. An ankle injury on the Tuesday before the race nearly put a stop to everything, but luckily icing and ibuprofen calmed the ankle down in time for the event.....

I flew out on the Thursday, camped in Chamonix, registered on the Friday morning, and lazed about until the 6.30pm mass start. The atmosphere at the start (2400 starters from 44 nations) was stirring, with top runners Scott Jurek (USA), Marco Olmo (Italy) and Dawa Sherpa (Nepal) wishing other runners good luck, together with Vangelis music accompanying the gun. It took about 4 minutes to get over the start line, as a right turn after the start led along a narrow street thronged with well-wishers.

The first hour is an easy jog downhill along tracks, you just have to make sure you don't trip over anyone else! Then the first hill, an 800m warm up climb up La Charme. There is a tremendous click-clack of poles: most competitors use poles as there is a theory that they are "essential": this is not true, it is a matter of personal preference, the winner didn't use them and I found it OK without.

The views along the Mont Blanc massif as the sun set were fabulous, people stopped to take photos. Darkness fell as we descended grassy slopes to St Gervais. Bill, from Rotherham, who I'd met at the campsite and who was hoping to do 32 hrs, slipped at this point and had to retire..... Headtorches went on, and we began the long climb to the Col de Bonhomme, the biggest climb of the event, needing 1700m of ascent. Starry skies, together with a snake of headtorches far ahead and behind made for a magical sight during the night. A steep descent followed, then as we came down into the village of Les Chapieux at 3am we were treated (as we were all the way round) like film stars! The village was lit up, with bonfires and roasting

pigs, and we were all given roars of encouragement as we went in and out of the checkpoint.

Another climb (1000m) took us over the Col de la Seigne into Italy as dawn was breaking. I made the mistake of ignoring a food-stop, and then suffered on the next climb. A fast heartbeat and weakness on climbing made me think "I was dying"! In fact, I was probably "hypo": ie low blood sugar level: this bad patch would last all day. I had to rest on the ascent of Mont Favre, and people started overtaking me. I was about a third of the way down the field, in 700th place. A 1200m descent to the Italian town of Courmayeur takes you down to the breakfast stop: I took it steady to protect the quads.....

You can change clothes there (they take a bag there for you), some people have a massage, and you can have a meal. I found it very hard to eat anything big, as we'd been on the go for over 12 hrs so far, and my system shuts down. However, I stayed there quite a long time trying to get food down, as we were not quite half way yet and food is crucial.

"You'll be inspired and awed by the privilege of being where you are, taking with you the peace, stillness and memories of solo adventure to share, leaving nothing but your footprints" .

Lizzy Hawker, TDMB 05 winner

After Courmayeur there is a steep climb onto a ridge that gives you stunning views of the south side of the Mont Blanc range. It was a gorgeous day (about 28 degrees) so suntan lotion and sunglasses were essential, plus drinks at every opportunity! By late afternoon it cooled down as I tackled the climb out of Italy to the Grand Col Ferret, at 2537m the highest point on our route. I got up there OK, though still being a bit lethargic, and needing an occasional stop. You then have a 17 km downhill-all-the-way section down the Val Ferret in Switzerland. I started feeling better energy-wise: I'd decided to drink more energy drink to make up for the small amounts of other foods I was taking in. However, 3 blisters could now be felt on my heels,



Ennerdale disappointingly brief? See www.ultratrailmb.com

which made running on rough ground very difficult and painful: I put compeed on, but things still hurt a lot, so the slightest roughness in the tracks slowed me to a walk.

By dusk on Saturday, we had climbed up to the high Swiss village of Champex, another meal stop. I put on night gear, and tried to eat, but only soup and a few nibbles like orange, cake and banana, would go down. On the second night, you have two more big climbs to do: Bovine and Les Steppes. Bovine is notoriously rough and muddy, you climb over big boulders and treestumps and the path is hard to find. Les Steppes, the last climb, is about Black Combe height, on a good path: once you are up Les Steppes you've cracked it, since its now downhill to Chamonix.... Steady on though, as a steep (dangerous) long descent takes you down ledges and through the woods to Vallorcine (147k) in France.

Ten miles to go, mainly downhill. It was light now (Sunday morning), and I was surprisingly feeling better. I'd taken 36 hours already, but if "I got my finger out" and ignored the blisters, I could finish in around 39 hours. After 25 minutes walking up to the Col des Montets I could see Chamonix in the distance, and I ran in all the way from there, overtaking about 30 people on the way in, although about 3 faster runners outdid me an overtook me. It was a great feeling to finish (39.01), I felt good, had a can of beer and got my finishers jacket, then I clapped in the next people coming in behind me.

Marco Olmo (59, Italy) had won the race in 21 hrs 31 against all the top ultra men. Alun Powell (UK) was 8th, and Sara Rowell and Mandy Calvert (UK) were also on the podium for 2nd and 3rd L40 prizes. 1400 finished, 1000 retired or were timed out.

Overall: tremendous atmosphere, fantastic crowd support (cowbells etc) day and night, very well organised. Generally awesome..... Will I do it again? Probably will be drawn back in a few years time..... There is also a shorter version the CCC Courmayeur Champex Chamonix which is about 52m with half the climb of the TMB, which takes place at the same time, and is a major challenge in itself. Entries for either event must be done online on a specified day in Jan (sells out within 4 hours). The 162k event has qualification rules (one 80k or 2 50k events done before entering)



How many outfits?

Two Mountain Marathons

If you thought a mountain marathon was two days of hard running through bog and gorse with nothing but tinfoil and pot noodles to look forward to, you may have been entering the wrong events.

Rab Challenge

by Hazel Tayler

As I write this, we've just finished, having had a couple of pints, a much needed bath and many cups of tea - so I still have that sense of euphoria and achievement which follows two days of back-breaking work over the fells of South Lakeland.

The event was planned as a 'score' mountain orienteering challenge, open to individuals and teams of two to four. Pete and I were competing as a team, as were Dave and Claire, with Rob entered as an individual. We had excellent weather and set off from the Miners' bridge at Coniston with six hours of orienteering ahead of us. The biggest challenge, as ever, was how far could we go in the time whilst visiting the highest scoring 'controls'?

Well, the terrain was rough, rocky and wet, and yes, there was still plenty of bracken.. This, together with some sustained climbing, meant we had to cut back on our original route. Pete wasn't really trying, of course, but the early brisk pace was taking its toll on my legs and lugs. I didn't complain... well, not too much! Despite this, we covered about 20k on day one and travelled from Coniston to Langdale via the Duddon. We camped overnight on a farm near Chapel Stile, which had nearby loos, showers, a burger van and the wainwright pub! So it was hardly a wilderness challenge, unlike our experiences on the Karrimor, but it was hugely social and great fun. A special men-

tion must go to Sue, who responded to Dave's cry for food by meeting us in the pub with a pack of bagels, a tub of Philadelphia and the Saturday Times magazine for bed-time reading. And no, this is not cheating as we had eaten our own food as well!

Day 2 was better running in excellent conditions: we were only out for 5 hours but we managed to cover more ground than day 1: about 22km, running from Chapel Stile to Coniston via Seathwaite Tarn and Dow Crag. Dave and Claire had a good day too with some excellent route choices which avoided steep, loose contouring. Rob set himself a tough challenge for day 2 which took in half the Langdale fell race route but he did bag a sixty point control for his efforts. This was the highest value control on the map.

We all finished the challenge in good style and celebrated in traditional fashion with a Wilf's and a couple of pints at the Sun in Coniston.

This is the first mountain marathon event that Rab has sponsored and it was well worth doing. There were comparatively few competitors, so we were often running on our own and we were constantly challenged with route choices, distance and terrain. Our course took us to some places we hadn't been before, including Blind Tarn near the Walna Scar Road. Oh, and the Wainwright pub.

Saunders MM

By Pete Tayler

Having run on a score course at the last 3 Karrimors, Hazel and I decided

to try a standard course this year, and entered the Harter Fell class at the Saunders.

The event was in the area from Glenridding across High Street to the Haweswater area. It's always a bit of a struggle to have to think and map-read as well as running, but we got away with it on the first day. Control sites were in reasonable spots and it was pretty clear. The only radical route choice we took was round a hill rather than over and failed miserably at a steep gully. Still, we played a blinder: having had an early start and a short course, we could lie in the sunshine all afternoon and sleep.

The great thing about the Saunders - the fluffiest of the Mountain Marathons - is the beer they sell at the campsite. Later in the afternoon we saw Rob Smithurst wandering about having completed the longest course in the event. Beer had sold out by then so Dave made a friend for life by donating one of his.

We'd been lucky enough to get into the casing start on day 2, so lined up to start at the correct time - the second. We then managed to lose 20 minutes finding the first control by struggling through head-high bracken and man-eating gorse while others trotted to it by another way. The rest of the course went well, but it was too late by then. 10th on day one and 40th on day 2! Never mind: it was a great weekend. 31km of course on which we ran about 38km, great views, sunshine, beer, good company. A good event for anyone to try their first mountain marathon.

The other side of the road

From the end of last year and through to the end of March I suffered a severe debilitating illness, although not life threatening it certainly mimicked very well something much more severe. Whilst away from my love of the open spaces it many times gave me times to reflect and think about things from the other side of the road.

As a frequent road racer one of the saddest moments I've ever seen is when someone finishes a race and immediately begins to criticise themselves and complain about their time or about how the race was organised. Unfortunately I have witnessed it within our club too. Exploding as they go through the finish chute they start screaming at the top of their lungs about how awful their race was, how terrible the run went. Maybe if they knew how silly they looked they wouldn't do it, but I doubt it.

Somehow it has escaped those runners that we are all, from the first to the least, very lucky to have health and opportunity to get out and run at all. Those complainers have totally missed the point that at any distance, at any pace, at any age, we – the active adults – are among a very select minority of the population. And dare I say it, even the modestly talented ones like me are elites when it comes to the average man or women in the street. We should congratulate ourselves for our accomplishments, where ever they fall on the continuum of fast or slow.

We should give thanks for our continued ability to train our fragile bodies, to clear our cloudy minds, and to reach for, find, and exceed our limits. We should never, not for one minute of one run, take for granted the privilege we have been granted. We should never come to believe that we are somehow entitled to run fast or far. We are not. Every run, every step is a gift.

So after regaining some semblance of stability before I attempted to retrain my tired body I went to watch the

event most dear to my heart the marathon. First I went to London, having coached a friend already with tremendous natural ability to her first start in this prestigious event. Understandably nervous, she had six months earlier qualified for an elite start, I was almost running the race with her as my heart and emotions raced through me. I saw her off and then frantically caught the train and to the 24 mile mark on the Embankment. Some 3 hours later I was again awash with excitement as I saw her giving her all as she passed me on her way to the finish. As my heart pounded, I felt very emotional, it's a totally surreal experience to watching the event when normally you are wrapped up in it. Would she hang on to sub 3.15? Would she falter – the answer was no. I stayed to watch my other friends run their destinies, some of them looking better than others as it was a desperately hot day. James was the last one I spotted.

A month later again I was road side, this time at 23 miles on the outskirts of Windermere. Again a hot day but with a refreshing breeze, probably more evident to me kerbside. Many more friends running this tough marathon, many more virgins finding their strengths and weaknesses. Everyone though up for the challenge and giving their all.

Now I am back in training slowly rebuilding, gradually laying foundations for future dreams, who knows whether I shall run as well as previously, who knows what's round the next corner. All I can say is I am really grateful to have been given a second chance at this wonderful game. The strength is returning and although I have often chased times and parameters in the past I am really grateful that I have like minded friends to just joggle along with for the pure joy of the open spaces, the fresh air, the wild-life encountered. Thanks for everything let's remember never take this wonderful sport for granted, it's there to be savoured.



Penny's recovery continues with a quick lie down

Championships update

Pete and Sue have run off with all the silverware, but the road race isn't over yet...

The Club Championships is drawing to a close and it has been great to see a great turnout from a hard core of regulars in the fell championships. As the runners have competed against each other so they have spurred each other onto some great times in sometimes difficult conditions; either extreme heat (yes we did get some early on in the season) or under very wet ground conditions. Congratulations to everyone who has taken part and especially to Peter Tayler, Will Ross and Sue Hodgkinson all relatively new to fell racing. I hope more lasses will take up the gauntlet next season; certainly now I've started to enter some trail races and got a bit fitter I'll try to do some next year work commitments allowing.

On the roads, we have had a reasonable turnout at most of the races although it is obvious that longer distances are proving the real challenge for the road competitors. So congratulations to Martin Jones, Kara Walker and Karl Fursey for flying the flag in the Windermere marathon a race not for the faint hearted. I hope a few more women will take up the challenge of racing the roads next season as I fancy some competition and I'm sure Sue will be out to make sure our new recruits don't catch her in the 10k's. [Penny Moreton](#)

Fells	Loughrigg	Coniston	Fairfield	Ennerdale	Wasdale	Kentmere	Blisco Dash	Borrowdale	Broughton Mills	Lakeland County Fair	Three Shires	Dunnerdale	Points Best 6
	S	M	M	L	L	M	S	L	S	S	M	S	
Pete Tayler	1 1	1 1		1 1	1 1		1 1	1 1		1 1	1 2		6 6
James Goffe		2 3	3 2						2 3	3 3			
Will Ross	2 5	3 5	2 4	3 4			2 3	2 3		2 4	ret		14 24
Steve Kruger		4 4				1 1	3 4			5 6			
Karl Fursey		5 7					4 6	4 5	4 5	4 8	4 5		25 36
Darren Foote		6 8											
Rob Smithurst		7 6					5 5				3 4		
Neil Gibbison	3 2												
John Parminter			1 3						1 2				
Peter Grayson				2 3									
Andy Gittins						2 2			3 4	6 7			
Dave Scott-Maxwell								3 4					
Dave Watson										7 ?			
Mike Berry											2 1		
Sue Hodgkinson	1 3	1 2	1 1	1 2	1 2		1 2	1 2	1 1	1 2	1 3		6 10
Sarah McGowan	2 4												
Elly Sinclair	3 6												
Hazel Tayler										2 5			

In both champs the rules are the same: your best two races in each distance category count, and you must have all six races to qualify. Black figures are scratch, green are handicapped according by the new John Peel method: runners over 39 are allowed 40 seconds in the hour for each year over 39 and women's times are reduced by 12%.

Road

	Keswick to Buttermere	Haweswater Half Marathon	Dent 14	Coniston 14	Dalton 10k	Windermere Marathon	Grasmere Gallop	Hawkshead 10	Hoar Hill 10	Ulverston 5k	Carlisle Half	Derwent 10	Points best 6
	L	M	L	L	S	L	M	S	S	S	M	M	
James Goffe	1 1	1 2		3 5	2 3			2 4	3 4	1 2			
Karl Fursey		2 3	2 3	7 11	5 6	1 3		8 8	5 7				
Darren Foote		3 4					1 1						
Peter Grayson			1 1	4 4									
Peter Tayler				1 3									
Mike Berry				2 1				3 2	2 1				
Andy Gittins				5 6				4 5					
John Chattaway				6 7	3 4			5 7					
Dave Hobbins				8 2					6 3				
Neil Gibbison					1 1			1 1		2 1			
Phil Newton					4 2			6 3					
Martin Jones						2 2							
Steve Kruger								7 6					
Will Ross									1 6				
Rob McKeever									4 5				
Kara Walker			1 2			1 1							
Sue Hodgkinson		1 1		1 8					1 2				
Anne Christian				2 9									
Jo Francis-Nichols				3 10									
Claire Watson				4									
Penny Moreton					1 5								

Right now - and probably still when you read this - there's a lively discussion on the forum about choosing and scoring next year's Championship races. If you've got a view, get on there (or let Pete know) before it's too late.

Just to prove that we did actually run up Black Combe when the man on the telly said we were going to.



BCR hits prime time

Penny reports back from the best-attended Tuesday night of the year.

When Mike mentioned to me he had received an email from the BBC NW tonight regional team wanting to do a feature on Black Combe Runners I thought we can't afford to miss this opportunity.

No wanting to dally I emailed the producer, a lass from Barrow originally called Lucy, that very evening. "No problem", said I "Where and when and what do you want us to do?" Little did I realise what would ensue.

After two weeks of numerous phone calls - I met with Lucy and camera man Steve at Whicham Church for a site meeting. Here we walked up to Seaness, to discuss camera angles and satellite links back to Manchester. BCR was to be portrayed in a serial called "On the Edge" with Stuart Flinders as he covered a route round the west coast of Cumbria and Lancashire. We would be intertwined with material shot at the Ravenglass railway and our bit would go out "LIVE" on the evening of the 13th August.

Persuading folk to come on that night was a little harder than I expected, not because it meant changing the social run but it meant I had to keep Val and Karl under control from talking all the time and the biggest challenge was to get everyone to wear a club vest. I had promised Lucy a good turnout - 4 days to go and I had 4 willing volunteers, one of which was me!

Fortunately the beer in the Newfield loosened the nerves and more club members arrived than expected at 5.30pm. Who said vanity is dead, with Bernie constantly checking her club vest and Rob and Gill thinking of things to say when interviewed.

True there was a lot of faffing around as we had several run throughs of what was required. Stuart arrived at 5.50pm, we did a few sound checks and he apologised for constantly gazing at Val and Bernie's chest, because he was worried he'd forget the name of the club. Then it happened BCR hit prime time t v

We were asked to run past Stuart in one's and two's and continue up the Combe, as members disappeared into the distance with nerves a jangling Gill, Rob and I were asked questions about the club. All over in a moment. Our moment in time, out to millions all over the north west of England. It was a great night. The atmosphere on the top of the Combe when I finally got there was electric. I know several of you were not sure, I know some of you had to down tools and hit the accelerator to be there on time and I know several of you did not want to wear a vest but THANK YOU! It went well and we have a club complimentary copy from the BBC for posterity. Whatever next?



It's not too late! See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MPwKxLZsfwA>



Robin Smithurst reaching the top of Harter in the Long Duddon

The next newsie will be out just before Christmas and is going to include lots of photographs from this year, so please get your pictures to me on will@spanner.org before December 7th. Not just races; anything relevant might go in. Stories are welcome too (and anyone whose race report didn't get into this one will appear next month. Sorry James! No room.)

Plug!

Sue uses her contacts in the industry - a bloke she met in the Manor who pretended to be interested in fell running - to give a sneak preview of the gear to look out for this winter.

Gore-tex

Gore have just launched a new fabric called Gore-tex Pro Shell. The fabric is woven rather than knitted it, which makes it stronger, so they've been able to make it thinner. This means it's also lighter, more durable (unbelievably), more flexible and more breathable. It feels very weird to the touch, almost paper thin, but if they say it's more durable then it must be.

New technology comes at a price though. I have three Lowe Alpine Pro Shell jackets in my shop, starting at £190, going up to £260. As a one-off Comby offer, I'll give you 20% off on those.

With the addition of this new fabric, Gore will be doing a bit of re-branding, and XCR will no longer be marketed as a separate fabric. From now on it's all Gore-tex Performance Shell. XCR was always a bit of a cheat anyway. There was nothing very special about it: just ordinary Gore-tex with the felt layer in the fabric removed to make it thinner and lighter and not as warm. Paclite remains the same as ever and will continue.



Boots

Bad news I'm afraid. Just about everyone will be putting their prices up by about 10-15% in January and February, and so if you think your boots will need replacing soon, do it before the new year. The Brasher Hillmaster will be going to £115 from £100 (although it will come with leather lining as standard) and the Scarpa Ranger GTX will go to £120. Boot prices have been static for quite some time and so this rise was long overdue, but it will mean you won't get anything decent for under a hundred quid any more.

Inov-8

Inov-8 have recently introduced a couple of Gore-tex shoes into its range - the Roclite 318 GTX and the Flyroc 345 GTX. I'm not really sure whether Gore-tex running shoes are worthwhile for the fell (or even in the spirit of things. Dry feet - who ever heard of such a thing?), but they would make nice walking shoes, or even nice winter pub shoes.

Inov-8 also have some new women's shoes out this autumn, in pretty girly colours - the Roclite 282 and the Terroc 308. I'm not sure how long they'll stay that colour if you do run in them, but again, nice pub shoes.

Also this autumn, they've introduced a boot called the Roclite 290 GTX para extreme. Now it says in the brochure that it's a paragliding boot, but essentially this

will be going into shops (so they're leading me to believe) as a light-weight hill walking boot. It is essentially a high Roclite. I don't think you would want to run in it, but you could definitely walk in it. The only advantage over your ordinary boot would be the weight - 780gms a pair vs 1500gms for a pair of normal walking boots, so you will save a great deal of energy. On the down side though, they will wear out like fell shoes do, and you could end up replacing them every year.



Karl's Korner

I recently met Mr Inov himself, and he seemed to listen to me like I knew what I was talking about, which I don't, and so if anyone does have any feedback for Wayne (oh yes) then I'll be happy to pass it on.



Petzl

As more and more people buy LED lights, more and more money gets piled into LED R&D, with the result that they just keep getting better and better. The MYO XP is currently being upgraded and will be available in January (just in time for the Christmas rush). On maximum output, the new MYO shines up to 72m and the batteries will last 80 hours. To get this in perspective, the ordinary Tikka, which most people have, shines to just 27m.

Head torches are great for running in winter, as you can see the road, and cars can see you.



Unless, of course, they hit you from behind. It seems so obvious I don't know why they didn't do it before. The new Petzl Signal is a small flashing red LED light that clips onto the back of your head torch strap, and blinks, so you can be seen from behind, apparently from 1000m away. It weighs just 22 gms. Everyone should have one, and everyone's dog should have one (they can clip onto the collar). Petzl thought January would be the ideal time to launch this too, but it's possible they might decide to let it out a bit earlier.

Greetings to you on this wonderfully warm autumn we are having to make up for such a depressing summer. Hope all your running is going well and those who have taken part in the road and fell club champs counter races- well done whatever results you got. There are only two road and two fell races left in this year's champs, details on the website, so please try and make the effort to take part.



My role as press & publicity person is one I am thoroughly enjoying. All but one of my reports to the local papers on our club races and such like have been printed, even if edited to a great extent in some cases. As people get to read about us, we've had more new members join since April's newsie, and at least three of these were as a result of articles by me on our races.

Take note though I have not been approached by any newspaper to work for them on compiling sports reports, as I wouldn't know anything else other than running and our club.

Britain's Most Boring Ultra is what I am calling this event: The Self-Transcendence 24 hour track race. Basically its just that- you run as much as you can in 24 hours – around a 400m athletics track in Tooting! Doing a track 10k (25 laps) is probably bad enough for experienced athletes, but when you hear the overall world course record is 166.7 miles or an incredible 671 laps of the track in 24 hours tells you this man (Don Ritchie) must love his constant boredom. The record at Tooting is 30 metres short of 151 miles, set ten years ago, and that equates to almost 608 laps. Last years winner managed 143 and a quarter miles. I will be well pleased if I can manage 100, based on my best time for London to Brighton covering 54.1 miles in 2004, in 9:57 on tarmac /hilly route and breaks etc. Have already got my entry and perhaps this event is not boring after all.

It's already over subscribed with six runners waiting as reserves in case someone can't make it over the weekend of the Langdale and Hodgson fell races. Each runner will have a lap recorder throughout the event and there are meals, toilets and refreshments trackside. The entry list confirms I am the only attached club runner from Cumbria there. If you are still wondering they change the direction every four hours, though I feel this should be two hourly as I'm likely to be getting dangerously close to the marathon point at 4pm on the 6th with one shoe bearing all the brunt of the quickest part of the event. Physios, masseurs and post race lunch, are also available, plus a knacker walk back to my relatives on the Sunday afternoon as well!!! Look out for a report on this event later in the autumn on the Forum or in the Xmas newsie.

Finally: As the darker nights arrive may I stress the importance of wearing reflective running kit for our social runs and any time you go out in the dark so that motorists can see you. Remember to wear your club vests at all races you enter and have a great autumn and winter of running. Look out on the website and forum for more information on anything running related within our club.

Until the Xmas Korner look after yourselves and try not to overtrain like I have been doing.

[Karl Fursey, September 2007.](#)

A glossary of terms

If you want to fit in at a fell race, be sure to make use of these handy words and phrases.

Baph, n: originally a banana, peanut butter and honey sandwich, but now used to mean any foodstuff so rich and sticky that it can only be eaten in the 20 minutes after finishing a fell race (or in the middle of the night when woken by leg trauma).

Caw, v: to spot someone attempting to hause and alert the rest of the field to their condition.

Goffe, n: a navigational error of such enormity that it is impossible to explain or repeat. The author of this glossary recently committed a spectacular goffe by arriving at Cockley Beck when aiming for the Three Shires stone.

Hause, v: to affect a nonchalant air while entering the finishing field on a different path to everyone else, covered in twigs and scratches and forty five minutes late. Advanced runners should be able to hause over a dry stone wall or out of a minicab.

Hobbins, v: to run several miles up and down very steep hills then refuse to get out of your car to open a gate.

Parm, n: a track through a bog so faint that it can only be seen if you don't look at it directly.

Parminter, v: to slow down slightly, such that anyone following overtakes you and then carries on straight past the turning that you are about to take. Often abbreviated to 'parmy', eg: "I was going well until he parmied me off Green Gable and I ended up in a ditch at Honister". Usually thought to derive from parm, but some authorities point to the Middle English word *fyrment*, meaning the rueful fury felt when all the other runners become visible on a nearby fell that cannot be reached without first descending.

Pike, v: to rehydrate with weak brown beer. After a long fell race it can take up to six pints of ale to replace all the fluids lost in exertion. A recent study has shown that this speeds recovery by relaxing long muscle fibres and helping the runner to forget what the last climb was like. Scientists advise that to avoid electrolyte depletion athletes should be sure to consume one packet of cheese and onion crisps per pint of rehydration therapy.

Stod, n: a single studded footprint confirming that you are going the right way and may even have taken a shortcut. Always check that you didn't make the stod yourself before deciding that you don't need to look at your map.

Stickle, n: a niggling injury vaguely associated with the upper leg area that flares up whenever it is cold and wet or there has been a lot of piking.

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