The Striding Report

PROBABLY LIVERPOOL'S PREMIER RUNNING CLUB NEWSLETTER

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From the Editor

New season, new website, and now welcome to the new look magazine!

I'm really excited about the spring and summer months ahead: the multi terrain series has just started and with it the opportunity to try all sorts of weird and wonderful races. Where else would you win a trout for your efforts, or get to race across the Welsh countryside getting chased down by horses, not to mention trains!

I love the opportunities that a club like Penny Lane Striders brings to people who run for the fun of it. While most unattached amateurs never get to hear of anything beyond their local 10k or the odd sponsored 5k and probably think many races beyond their possibilities, we can see that most races are truly open to runners of all levels.

We may not challenge for prizes all the time, but by Jove Penny Lane vests seem to get EVERYWHERE.

Now then, who's up for the Welsh Castles Relays?

News

Oulton Park is famous for fast bipeds on two wheels, and where better for Dave Lovatt to qualify for the World Duathlon Championships due to take place in Nancy in September. This is the 2nd time our speedy physio has qualified for the worlds, we're going to start getting used to this if we're not careful.

The summer 10k series started with bang: James McNally won Croxteth Park 10k, Fiona Milne was 3rd SL and Naomi Fowlis 1st V45!

Not long after that Martin Swensson broke the club marathon record with a fantastic 2h37'10" in London. Previous record holder Nigel Grant was reported to be inconsolable and on his way to drown his sorrows in the nearest pub, only go straight back home as soon as he spotted the price listing at the bar.

In the meantime the Multi Terrain season marches on, with the latest fixture the NSPCC Sandstone Trail 10k. "A great introduction to multi terrain racing" according to none

News

Kevin Sheahan and son Kian at the Olympic Stadium

other than your city-dwelling, tarmac loving editor – and of course the ideal opportunity to support an excellent organisation.

In the midst of all this, Strider Kevin Sheahan took to the Olympic track for the National Lottery Olympic Park Run, with his family looking on from the stands.

"I took it slow and savoured every minute. Running through the Olympic stadium with 12,000 cheering was one hell of an experience I'll never forget" says Kevin, pictured at the top of the page with son Kian.

Crafty way to get yourself a medal there, Kian!

Rubbing shoulders with some of the best teams in the North of England, PLS fielded 4 teams at the Northern Road Relays in Sefton Park. A great day was had by all, with fantastic support for the runners and a decent amount of cake for all present. Result!

Welsh Castles Relays make a long-awaited return in June. Last year the club was unsuccessful in getting a team in the ballot, but 2012 brings a mixed team in the open category and with it the opportunity to take part in this unusual race.

The relays are now in their 30th year and attract teams from all over the country and beyond.

This year a German team will also compete. Gentlemen Captain Mal Balmer describes it as "...one truly brilliant event" and, as we are going to print, is looking for more members to join the squad.

Merseyside's most awaited sporting event is set to take place at the Aigburth People's Hall on Friday 11 May.

The 2011/12 Penny Lane Striders Awards Presentation Evening has moved with the new season from the end of November to its new spring date. Tickets available from Social Secretary Eunice Nopondo, who was last heard suggesting "We've got loads to celebrate, so come and let your hair down, kick back, enjoy & have a cracking night out".

Membership News

by Shane Knott

Returns in the next issue!

Strider of the Month: Mitch Hawkins

by Rachel Rick

Mitch Hawkins is the author of the blog 'Trials of Miles' - one man's battle against flab, lethargy and the evil spectre of the school PE system.

When did you start running? I started with the military circuit sessions in Sefton Park, and some of the people doing that did the Liverpool Half Marathon. That got me interested in running, and I set myself a goal to do the Liverpool 10k that year – 2008. And I did! I've then spent a couple of years rowing since then; I'd answered an advert about rowing and got involved, first in Liverpool and then with Grosvenor RC, Chester. I learnt a lot about team work but I felt I'd taken rowing as far as I wanted to, and so came back to running.

Mitch at the 4 Villages

Do you enjoy racing? I prefer training really, but I enjoy racing because it's a chance to test myself, and prove how hard I've worked in training. I think half marathon is my favourite distance, although I liked what I learnt about myself when I ran the London marathon in 2010. It was a crazy, amazing day. It feels like everyone's cheering for you. I didn't have my name on my vest, but it did have Liverpool on it and people kept on shouting 'Come on, Scouse'. There was a wall of people the whole route. At 23 miles I was overtaken by Sponge Bob Squarepants! Also, someone particularly evil had placed very aromatic burger vans at 22 miles. I will do another marathon – perhaps in the Autumn, but I don't think I will do Liverpool – I've run round Sefton and Princes Parks so many times! I'll look further afield for an interesting course. Watch this space…

I love parkrun too – I'm there most weeks either as a runner or a volunteer. I've found it really humbling in a good way. I love running with Group 1/2 at the club, but what you see at parkrun is that everyone puts in an enormous effort. It's a great sociable start to a Saturday too.

What is your favourite race? I think the Para 10 miler, which is round Catterick Training. Back pack is optional – I gave it a miss! The first hill is a mile long, but then each one was worse than the last. It was a great day though. I still had contact with the people doing the military circuits, and that's how I heard about it.

What is your least favourite race? Cross country! I never did it at school, so I didn't know what to expect. I turned up with a shiny new pair of spikes -everyone laughed! I was completely unprepared for the hills and the mud, my laces came undone almost straight away so I had to stop, then at the end I was focusing on finishing ahead of another runner, and ran straight past the funnel. In front of everyone! I had to be alone for a while… I'm looking forward to next year's cross country season now I know what to expect.

What do you like to eat before running? It's all about the Cake Credits – I run to eat, and I eat to run! I'll eat pretty much anything that's put in front of me. That's the great thing about recreational running - you can do that. I do sometimes have a gin and tonic or a glass of wine the night before a race – I get so nervous. During team events like relays I hang around getting more and more nervous – and quieter and quieter! I'm always fine after the first 200m, though.

Strider of the Month: Mitch Hawkins

by Rachel Rick

Do you run to music? I used to, but I find as I run more, I use music less. I did run with my iPod during the Liverpool Half-Marathon this year, but it was a bit disconcerting because I couldn't hear my breathing. You can use it to pace yourself – I have different lists for different things. I went out recently with the iPod. I was supposed to be doing a gentle recovery run but noticed that I was using a really pumping playlist list from my rowing days and I was too lazy to change it. I like Jay Brannan, Sufjan Stevens and Kate Rusby. For a race I'd have something banging – with as many beats per minute as possible, Watercolour by Pendulum is a good one. You have to be so careful with urban running using music though – parks and races are different!

London marathon 2010

What's your favourite bit of kit? You can never have too much kit or too many shiny things! I love my Garmin. I love stats anyway, and it brings out my inner geek! I use it differently now that I've had it a while. I think it's really improved my consistency. In terms of shoes and so on, I tend to run in Mizuno Wave Riders – trial and error, they seem to work for me. I've been flirting with the idea of minimalist shoes. A bit nervous though – I have ankles of glass!

Why PLS? I've been in other clubs before, but coming back to running after my time rowing I looked around. PLS is closer to where I live than the others but I think most of all, I think it was the reputation. You always see Striders at races and so on, and they are such a good advert for the club. I feel tremendously proud every time I wear the vest.

Any tips for new runners? Just take it slowly, and listen to your body. I did get a niggle on a long run once when training for London. Thought I could run through it – many miles later, hobbling back to the car I knew I'd made the wrong decision! Had a physio session – I needed scraping off the ceiling! I'm much better now at listening to my body. There's always been someone faster than you and someone slower. I'm really competitive, but I've learned it doesn't matter.

Who inspires you? I love running with Group 1/2. I love the challenge of going fast, and the competition. Mo Farrah of course inspires me, but also Steve Way who went from being a 16 stone guy to being a sub 2.20 marathoner. That must have taken such willpower and focus. I'd love to have the drive to be able to set a challenging goal and enjoy it.

Tell us something about yourself we don't know. I have a collection of over 300 cookery books. I inherited some and then carried on buying them. The kitchen is just about reaching capacity and I have to do a cull every now and then. Have I used a recipe from every book? I don't think so. Sometimes I'll focus on one of the books and do a 'theme week'! Not solely from the Jelly Cookbook though…

Sunday Best chocolate fudge cake. All round to Mitch's on bake day!

High Peak Marathon

by Lawrence Eccles

With the start of the new Multi Terrain season, what better than a glimpse into the world of off-road racing? Lawrence starts us off with an overnight adventure in the Peak district, first in a series of articles on off road running and ultras

The High Peak Marathon is a 42mile(ish) race that follows the classic walking route of the Derwent Watershed in the Peak District. The race is organised by old and new members of Sheffield University.

My race along with Garry Beardwood, Paul Jackson and David White (http://dwtherunner.blogspot.com/) started at 2302 on Friday. We were running under the team name of Penny Lane. The race starts easy enough with a short climb up a hill on an easy to follow path from Edale village to Hollin's Cross (CP1) which we dispatched cautiously; don't want to go off too fast. We then followed the ridge line to the summit of Lose Hill (CP2). A steep descent took us down to the village of Hope and the world's shortest short cut (it saves about a stride by taking a foot path rather than the turn in the road. The steep climb up Win Hill was marked by the failure of Paul's head torch. Early versions of the Petzl Myo XP (belt pack) have the long lead made out of too rigid a cable which breaks (apparently Petzl will repair this defect free of charge). Luckily Paul was able to nurse his head torch back to life (none of us were carrying a spare head torch).

Summit of Win Hill (CP3) reached and another steep descent down to Yorkshire Bridge followed by a trot along a tarmac road led to a check point beneath High Neb (CP4) on Stanage edge. I assume Stanage edge was there because I could not see it; the cloud was making visibility a problem. A well trodden track lead to Moscar (CP5), the first food and water stop, where the students were made up in a tribute to the rock band KISS. After a short refreshment stop we plodded on down the A57 to reach Cutthroat Bridge (CP6). The cloud was down and all we were missing was the rain, but that was soon rectified as we climbed up onto Derwent Moor (CP7). A compass bearing brought us onto the path which leads to Lost Lad; initially we were heading the wrong way in the mist. I moved my head torch to my hand to try to improve visibility and we soon reached Lost Lad (CP8).

From Lost Lad the route moved to treads on the ground; easy to lose them in the dark with the cloud down and rain in your face. Other groups were around us as we reached Sheepfold Clough (CP9) further down the hill. The path on the ground went from bad to worse as we crossed the stream.

Ahead all the teams were spread out in different directions. The navigation exercise was well and truly on. With compasses in hand we headed blindly on bearings. We gained some reassurance when John Hunt, a veteran of the HPM and many other fell races including winning the OMM elite, passed us. Sadly his old legs were stronger than ours and he soon disappeared in the mist and we felt lost again. When we hit a fence I tried to reassure the team that we had not gone too far, but I had lost credibility; I got some back when we pushed on and hit the check point via the distinctive path that comes up from the valley to it. From Cut Gate (CP 10) we paid close attention to the bearing, although we still ended up having to make a slight adjustment as the hill started to drop away (the check Point was on a hill top). We reached the hill top although could not see the Outer Edge (CP11) summit trig till we nearly walked into it.

Bleaklow moor was next; the name sums it up. The mud that looks deep you sometimes don't sink more than an inch and the solid looking piece of ground can swallow you whole (up to the knee, perhaps the waist). The ground is not even, with deep ruts crossing the direction of travel frequently. Again trusting in compass we headed on. We reached a point where we deemed that heading west was a judged risk to take. We were reassured when we met another team and saw the odd old fence post that guide the way, but are so far spaced they are difficult to see in the day. I was surprised that this section passed easily at a brisk walk. The screams (cheers) of the students at Swains Head could be heard long before it was reached. A solid

fence with a stile provides the reassuring feature of Swains Head (CP12).

Once again we trusted in the map and compass and left the other teams to their own devices. With a large chunk of bizarre luck we found ourselves in the deep rut that heads up to the ridge line. Approaching the ridge line Garry and Paul were keen to take a bearing to the Bleaklow Stones, but I was sure we needed to get higher as the route across involved deep ruts very much against the line of travel. I was rewarded for my stubbornness and we found a good route to reach the Bleaklow Stones (CP13) with near pin point accuracy. We were rewarded with sunrise.

Head Torchless we headed on a bearing for Bleaklow head. Dave commented on the oddness of how seemingly 100 foot prints on the ground would suddenly disappear in the ruts and we seemed to be breaking new ground. I thought the same, but had no answer; we had to trust the bearing. We adjusted it slightly as if we aimed slightly low we would hit the Pennine Way. After a long while, when confidence in the compass was failing, we hit the Pennine Way which we followed a short distance to the Bleaklow Wainstones (CP14). The though of refreshments spurred me down the Pennine way doing something resembling running.

Lawrence descending the Matterhorn. Easier than negotiating Brown Knoll, as it turns out.

Fully refreshed at the top of the Snake Pass (CP15) we were getting cold so carried on running. The route was flagged now. The HPM dates back to 1972 when the mud would have still been our companion. The flags led easily to Mill Hill (CP16). Next came the reassuringly solid ground of the Kinder edges which is also good for running on. We trotted along, slowing to a walk on the moderate hills. We reached kinder Low (the highest trig point on Kinder!) and descended to Edale Cross. I am still not sure why, but we ended up on a different path to that expected and had to jog from east from Edale Cross to the top of Jacob's ladder (CP17).

Now we had to traverse more mud. The rules required that we skirt Brown Knoll. As another team seemed to head off down to Edale I told my team we should keep heading South West. In my eagerness to show the way I ran into some mud and got stuck past my knees. They pulled on one arm but I could not get free. I was thinking of trying to belly crawl out and get very muddy in the process when I gave them my left arm. The force of the pulling on both arms rotated my right knee; I felt it crunch (the ligaments/cartilage did not approve of this technique). Eventually, after 5-10 minutes, with a non rotation inducing pulling direction, I was freed from the mud and able to hobble along on the south West bearing.

We reached Rushup Edge (CP18; also known as Lord's Seat). The team that had appeared to head off to Edale caught and passed us. Paul was now suffering with cramp, but the end was near and he hobbled on. The students were dressed as tigers and bears at Rushup Edge Check Point or I had started hallucinating after 28 hours of being awake. We skirted around Mam Tor and came once again to Hollins Cross just above Edale village, although now it was check point 19 and the weather looked to be improving. A short descent down the hill led us to Edale village, the finish, in 12hours 18minutes and 38seconds. Enjoyment of such a venture as just described is there, but hard to put a finger on.

Captain's log

Mal Balmer

Hi Men, I've been ~~told, ordered,~~ requested to keep this short by the Ed. So I'll quickly say congrats to Neil & Maria on their wedding, also to Shane and Carolyn on their new edition (Ethan) and to Emma and Ian on their future arrival of tiny fast feet.

In the cross country Sunday league it ended up with the men finishing 4th overall with Liverpool RC holding of the Liverpool running bugs(now Knowsley Harriers) to win. Well done to all who ran for us this season and thanks, I hope to see you all next season.

We've had some terrific results recently firstly the 12 stage relays. The A team had our highest ever finish in these championships finishing 32nd out of 47 complete teams and we also had a complete B team for first time ever who finished 45th. So a big thanks to all who represented PLS, you did us proud.

There have been some great individual results too. Well done to James McNally in his wins at Halewood 5k and the Croxteth 10k and to LukeParker in his 2nd at Halewood and his win at Tatton Park 10k.

The London Marathon saw Martin Swensson break Nigels long standing club record (he was made up for the lad) and some brilliant performances were people had to dig deep on the day. Ritchie Houston ran well in the Madrid Marathon using his patented curry nutritional formula and clocked a 4:06

This year the club has again been picked to run in the Welsh castles relays on the 9th/10th June, anyone still wishing to take part can you see me ASAP. This is a challenging relay race from Caernarfon to Cardiff over 2 days with 20 runners per team. Price will be £20 per runner and you will receive a tech T shirt

Finally as you may know the new championship season started on the 1st April, good luck to you all, see you on the road/trail/fell.

Tarja Kinnunen

6 stage relays: The Northern 6-stage Road Relays were held at our doorstep in Sefton Park on the 31st of March. We had two teams representing PLS ladies, which must be a record! During the years I have been a member of PLS, I do not recall us having two teams at 6-stage relays, so massive thank you to all who participated! Ladies, let's keep the momentum up! Our "A" team came 20th in the competition and our "B" team was 26th. Both very respectful results considering this race constituted teams from all North of England.

PLS Summer 10km Series: This year the club's summer race series is over the popular distance of 10km. First race of the series was the Aintree Diabetes on 15th April, next will be Liverpool Women's 10km on 6th of May. Details of all the races are as follows: Tunnel 10k (June 10); Warrington RR (June 20th); Birchwood (Aug 19th); Sutton 6 (Sept 16th). The rules are: minimum of 4 races to qualify, best 4 results (based on PLS member position) to count, 50 points for first PLS member, 49 for second etc. CASH prizes for: Women's Overall winner (could be a vet), Women's Overall runner up (could be a vet), Women's vet winner, Women's vet runner up. Good luck!

Club Champs: I have just checked out the final results and sorted out the trophies for the Club Champs of 2011 (massive thanks go to Andy Keeley, our stato, who has kept records of race times over the year). I was delighted to notice that the "glory" (i.e. trophies) has been spread out to more Ladies than in the past few seasons. This is a positive trend, meaning that more ladies are competing over various distances, and there is more competition within the club. 2011 was a year that unfortunately saw several of our ladies who normally race a lot, being on the sidelines due to injuries/surgeries etc. Yet we had lots of ladies racing and there was a fierce competition for the overall Championship. Well done to everyone, see you at the trophy presentation night on the 11th May. I look forward to the new Championship year 2012 and wish everyone fit and injury free year!

If you have any queries, suggestions, requests etc. email tarjakinnunen@yahoo.co.uk

First we take Manhattan…

by Phil Quinn

Follow Phil around one of the most iconic Olympic landmarks in Europe

…Then we take Berlin!' so sang poet master Leonard Cohen. Well we can forget the Manhattan bit *, but in recent times it seems I have taken to 'bagging' Olympic stadia. Over the past few years, without any serious intent, I have 'bagged', Amsterdam, Athens and Barcelona and most recently, in March of this year, I visited and therefore 'bagged' the Olympic Stadium at Berlin.

It may appear to the casual reader that I am 'bagging' these Olympic venues alphabetically. But no, there is little rhyme or reason to what is happening. The only defence I present for visiting these sites is a longstanding love affair with athletics and, while not blind to the shortcomings of the Olympic Movement, a childish delight in the sporting spectacle that is the Olympic Games.

Following a short walk from the U bahn station, Mrs Quinn and I presented ourselves at the twin towers of the 'Olympiastadion'. After collecting audioguides we began making our way around this most impressive and historic of sites. We viewed the outdoor swimming pool and then proceeded to the Maifield, designed to accommodate Nazi rallies but proving too small before any could be staged there. We noted the steles, standing stones, commemorating German champions from past Olympics and cast critical eyes over the roughly hewn sculptures from the Nazi period.

Moving inside we circuited the interior and then finding a table on an upper tier we sat and supped mugs of hot chocolate. We looked across to the 'Fuhrer's box' where during a few weeks in the summer of 1936 a certain German Chancellor stood and responded to the adulation of the crowd and we gazed down at the sunken track where a certain black American athlete strolled acknowledging the same crowd, wild for altogether different reasons. We took in the scene and tried to imagine how it all must have been in those memorable weeks almost eighty years ago.

The Berlin Games of 1936 has been dubbed the most controversial sporting event of 20th century and with good reason considering, the discriminatory treatment of Jewish competitors, the threatened boycotts, and the whole swastika flying, hand gesturing, Nazi orchestrated, presentation and atmosphere.

Against a murky backdrop though there were areas of light relief. It was at these Games the Torch Relay was staged for the first time. This, in subsequent Olympics, has become a diverting pre-cursor to the Games themselves, uniting tens of thousands of runners from different countries in the common goal of transporting the Olympic Flame from Greece to its designated quadrennial venue. The Relay has also helped reconnect the sport of athletics with its spiritual home and every four years re-establish the link between the ancient world and the modern. In a few weeks time the same Olympic Torch Relay will illuminate the streets of our city.

On the track a glittering display of pace running was provided by the wiry haired New Zealander Jack Lovelock. His world record run in the 1500 metres has been hailed one of the all time great Olympic races but the indisputably dazzling highlight of these Games was the presence, poise

and perfect 'full house' performance of Jesse Owens; four events, four gold medals.

The Olympiastadion, with a capacity of 100,000, was built especially for the Games of '36. Unlike most of the notable structures of Berlin it was spared the ravages of the war years, and though it has undergone some reconstruction, today's visitor sees it much as it was when first built.

The stadium has hosted two men's football World Cups. Three matches of the 1974 tournament were played here and in 2006 the final between France and Italy; if you have difficulty remembering the result I am sure Cristina and Simone would be more than happy to enlighten you. Germany hosted the 2011 women's football World Cup and it was in this stadium the match between the hosts and Canada was played. Since 1963, the stadium has been the home ground of Hertha Berlin and each year the German Cup Final is played here, for the Olympiastadion is the Wembley of Germany.

Berlin is a city where running flourishes, where athletes are welcomed enthusiastically and where Marathon world records are broken as regularly as eggs for breakfast. In this city the women's world record has been set three times and on the last four occasions the men's world record has been broken, it has happened here. The current record time held by Patrick Makau of Kenya, 2hours 3mins 38 secs, staggering to all of us with even a modicum of running experience, was set here in Sept 2011.

Who can forget the 2009 World Athletics Championships held in Berlin? You can? Well let me remind you. It was here in the Olympiastadion that Usain Bolt broke his own 100m and 200m world records, set the previous year in Beijing. Remember now? It was here too in the 800m that Jenny Meadows made a late determined burst for the tape and picked up a well deserved bronze medal, but the most memorable episode of all was what happened following the men's long jump event.

Marlene Dortch and Julia Long, granddaughters of Jesse Owens and Luz Long respectively, as guests of honour presented medals to the three successful jumpers. Long and Owens had become friends during the 1936 Games and it was the German Long who encouraged and advised Owens before Owens took his final and winning jump. The friendship between the two men, forged in this Berlin stadium and improbable as it seems for the time, continues through their families to this day.

Now, which Olympic stadium to bag next, Sydney, Los Angeles, Tokyo? They're all such a distance away! Where are the next Olympics to be held then? London, that's not far! Mmmm, it's got me thinking.

* Interestingly though the 1936 US team, including Jesse Owens, travelled to Europe on board the S.S. Manhattan

Princes Parkrun: one year on

by **Mike Roxburgh**

Time flies when you're having fun.... or so the saying goes.... and I think it's fair to say that the past year since the birth of Princes parkrun has indeed flown by.

When we launched this weekly 5k event via a pilot race held on a cold February morning in 2011 we had 14 runners and 14 volunteers, little did we realise how over the coming months the event would grow and be taken to heart by all sections of the running community.

The past year has seen over 1500 people register, with the course attendance record gradually rising over that time until we reached our latest high point of 177 runners on the weekend of our first anniversary.

During that time runners of all abilities from sub 16 minute speed merchants to 45 minute run/walkers have tackled the undulating course all supported and encouraged by volunteers, spectators and participants alike.

The lovely Friends of Princes Park armed with cake and hot drinks

For those of you who may not be aware the parkrun is a free, weekly 5k run which takes place in Princes Park L8 starting at 9am prompt and is organised entirely by volunteers.

The event is part of a series of around 100 events that are taking place in parks in towns and cities across the country. The programme also has international events in Denmark, Iceland, Australia, South Africa and there is even one in Camp Bastion in Afghanistan.

The aim of the events is to get people to take part in an organised running event, with a realistic distance goal for beginners and to provide them with information about other running events taking place locally. The run attracts local people, first time runners, regular runners, club athletes and it even attracts parkrun tourists to the city! Kids can run, Dogs can run (on leads) even babies in prams are welcome!

Happy Birthday to the Parkrun Gang: Shane Knott, Russell Burnham, Andrew Stansfield, Tony Hewitson, Mike Roxburgh, Eamonn Brady and Emma Kearney, with special guest Cath Nevin on the startline

I'd like to think that Princes parkrun is now an established race within the Merseyside running community, a race that is respected for its organisation and loved for its inclusivity and community spirit, a spirit that makes it open and accessible to all.

It's an event that has also acted as a gateway for runners looking to access a club with PLS benefiting from numerous new members over the past year including our own speed merchant James McNally and Shelly Kemp who actually ran in that original pilot race back in February 2011.

Mr Parkrun in action – Joe McGlynn has over 50 Parkruns to his name and the t-shirt to prove it!

For me to see the race grow is immensely satisfying with my personal highlight (my only highlight that day – did I mention id had the flu by any chance??!) being when I was tapped on the shoulder at the start of the recent Liverpool Half Marathon by a lady in running kit who thanked me. When I asked what for she replied that she had never ran before she started coming down each week to the parkrun, since then she had gone on to lose weight, gain confidence and was that day about to tackle her first half marathon – her words "it changed my life" says it all for me.

So…If you haven't already but fancy giving it a go, get to Princes Park on any Saturday morning for around 8.45am for a 9.00am start – please visit www.parkrun.com register for the Princes parkrun, print off your barcode (that acts your registration and timing chip) bring it with you and run the race!

DID YOU KNOW?

Parkrun is officially recognised as an accurately measured course by UK Athletics.

From April 2012 times recorded at Parkrun will be eligible for the Club Championship. But remember: you must make sure you wear your club vest for the time to count!

Parkrun is a truly community event: with the help of the Friends of Princes Park runners and volunteers sometimes hang around for some organised litter picking and general park tidying, and on Parkrun's first birthday the record breaking number of participants shared cakes, biscuits and soft drinks, followed by more cake, tea and coffee courtesy of the Friends of Princes Park, pictured on page 10.

Even the weather co-operated, providing a beautiful backdrop for Parkrun's first birthday party!

FOR MORE INFORMATION

WWW.PARKRUN.COM

Or see Mike at club nights

Personal Profile: Tommy Gates

Occupation: Operations Manager

Why did you join PLS? To get some structured training and make friends.

Running likes: When it feels good

How long have you been running? About 12 years

Running dislikes: When it doesn't feel good

Favourite male runner: Don't have one

Favourite female runner: Too shy to say

Favourite non running person: Peter Kay

Favourite race: Enjoyed the Liverpool Marathon

Least favourite race: not sure

Favourite drink: Beer

Least favourite drink: Milk

Favourite food: Pasta

Least favourite food: Anything fried

Favourite holiday: The next one

What is your idea of happiness: "A cigar called Hamlet"

Favourite song: How can you mend a broken heart, Al Green

Favourite male singer: Rod "the mod" Stewart

Favourite female singer: Amy Winehouse

Favourite group: Bee Gee's

What do you always carry on you: my mobile

Best running moment: Running down the Mall 2006

Worst running moment: too many to list

My most appealing trait: not for me to say

Most unappealing trait: same

Favourite running shoe: Asics

Favourite film: Saving Private Ryan

Vest in or out: Outy

Tommy on the starting blocks. Must be nearly 5 o'clock!

Best Times over classic distances:

Distance	Time	Race	Year
5k	26'02	Parkrun	2011
10k	59'00	Lytham	2011
Half marathon	2h29'	Great North Run	2005
Marathon	4h42'12	Belfast	2005

Race Calendar: May 2012

Tue 01	Hilary Craft Action against Cancer Cowm Reservoir 5k, Whitworth
Wed 02	Chorley 4.4 Mile Trail Series (1/4), Astley Village, Chorley
Thu 03	Ripley Fun Run, Lancaster
Fri 04	Dalton Charter 10k, Dalton-in-Furness
Sun 06	Great Hameldon Hill Race, Accrington
Sun 06	Keswick Half Marathon, Keswick
Sun 06	Scorton Bikes and Barrows 10k, nr. Preston
Sun 06	Alexandra Park 5k Women's Series
Mon 07	Preston Guild 5k
Mon 07	Ian Clegg Memorial Reservoir 5k, Whitworth, nr. Rochdale
Mon 07	Waterloo 15k Multi Terrain
Tue 08	Geoff Doggett Memorial 5k Road Race, Littleborough, Rochdale
Wed 09	Kendal 10k, Kendal
Thu 10	Mobberley 'Round the Runway' Race, Mobberley
Fri 11	Pinhaw Fell Race, Earby
Sat 12	Belmont Winter Hill Fell Race
Sun 13	Thurstaston MT Challenge
Sun 13	Blacksticks Blue 10k Road Race, nr. Preston
Sun 13	Port Sunlight 10k Run, Wirral
Sun 13	Anglesey Half Marathon - The Island Race
Tue 15	Stanhill Fell Race, Oswaldtwistle (Race 3/12 Accrington & District Series)
Tue 15	Chernobyl 5k Race (2/3), Preston
Tue 15	Moorclose 10k, Workington
Wed 16	Wholan Nook Trail Race, Burnley (Pendle & Burnley GP 3/15)
Wed 16	Horwich Jubilee Series (1/4), Rivington, nr. Bolton
Wed 16	Wirral Seaside Run (3/8), Leasowe
Thu 17	Ian Casey Memorial Cowm Race, Whitworth
Fri 18	Chorley Park Series (2/4), Chorley
Fri 18	Christleton 5k, nr. Chester
Sat 19	Bay2Bae3 10k Coastal Trail Run, Bull Bay to Cemaes Bay
Sun 20	Fishwick 5 Trail Race, Preston
Sun 20	Worden Park 10k, Leyland
Tue 22	Coppice Fell Race, Accrington
Wed 23	Harrocks Hill #1 Wednesday
Wed 23	Jack Betney Memorial Reservoir Race, Whitworth, Rochdale
Wed 23	Dovestone Diamond 10k Multi-Terrain Race, Greenfield, Oldham
Thu 24	King's Highway 5k Trail Race, Accrington
Fri 25	Burnley Lions 10k, Colne
Fri 25	Dunham Massey Park 5k
Sun 27	Blue Light 5 Mile Race, Bispham, Blackpool
Sun 27	UK Backwards Run, Heaton Park (M25 2SW)
Sun 27	Howgill Harriers 10k Road Race, Kirkby Stephen
Mon 28	Skye's Syke and Healey Dash, Whitworth, Rochdale
Wed 30	Levens 10k, nr. Kendal

Multi Terrain Series

Penny Lane Striders 10k

Races held on day of PLS 10k not valid for club championship

Race Calendar: June 2012

Sat 02	Catforth Canter 5k (1/3), Catforth, nr. Preston
Sat 02	Kelbrook Fell Race (Pendle & Burnley Grand Prix Race 5/15)
Sat 02	Peter Lowe Memorial Hollins Green 5k, nr Warrington
Sat 02	Dallam Dash 10k Road Race & 2k Family Run, Milnthorpe
Sat 02	Wincle Trout Run, nr. Macclesfield
Sun 03	Stanley Park 4 Mile Trail Race, Blackpool
Sun 03	Longridge Lions 7 Mile Road Race, nr. Preston
Sun 03	Alexandra Park 5k Women's Series
Mon 04	Bowley Hill Trail Race, Great Harwood, nr. Blackburn
Wed 06	Chorley 4.4 Mile Trail Series (2/4), Astley Village, Chorley
Wed 06	Carlisle Tri 10k Road Race
Thu 07	Bash Grueller Trail Race, Accrington
Thu 07	Cuerden Valley Badger 10k Trail Race (1/3), Bamber Bridge, Preston
Thu 07	Bowdon 5k, Altrincham
Thu 07	Deestriders Off-Road Grand Prix (1/4), Shotton
Fri 08	Barley Classic Fell Race, Barley
Fri 08	Rochdale Harriers 6 Mile Road Race Rochdale
Sat 09	Rochdale Harriers 6 Mile Multi-Terrain Rochdale
Sun 10	Morecambe 10k
Sun 10	Burnley Boys Club 10k, Burnley
Sun 10	Rochdale Harriers 6 Mile 'Knowl Hill' Fell Race Rochdale
Sun 10	Prestwich Challenge, Whitefield
Tue 12	Moleside Fell Race, Accrington
Wed 13	3 Sisters Country Park (Bryn) 5k, nr. Wigan
Thu 14	Walsh Two Lads Fell Race, Horwich, nr. Bolton
Thu 14	Dunham Massey Park 5k (race 2/2) (N. Ches GP 4/5), Altrincham
at 16	Chorley Great Hill Fell Race, Brinscall, nr. Chorley
Sat 16	White Bear Way, Adlington, nr. Chorley
Sat 16	Bendrigg 10k, Old Hutton, nr. Kendal
Sun 17	Freckleton Half Marathon, nr. Preston
Sun 17	Hendon Brook 13.5 Miles, Burnley
Tue 19	Chernobyl 5k Race (3/3), Preston
Tue 19	Lancaster Girls' GS Midsummer Supper 6k, Lancaster
Wed 20	Warrington 10k
Wed 20	Horwich Jubilee Series (2/4), Rivington, nr. Bolton
Wed 20	Wirral Seaside Run (4/8), Leasowe
Wed 20	Hawkshead 10k, nr. Ambleside
Fri 22	Chorley Park Series (3/4), Chorley
Fri 22	Chorley Park Junior Series (3/4), Chorley
Sat 23	Lymm 5k, nr Warrington
Sat 23	Trail Marathon Wales, Coed y Brenin, nr. Dolgellau
Sat 23	Trail Half Marathon Wales, Coed y Brenin, nr. Dolgellau
Sun 24	Sotos 10k, Fleetwood
Sun 24	Trawden 7 Mile Trail Race, nr. Burnley (Pendle & Burnley GP 9/15)
Sun 24	We Love Manchester 10k, SportCity
Sun 24	Penny Lane Striders 10k, Aigburth, Liverpool
Sun 24	Lancaster Castle Marathon, Lancaster
Sat 30	Bodyfit "Eaglesfield Paddle" 5k Race, Cockermouth
Sat 30	Fairclough 5 Mile Road Race, Thornton Cleveleys
Sat 30	

February 2012

12 February 2012 – Mad Dog 10k

Robbie Collins	00:39:48
Mitch Hawkins	00:41:33
Paul Brady	00:42:03
J Bampton	00:43:38
Eamonn Brady	00:45:49
Holly Suckling	00:47:26
Terrence Long	00:49:04
Dave Mangan	00:50:07
Tommy Gates	00:51:01
M Wilby	00:51:27
Graeme Hind	00:52:21
Eunice Nopondo	00:56:12
P Dimeck	00:59:45

19 February 2012 – Wrexham Bakery Half

Adrian Loughrey	01:29:26
Cristina Puccini	01:49:00
Steve Maden	01:53:14
Shelly Kemp	02:03:25

26 February 2012 – Great North West Half

John Connolly	01:19:50
Marc Vincent	01:37:06
Russell Burnham	01:37:40
Jon Jensen	01:39:48
Emma Kearney	01:44:57
Terence Long	01:51:01
A Whalley	02:05:21

26 February 2012 – Land Rover Half (Malta)

Mark Finch	01:34:23

26 February 2012 – Netherton 10

Dave Cain	01:12:09
Sue Cain	01:14:59

March 2012

03 March 2012 – Bugs Run 5k

Dave Lovett	00:19:09
A Loughrey	01:30:32

03 March 2012 – Milton Keynes Half

Shelly Kemp	02:09:51

03 March 2012 – Stanley Park 10k

Rob Hardwick	00:44:49
Jane Hallows	00:49:01
Dave Mangan	00:51:15

Stato's report

by Andy Keeley

T Hewitson	00:51:44

11 March 2012 – Blackpool Half

Michelle Cobourn	01:47:56

11 March 2012 – Wrap up & Run 10k

Luke Parker	00:37:22
1st place	
Oonagh Jaquest	00:49:28
Alice Spooner	00:49:52

11 March 2012 – Trafford 10k

John Connolly	00:36:25
Ste McNicholas	00:40:50
James McNally	00:45:66
Phil Murray	01:00:35

11 March 2012 – St Helens 10k

Rob Hardwick	00:43:34
Dave Pinnington	00:43:47
Ewan Dawick	00:46:17
Billy Taylor	00:47:55
Jane Hallows	00:47:55
Mike Roberts	00:51:31

18 March 2012 – Rome Marathon

Cristina Puccini	04:05:12

18 March 2012 – Ultrafit 10m

Graham Beardsmore	01:10:45
Andy Keeley	01:14:34

18 March 2012 – Liverpool Half

Keiren Birrell	01:20:33
Paul Riley	01:23:56
Mark Hargreaves	01:24:14
Dean Connolly	01:25:27
Robbie Collins	01:26:49
Derek Ashcroft	01:26:50
L Easthope	01:28:48
Colin Dobbs	01:29:08
Lawrence Eccles	01:29:34
Gary Roberts	01:30:22
Neil Wilcock	01:30:36
Ian Russell	01:31:46
G Lawson	01:33:00
Graham Halsall	01:34:27
Ste Maguire	01:35:21
Marc Vincent	01:36:14
J Bampton	01:37:17
Mitch Hawkins	01:38:28
Tommy Burke	01:38:28
D Higham	01:39:10
Paul Brady	01:39:56
Dave Owens	01:40:42
A Wilcock	01:40:46
Emma Kearney	01:41:35
C Hawley	01:41:50
D Baier	01:41:52
Jon Jensen	01:42:44
Russell Burnham	01:43:02
T Carson	01:43:02
Richard Houston	01:45:03
Graeme Hussey	01:45:32
J Sloan	01:47:40
C Whelton	01:50:01
Alan Gidman	01:50:25
Judith Dyer	01:51:05
M Murphy	01:51:13
Dave Lynam	01:51:27
D Hamill	01:51:34
M Thomas	01:51:38
Eamonn Brady	01:52:14
Rachel Rick	01:52:14
Tony Hewitson	01:52:35
Billy Taylor	01:53:38
T Long	01:55:03
K Atterbury	01:55:30
M Wilby	01:55:40
Mike Roxburgh	01:56:30
J Canter	01:57:08
P Brodie	01:57:26
Louise Warn	01:58:02
J waring	01:58:12
Anne Kavanagh	02:00:17
A Cantwell	02:00:40
S Bradley	02:01:35
L Atkinson	02:01:44
Dave Mangan	02:04:21
Val Desborough	02:04:38
R Richie	02:05:38
A Whalley	02:06:42
Graeme Hind	02:06:46
Eunice Nopondo	02:09:10
Tommy Gates	02:10:42
E Phillips	02:13:21
L Corkhill	02:14:55
P Murray	02:16:12
M Betson	02:17:08
A Morton	02:23:48
A Moore	02:24:13
E Phillips	02:26:23
Eileen Burke	02:32:58

25 March 2012 – Wilmslow Half

Althea Deane	02:12:32

Stato's report

by Andy Keeley

As it is the end of the season this month I have tallied up the number of events run in the past year. A total of 913 qualifying races were run; 704 for the men and 209 for the ladies. This compares to 878 qualifying races in the equivalent period of 2009-10, 613 for the men and 265 for the ladies. This excludes the Parkrun events that were not counted in the last season but which will count in the coming year, if you wear your club vest. Top of the tree for the men was John Connolly and for the ladies it was Eunice Nopondo. Well done to everyone who competed and I hope that in the coming year I will make a return to the regular runners table, if I can stay injury/illness free. Roll on the coming year.

Ranking	Events	Men	Events	Women
1	24	J Connolly	16	E Nopondo
2	21	E Brady	15	C Nevin
3	19	S McNicholas	14	C Puccini
4	18	M Swensson	14	E Lynan
5	17	P Brady	14	E Kearney
6	16	T Warn	12	S Kemp
7	14	A Stansfield	12	J Eardley
8	13	M Roxburgh	11	G Darby
9	13	S Pemberton	10	E Lawton
10	13	D Mangan	10	V Desborough
11	13	M Hirrell	9	S Noon
12	13	R Burnham	9	M Cobourn
13	12	T Man	8	M Motley
14	12	T Fletcher	8	N Fowlis
15	12	C Dobbs	7	J Dyer
16	11	M Vincent	6	H Suckling
17	11	B Hargreaves	6	S Hodgson
18	11	K Boyle	6	J Hallows
19	11	D Ashcroft	6	N Cooper
20	10	....	6	S Cain

Club Records

The season winds up to its finale with a flurry of races and the fruits of the winter training were seen in some excellent times in February and march. The club records name the 5 fastest runners at each distance for a given age group.

Emma Kearney improved from the 4th to the 3rd fastest woman in the F35 category at half marathon with her performance at Liverpool.

Sue Cain posted a **new F55 record** for 10 miles at Netherton.

Eileen Burke is now the 3rd fastest half marathoner in the F60 age group after her performance at Liverpool.

Val Desborough became the 5th fastest at 10m in the F50 age group after her performance at the Stockport 10.

John Connolly posted a new 3rd fastest time for half marathon in the M40 category at Wilmslow.

Stato's report

by Andy Keeley

In the Multi-terrain Challenge the final standings are shown below. Congratulations to award winners:

Men's Champion	Simone Capponi	**Women's Champion**	Maria Conaghan
Runner up	John Connolly	**Runner up**	Gill Darby
Vet Champion	Tony Man	**Vet Champion**	N/A
Vet Runner up	Andy Keeley	**Vet Runner up**	N/A

Well done to everyone who completed and let battle commence for the new season.

Multi-Terrain Challenge Trophy 2011-12 - Final Standings (Best 5)

	Men				Women			
Position	Points	Name	Cat	Races	Points	Name	Cat	Races
1	250	Simone Capponi	M	12	250	Maria Conaghan	F	5
2	249	John Connelly	MV	7	249	Gill Darby	FV	9
3	247	Neil Kelly	M	5	246	Jane Eardley	F	6
4	246	Tony Man	MV	10	190	Jane Hallows	FV	4
5	242	Andrew Keeley	MV	8	143	Tarja Kinnunen	FV	3
6	240	Lawrence Eccles	M	5	99	Pam Thurtle	F	2
7	235	Ste McNicholas	MV	6	97	Ellie Darby	F	2
8	211	Sam Darby	MV	5	50	Natalie Cooper	F	1
9	178	Steve Pemberton	MV	4	49	Alice Spooner	F	1
10	138	Rob Hardwick	MV	3	47	Emma Lawton	F	1
11	136	Bill Hargreaves	MV	3	44	Christine Hargreaves	FV	1
12	100	James McNally	M	2	0	None	0	0
13	95	Martin Hirrell	MV	2	0	None	0	0
14	91	Mal Gordon	M	2	0	None	0	0
15	85	Andrew Stansfield	MV	2	0	None	0	0
16	83	Graham Hussey	MV	2	0	None	0	0
17	83	Tony Hargreaves	MV	2	0	None	0	0
18	81	Ewan Dawick	M	2	0	None	0	0
19	77	Mike Devereux	MV	2	0	None	0	0
20	75	Keith Boyle	MV	2	0	None	0	0
21	49	Bob Barrows	M	1	0	None	0	0
22	47	Marc Vincent	M	1	0	None	0	0
23	44	Gary Whitfield	MV	1	0	None	0	0
24	43	Billy Taylor	M	1	0	None	0	0
25	43	David Pease	M	1	0	None	0	0
26	43	Joe McGlynn	MV	1	0	None	0	0
27	42	Andy Cantwell	M	1	0	None	0	0
28	41	Chris Doyle	MV	1	0	None	0	0
29	36	Chris Welton	MV	1	0	None	0	0

The View from the Back: Barefoot Bravery

by Rachel Rick

Like so many fellow-runners, I worry about injury. Pick up any running magazine, check any running website and you'll find articles about how to avoid injury, or cope with existing injuries.
In 1990 I visited Natterjacks in their old store in Woolton Rd. I bought a pair of Mizuno trainers, and got a contact number for someone who made orthotics.

I went along and met a gentleman who told me that if I decided to do something as stupid as running, I could only expect pain. He made plaster casts of my feet (I still have them – great bookends!) and gave me orthotics which changed my life and my running. 22 years later I still use custom-made orthotics.

Recently though I've been reading up about Barefoot Running! It's Frank Martin's fault – he told me about the difference it had made to him, and about the book 'Born To Run', I already had a copy of 'Chi Running, but hadn't got past the introduction. I had started concentrating on form, though and found that made a difference, so I bought the book.

Well – I'm a bit geeky, so I downloaded it. Frank said it would debunk some myths, and it did! There was much about the footwear – or lack of it, about how runners are persuaded to buy new and more sophisticated shoes. I read the book in the run-up to Christmas, and was really became fascinated by the possibilities. Googled lots of images - Tarahumara, huaraches, and looked at a number of websites. Minimalist footwear, it transpires, is big business! That's a big gamble – but then, every time a runner buys new shoes it's a gamble! Huaraches are much cheaper, but am I ready for that. Last month we heard the very sad news of the death of Micah True.

The irony of the commercialisation of barefoot running would not be lost on the pioneers of the movement.
I'm almost glad I'm still injured – for the moment, I don't need to make a decision. I'm just not brave enough. I've got time to watch other braver runners take the leap of faith.

The Striding Report
A newsletter for Readers of all abilities

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