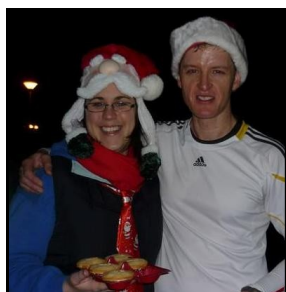


JANUARY 2012

JOG ON!



Christmas 2011



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Thanks to El Palfreman and Sandra Williams for organising and to Claire Salter and Dawn Mahoney for the photographs



Las Vegas Half Marathon by Helen Needs

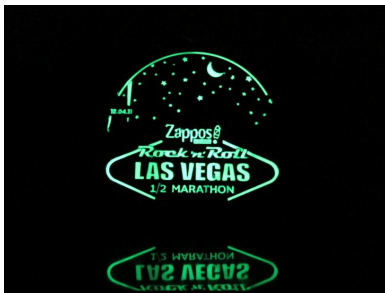
After some random searches on the internet of marathons around the world I came about this race through the Rock and Roll Marathon series <http://runrocknroll.competitor.com/>. As it happened to coincide with my annual leave from work it was an ideal opportunity to combine a run and a holiday.

With 44,000 applicants for the marathon and half, also the run taking place in the evening it was a perfect excuse to experience the Las Vegas Strip on foot.

The roads were closed, the police were out in force and national TV were filming from a helicopter above. At 5pm on 4th December I lined up with 29,000 other half marathoners in preparation for the 13.1 miles of lights and live music. The marathon had started at 4pm and would run the 2nd half of their course with us. It appeared very organised with clear indications of start corals, baggage drop off and an exclusive finishers village where, for the first time, my husband successfully found me in the agreed meeting place.

The first 4 miles of the race were from end to end of The Strip. There were numerous light displays, including a coloured laser beam display at the start, and large screens where other parts of the race could be seen. Also a number of TV cameras along the course were showing footage on the screens. There were also live bands situated at every mile marker point and many casinos and bars along the course had provided additional music as well as many spectators.

Mile 4-9 consisted of some darker roads for which a head torch had been provided at the expo and also for running through Freemont Street, the old part of Las Vegas. The final part of the race was running back down The Strip to the finish which was where the race had started. Although this part had already been run there was no element of boredom as there was so much to see and hear.



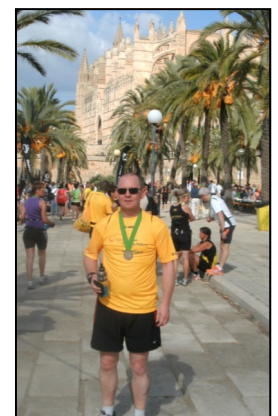
Overall an excellent running experience finishing in 2 hours 15 minutes, a bit slower than usual but a very busy race and also I'm not used to racing in the evening. The temperature had been cool, about 8 degrees, there were plenty of water and energy stations and an excellent medal/goody bag at the end. My only concern was the caged tigers that were at the start of the race and if they released them to ensure people meet the 4.5 hour time limit for both races!

The medal that runners received was glow in the dark!

Palma, Majorca – Half Marathon. 16 October 2011 by Paul Thomas

I'd been toying with the idea of doing this run after seeing it advertised on the Runner's World in early 2011. After a bit of research on the Runners World forums I saw most people from the UK who had run it before had rated it quite highly – mainly because of the route (mostly flat) as well as the organisation (it's sponsored by the TUI Travel Group, whose German parent company arranges the event, so the whole set up was guaranteed to be fairly slick). Looking at previous race and weather reports, the temperature should have been a warmish 16 – 18 degrees, but unfortunately, they had a mini heat wave the week before the race, and as I had an early flight out on the Friday morning, as I wandered down to the beach from the hotel just after getting there around 11.30am, the temperature had already got to 30°C in the shade (!). Luckily it did drop slightly and was forecast to about 23°C by midday on the Sunday (race day) although the 9am start meant a cooler beginning part any way. There was a mix of nationalities – mainly Spanish, but loads of Germans and quite a few Brits.

As well as the half there was also a full marathon and a 10k race, and this is the first race I've done where everyone starts at the same time, no matter what race you are running (including three Germans running the 10k race backwards!). Bang on 9am and we were off, with everyone first running the 10k route, which was a loop along the main road down by the water front down to the main marina and back again, then everyone running the half and full marathon route split off into the main streets of Palma. This saw you zigzagging your way firstly through the more modern (shopping) parts of Palma, and eventually we ended up going through the older parts of the city, (which was stunning). The first 10k was fairly exposed, as apart from the odd palm tree here and there, there wasn't a lot of shade from the sun, but with drink stations every 3 kilometres I just concentrated on trying to stay reasonably hydrated and run at a comfortable pace with the heat. It was hard going by the end of this 10k but luckily the run through Palma was well shaded, particularly in the older parts of the city where the narrow streets (some of which were cobbled – grrr!) and high buildings meant they stayed reasonably cool as we ran through. Despite this (and the bananas and apples handed out along the route) I was still fairly pleased to see the finish line, and admired anyone (and there were lots) splitting off near the finish to then run the full marathon route. I got around in 2 hours 16 minutes, and although one of my slowest times to date, I thoroughly enjoyed it (the free beer and doughnuts handed out at the end certainly helped!). I'm seriously contemplating returning for the full marathon next year.



5,407 people ran - 1,406 completed the marathon, 3,483 the half marathon, and 1,987 the 10k.

Running Routes by Geoff Eggleston

I must start by thanking Paul Shergold and Val Perigo for their kind comments in the last newsletter. I must confess that I enjoy coming up with new routes especially now that I am retired. Cherry and I have the time to get out and about during the week and recce new routes. In some areas this is just as well as there are a few paths that are impassable walking, let alone running.

For a while there were several of my group who were rather apprehensive about running off road during the summer months, however, following the long winter being confined to the streets and alleyways of Taunton I was hoping that the group would enjoy getting out into the countryside. This seems to have been quite a success judging by comments afterwards. I suspect that group 5 enjoys the all too frequent sight of me falling flat on my face having tripped over tree roots that I have warned everyone else about!! Many thanks to the loyal few who feel they must support me by tripping over as well!!

Although at the time of writing this we are about to be confined to the town on Wednesday nights, there is still an opportunity to run in the countryside with the club on Sunday mornings. A great way to overcome the hangover from Saturday night's festivities.

The Ordnance Survey 1:25000 maps make route finding quite easy. Sheets 128 and 140 in the Explorer range are very good for this area. I have many years experience in teaching map reading, navigation and memorising routes so am more than willing to help anyone wishing to work out routes in the area where they live. I suspect many of you run on days other than Wednesdays. The whole of the Taunton Deane area is blessed with footpaths and bridleways which can make your runs from home much more interesting.

It made my day a few weeks ago when taking a group along a different route. Even Mike Nicholls didn't have a clue where we were going yet we were within a mile of his house. It's good fun—give it a go.

The big plus for me is that if the quicker runners don't know the route they have to come back for me or get lost. I'm not daft.



Great South Run by Nicky Wilkes

At the end of the Taunton Half Marathon I seem to recall vowing 'Never Again!' So why 1 month later I agreed to do the Great South Run is completely beyond me - was I inebriated?

Being as I was going to inflict pain on myself (and yes to those Group 4 and above; 10 miles is immense pain to legs less drilled) I would do it for a good cause. A charity close to my heart (and many others I am sure) is Cancer Research so up came the Just Giving page and months of annoying friends, family and colleagues with desperate begging.

To try and make the hellish training a little more fun I started a Training group for the GNR (Great North Run) lot and those of us doing the GSR. Well, when I say I started, I went as far as creating the Facebook page and adding members! Sandra as always became our much loved (and at times hated) Drill Sergeant. Our group became 8 with Dawn, Marina, Elaine, Liz, Sandra, Becks myself and our token male Tom, we also managed to gain some non running groupies; namely Lainey & Claire. The GSR section consisted of Me, Sandra, Liz, Marina, Elaine and Becks (Becks who was too busy to train with us but didn't stop her running rings around us on the day!)

So we added in a Sunday afternoon run to increase distance. To be honest we were all too slow and too lazy to get up for the early Sunday Running Forever group. Week by week Sandra put us through our paces increasing distance and adding in more hills than I thought existed in Taunton!

Finally the day arrived and I had managed to coerce over £500 out of people for Cancer Research so I had to go ahead. Elaine had such a massive fan club and turned the whole event into a fun family weekend so we didn't see her on the day but believe she had a great day and was very pleased with her time, especially as she was our newest member.

The atmosphere was fantastic and somehow with crowds of people the 5 remaining runners found each other in one of the hundreds of crossed leg queues of women waiting in the cold for their last pit stop. Music playing all around us and announcements of famous people we couldn't see through the crowd. Next thing you know the race began, we stuck together for a short while but before you knew it speedy Becks was out of sight finishing in 1 hr 38 and Sandra was pushing me for a personal best.

The crowd was both immense and lovely, cheering and clapping all the way around, by mile 7 I thought I was going to die, however the small but evil Sandra was not going to relent and she dragged me to the finish line in 1hr 41 which was the same pace as I managed the Taunton 10k. Liz & Marina crossed the line together in 2 hours on the nose. All in all a great day.



Nutrition and endurance running by Emma Greig

A quick glance at our website reveals that more of us are undertaking longer events. Your normal diet does not require any supplementation before a 5 or 10k race as glycogen (a carbohydrate which is stored in muscle and breaks down to glucose) will last as your main energy source for the first 60-90 minutes of steady running. However, for longer events, you will need a strategy to prevent exhaustion of your carbohydrate reserves, known as 'hitting the wall'. This occurs in up to 40% of marathon runners, especially men and those undertaking a maximum 20 mile run during training. While no-one can change sex just for a better marathon result, preparation is key and teaching your body to burn fat after your carbohydrate runs out, maximising your glycogen storage before a big event (carbohydrate loading) and learning which of the commercial gels/sports bars/energy beans do not make you retch forms part of the magic of an endurance event.

Training

A high carbohydrate diet replenishes glycogen stores after training and allows quality training in subsequent days while poor performance in training, unexpected fatigue, or failure to reach an expected time goal may result from inadequate carbohydrate intake. Post-exercise glycogen production in muscle increases when protein is ingested with carbohydrate, especially if the snack is eaten within the first hour after exercise finishes. You are aiming for 50g of carbohydrate and 10g of protein (examples include ½ pint chocolate-flavoured milk/ 250 ml smoothie made with fruit, low fat yoghurt and honey/ 1.5 cups of cereal with low fat milk/ 1 high protein bar with 250 ml fruit juice).

'Train low, compete high'

While a pre-exercise snack 2-3 hours beforehand will enhance a longer training run, aiming to start shorter training sessions in a state of fasting and carbohydrate depletion allows your body to learn to metabolise fat instead (known as 'train low'). This is a huge advantage as fat reserves massively outnumber carbohydrate ones. On the day of the event, you eat a lot of carbohydrate to maximise success (known as 'compete high') as well as burning fat as you have trained to do, thus reducing the probability of 'hitting the wall'. Even if you choose to do this sort of training, it is still important to practice using carbohydrate to mimic race conditions on several long training sessions to learn which foods and supplements you can tolerate. Tastes change during prolonged exercise and snacks which seemed delicious at 5 miles, may be nausea-inducing 20 miles in.

Carbohydrate loading

The principles of this are easy; aiming to maximise muscle glycogen by increasing carbohydrate intake to between 7 and 10g per kg body weight per day for the three days before an event with a significant reduction in training to allow glycogen to build up in muscle. In practice, it is hard to eat that much carbohydrate (400-560g/day even for someone relatively light such as me at 56kg), unless you seriously curtail protein and fat intake which can make meals unpalatable. There is some evidence that high glycaemic index foods (such as potatoes, pasta, rice and bread) are of particular benefit for making muscle glycogen in the 24 hours before an event. Aim for a pasta party if your event has one; garlic bread would not go amiss as an accompaniment.

Before the big day

Practice eating breakfast! An ideal meal should contain fluid to maintain hydration, moderate protein but low fat and fibre to minimise gastrointestinal distress later, and high carbohydrate levels to maintain blood glucose and maximise glycogen. Size and timing are vital as a meal of around 200-300g carbohydrate (such as a cup of porridge oats with low fat milk and sugar or crumpets with honey, yoghurt and fruit salad) enhances performance most effectively about 3-4 hours before the race. As a full stomach and running is neither a comfortable nor happy combination, you may find that a small amount of food eaten much closer to the race works better for you.

The event

Carbohydrate loading for 3 days and a good breakfast will take you so far but you will also require calories as the event unfolds to enhance your performance. The excitement of the event and likely increase in speed for the real thing causes energy levels to fall faster than during training. The basic rule is that you will absorb a maximum of 60g of glucose each hour but can slightly increase this by adding a mixture of fructose (fruit sugar) to your glucose and certain sports drinks/ gels make use of this fact (for example Torq gels*). It is worth bearing in mind that the average gel contains only 20-30g carbohydrate so you need 2 per hour (see table opposite for other suggestions). Don't underestimate the potential laxative effect of some commercial products and try them in training first. You may fare better eating real food as some things are easier to tolerate than others and this can be very individual. Dean Karnazes (a famous ultrarunner) has takeaway pizza delivered to the side of the road, rolls and eats it without breaking stride! Finally, good luck for your race and if you would like any further information, please come and find me. I'm usually at the back of group 3B.



Photo: An example of post-race nutrition

Carbohydrate options which contain about 60g carbohydrate per portion*

500 ml soft drink (e.g. full sugar Coke)
250 ml soft drink + 3-4 baby potatoes
250 ml soft drink + 1 sandwich/ roll
400-500 ml carbohydrate drink + 1 energy bar
400-500 ml carbohydrate drink + 1 banana
400-500 ml carbohydrate drink + 1 carbohydrate gel
800-1000 ml commercial carbohydrate drink (e.g. Lucozade Sport)

Medium muffin (120g)
2 slices fruit cake (120g) or 3 slices Malt loaf
4-5 jelly babies + 1 banana
1 Carbohydrate gel + 1 energy bar

*in the interests of fairness, other supplements are available

How to be an RFRC Cheerleader ... in London!! By **Claire Salter** (and **Dave Loader**, who did help with the planning of the day, oh, and ran it in a very respectable **3:56:11!**)

Me again!! So, following on from my 'Being a marshal' and 'How to be a cheerleader' articles, I thought I would put together a few words about supporting a runner round the London Marathon route (see a theme – no running for me!!). When Dave got picked in the club ballot last year and said that he'd like me and his children to go and watch him, my heart sank! What was I going to do with 2 children aged 8 and 5 amongst thousands of people, when I'm just a mere country bumpkin?! However, it ended up being a really successful - though exhausting for all! - day, with us seeing Dave 4 times, so here are my tips for London cheering, especially with children.

TOP TIP 1:

Consider using other transport than the tube. We used the Thames Clippers (www.thamesclippers.com) which were great – they're not crowded, they have toilets (vital for children) and coffee (vital for adults!). We went from the London Eye to Canary Wharf and across to Hilton Docklands, where we had a 5 min walk to see Dave at approx mile 10. We then went back to Canary Wharf where we saw him at miles 15 and 18. Then we had chance to have a bit of lunch before heading back to Embankment where by luck we saw him again at about mile 25.

TOP TIP 2:

Take reinforcements – preferably one adult per child (particularly if they're as young as Dave's two). In my case, we had Dave's parents to help, along with his Uncle who lives near London and who we stayed with before the run. I have to say though, that after the children were told "no hitting each other with your clapper sticks", I did then have to tell Grandad off for doing exactly that!

TOP TIP 3:

Plan, Plan, Plan – get your runner to estimate when they will be going through each mile, they'll have an idea after all their training runs! You can see maps of the course on the website (www.virginlondonmarathon.com) and if you know roughly when they will be going through each point, you can plan where you will be. Dave printed out a map and plotted on where he thought he would be and laminated it in pocket size! This really helped us, as we knew where to find him. Dave actually took his mobile in his running shorts too, which meant that we were able to text him where we were e.g. just past mile 8 marker on left. I know he didn't see all of these necessarily, but it was helpful if you really do want to see your nearest and dearest. Take time to look at the website which tells you where are good places to cheer. Canary Wharf was heaving and it was more luck than planning that meant we got a good space to cheer.

TOP TIP 4:

Get your runner to register a few days before race day if you can. The queues are pretty lengthy and if you do it ASAP, that's a huge weight off. The Expo there provides loads of good freebies such as clapper sticks and boards, whistles (I hid these from the children I have to admit!), identical hats, pacer bands etc.

TOP TIP 5:

Don't go to the Finish line. Other people had reported that it got really busy there, so we crossed over to near the London Eye (by the Aquarium) where the children got their promised ice-creams and were entertained by the various street entertainers whilst we waited for Dave to hobble back to us.

TOP TIP 6:

If you have young children, consider dressing them in similar, bright coloured clothes. Kaitlyn and Tom had bright red t-shirts and baseball hats (freebie at the Expo!) and I was generally able to spot them. They were also read the riot act before we left that they needed to keep with me at all times. We also wrote a contact mobile number on their arms just in case. I'd meant to get some hospital bands or something similar to write numbers on, but biro at the top of their arms (so it didn't rub off) seemed to work. I also took photos of the children in what they were wearing so that if they did go missing, I would be able to show a policeman!

TOP TIP 7:

Warm up the voice!! As usual, my fog horn qualities were commented on by other spectators, but it did mean Dave knew where we were!! One last thing – don't forget your club vest!!! Oh, and whilst I mocked him for it beforehand, Dave wearing a hi-vis hat did help us to spot him!

Well, that's it! A few of our tips that helped make the day an enjoyable one and not as bad as I had feared. If you want anymore, or if you want a copy of the maps that Dave laminated, chuck us a message on the forum and we'll see what we can do to help! C&D!



Why Bother?

When I was asked to write for the newsletter, I thought 'Great! What a good opportunity to share my thoughts with the world!' (or at least the runners of Taunton). It was only after sitting in front of my laptop for 10 minutes, with nothing except 'Untitled RFRC Article', on the screen, that I realised I had no idea what to write about.



So I went back to the age old principle of 'write about what you know' and what immediately came to my mind was, 'why do people run?' But to be honest, I'm not sure I know the answer to that either.

Do a quick internet search on 'reasons to run' and you get a huge list of things like 'running beats cancer' and 'running helps you sleep better'. Now I don't know about you, but if I had problems sleeping, I'd be far more inclined to take a sleeping tablet rather than venture outside on a blustery winter evening in my (incredibly attractive) fluorescent yellow running top, so there must be another reason I do it.

Running is an odd 'hobby' (yes, over a year of running and I am still denying that running is a sport- I pride myself in being dreadful at all sports and am not ready to admit I'm half-decent at one!) because it is most enjoyable when it's finished. The best moment of my first half marathon was without a doubt the feeling of relief when I saw the big white banner with the words 'Finish' across it in foot high letters (or at least that's what I assume it said - by this point I was far too tired to even speak, let alone read). Even the elite don't always seem comfortable whilst running. The look on Mo Farah's face on the last leg of the 10,000m during the World Championships was certainly not one of ease. But he had an excuse; he had the pressure of thousands of British people screaming his name, expecting him to win (it can't be *that* hard to get a 10k time of 27:14, we were all thinking).

But most of us aren't representing Great Britain, and I do believe that most of us aren't *that* concerned about getting a good night's sleep either. Yet still, many of us faithfully slip on our running shoes three or four times a week and trot merrily out of the door with no intention of returning for at least another 45 minutes, no matter how tired/achy/grouchy/puffy/hungover we may feel. So why do we do it?

The answer is obviously different for everyone, but for me, I run for the way running makes me feel during the run, after the run, (although not necessarily before the run!) and even on the days when I don't run. Running is one of the few times you can be thinking about nothing, and still benefit from it. It may be downright uncomfortable at times, but every step I take is one step closer to being a better runner (and one step closer to the front door). After a run I feel ten times better. I haven't yet decided whether this is simply the endorphins, or the realisation that I have put 'miles in the tank' (to use my Dad's favourite phrase). No-one can take those miles away, no matter how fast (or slow) I did them in. But running even makes me feel better on the days when I don't run, because it is more than likely that I'll have run the day before, or will be running the next day, and just knowing that I'm a runner makes me feel better about myself. So that's why I bother to run, yes, it's nice to get a PB, and it's nice to be on top form, but even if I was never allowed to race ever again, I would still run- for running's sake.



Losing form

For my second article I have written about something I, quite unfortunately, know a lot about, (even though I'm not entirely sure what it means) "losing form":

Well known for releasing endorphins, running is viewed by many as the most rewarding way of getting fit. But, as 'mentally and physically beneficial' as running may be, it can also make you feel frustrated to the extent that you never want to run ever again. A couple of months ago, I came very close to hating running. The more I ran, the slower I got. My regular 'easy' 6 mile route felt like a marathon, and I couldn't run a mile without sounding like an asthmatic steam train. Friends/family/other runners described it very tactfully as 'losing form'. Great, I didn't even know I had 'form' in the first place, and now I had lost it.

In true sportsman fashion, I put my 'loss of form' down to things beyond my control. Unfortunately I realised I could no longer blame my 'allergy to air', after my Dad (who suffers from similar 'allergies') ran past me effortlessly halfway through Langport 10k (which still gets brought up occasionally). It was clear to me then that I had to stop blaming invisible specks of dust and admit that it must be something to do with me.

After stomping around in angry toddler fashion for a couple of days, I did the sensible thing and went to the doctor. Thankfully for me, my form came back in the shape of iron tablets, and now I'm back where I should be- i.e. getting better 10k times than my Dad! I'm hardly what anyone would call an 'experienced runner' (I'm really too young to be experienced at anything!) but, in true 'Runners World' fashion, I have compiled a short list of 'Top Tips' for anyone who, like me, has mysteriously lost form (I thought this would be an easier task than defining it):



Don't stop running- it may seem like the easiest (and least painful) option, but no-one ever became a better runner by ceasing to run;

Don't up your mileage- think about it, if your legs are rebelling at six miles, they're not going to be too happy if you up the distance to nine miles (I wish I was this logical two months ago);

Leave the watch at home- running with a watch is brilliant for monitoring your progress- but if you're running badly, you know you're not on for a PB- quantifying it doesn't make it any less demoralising;

Think outside the box- the reason for a loss of form may be completely unrelated to running- it was for me. Think about if anything has changed in your life recently (stress, daily routine etc) and, if you can, try to make small changes to accommodate for this;

DON'T PANIC! - just because at the moment you're a long way off where you used to be, it doesn't mean you won't get back there soon. Stay positive. Shouting at your legs in despair isn't going to make them run any faster, it may even make them give up altogether in protest...

I hope this list is of some help to anyone suffering from 'unexplainable loss of form' (a condition which I really do believe should be added to medical text books,) even if it just provides reassurance that you're not the only one. Just remember, it's pretty much always only temporary and you'll soon be back on track, whether 'back on track' means being the first to cross the finish line, or simply not being overtaken by an 80 year old man dressed as a fairy.

Pat on the back

El Palfreman by **Geoff Eggleston**

Since taking over as the club's social representative El has done much to improve the social aspects of the club. The various quiz nights, Thai Dinner night and last year's Christmas Party were extremely successful. By the time you read this El will have organised the 2011 Christmas Party. I am sure it will be equally successful and great value for money.

The club has always been friendly but social events enable us to get to know one another better (hopefully a plus point) as well as adding another dimension to the club.

Mention must also be made of John Scanlon who puts so much effort into producing such a wide ranging selection of topics and questions for the quizzes.



When to ice, when to heat by **Sandra Williams**

As regular athletes we all have niggles at times and some of us are unfortunate enough to occasionally suffer more serious injuries but the question is, which is best - ice or heat? Injuries from running generally fall into two categories, acute (comes on suddenly but is short-lived) and chronic (builds up slowly over time, typically due to overuse or an untreated acute injury).

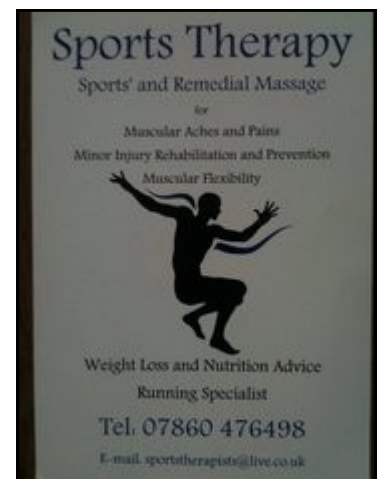
When an injury occurs there may be symptoms such as swelling, pain, redness and warmth. These reactions are the body's way of protecting the area. The swelling and redness are caused by blood and other fluids rushing to the site of the injury. This in turn causes pain and the blood may begin to clot (bruising). Of course, these are all naturally occurring reactions but too much inflammation can be counterproductive and pain may inhibit action of the muscle, therefore reducing pain and swelling enables muscles to work more effectively.

The use of ice (cryotherapy), has many positive effects. It is a powerful analgesic and can immediately begin to reduce pain. This is achieved by causing the blood vessels to dilate, forcing blood away from the area and reducing inflammation and can also prevent excessive bruising as the blood is unable to pool. Other fluids are diverted away from the area exerting less pressure on the pain receptors. This effect may carry on working for up to 20 minutes after application of the ice and could reduce scar tissue.

Ice should never be placed directly on the skin. This includes gel packs and any compress must be wrapped in a cloth to prevent burns. It should only be left on the area for a maximum of 10 minutes at a time as after this, the body will react by increasing blood flow to prevent further damage to the surrounding soft tissues. It is perfectly natural to feel a number of sensations including burning, aching and numbness and this is all part of the process. Ice can be applied every two hours if possible. There are some instances when ice should not be used including persons suffering from high blood pressure who should use ice with caution as narrowing of the vessels will exert more pressure on the vessel walls.

Heat, hot baths, spas, heat creams etc. should not be used in the first 48-72 hours of any injury as these encourage blood into the area but after pain/swelling has dissipated, contrast bathing may be an option. This is the alternate use of ice/heat but if the injury becomes aggravated, go back to the sole use of ice for 2/3 days. If the injury is chronic (old) and exercise aggravates it, the use of heat may be beneficial before exercise to loosen up the tissues and relax the area. Heating pads or hot, wet towels are perfect for this and 15 minutes is plenty of time but never use heat after exercise.

To summarise, ice should be used in the first 24-72 hours of any injury and should be applied straight away (the sooner, the better). Heat is for chronic injuries such as overuse and minor muscle strains that won't go away and should be applied before exercise.



Running Naked by **Simon Reach**

OK, so it's a shameless way to get your attention, but that is really how I've been running lately, at least my feet have anyway...

Going barefoot is certainly a hot topic in the world of running at the moment, and me being me, when I first started reading about barefoot running I was more than happy to jump on the passing bandwagon: I took my running shoes off immediately. Actually, I first started dabbling with barefoot running about 2 years ago, after reading a small article about it in a newspaper. The article was probably related to Christopher McDougall's book "Born to Run" in which he describes his adventures in Copper Canyon, Mexico where he met, and ran with, the Tarahumara Indians, a tribe of barefoot running ultra-athletes, as well as a collection of other colourful characters such as Caballo Blanco, Scott Jurek and Barefoot Ted MacDonald to name a few. And incidentally, I really recommend 'Born to Run'; it's a well written, informative and genuinely gripping read.

So what's the point of running barefoot? Won't you hurt your feet? Won't you get dog mess all over them? I'm not going to go into the whys and the wherefores of barefoot running; the numerous books, websites and blogs out there do it far better than I ever could. What is compelling is that recent studies seem to show that the more expensive the running shoe, the greater the risk of injury! That's right, I say again, the most expensive running shoes cause the most running injuries. What seems to be going on, the way I understand it, is that running shoes, with all their cushioning, shock absorption and medial support only really encourage us to run with poor running form, particularly heel striking, and give us the feeling that we are reducing the stresses on our bodies when in fact we are increasing them. Think about it, if you were barefoot how would you run? Would you land on your heels? Course you wouldn't, at least not twice anyway, the pain would be terrible. Every time you land on your heels you over-stride and put the brakes on. When you run barefoot you run with shorter, quicker, more efficient steps, gently kissing the ground with your forefoot, and no brakes.

I've been running barefoot or with so-called minimalist running shoes since April and I wouldn't go back. Once, when I had no option (my running partner refused to run with me unless I put some shoes on), I ran with some of my old running shoes. It was horrible, like running with big blocks of wood on my feet. I can now run on all surfaces; pavement, tarmac, grass, trail, and I find it so invigorating. I have only once injured my foot (a rogue thorn) and I have never once stood on a dog egg!

My minimalist shoes: Merrell Trail Glove

Recommended Reading:

Born to Run: The Hidden Tribe, the Ultra-Runners, and the Greatest Race the World Has Never Seen by Christopher McDougall

The Complete Book of Barefoot Running: Learn the Scientifically Proven Technique for Improving Your Stride and Reducing Injuries by Roy Wallack and Ken Bob Saxton

Barefoot Running: How to Run Light and Free by Getting in Touch with the Earth by Michael Sandler



Hestercombe Humdinger & Hurtle - 29 January 2012

Social / News

Our club race The Hestercombe Humdinger takes place on Sunday January 29th. As per previous years we will be holding a marshall meeting to sort out the various roles on the day (parking, timing, marshalling, drinks station etc). We need around 80 volunteers so please make every effort to help out.

The marshall meeting will take place after running on **Weds January 11th at 8pm in the Kings Arms** (the pub at the end of Chip Lane). Once we have filled all the positions then members can feel free to enter the main Humdinger race or the shorter less punishing sister race The Hestercombe Hurtle 5k.

There is usually an organised group run of the route the day before the event and we will let you know details when we have them.



Virgin London Marathon 2012

Running Forever RC has a record number of entrants in the Virgin London Marathon this year.

As you know we get 3 club places and the lucky recipients of these this year are **Phil Wilson, Mike Sharpe** and **Mike Nicholls**. **Jon Sparks** is also running with a club place, deferred from last year, and raising money for Breakthrough Breast Cancer and Shelterbox at the same time. We have 2 members, **Gerry Hogg** and **Jo Carritt**, who have qualified for Championship Places which means they are capable of doing a sub 2.45 and 3.15 marathon respectively! Running with Good for Age places are **Alex Abrams** and **Rich Palmer** which, I think, means they are both able to run sub 3.10! Even if I was in the 70+ age category (which I'm not!) I'd struggle to get a Good for Age place.



Back to reality. We have 4 members who have got Ballot places - **Sallie Durman, Graham Strang, Richard Staunton,** and **Sally Curtis**. Sally will also be raising funds for Escape. Two members are running with Charity places - **Peta Aspden** is running for Somerset Counselling Centre and **James Lowe** for St Margaret's Hospice.

Let's wish all our runners injury free training and a great day. And don't forget to sponsor our charity runners.

Curry and Quiz Night—20 January 2012

Thanks to El Palfreman and John Scanlon Running Forever RC will be holding a Curry and Quiz night on Friday 20 January at the Police Reform Club at a cost of £5 for members and £6 for a non members. If you just want to attend the quiz it'll cost £3 per person.

The event will start at 7pm with the quiz starting about 8pm and the bar, of course, will be open throughout.

Only teams of up to 4 people will be able to win the trophy and you don't need to be part of a team before you arrive as there's always chance to join with others when you get there.

Always a popular night and great fun so don't miss out. El will taking names and money from Wednesday 4 January.

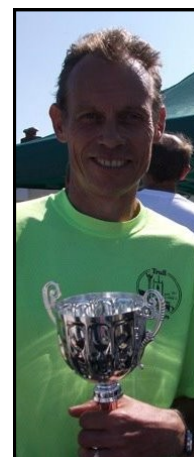


Marathon training advice — Wednesday 18 January

Club member and UKA coach Gerry Hogg will be giving a marathon training talk/chat for inexperienced runners who are entering a marathon this year. So if you have a place in London, Taunton or any marathon this year, it would be great to see you.

Primarily aimed at those who have not yet run a marathon, if you have already run one or two but want to get some professional advice, you'll find something there of interest.

The date is Wednesday 18 January at 7.45 pm in the Kings Arms. If you are interested please put a note on the relevant post on the Running Forever RC Forum or Facebook thread or to advise that you'll be there, so we can gauge numbers.



Website & Forum

www.runningforeverrunningclub.org.uk

The club website contains lots of information about the club in general and this is updated regularly with photos and news items.

The forum offers the chance to 'pick the brains' of more experienced runners, offer advice to inexperienced runners and join forces to arrange specific events whether it's running or something else. The more people that register and use the forum the better it becomes so make it a New Years Resolution to use it. We're very friendly and welcoming!

Also, put your race results on the forum and they'll get sent off to the Gazette.



Running Forever Sundays

There has recently been some confusion over Sunday club runs and I can confirm that the club run on Sunday leaves from Belvedere Car Park at 9am. However, there are often other groups going out doing off-road or long runs for marathon training so keep an eye on the forum for these ad-hoc runs.

Upcoming Races

January

8 January 2012 - First Chance 10k - <http://www.firstchance10k.co.uk/>

15 February 2012 - Oh My Obelisk - <http://www.dawlishcoasters.co.uk/OurRaces.html>

29 January 2012 - Hestercombe Humdinger & Hurtle - <http://www.thehestercombehumdinger.co.uk/>

February

5 February 2012 - Blackmore Vale Half Marathon - <http://www.bvlions.yolasite.com/>

12 February 2012 - Exeter Half Marathon - <http://www.ironbridgerunnerevents.co.uk/exeterhalf/>

19 February 2012 - Weston-Super-Mare Tough Ten - <http://www.toughten.co.uk/>

March

4 March 2012 - Bideford Half Marathon - <http://www.bidefordaac.co.uk/>

23 March 2012 - Votwo Jurassic Coast 3-Day Challenge 78.6 -
[http://www.votwo.co.uk/webapp/1205242/Jurassic Coast Challenge 2012](http://www.votwo.co.uk/webapp/1205242/Jurassic%20Coast%20Challenge%202012)

25 March 2012 - Yeovil Half Marathon - <http://www.totalbuzzevents.com/>



Enfin

I hope you like the new look and re-named Running Forever RC Newsletter. Thanks again to all the contributors especially Holly who put me to shame being so organised with the timeliness of her great articles. It seems that we have some very knowledgeable members in our club with Sandra Williams, Gerry Hogg and Emma Greig all kindly offering advice in their particular fields of expertise - thanks to all of them.



It looks like 2012 could be the year of the marathon for Running Forever! So many people running the London Marathon from the club and I get to go and watch in person! And after saying 'never again' in 2005 when I finished the Dublin Marathon I've gone and entered the Greater Manchester Marathon. In all fairness it was my knee that said 'never again' rather than me so here's hoping I'll be injury free. Oh, and I'll definitely be at Gerry's talk on 18 Jan - I'm going to need all the help I can get!

Well done to everyone who ran at Stoke Stampede on Boxing Day, another great turn out from the club. I would have joined you but I was away (great excuse!). In my defence Phil and I did run 8.5 miles on Christmas morning up Bowstones (a hill in Cheshire) and back before breakfast and saw a large group of red deer for our efforts.

Don't forget that I need help with the newsletter so please keep your articles coming in. I could write it without you but it would be very dull and mostly, I suspect, about soap making and bath truffles! So, if you'd like to write something for the next issue of 'Jog On', which is due out 1 April 2012, please let me know and I'll save you some space. Also, I need a suggestion for the 'Pat on the Back' section too - these should help you when it comes to thinking of your nomination for the George Hudson Member of the Year Award at the AGM this year.

Here's hoping we all have some great running experiences in 2012 whether it's a 10k or an ultra and whether you're running in state of the art footwear or with bare feet! Keep attending the local events as well as the far flung races and don't forget to wear your Running Forever RC kit so that supporters can identify you more easily.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Mike Nicholls - President**
- Graham Strang - Chairman**
- Rich Palmer - Vice-Chairman**
- Martin Axon - Treasurer**
- Sandra Williams - Secretary/Membership Secretary**
- Phil Wilson - Website**
- Val Perigo - Newsletter**
- El Palfreman - Social**
- Tamara Mears - Club Kit**
- Malcolm Boon - Club Kit**
- Mike Sharpe - Group Leaders**
- Steve Hudson**

www.runningforeverrunningclub.org.uk

Newsletter Editor: Val Perigo
Co-Editor: Holly Ashford

