

TODMORDEN HARRIERS

NEWS, MOTIVATION, INSPIRATION, RACING, OBSESSION, MEMORIES, BANTER AND MORE!

**KINGS AND QUEENS
OF THE TRACKS, TRAILS, FELLS,
MOUNTAINS, ROADS,
CROSS COUNTRY,
MARATHONS,
ULTRA MARATHONS
AND
PARK RUNS!**



THE TORRIER

AUTUMN 2014 Thanks for all contributions

What's On

Tuesdays-Speed Work/Interval training 6.30pm Todmorden High School

Wednesdays - Pack Runs

Thursdays - Pilates £5 6.45 start Macpelah House end of station road Hebden Bridge
-ALL WELCOME.

Keeper of the kit - Kath Brierley is at most pack runs and centrally placed in Todmorden
- Ring her on 01706 819417

Timely reminder

The days are lengthening and we can look forward to balmy summer evenings later in the year. For now, however, with cold, wet and windy pack runs still a prospect for a while I invite you to consider safety. Taking part in 'batruns' with little or no equipment or additional kit potentially put their own safety, and the safety of their fellow runners, at risk. A runner who falls or becomes unwell can always rely on the group to help, but if one of the group gives away his/her jacket, for instance, that runner becomes vulnerable too. Even in summer the risks are real if you are on the high fells; in winter the risks are substantial. There is inherent danger in fell running, and perhaps this is one of its attractions.

Carry appropriate additional kit and equipment. This expectation applies to all runners, regardless of experience, and at all times of year. It is recommended that runners are guided by the FRA Safety Rules and Equipment requirements, and in particular section 12c.

Let's not forget the road runners. When you run on the road are you visible? Please wear something reflective, ideally a high viz jacket. You know it makes sense.

CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS - GRAND PRIX NEWS

There are just 5 races left in the GP calander this year, which is plenty for lots more qualifiers, and for some categories winners to emerge. So far we have 17 GP qualifiers out of the 84 who have taken part, slightly down on the numbers last year. There is plenty of points to be scored to get a top 10 finish - and therefore a trophy rather than a certificate.

3 fell races left to run which should increase the number ofqualifiers from 12 - and it could be a very tight finish for top-spot with some prime contenders jet to qualify.

2 road races remain to be run, hopefully to improve on just the 4runners who have so far qualified. In contrast the Trail Championsiphas proved successful, 14 qualifiers with 1 race to win and there could yet be a battle for the Womens Trophy.

Happy racing for the rest of the season.

2014 TRAIL TABLE 5 races			East Lancs 10k	Roddlesworth Roller	Diane Modhal 5k	Millbrook Monster	spare short	Stainland	Tandle Hill	Burnsall 10	Preston 10	spare med	Liversedge Half	Hendon Brook 13.5	Fleetwood Half	Lancaster Half	spare long	Completed Races	total points	Qualified?	qualifying TOTAL
	attendance		17	13	15.0	10	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	68			
	average points		69.2	72.8	79.1	68.7	#DIV/0!	68.5	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!			
1	Darren T	M		88.3	95.4			82.7										3	266.4	Q	0.0
2	Craig St	M45			96.3	78.2		90.5										3	265.0	Q	0.0
3	Dan Tay	M			92.4	79.1		81.4										3	252.9	Q	252.9
4	Michael	M45	79.6	83.3	88.3	78.5		76.5										5	406.2	Q	251.2
5	Simon G	M45	71.9	78.2	81.4													3	231.5	Q	0.0
6	Andy Gly	M40		78.8		72.4		75.7										3	226.9	Q	0.0
7	Kevin C	M50	74.4			66.4		66.0										3	206.8	Q	0.0
8	Helen W	F45	65.9	64.0	71.3													3	201.2	Q	0.0
9	Peter EH	M65	64.1	64.2	66.3													3	194.6	Q	0.0
10	Dave W	M55	63.1	62.4	69.1													3	194.6	Q	0.0
11	Louise A	F50	65.7		67.4			61.4										3	194.5	Q	0.0
12	Julie Wy	F45	63.0	64.4				56.9										3	184.3	Q	0.0
13	Dave O'	M55	54.4		58.1	51.0		52.1										4	215.6	Q	164.6
14	Nina Fed	F50	54.6			51.6		56.7										3	162.9	Q	0.0
15	Richard	M40			86.8	80.8		79.7										3	247.3	n/e	0.0
16	Paul Bra	M45	92.1		101.2													2	193.3	n/e	193.3
17	Guy Whi	M45	78.0	80.9														2	158.9	X	0.0
18	Phil Coo	M45	76.9		79.7													2	156.6	X	0.0
19	Andrew	M60	79.0	77.2														2	156.2	X	0.0
20	David Le	M60			75.9	67.4												2	143.3	X	0.0
21	Richard	M50	70.9	72.1														2	143.0	X	0.0
22	Elise Mil	F50	66.8	70.4														2	137.2	X	0.0
23	Andrea	F35				61.7		61.1										2	122.8	n/e	0.0
24	Graham	M55	55.1	62.0														2	117.1	X	0.0
25	Myra We	F55			57.2			49.2										2	106.4	X	0.0

2014 FELL TABLE			Midgeley	Pendle (EC)	Crow Hill	Hodder valley (EC)	Harriers vs Cyclists	spare short	Boulesworth Bog	Coniston (EC)	Edenfield	Kentmere (EC)	Clwydian	spare med	Wadsworth Trog	Ennerdale (EC/BC)	Kinder Trog	Sedburgh Hills (EC)	Langdale	spare long	Completed Races	Total points	Qualified?	Qualifying TOTAL
	attendance		34	24	23	20	0	0	9	29	16	12	0	0	14	8	6	9	0	0	204			
	average points		69.8	72.1	74.4	73.3	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	76.5	69.8	71.8	70.9	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	69.0	78.0	71.1	74.8	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!				
1	Craig St	M45	89.2	86.1	88.3	90.2				86.7	91.1				85.4		88.8	89.0			9	353.8	Q	536.6
2	Ben Cro	M40	90.4	87.7		91.7				87.7		84.0				87.7					6	529.2	Q	529.2
3	John Alle	M	85.7	80.4						79.0		82.3			75.5		77.1				6	480.0	Q	480.0
4	Paul Bra	M45	90.3	87.4		70.1				63.8		87.4			78.2						6	477.2	Q	477.2
5	Lucy Bur	F35	79.1	76.0	77.9	80.2				77.8						80.2		78.0			7	549.2	Q	473.2
6	Dan Tay	M		80.4		80.1					73.8	73.9			75.8		71.0				6	455.0	Q	455.0
7	Mel Blac	F45	53.7	71.2		75.0				67.2	72.6	73.0						71.2			7	483.9	Q	430.2
8	David Le	M60	66.1	66.4		68.9			69.6		66.9	56.2						61.4			7	455.5	Q	399.3
9	Kath Bri	F50	70.0			68.1				63.2	70.1	65.3				59.5					6	396.2	Q	396.2
10	Kirsty Pa	F	63.3	65.1		64.2				59.2		62.7					58.9				6	373.4	Q	373.4
11	Helen W	F45	53.7	59.7	61.1					56.0	60.8				56.8						6	348.1	Q	348.1
12	Dave Wi	M55	53.4	57.8	62.4					55.8	59.6						58.5				6	347.5	Q	347.5
13	Ivan Gee	M40	91.0		90.2	85.6			93.1							88.8					5	448.7	X	448.7
14	Jon Wrig	M40		95.0		95.5				94.0						97.1					4	381.6	X	381.6
15	Peter Eh	M65	58.1	59.0					64.7	51.9	60.6	53.3									6	347.6	X	347.6
16	Andrew	M60	76.5		77.5					70.9							75.6				4	300.5	X	300.5
17	Louise A	F50	61.1	58.8					67.3	53.2	58.8										5	299.2	X	299.2
18	Guy Whi	M45	70.4		73.9						71.9						67.9				4	284.1	X	284.1
19	Nick Bar	M				94.8				89.0								89.3			3	273.1	X	273.1
20	Jane Lec	F55	68.1			66.5				65.6					61.1						4	261.3	X	261.3
21	Robert G	M	85.5								83.1	78.6									3	247.2	X	247.2
22	Dave Co	M55			81.3						80.8							80.3			3	242.4	X	242.4
23	Robert T	M			85.7					77.9					71.8						3	235.4	X	235.4
24	Mandy G	F50			60.0	58.1									57.2			57.1			4	232.4	X	232.4

2014 ROAD TABLE Race 10			Huddersfield 10k	Helen Windsor 10k	Littleborough 5k	Wesham 10k	spare short	Norton 9m	Caldervale 10m	Waggon & Horses 10m	Swinton 10m	spare med	Trimpell 20	Hendon Brook	Windmill half	Oldham Half	spare long	Completed Races	total points	Qualified?	qualifying TOTAL
	attendance		11	18	22	0	0	6	12	4	9	0	2	8	12	0	0	104			
	average points		71.1	72.1	73.4	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	77.2	82.2	76.7	72.5	#DIV/0!	62.8	71.7	72.0	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!			
1	Sarah G	F35	82.9	83.1				82.6		78.9				79.0	80.1			6	486.6	Q	486.6
2	Michael	M45	79.1		88.1			78.7	81.4		79.1			78.6	78.8			7	563.8	Q	485.2
3	Guy Whi	M45	77.5		81.9			80.0	81.2		76.0				74.3			6	470.9	Q	470.9
4	David Le	M60	67.7	71.9	70.4			68.8	74.8				59.7	67.5				7	480.8	Q	421.1
5	Paul Bra	M45		89.3	97.7			81.6	102.0						93.9			5	464.5	X	464.5
6	John Alla	M		84.5	86.5				85.7	82.8					81.4			5	420.9	X	420.9
7	Mel Blac	F45		78.2	79.0						78.4			77.8	75.8			5	389.2	X	389.2
8	Richard	M40		85.9	89.3						84.0			77.0				4	336.2	X	336.2
9	Peter Eh	M65	63.0	62.6	63.7				68.4						57.7			5	315.4	X	315.4

BEN NEVIS

11 Toddlies travelled north to compete in the Ben Nevis Race. This unique 14km race has 1347 metres of climb and descent...and a unique atmosphere with all the runners parading round the sports field behind a piped band before the race.

The drizzle at the start had turned to bright sunshine by the finish. We had enthusiastic support from Bev, Caite, Andrew Wrench and Jim Smith (36 Bens to his name!). The race was won by Finlay Wild in 1:37 and there were some top performances by Toddlies. Most notable was first Toddie home, Jon Wright, completing his iconic 21st Ben Race in 1:47 (I think he's averaged 1:47 on his 21 consecutive Bens !) and proud recipient of the Connachie Plaque for this achievement - he was obviously delighted and was spotted dancing on tables several times during our very enjoyable post race pub crawl.

Next up was Craig Stansfield with another "well under" 2 hour Ben. Dan had another good race, he's getting closer to that 2 hour mark, and Hoss was well pleased to get up and down unscathed with a dodgy calf on his 19th Ben.

Robin, in his first Ben Race, stormed up the hill, took it steady coming down, and was rumoured to have been doing sub 6 minute miles on the last road section. He snuck up on Batman, who'd taken a more scenic descent route, raced him round the finish field and pipped him with 10 metres to go.

Batman's new descent route avoiding the road is bobbins. It included 1km of heather and boggy shite, and a long grass bank so steep it felt like landing a plane. I'm sticking to the proper route next time.

James, Rhys and Sue all completed in style, but poor Mick Howard had to DNF with a back problem... (Rhys finished the Ben, jumped in his car, drove to Newcastle and did the Great North Run on Sunday I hear Mo Farah kept looking behind just in case.

...and Mandy completed her 20th Ben, improving on her time in 2013 and now relishing next year's race. All being well she'll become the first woman to achieve the Connachie plaque. We'll let you know when entries open for next year (Janaury) and hope we can get a few coachloads of us up there to support her :thumbup: Maybe we should put it in the Club Grand Prix ???



Jon Wright, proud recipient of the Cognachie
Plaque after completing his 21st Ben Nevis Race



Jon showing good form at Ovenden 2013

Iceland trip, July 2014

In July this year, Reg Czudek and I competed in the Laugavegur Ultramarathon, a 55km race across the Southern Highlands of Iceland. This is an annual event which follows the course of a popular trekking route – normally completed in 4 days, travelling between a series of Icelandic mountain huts. Why Iceland? Well, for me, it was a place I'd always wanted to go to – indeed I still had an old guidebook and 2 maps from a planned mountain biking trip over 20 years ago that never quite got off the ground. Also, I wanted to do a challenging event in the year of my 50th birthday – whilst I still could! So, after months of planning and plenty of long Lakes fell runs, suddenly it was Thursday 10th July and time to get up early for my £99 Easy jet flight to Reykjavik. No dramas on the journey to Manchester airport, I arrived 2 hours early for the flight and joined the check in queue. That went fine but then I noticed a very long line stretching the length of Terminal 1 and well out into the car park area – this was to get through the security checks...2 days earlier the rules had changed and now you had to show all items with batteries in etc



The next 2 days involved picking up the race info pack, doing a bit of sight seeing and preparing for the race – the race bus was leaving at 4 30 am on the Saturday morning.

Reg and I met up nervously and clambered aboard. The journey was to take 4 hours. The first 2 were on normal roads and then the convoy of 4 full length coaches (with extra high suspension and extremely large wheels – a bit “monster truck” like) slowly lurched along narrow volcanic sand tracks and crossed through several streams and minor rivers...”There is far more water than usual today because of the recent bad weather, make sure you are wearing your full winter mountain running gear” we were warned. No chance of sleep on this bus ride! Not that I wanted to with some awesome, outlandish scenery to see. The

race organiser informed us that NASA had brought astronauts here for training as the volcanic, lunar style landscape is very “moonlike”.

After a buffet style breakfast stop that worked surprisingly well, we arrived in Landmannalaugar at the starting point. It was raining, quite cold and the track appeared to go rapidly upwards and then disappear into the mist and mountains... our exciting adventure suddenly became very real!! Reg and I were in different start

groups (based on your own estimated finish time). There were 3 groups with about 150 runners in each. At 9:05 I set off in Group 2. There are 4 checkpoints you have to reach within a certain time. The first stage is mostly uphill and the weather had thankfully improved slightly so you could see the impressive landscape...



WOW! WOW! WOW!

I am not very poetic so let's just say a mile or so in the scenery became amazing. Sometimes like being in the Lakes, sometimes similar to Scotland, but at other times like how I imagine it to be on the moon or even another planet. The variety of terrain to look at just kept you going. So although we were almost constantly climbing, the first hour whizzed by. Then we got to the snow...

You could hardly see the person in front of you but thankfully the trail was mostly clearly marked with wooden posts. I passed a sobering memorial to an Israeli hiker who had died from exposure - less than a quarter of a mile from the safety of the mountain hut at Hrafninnusker. The snow was mostly firm underfoot but there were crevasses and boiling volcanic pools emitting volcanic gases, at times just feet from the track. A surreal experience. Then we came to a part where the snow was melting...one foot went ankle deep into icy water, the next nearly up to your waist. Reg said later he met a female competitor who had to retire after losing her balance and falling right over here. For me, that was the scariest part of the whole race. The water was so cold it hurt a lot and I was thankful to clamber onto firmer ground after

what was actually only about a 50m section – luckily. My feet and lower legs were like blocks of ice but they warmed up over the next few minutes. “Just keep moving”, I told myself.

I reached the first checkpoint a few minutes later and drank Powerade and ate banana pieces before continuing. The course maintained a high level – but went relentlessly up and down over a mixture of rock, snow and volcanic sand – until about the 18km point. I still felt good, being careful not to run too fast. I was also stopping briefly to take photos, sometimes asking fellow runners or hikers to take one of me. This all helped me conserve energy – I knew it would be a long day!

Suddenly we reached the Jokultungur descent, where we finished the high mountain section and entered a “Lord of the Rings” type of landscape.



I was elated by the change, knowing the hardest part was now completed. I sped down to the valley below – a 1200ft typical fell race style descent – where I overtook maybe 20 runners. This part was great, until I realised at the bottom I still wasn't at the halfway point yet. Anyway, although a few people overhauled me, I maintained a good pace to checkpoint 2, by a large lake at Alftavatn. I was well ahead of schedule for my estimated target time of 7:29 and the outstanding scenery was inspiring me to run well. No injuries or particular problems yet.

I knew that from the 2nd to the 3rd checkpoint at Emstrua was largely flat, undulating at times, but it was to be broken up by reaching the “special needs” drop zone and my bag. This I did after wading across one of the deepest rivers. I ate some pringles, drank Lucozade and decided against changing my drenched socks. What was the point with another 2 more rivers to cross? I set off again. As expected I began to struggle a bit on these flatter sections. I was running slower now and was losing places. Nevertheless, I reached checkpoint 3 feeling confident and happy that I would now definitely finish. This time there were pieces of chocolate bars available too – snickers and bounty types. I stretched my muscles and prepared for the next part.



This was interesting, involving a clamber down to a deep gorge (with a rope to help) and then after more minor hills we came to the final deep river crossing over the Thronga. I had been a bit concerned about this final obstacle – but as it happened a rope stretched across meant you just had to take your time and keep your balance.



(Like most competitors I didn't bother with the "plastic waders" shown in the photo).

Now, I was at Checkpoint 4. Just 5km to go!!!

Under normal circumstances this would have been very easy – a mostly downhill track through natural Icelandic forest – with loads of support from Icelandic day trippers (the finish at Pormosk is the most accessible part of the whole route). Indeed, just after the River Thronga crossing we climbed the last hill – with great views of the Eyjaffjallajokull volcano that caused so much trouble for air travel in 2010.

It's there in the background (sorry about the quality – taken on my cheap phone as my camera decided not to work!)

Luckily the volcano decided to behave today! However, by now my legs had seized up and my left knee was sore. So I was hobbling rather than running... But soon I turned a corner and there was the finish! A fairly low key affair - this race still has a "local" feel to it despite attracting runners from 27 different countries. Not really anything like the razzamatazz of Ironman France – the last time I did a race abroad. The finishers medal is rather understated too – I was hoping for a really big one to display on the wall at home!! But seriously, this was a fantastic race – very friendly with a bit of everything. I reckon quite a few Toddies would enjoy it.

After finishing, there were hot showers, a decent meal and a natural hot tub laid on. Then it was back on the bus for 3 hours to Reykjavik. This was via a different route that went across the Southern flatlands in Iceland (apparently this part was all under

the sea until the last mini Ice Age). Quite unlike the volcanic, mountainous landscape of the rest of Iceland.

I wondered about Reg. He had been really unlucky – he ran out of time on the way to Checkpoint 3. He was “retired” from the race after over 7 hours of running and bundled into a land rover. With less than 17km to go to the finish – he would have undoubtedly made it had he been allowed to continue. Reg was very philosophical about it – he said he understood that the organisers had to have a cut off for safety reasons – competitors and marshals alike. Typical of this race they provided all those who didn’t reach the finish with a free meal and drinks at a café on the way back to Reykjavik. Reg and I met up again the next day for beer and to watch the World Cup Final on a big screen in Reykjavik town square!

Iceland is thought of as an “expensive” country but Reg and I found it to be okay. Indeed similar to Switzerland that I’ve just come back from. The next day we had a few beers (only about London prices - £5 a pint) and then went on the Golden Circle Tour – we saw a fantastic waterfall even if the main geyser at Strokur was being temperamental. The Blue Lagoon was amazing too!

I really enjoyed this trip. I am considering going back next year. This time I was there for 6 days but you can get a flight from Thursday to return on the Sunday. Reg was a great companion and I believe he is thinking of going back too. Iceland is well worth a visit and this race is unique.



Simon G.

The Mille Cymru – MC1K 2014 - One Ride to Bind them All

“What are you up to this weekend?” a friend asked.

“We’re doing the Mille Cymru”, I replied.

“The Mill....?”

Richard and myself were getting used to explaining what the MC1K entailed. “It’s a 1000 kilometre ride round Wales”, Richard explained, “with 16,000 metres of climbing...in three days”

You could almost hear the whirring cogs as they struggled to figure out the enormity of our adventure. “You’re mad!” he assured us. We nodded in agreement. Since we’d done the LondonEdinburghLondon last year we’d been affectionately referred to as the Mad Badgers by friends who viewed our Audax UK super randonneuring as “a bit too far for me”.

Training had not gone quite as planned. Our Easter Arrow team succumbed to injury and illness before the event. We’d managed a few century rides and a 200k early in the year but had to resort to a DIY 400k and a



Welsh grand depart. Were we fit enough for what would undoubtedly be the toughest event so far in our short AUK careers? It was with some trepidation that we set off from Upton Magna at 11am on a drizzly Friday morning with 93 fellow MC1K’ers. We had just 75 hours to complete the ride.

The Fellowship of the Wheel: Upton Magna to Llanwtryd Wells - 270km / 4250m

Despite our best intentions, “Let’s take it easy at the start, there’s a long way to go”, we got caught up in the general excitement and averaged 27kph for the first 40k. Sense then prevailed and we made more steady progress, and were lucky that the forecast for torrential rain and thunder proved pessimistic. We crossed the Gospel Pass in a deluge but by the time we were cruising down the Wye Valley the sun was out. Despite the day’s major pitstop being hosted by Kingstone Brewery we stuck to lasagne and coke. Darkness encroached as we rode up the Usk valley and we were cocooned by our dynamo lights as we climbed the Mynnydd Eppynt. On the way down we were suddenly confronted by a chap in camouflage gear, barring our way. “You can’t go through just yet”, the army corporal explained, “there’s an ambush about to take place, with lots of pyrotechnics”. Despite the late night chill we didn’t argue...he was cradling a fearsome looking assault rifle. Ten minutes later the sky erupted with flares and rockets and the rat-a-tat-tat of machine gun fire sounded much too close for comfort. Having lost 20 minutes of our precious time schedule we plunged on down the hill. Near disaster struck just after midnight as my rear cassette gear cable snapped. Fortunately no steep hills lay between us and our “overnight” stop just 7k away. We were greeted by cups of tea, wholesome food and a willing bike mechanic. “You get a few hours sleep and it’ll be sorted when you wake up”!

The Two Coasts: Llantwtryd Wells to Llanwtryd Wells – 305km / 4200m

Day two dawned and at 7am, a little later than we'd planned, we were off towards the seaside, behind most of the other riders. Today was to be a tour of the Pembrokeshire coast. No big hills but an abundance of short steep ones. We rode in bright sunshine down narrow lanes through pretty coastal towns and villages. Another major mechanical hit us just before the very steep descent down to Pendine. Richard's front brake and light suddenly parted company from the frame, and the dislodged nut was nowhere to be found. Emergency surgery with zip ties held the bits away from the wheel and he then rode the next 100k hoping that the obliging mechanic at Llanwtryd Wells had a spare nut...assuming, in the



meantime, that he didn't end up in a mangled heap at the bottom of a steep hill. It was my turn for misfortune next as, coasting down a dual carriageway into a rain shower, I waded to slow us down to put on waterproofs. I spotted an imminent layby, but not the small kerb edging it, and suddenly found myself diving towards the deck as the kerb whipped my wheels from under me. I shook myself down and was surprised to see little damage, to me or the bike. We joined a couple of other riders as we time trialled up the A40 before climbing in the dark back to Llanwtryd Wells and welcome food and drink and a couple of hours sleep. Yet again the mechanic was a star and when we departed at 5am we both had two fully functioning brakes...but, after only three hours sleep, only partly functioning brains.

Return of the Dragon: Llantwtryd Wells to Betws y Coed – 300km / 5550m

The initial gentle ride north up a meandering valley did little to prepare us for the steepest hill of the whole ride. We'd heard that the Devil's Staircase was steep but had shrugged it off with a nonchalant "we've ridden Hardknott" arrogance. When finally confronted by the ribbon of tarmac arching above us like a rearing Cobra we admitted our error. One of the riders had told us that his strategy was to walk the steep bits and save his legs. We didn't take much persuading to copy his style on the first of the three "stairs". Other riders bravely rode past us. "Their legs will be trashed at the top" we assured ourselves. (You can be assured that we'll be back there soon to ride the staircase in the manner it deserves...on our lightest bikes). We rode the next two stairs and enjoyed the swoop down to Devil's Bridge, but not the gratuitous descent down a track to the next checkpoint. The hospitality was exceptional but the climb back up to the road was tortuous. The day became a bit of a blur as we cycled up the beautiful Elan Valley in the company of a couple of day riders, rode the steeply undulating lanes of central Wales with brief stops at Co-ops or Spars to refuel on sugary drinks and pastries and relished the oh-so-brief respite from hills as we cruised down the valley and along the coast to Barmouth and Harlech. The hills returned in Snowdonia as we meandered through Beddgelert and Rhyd Ddu. It was after midnight when we reached

Llanberis in the company of an Elliptigo rider (chapeau!). With clear skies the temperature had plummeted. The climb up Pen y Pass warmed us up but soon after starting our descent we passed through the invisible wall of cold air caused by the temperature inversion. It felt like plunging into a deep freeze and, despite the deployment of all available layers, the wind chill was fierce. It seemed a long, long way to our next stop at Betws-y-Coed. By the time we reached the village outskirts our knees were knocking together on our bikes. As we shivered our way into the checkpoint blankets were thrown over us and we wolfed down hot food and tea. Where the sleeping arrangements at Llanwtryd Wells had been meticulously regimented at this, our last stop, it was sleeping chaos. The smaller dimensions of the hall required optimum use of space. Fully clothed bodies on mattresses were randomly crammed into every nook and cranny. As one rider was getting up to depart another collapsed onto the vacated mattress to grab a brief nap. We joined the melee and at 4.40am, after one and a half hours fitful sleep and a quick breakfast of corned beef hash, we ventured out into the dawn half an hour later than planned.

Home to the Shire: Betws y coed to Upton Magna – 140km / 2000m

We were again behind most riders but soon started gaining ground as we worked hard to combat the persistent cold. A sunny day was in prospect as we cycled the narrow lanes over the Cwm Hafodyredwydd and across the moors to Bala. Richard was struggling to eat or drink but there was no prospect of a cafe stop in Bala as time was getting tight. We ghosted through the early morning mist off Lake Bala before starting the steep climb over Bwlch y Groes. By now Richard was away with the fairies and our pace had dropped to a point where the 75 hour deadline was looking tight. "Come on, get some food down you", I chided, "here's some dextrosol". "We need to dig in, come on, it's all in the head". As the sun was behind us I saw the shadow of the clandestine V sign aimed at me from behind my back. Fortunately revival kicked in before the col and our pace picked up again. The road plunged down to the stunning Lake Vyrnwy and, back on schedule, we enjoyed a relatively leisurely cooked breakfast at the final checkpoint. On down the Tanat valley and, as happens on many long rides, our pace quickened as the 20km to go point was reached. The head rules the body and, in time trial mode, we raced the final twisting lanes to the finish back at Upton Magna. What a great feeling as you finish such adventures... we crossed the line comfortably under the time limit. As we devoured a meal the adrenaline wore off and we suddenly realised just how tired we were and felt the excruciating aches and pains which had gone unnoticed only half an hour previously. This was far outweighed by the elation of finishing the legendary MC1K.

What an epic route. It linked together a number of revered long Welsh AUK rides and, it would appear, aimed to do so by the hilliest route possible and to include many of the classic steep climbs in Wales. The 16,000 metres of climbing and the 75 hour deadline introduced an insidious time pressure which allowed little respite.

A big thank you to Mike Hamilton, the organiser and his merry band of helpers for their superb organisation and for looking after us.

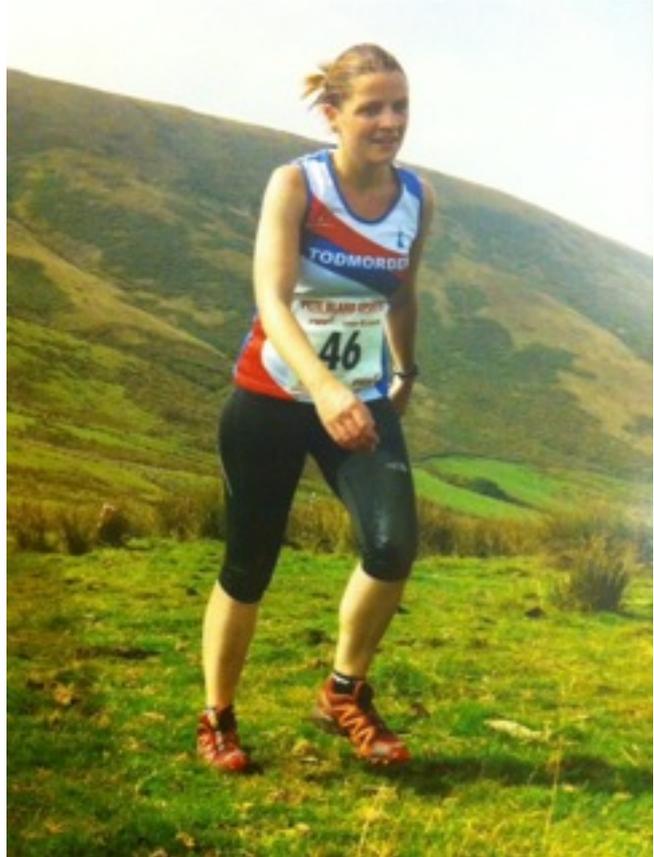
As the lager advert opines this is "probably the toughest cycle event in the UK." Both of us have completed numerous running and cycling ultra-endurance events, but this was certainly the toughest physical challenge either of us has ever undertaken.....to date ☺

What's next Richard???

The Mad Badgers: Phil Hodgson & Richard Leonard

Catherine Elvin

- I started running in...2011. I'd always run a bit on and off but started doing more when I moved to Leeds and joined a club there.
- I started running because... I found myself in a new city where I didn't know many people and it seemed a good way to get me out of the house!
- My favourite thing about running is... Going out discovering new places and seeing new things other people don't.
- I joined Tod Harriers in... January this year, after moving back up north from London.
- My favourite thing about Tod Harriers is... The variety of locations and different routes. And that all of these involve pubs.
- My personal running achievements (big or small) are... All the training runs I didn't really want to do. There are several of these.
- My favourite race(s)... I've done the northumberland coastal run the last few years and will hopefully do it again next year. Being from Newcastle I'll always have a soft spot for the great north run too.
- My personal bests (can be fell, road, track, etc.) are... 10k 44.46, half marathon 1.38.09 marathon 3.27.59
- Anything else you'd like to say... Some day I will learn to run up hills.



Axeman Crowther

So the years starts with a really buoyant me, yes more than usual, planning to be fit fast and good at brit and english champs. First off the Short irish Donard. I pester the committee with my presence on a monday night at the staff of life to get my seven penneth over and I persuaded them we needed a vet 40 team and some of them, me included, could not always afford the whole expense of 160 to get to ireland and back and run a 5 mile race. This successfully done I got the place sorted and then realised with my groundbreaking plans for house improvement (new back yard and dry stone wall) this would have to fall by the wayside as would my habit of picking up top ten places at mountain marathons, - often behind Phil. Thus MM's are cut to two, RAB and OMM no additions. I reluctantly don't enter, and focus on the English, only to find the systems for calculation how well you do are more favorable to a 41 year old like me in the british... And the donard race turns out to be like a night orienteering event, which i am pretty good at. Bu@@@eration, I missed out. Race 2 Ennerdale - entered, got there all prepped with David Leslie driving me, Thanks DL, had a great race, came 37 Brit, over 40 40 Englishman over 40. Hurrah! Year Gaol achieved in a long event when i had been concentrating training on short fast stuff, oh well! It was benifitting me inthe English. So no great loss! Dollar, what with pressure on for the flipping back yard I failed to get up to scotland and only a few toddies did, Well done those who did, next year I'm getting round the families of runners I hope to encourage and writing dates in peoples family diaries - I think this is a new and innovative tactic to getting us a high brit vet 4 place - which we are VERY capable of doing! Thats Bronze or silver medals for all entering!!! Measgwyn Muddle: Odd a new race, not tested apparently made up of bits of established races form a new start point. Now if you ever check out a race online and find it has been moved 2 hours, then write it in your FRAQ book, Because when you turn up 10 mins after the start because (and I am cross here) the organiser changes the time for a BRITISH CHAMPIONSHIP by two hours well after (8 months) publishing the FRA guide... I shall leave that hanging. 6 of us did, at least. We jogged round and got a time any way - I wish they had told me I would have got a proper time as I would have run harder or lied about my time, I mean given them my race estimate... So I messed u[badly at my attempt. Next year i'm going to all of them, on time and hope fully will make a part of the team that will win Todmorden Harriers some vet 40 british glory! Neb, Captain Caveman the Ian Hodgson and prospective Fell Captain 2015

The Mynd Mac Fell Race.

So I'm there earlier on in the year for a family holiday and as granny was available for child care, I skipped merrily off on a Sunday Morning to Shropshire, 45 min drive from holiday house. Got to race with 15 min's to spare and realising if not brought a map, I put my road atlas (this A4 book in my back pack...). Quick jog down to start line and chat with a young pair of lads in blue form Brecon who were just running for the first time in fell races, but one of them had a detailed map. I noted the odd end of the race, important for later amusement folks!, but essentially back down to a fence which you run up by, but then peel of finish down a steep valley. So off we go, jokes about the back pack, me saying I've a library in there, I'm about 9th by the start of the first hill, which is after running out of carding mill valley then taking the north hill to the right and curves up to a fence by a golf course, two local Mercian in yellow take the lead with the two Brecon lads and a selection of others behind, I'm doing ok, field of 40, 25% not bad, first climb, - and these are climbs and the gain, and the Mercians don't walk, so we all soldier on, two drop off and I'm 7th, Mercian's getting further away on the 6 mile course, so I aim to keep up with a fellow lookalike Vet 40, who after the first hill also drops off, saying something about cake a beer for breakfast, used to this psychological warfare of my two favourite things to distract me, slow me and cause me to drool, I clamp my chops shut and run harder. Down, for second hill start, up a long winding valley to near pole hill and the climb summit, now I remembered there are four climbs, so eased off and took stock, so I'm 5th, with me and one of the Blue Brecon lads, (Ben, 19) having a battle on the fourth hill, me practicing my age old psykout of encouraging works in a level tone while running hard. Dispite this Clearly Ben was more encouraged than discouraged and beats me to the top of the hill, The two blues and me have not seen the two yellow, local, 30 something Mercians for some 5 min's so we soldier on, over the last hill and down to the all important fence line, and I note with some interest the two lads, with an accurate map turn left not right along the fence, Ahha, in a good Alan Partridge voice, say I. So I descend, for a short while, getting my breath back before shouting the two lads back, they check map and give chase. That does it, I'm off like a march born hare with some sprint practice, belting down a steep descent i reach an excited Marshall who points me sharp left for a finish line, and jog through some 30 seconds before the two Brecon lads. One turn out to be 16, the owner of the map, came third and although its accurate he was not really following it. So a few more encouraging words of wisdom from me and i scoot to the organiser thank him and start off, thinking maybe third place is pretty brilliant behind two local Mercians. As I stop for a chat with the excited Marshall I note two more Mercians come down , one of them raging bout bad route marking, I defend the organisers by yelling some abuse back, justified I think, he slinks off to the finish and I smugly strut off on the moral high ground for the car, only to realise he was one of the Mercians I was chasing... it was the back view of a sack like mine... ahhhh think I, where did I come then... back to the organiser to find I was first, winner and a vet 40 as well. How chuffed was I! Now all i need it the write up in the FRA mag!

Neb



TOILET SEAT

A fast start to the year with Mandy collecting points before Christmas, then a steady flow with no toilet seat stars as nobody has earned above 5pts to date - but there's probably lots that I have either missed or forgotten. I now believe that it's time for Uncle Barry to close the toilet seat at the end of the year as I am not around as much as in the past and no longer racing, spending more time in the caravan etc. It would be nice to see someone else re-open the toilet seat in the New Year with a few fresh ideas?

UNCLE BARRY

First Points. Not even Christmas and Mandy was off, managing to mess up the start times at the annual duathlon, giving a few teams a flying start!

That's a quick 5pts Mandy
Kit Care advice (by Phil)
 Leave your saddlebag open at the start of a long cycle ride, don't check until end of ride, then find tod cycle jacket missing. A 10 mile ride or drive - not sure which to find jacket in middle of road with several car tyre tracks on it, Mandy managed to clean it up with no damage done for just 5pts

Baton, what baton? Ivan had lost it, but was surprised his partner Ben had not noticed, claiming he had been behind him 99.9% of the time. They managed to improvise with a handy twig to pass on at the changeover in the Calderdale relay. Ivan 5pts for dropping baton, 5pts to Ben for not noticing.

No Hills Phil? I cannot believe you forgot about the hills when planning an easy cycle route - **all** your routes go uphill! 0 pts

Burnt Nose. Dave Wilson managed to severely burn his nose whilst walking on Snowden at Easter. Must have been the reflection off his mirrored sunglasses. Change the glasses Dave and earn 5pts

Notice anything Missing? Lee started the Blackstone Edge fell race with two shoes but finished with only one. Don't worry, you have gained 5pts

Don't forget your kit. Martin cycled from Oxenhope to the Hare & Hounds for a Wednesday run - but forgot his running kit. 5pts Martin

Please start. Andrew had an embarrassing moment on the ferry to Jura as his campervan failed to start when he tried to disembark. 5pts Andrew

Post race diet? Daz was spotted putting sugar on his chip butty after the Huddersfield 10k. Personally. I prefer salt with a touch of vinegar. 5pts Daz

Right wet suits wrong address
 Neil ordered wet suits for a family holiday on the internet, then realised he'd had them sent to the old address having forgotten he had moved house. 5pts Neil

Ivan I agree. Waterboy, whoever he is, deserves honorary toilet seat pts for carrying 7kg of water up Green Gable, waiting 3hrs for 400 runners who never arrived due to Ennerdale race route being changed because of bad weather. If he had been a Toddy he would have won the toilet seat outright!

The Beers off! Uncle Barry mistook the gravy jug for his pint whilst eating his meal at the Shepherd's Rest realising just as the jug reached his lips. That will be 5pts

LEAGUE TABLE

5	Ben Crowther
5	Mandy Goth
5	Phil Hodgson
5	Neil Hodgkinson
5	Ivan Gee
5	Uncle Barry
5	Dave Wilson
5	Lee McCluskey
5	Martin Roberts
5	Darren Graham
5	Andrew Bibby