



Chris Ashworth puts in a strong performance through the mud at Leamington Spa at the Midlands Cross Country Championships. Read why he was allowed to run while many others weren't – page 6

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Captain's Column



This is my first 'Captain's Column' and I thought crikey what have I got to write about? Then I started thinking about what it is I love about running, well that's easy 'DIRT'. I was brought up around it, have always worked with it and all of us will end up under it, so why not run through it?

The virtues of 'off road' running are well publicised, the softer surface is kinder to the body, the foot hits the ground at different angles, and the changing terrain forces you to change pace and stride length. Together these things help avoid many injuries that plague road runners.

For me (and my off road buddies) it's much more than that. Just being away from traffic is a good enough reason. I've lost count of the number of close encounters we've had with wildlife while out early on a Sunday morning. When I think about it none of the really memorable runs have been on road, except the one where I limped home with Plantar Fasciitis!

I know there are many runners that never get their trainers dirty, and they love the sport as much as everyone else. We all run on the road, of course we do, but if you are tempted to leave the tarmac for a few miles, give it a go!! It is harder and slower so forget minute mile times, just enjoy the challenge and the views and you won't even notice the effort. Running without effort, GREAT!!!!

Rob

More Dirt?

Our new Club Captain, along with Himalayan runner Jo Plumbley (see last Prattle & Run) have been co-opted by race veteran Jim Godden to join his team for the [High Peak Marathon](#) a 42-mile night time navigation endurance challenge for teams of four. The route through the Dark Peak of Derbyshire traverses the Derwent Watershed, starting and finishing at Edale Village Hall. Jim & Co make a habit of winning the mixed team category ('no pressure there then!' said Jo).

Jim wrote an article which was published in the June 2005 edition of this magazine; I'm hoping we will all hear about the 2011 race.

For Peace of mind ...

Worried about going off-road alone? Look at the statistics; every year thousands of runners and walkers go into the fells and the woods and return safely. At least they're not likely to have been hit by a road vehicle! It's mostly common sense. But sometimes things go wrong.

In May 2001 the body of a jogger was found in the gutter – not off-road in the Brecon Beacons, but on a housing estate in Cardiff. He had suffered a fractured skull after collapsing whilst out running. It was two days before he could be



identified as 39-yr-old Kevin Cram, yes, the younger brother of Steve.

In Kevin's case, early identification would not have saved his life, but his family could have been contacted, saving them some of the anguish of finding out when it was all too late. Steve has responded to the family tragedy by producing the [Cram-Alert](#) a wristband which tells First Responders and Paramedics that identification and medical needs are only a phone call away.

A pack of 2 wristbands costs £15.95, with the first year's registration free, after which peace of mind currently costs £15 pa. Consider doing it for your family, if not for yourself!

See www.cramalert.co.uk for more details

Aquathlon



13th March and the 3rd Thornbury Running Club Aquathlon will soon be with us, but there's a lot happening that day! The date clashes with the Grizzly, the Gloucester 20 and the final Gwent League Cross Country race for the season. This means Sandra needs all the help she can get! If at all possible, please put your name down on her list.

Today, **Richard Illingworth**, this is your...20 Questions!

1. *Where were you born?* Ashby De la Zouch (Leicestershire)
2. *What is your favourite race?* Oldbury 10 Bristol 1/2
3. *What is your favourite film?* Magnificent 7 (and John Wayne films)
4. *What sporting moment are you most proud of, (PB etc)?* London Marathon 2hr 57 min 24 sec - a long long time ago (*Editor's note – Richard is still the holder of the Club Record for London Marathon. Don't they breed them like they used to?*)
5. *What is your favourite book?* Bernard Cornwell (the Sharp series)
6. *How many years have you been running?* 30 years
7. *What is your occupation?* Previously HR Manager but recently retired

Oh Dear! The editor had the wrong picture here!

It seems the quickest London Marathoner in the Club was moving too fast to get in the photo ...

8. *How many miles a week on average do you run?* Hardly any now but cycling 100 miles a week plus
9. *What is the first piece of music you ever bought?* An Elvis Presley 45 rpm record (to go with my new Dansette record player)
10. *What is your favourite piece of running kit?* Gloves
11. *Secret crush?* Anne Bancroft (from the film the graduate)
12. *Do you have any pre/post race rituals/habits?*
Toilet matters (but there is no need to go into that in detail)
- 13 *Which is your favourite, winter or summer?* .No competition Summer
14. *Who is your sporting hero?* Seb Coe (speed and style)
15. *How do you get through 'the wall'?* Just kept going in a daze
16. *Tell us about an embarrassing moment?* NO
17. *What is your current cycling goal?* To try and keep up with Bob Tyrell
18. *When you were a child what did you want to be when you 'grew up'?* Engine driver
19. *Do you have any secret ambitions?* If I said they would not be secret (go on then to cycle one of the famous French Cols).
20. *Why did you start running?* I tore my hamstring and running was one way to get fit again: like forest Gump I never stopped running.

And today, Martyn Green, this is your...20 Questions!

1. *Where were you born?* – In Evesham, Worcestershire, it's a town a little bigger than Thornbury an hour's drive north of Bristol. It is built around a bend on the River Avon and after periods of heavy rain the two tend to merge. It was founded on the site where Eoves, a local shepherd, saw a vision of Mary. It is no longer well known for its virginal visions.
2. *What is your favorite race?* – Always any other race to the one I am in. I do enjoy races but I enjoy them so much more when completed.

3. *What is your favorite film?* – Apart from an episode of a BBC TV series Kinsey in the early 90s it would have to be Pan’s Labyrinth, a truly fantastic film. Kinsey was screened long before the days of youtube so my secret is safe. On the subject of youtube check out an animated film, “A Cow’s Tale”, to see what magic can be done whilst laid up with a broken collarbone.

4. *What sporting moment you are most proud of, (PB etc)?* – The most memorable had to be surviving the storm ravaged OMM in 2008 and then evading the mountain rescue teams with Squadron Leader “Tunnel King” Denton.

5. *What is your favorite book?* - Atonement by Ian McEwan, this choice is in no way influenced by the cover picture of Keira Knightley. The rumours about us are also untrue.

6. *How many years have you been running?* – This time around, I have been running for ten years. I was introduced to the club by Trevor Roberts. He was old back then, he must be really old now.

7. *What is your occupation?* – I have had a varied career working as a male model, film extra, strippergram and nightclub bouncer. In recent years I have taken up steady employment at Airbus.

8. *How many miles a week on average do you run?* – 10 to 20. Once I get used to this I plan to increase it.

9. *What is the first piece of music you ever bought?* - Oh dear, very embarrassing - Art Garfunkel, Bright Eyes. You’ve got to feel for those rabbits. Every time I hear it a little tear comes to the corner of my eye and I am taken back in time.

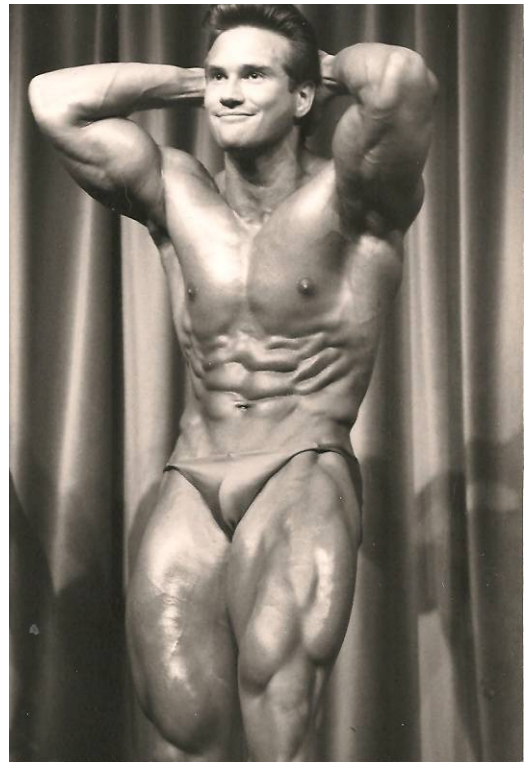
10. *What is your favorite piece of running kit?* – My lucky shorts. They only come out for special races now as they are getting a little worn. I had the very disturbing misfortune once of being sat down whilst a famous local runner stood by me in his lucky shorts. I still have flashbacks now that drive me to drink. Needless to say I won’t let mine get that worn out.

11. *Secret crush?* – Wow there are just so many. Where do I start, more importantly when?

12. *Do you have any pre/post race rituals/habits?* – I screw my number up in to a ball and then flatten it out before pinning it on. God knows why.

13. *Which is your favorite, winter or summer?* – I have no real preference here, please can I have Spring?

14. *Who is your sporting hero?* – Nobody in particular, but anyone who clearly is not naturally gifted but through determination exceeds expectations.



15. *How do you get through 'the wall'?* – I like to do a mental inventory of what bits of my body are still working OK and then I convince myself it can't be all that bad.

16. *Tell us about an embarrassing moment* – Whilst at my high school end of year awards my headmaster called my name to receive the school colours for sporting prowess. Proudly I strode past rows and rows of fellow students, head held high, only to get near to the front before realising that the award was for another, much older, “Martin Green” who was already on stage. To this day I maintain they only gave it to him to save his pride after getting there first.

17. *What is your current running goal?* – To keep getting fatter (should this read faster?)

18. *When you were a child what did you want to be when you 'grew up'?* – A Professional Bodybuilder. Well that was my teenage dream, in my childhood I wanted to design cars. It is such a painful disappointment that I have gone on to work on aircraft instead.

19. *Do you have any secret ambitions?* – I would not describe myself as ambitious. My Geography teacher once wrote that he was, “sure Martyn has ability but also sure that he will go on to waste it”. I am so pleased to say that I have lived to prove him right.

20. *Why did you start running?* – I was swimming and cycling at the time I met Trevor and we agreed that it seemed to be a good way to finish a triathlon.

Are you a member?

Time to sign-up for Thornbury Running Club Membership again – and do it before the end of the month after which the ‘late supplement’ – another £4 – will be added!

Now, I'm going to talk about England Athletics again. In November I published an article about joining, but I make no apologies for repeating myself. Whether or not you know about, care about or agree with it, the fact is, if you are going to race you need to join. Why?

- **Increasingly it is *personal membership* of EA which is going to give you discounted entry to races.** Only a couple of races at £2 or £3 difference and you've got your money back.
- **You may not be able to run at all without EA membership.** Thornbury Running Club enters two races organized by the Midland Counties Athletic Association; in each case you can not run unless you are an EA member. Recently 15 members were entered for the Cross Country championships – eight of those were not allowed to compete.
- **And you do get your money back** – you will be given a £5 Sweatshop voucher when you join.
- **Club London Marathon places** are dependent on the number of EA members there are in the Club. Any chance you might want to apply for one?

So – save yourself £4 by rejoining NOW – then you can easily afford the extra £5 for EA. Simple!

If you think you're tough:

Do you ever look out the window on a winter's morning, see the rain coming down and think I'm not sure if I want to go out in this?

WELL

Some of you may remember Mike from Toronto. He did one of Pete's Tintern runs with us, he has done the Stroud Half, ran a few club night runs and certainly looked after me and Jim when we were in Toronto.

Anyway, Mike's club (Longboat) have a Saturday morning run where they meet at the Grenadier Restaurant in High Park, Toronto. This is a picture of Mike before his Saturday run. I'm not sure the detail of the weather conditions – but I know it had been -26C (with wind chill) in that week. Does this help to make you feel any better when you do get out and run in our rain?



John Grimsey

Following Jim Constables talk in our Coaching series, Jacqueline sums-up

Mind over Matter

VERY FEW people in life allow themselves to achieve what they are capable of. This is particularly apparent in running, where we are always measuring ourselves against times and comparing ourselves to others. The body may be strong, fit and willing, but most minds will do anything to stay within the comfort zone. There are lots of reasons for this:

- The possibility of failure
- Concern that success will mean more pressure to succeed
- Fear that it's going to hurt too much
- Feeling intimidated by other runners

Everyone is different. The British track cyclist Victoria Pendleton has made no secret of the fact that without her sport psychologist, she would go to pieces in races. In contrast, the man who coaches top triathletes Alastair and Jonathan Brownlee says the brothers show no fear – 'they race even better than they train'.

If you recognise yourself as someone whose weakness lies up-top rather than down below, here's some advice from sport psychologist Jim Constable: 'It's time to take control of your thoughts. Running is mental, so recognise your brain as your greatest asset.'

That was his message last month when he took a TRC Winter Seminar called Mind Over Matter. 'Attitude is a choice' says Jim, who works as a performance coach for PlanetK2 and is completing an MSc in applied sport psychology. 'If you believe you can, or you believe you can't, you're probably right. So why not be curious about what you *can* achieve?'

Easier said than done. Just how do you banish negative thoughts that have held you back for years? By training the mind, says Jim. 'Build self-confidence by focusing on your strengths, learn to trust yourself, listen to people who give you confidence.'

Rather than setting race-goals without much thought, Jim suggests we should be clear about what we want to achieve : 'Use goals as a tool to help you achieve realistic aims, rather than as a punishment when you don't reach them. Don't forget to review and change them if necessary.'

When it comes to racing, he recommends tried-and-tested strategies like 'self-talk', as used to great effect by Cathy Freeman when she lined up for the 400m Olympic final in Sydney with the whole of Australia expecting her to win. She shut out the stadium and simply repeated to herself: 'Just do what you know, do what you know'. It worked.

Jim also suggests a technique called 'visualisation', in which you *imagine* running your race from start to finish, seeing, feeling, hearing what it will be like to run well. But be prepared also to visualise things going wrong, too, and think about ways to cope.

By and large, it's best to concentrate on the positive if you want to succeed. However, when used properly, the prospect of failure can inspire motivation - or help cope with disappointment. To illustrate this Jim uses a clip of the rower Sir Steve Redgrave, just before winning gold at his third Olympics, talking very honestly about how badly failure would affect him.

Club runners have devised their own strategies, and below are a selection of tips submitted by TRC members, to which Jim has added his comments.

So far this winter, four TRC seminars have been held: The Importance of Training Schedules, Core Stability and Injury Prevention, Endurance running, and Mind Over Matter. You can find the accompanying powerpoint presentations for each on the website [Winter Seminars](#) page. The next seminar will be Nutrition and Hydration by Maddie Parrott, on February 17.

- Realistic but challenging goals (*it can be good to set gold, silver and bronze medal goals. Gold medal goal is what I could achieve if everything goes my way. Conditions are on my side, I stay injury free and healthy, I get lucky etc. This is the ultimate you could achieve. Silver medal represents a great performance which you're proud of, though one or two little things didn't happen that prevented gold. Still a great achievement. Bronze is still a challenge but the least you would accept as worthwhile. Not what you really wanted but a medal nonetheless*)
- When someone overtakes you congratulate them rather than think you're doing badly
- An "I can" mentality (*yep. Though a "what if" mentality around things that could go wrong – like we saw in the Steve Redgrave clip – can be useful to help focus the mind on what you can control and plan for things that could go wrong*)
- Be prepared to push the comfort zone
- Brain gives up before the body – if you think you can't go on YOU ACTUALLY CAN! So keep going

- When you don't feel like running push yourself to do it. You'll feel better when you do (*yep. The more you didn't want to the better you feel when you are and afterwards. This is deferred gratification!*)
- Produce a race plan (*a plan can include how you plan to think and feel at different stages*)
- No such thing as failure – just experience
- If you do get a negative thought turn it to a positive one (*but keep it authentic. So rather than turning "I'm tired" into "no I'm not" you could turn it into "but what if I'm less tired than everyone else" or "that's great because it means I'm pushing myself" or whatever works for you*)
- Develop your own mantra to repeat during a race (*definitely. or be on the lookout to find one. Someone I know in his first marathon was told at 16 miles "the last 6 miles will be tough but you've just got to keep your legs going" to which he thought "oh that's easy, I can do that, that's simple, I've just got to keep my legs going" and so for the last 6 miles he ran freely saying "I've only got to keep my legs going"*)
- Routine before a race, on the day (*can conserve nervous energy*)
- Believe other people when they say good things to you (*yep. Or be equally sceptical if anyone ever says anything critical or negative about you*)
- Think of times when you've felt great
- Practice running "with abandon"
- Be in tune with your body
- It's only a race!! (*Katherine Grainger, three time Olympic rowing medallist interviewed after Beijing talked about the passion and intensity and devotion that she has to her sport, whilst at the same time recognising that all she's doing is moving a boat 2,000m over a flat course, and acknowledging that this is hardly monumental in the history of mankind but doesn't stop her still doing it to the absolute best of her ability whilst she's doing it. Being able to hold those two thoughts at the same time, i.e. that this is the most important thing in the world and that this is not at all important in the world, is a great example of some of the paradoxical thinking that you get in elite level sport*)
- Have a running friend (*being emotionally, physically and mentally supported can make an enormous difference and is often a neglected performance input – especially by some men I think, who like to try and do it all on their own!*)
- Count 1 to ? when running up a big hill. Helps breathing
- Imagine yourself succeeding (*the imagination is an incredibly powerful thing. Imagining yourself failing, either consciously imagining or unconsciously, is equally powerful!*)

Jacqueline Wadsworth

What was John's incentive? By choosing a slightly shorter option he missed-out a treacherous downhill, a lung-bursting climb, and had to spend time on his own with Nancy, taking photographs. Poor chap!

The Wotton Christmas/Mince Pie Run

For many, many years the club has been doing the annual Wotton Christmas Run (sometimes called the Mince Pie Run) on the Sunday before Christmas. This run offers different distances with the plan (that rarely works) that all the groups will arrive back at the Chipping car park at the same time with the intention of enjoying coffee and mince pies together.



If you are unaware - as its name suggests - "Wotton is situated under the edge of the escarpment in the Cotswold



Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty". All the routes take in some of the amazing scenery that the Cotswolds has to offer and try to include the monument on the top of the hill at North Nibley.

Just in case you have missed these runs a couple of pictures by Breakheart Quarry from the Christmas 2010 run. Does this make you think you want to be there for the 2011 run? Note if you do want to see this the Dursley Dozen does go through the Quarry – although I'm not sure if you would feel you would have the same opportunity to take any pictures.

Breakheart Quarry with the Tyndale Monument in the distance

John Grimsey

Charity of the Year

The Club has decided to support a local charity each year, and for 2011 has chosen [Hammerout](#), which is Thornbury-based and supports those affected by brain tumours.

The refreshments at the Riverbank Rollick raised over £150, and we hope to add to this as the year progresses.

TRCB	Date <u>16th January 2011</u>
Pay <i>Hammerout</i>	
<i>One hundred and sixty-six pounds - 11</i>	£166 - 11
	THORNBURY RUNNING CLUB
	<i>Riverbank Rollick</i>
36 - 24 - 36	70X02397

If you want to run for sponsorship and don't know who to choose, why not help add to the total. We would like to raise their profile, and ours, by handing over a big cheque at the end of the year.