



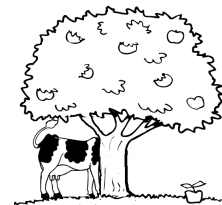
The Sunday morning run or 'Spring Flowers'

Prattle & Run wishes all Thornbury's London Marathon entrants a fast, enjoyable run: is Richard Illingworth's record at risk?

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Captain's Column



The first of this year's team events took place on 3rd April. The 4 x 5 mile relay on the Bitton to Bath cycle path was a small well organised event in which T.R.C. had 3 teams entered, unfortunately on the day we could only run with 2 teams.

Five miles on flat tarmac is not everyone's cup of tea: it's certainly not mine, but as it was a team event the whole run took on a different feel and meaning, and because of that I and hopefully others that took part will be keen to enter other team events that are lined up in the coming months.

These include:

- Thu June 9th - Chepstow Mob Match
- Sat June 25th - Cotswold Relay
- Fri July 22nd - Avon Clubs 10k Mob Match (Towpath)
- Sat July 30th - Severn Walkway Relay

Chepstow made us very welcome when we visited them last year: this is our chance to return the compliment and hopefully our chance to beat them! All these events are open to **all** T.R.C. members regardless of ability, and I hope we can enter large strong teams of sky blue and red in every race.

Rob Watkins

If it's not already in your diaries – Saturday 25th June.

What? The 2011 Cotswold Way Relay of course.

As it says on the website www.cotswoldwayrelay.co.uk *the Relay is now in its 19th year, operated as 10 back-to-back races, each stage beginning with a mass start at the expected arrival time of the 1st runner from the previous stage.*

Running from Chipping Campden in the early morning, through to the arrival at Bath Abbey in the early evening, using the waymarked route of the Cotswold Way, the relay is over 90% off-road, taking in many hills, woodlands, fields and tracks, all offering spectacular views of the countryside around (if ever a runner looked up from the path to take it in!).



There are no marshals on the route, so route-finding is all part of the spirit of the event. The Cotswold Way Authority has considerably improved the signage on route, as part of its upgrade to National Trail status, but there's always one or two who speed past a sign to take time to appreciate some countryside off the main route.

In recent years there have been over 70 teams competing from around 25 Clubs

Despite being a logistic nightmare, this is a truly great event and once again TRC is entering as many teams as there are tens of runners that want to take part, and that will be at least 4. Garry Slater has already started to group runners together to make the most of what we have – and the most is pretty good! 2010's Senior Men's team of Rob Watkins, Chris Ashworth, Nick Langridge, Mark Curtis, Steve Thorn, Andrew Darton, Rob Cowlard, Martyn Green, Garry Slater and Chris Pearce are almost all Vets, so with use of a couple more of our best Over 40s Thornbury stands a very good chance of being up there for the Vet Team prize.

And let's forget about the men for a moment; the ladies team came 4th in 2010: can we beat that? Yes given some of the runners that have joined us this year and the consistency of the 'older' ones, I believe we can!

However, if you're reading this thinking: 'I'm not fast enough, but I'd really like to do it' there's a place for you too.

If you have any interest, give Garry your name and he will find a place for you. Some runners like to run a particular Leg, but as you can see below it's worth eventually doing all of it.

Now, back to the website: *'Many runners do a recce of their stage before the event, others fall-in behind someone else. Most runners find that doing a recce through the beautiful Cotswolds in the company of other runners is all part of the great pleasure derived from this event. You will certainly observe more of the views during the recce than in the race.'* And to that end Pete has already been taking anyone interested on Sunday morning runs along the route. But it's not too late; when you know which Leg you're running, get together with the other Thornbury runners and check you know where you're going. If you're competitive this may save you extra seconds on race day, and if you're not it will give you extra confidence just in case everyone else gets out of sight. That way you can enjoy the run without the nagging worry that you will get lost.

Kings of the Cotswolds

This prize is awarded to those who have completed all 10 stages of the Cotswold Way Relay over differing years. It is still quite a select number though has three Thornbury members in the list:

Winner	Normal Club/Team	Total Time	Year of Completion
Terry King	Roly Polys	17:06:54	2004
John Griffiths	Roly Polys	15:13:31	2005
Paul Chadwick	Wells City Harriers	14:05:40	2006
Dermot Mullen	Stroud & District	15:11:20	2007
Derek Rugman	Thornbury	15:41:02	2007
Bill Savage	Chepstow	13:43:57	2007
Dave Andrews	Thornbury	17:47:32	2008
Tim Thorne	Thornbury	14:26:06	2008
Peter Foster	BOK	15:08:00	2009
Antony Clark	TACH	16:20:04	2010
Dick Finch	Chepstow	14:44:58	2010
Jason Pitchers	Nailsea	14:05:23	2010

Our own John Grimsey has only 2 more Legs to run before getting his Crown, and I know there are several others who are working at it quietly. Mark Curtis is one of the few doing it in sequential order (as is Rosina, I believe). They are hoping to do Leg 5 in 2011 so have a way to go.

And talking of John Grimsey, he has found the following article to give us all food for thought:

This article appeared in the Longboat Express – a monthly web publication from my Canadian running club. It is a modified excerpt from *"If I Ran This Place... Communication for Results"*

The Rex is a bar in Toronto where the Longboat club meet after their Wednesday evening run. Settlement House provide their showering and changing facilities. They don't have any tea rotas! I thought this article had plenty of things for me to think about!

The contributor is *Debbie Matters, Training Consultant and Managing Director, Your Communication Matters Inc.*
www.ycmatters.com

Communicate for Results at Work, on the Road and at the Rex

By Debbie Matters

Communication skills can make or break a career - or an evening. When everyone cooperates, is pleasant, and shares similar ideas, communication is smooth and easy. The real test of our ability to communicate effectively, which impacts our quality of life and relationships, is when we disagree, dislike or have conflicting opinions. How do you react when a colleague or fellow runner says or does something inappropriate, hurtful or distasteful? Hopefully, it doesn't happen often, but when it does, what happens next makes the difference.

Reality is that many bright people do unusual or, dare I say, ridiculous things. We can get frustrated, angry or disgusted and invest time dwelling on the unpleasantness of it all, or we can manage our reaction with mental agility. We can't change their behaviour; however, we can change how we respond to them and the situation.

Mental agility is the power of reinterpretation. It is interrupting our automatic reactions when they are not working for us and then reinterpreting the comments, behaviours or situations in a way that makes our lives easier and less frustrating. Many of us live in the fast lane and luckily for us, our brains work on autopilot. Autopilot - or brain shortcuts - is useful for repetitive, automatic activities. We don't think about how to start the car, walk from Settlement house to the Rex without asking directions, or even take a shower. We just do it.

The problem with brain shortcuts is that our brains commonly focus on speed over accuracy. Although we all share the love of running, each of us is unique in how we view the world. We may all experience the same event whether it is running a race, suffering through an injury or attending a social event; however, we respond to it differently depending on the stories we tell ourselves about the event. The same event may be viewed as an opportunity by some and a frustrating experience by others. Our stories, although usually based on the past, determine how we interpret and communicate in the present.

This process happens so quickly that we are unaware of all the steps that take place. We take in information, scan our subconscious brain for memories and pertinent information, and quickly assign meaning to events. This meaning or interpretation becomes our truth, whether accurate or not, and determines our behaviour and emotional reaction.

Influential communicators work on the premise that their interpretations are uniquely theirs; other people assign different meanings to the same event and create their own unique reality, thereby saying or doing things that seem inaccurate and illogical to us but normal to them.

Developing a skill like mental agility is like strengthening the necessary muscles to swim, bike or run. The more we practise the more effective, efficient and capable we are when it counts. Mental agility does not magically happen once we understand the theory. Just like marathon training, practice, persistence and patience are needed to develop any new skill. Looking for a training plan - see the three steps below.

Step 1: Identify and Interrupt Autopilot

When people say or do inappropriate things, our autopilot often takes over and we make assumptions about their intentions. Catch yourself when you would potentially get frustrated, angry or disgusted. How are you interpreting the situation? Is your current thinking or interpretation of their behaviour working for you? Is it making your life easier or more difficult? Although they may be saying something inappropriate, you decide how you will respond or if you do. When we are baffled by the actions of others, it may be a sign that we are missing information about their perspective or the situation.

Step 2: Investigate our Interpretations

Decide if your interpretations are accurate or not. You may need to hear the perspective of others. Hearing differing perspectives helps us to separate interpretations from the facts. People with differing opinions can help determine whether our interpretations are valid, logical and beneficial. We do not necessarily accept their reality as true; instead, their opinions serve to provoke new thinking for us.

Step 3: Reinterpret

The third step is to reinterpret in a way that works for us. We are simply asking ourselves, "How do I want to interpret situations like this?" When we understand that we have the ability to reinterpret our reality, we have more control over our behaviour and communication. We realize that everyone we interact with is reacting to his or her own story. We understand the root of miscommunication. It is impossible to understand the unique interpretations of everyone for every situation.

In summary, mental agility allows us to consciously break free of our automatic interpretations when they are not working for us. Enjoy the fact that your brain takes shortcuts to make life easier and equip yourself with mental agility to enhance your quality of life.

And remember when it comes to success, your communication matters...

They say: the only way to run faster is to run faster. Putting it to the test:

Running Round in Circles – sort of!

In 2004, not long after I'd started working in Sweatshop, I was sitting at a table in a pub with one other woman and eleven young, athletic men and musing on the differences between my situation and my previous employment as a primary school teacher. The discussion turned to running and I asked my neighbour what I should do to speed up. His one word "track" made me laugh with derision: me, a fifty-something, almost-beginner, slow plodder – on a track! You must be joking; track was for the fast people.

A couple of years later TRC began track sessions at WISE and I felt I had no excuse so went along feeling very apprehensive. Sure enough, the others were all speedier than me (not difficult!) but I found it much more fun than I'd expected. I had an on-off relationship with the track for the next few years but have recently returned and am still enjoying it despite the fact that I'm slower than I was.

So why do I like it?

- The track surface is lovely to run on: soft, springy and very smooth.
- I like the drills: they're similar to those we do on a club night but, in winter, have the advantage of being performed on a level surface, under lights and with no brambles to attack you.
- The sessions are never easy: 440m reps, 300m reps, pyramids or the favourite "on the whistle fartlek." There's no need to know beforehand what any of these things mean as it's all explained before we start.
- The sessions don't last long.
- Despite the fact that there's not much conversation it's still quite sociable. I get passed by everyone else sooner or later but people often give encouragement and don't seem to mind if I only manage a grunt in reply.
- The sessions have the bonus of giving me a chance to follow someone. I frequently have no-one visible ahead of me in races so it does have novelty value.
- I can combine work and pleasure by practising gait analysis while I run.
- The training is measurable. I can compare one session with a previous one. With luck I will be able to see an improvement.
- A sprint group from UWE uses the track at the same time. I like watching their drills (so many!), their sprints (so fast!) and their clothing (so much!).

- You don't need to think about which way to go.
- The people on the passing trains probably think I'm jogging around. They don't know that I'm running flat out.
- The lack of traffic, kerbs, etc, allows me to concentrate on running and practice visualisation techniques.
- Dame Kelly has come out of retirement and Paula has upped her training since they were both so soundly thrashed by me a couple of weeks ago.

Jan Burke

When one of our members comes back on the scene after injury, it's always interesting to know how they are getting on, what was wrong, and what treatment they had. Jim Broughton's now well on his way to recovery and tells us all about it

New CRYO Surgery Method For Treating Morton's Neuroma

I decided to write this piece for Prattle and Run because the treatment I recently had was not known by my doctor or my physio and there seemed to be very little information available except through scouring the internet.

I had a problem with my foot since January 2010. Very severe burning sensations in the metatarsal region by my second and third toe, sometimes it felt like I had a stone in my shoe, sometimes by foot was a bit swollen. After being diagnosed just about everything possible, i.e. arthritis, metatarsalgia, hammer toe, recommended orthotics, had a MRI scan, x-rays and ultra sound at Bath hospital I was still no nearer to any form of diagnosis, by September 2010.

Eventually after two failed cortisone injections (They were successful in the short term and even allowed me to do the Berlin marathon last September, but after a couple of weeks the pain was as bad as ever) I discussed with my physio and proposed to him that I had a Morton's Neuroma. I had looked in the internet and the symptoms were described just right. He agreed this could be the problem.

A Morton's Neuroma is a benign tumour which grows around the digital nerve causing pressure on the nerve and hence pain.

I was recommended to go for an operation, which is the standard method of removing this problem....literally. The foot is opened and the nerve removed, leaving the two toes either side numb, probably for life. This is quite invasive and requires a long recovery. Apart from the numb toes afterwards and permanent scarring, in about 20% of cases a stump neuroma forms on the end of the cut nerve and the operation needs to be repeated.....yuk!



As you can probably imagine...I didn't fancy that. Apart from the pain and long recovery, what about my beautiful feet ???

I also found out about a new Cryo Surgery technique which involves freezing the neuroma with very low temperature laughing gas (Nitrous Oxide). A needle is inserted for a few minutes where the cold gases pass through until an ice ball builds in the neuroma, which kills it, without fully destroying the nerve.

There seem to be many plus points for this treatment. It is non-invasive (i.e. you walk out of the surgery afterwards and go home), it is 90% successful, it can be done again if it doesn't work the first time (i.e. in 10% of cases), there is no scar, almost no side effects. The only downside might

be the price. It is only available privately and costs 1200 pounds.

There is only one place in the whole of Europe that does this operation, so I went to see them on 4th March, in Sheffield. The neuroma was diagnosed as expected, and the little operation was done straightaway. It takes only a few minutes. It does, however, take a few weeks until you are sure of success. The first week is great, no pain and it feels as though it has gone. Then the nerve wakes up again...this hurts..for about another 3-4 weeks.

If I had written this article a week ago I would have been a little sceptical because I still had a lot of pain, however it has settled down just this last weekend (9th /10th April) and I am now very optimistic that it is successful. I will be down the club in the next few weeks.....and can't wait!!!

If any of you have had or are having this problem and want to know a bit more, just give me a call on 07815-306639.....or take a look on <http://www.mortonsneuroma.co.uk>

Cheers for now and I look forward to running together with you soon

Jim Broughton

'Mum, my arm hurts!' so what does Mum do? Gives it a rub. Hardly what you would call massage, but that's where it all starts. Thornbury Running Club is fortunate to have a number of members who are trained in various forms of massage or physiotherapy.

The Pain and the Pleasure

Our two members featured in this edition have very different roles. Ray, as he says, is a physiotherapist and deals with injury treatment and rehabilitation. Selina is a therapeutic massage therapist. Her role is to relax your muscles which will either prepare them for the next race or help you feel better after the last one. Or you could go to her just for a bit of the feel-good factor. Selina says 'if you come to me with an injury I will be telling you to go to Ray!' The two roles compliment each other, they are not in competition!

And both being sportspersons, they certainly know what makes us tick!



RAY SUNNUCKS
CLUB PHYSIOTHERAPIST

Specialising in the Effective Treatment & Rehabilitation of Sports Injuries such as Runners Knee, Achilles Tendonitis, Plantar Fasciitis, Sciatica, Shin Splints, Sprains and Back pain.

Open Clinic every Thursday night at Turnberrys.

Discount for Club Members on any follow-up treatment.



Therapeutic Massage

SELINA DAVIES BSc (Hons)

As some of you already know I am a qualified Therapeutic Massage Therapist. I am offering a discounted rate to club members.

My aim is to make massage affordable so you can use it for more regular maintenance, rather than a one-off treat.

A good massage is great for for your pre- and post-race preparation.

Or if you just fancy chilling out why not have a neck, back and shoulders massage purely for relaxation.

I am at club every other week as Garry and I take it in turns, so any questions please just ask myself or pass a message on via Garry.

I have a practice room at home: 12 Brookmead, Thornbury, BS35 2XG.

Please contact me on 01454 413646 or 07983703810 or email me selinadavies@hotmail.co.uk

Cross Country 2010/11 Season

Well that's another season done and dusted and what a season. 29 runners have represented the club this year; special mention to both Pete and Ros who have run in 8 races each, closely followed by Caroline, Judy and Steve Selwyn with 7 races apiece. We ended the season on a real high with a fantastic day out to Swansea, with beautiful sunshine and a lovely course. The ladies' team has gone from strength to strength following their promotion to Division One in the Gwent league last year. They finished 7th in the division, which as anyone who has ever run in the Gwent league knows, is highly competitive. Fiona Eatherington finished consistently in the top 30 with very competitive runs from Becky McInnes and Jo Plumbley, all contributing to our overall success. Congratulations to Ros who finished 10th overall LV45 in the Gwent league.

The ladies club championship results:

Fiona Eatherington	150 points
Ros Rowland	144 points
Judy Mills	131 points

Age Adjusted Ladies

Fiona Eatherington	146 points
Ros Rowland	145 points
Judy Mills	144 points

The men have also been represented well this year with a very closely contested battle for the club championship from Garry and Jim Godden. The men's team finished 6th in Division Two of the Gwent league with everything to play for next season with some more support from other runners in the club. Particular mention must go to Steve Selwyn who has consistently represented the club this season, has quietly gone about his business and kept going when a lesser man might have given up. Also worthy of mention is Rob Hopkins, who despite a punishing training programme for the Lanzarote Ironman in May has run for the club on 6 occasions.

The men's club championship results:

Garry Slater	146 points
Jim Godden	144 points
Rob Hopkins	134 points

Age Adjusted Men

Jim Godden	148 points
Garry Slater	142 points
Pete Mainstone	133 points

Many thanks to all those who have taken part this season, for supporting the club teams and we look forward to your participation again next season.

Maddie Parrott

For our Twenty Questions subjects in this edition we have previously mentioned King of the Cotswolds, Dave Andrews who now runs for Chepstow as well as Thornbury, and former Captain and Chair Mark Williams who isn't likely to be King of anything.

TodayDave Andrews.....this is your...20 Questions!

1. *Where were you born?*

Rhayader, Powys, a small town in Mid Wales, famous for the Elan Valley and Red Kites.

2. *What is your favourite race?*

Elan Valley 10 (I was 1st M60 in 2007 & 2008), the Hogweeds Muggles race (although I went the wrong way with others and ended up behind Arthur & John at the Finish) and the Cotswold Way Relay, for which I am a King of the Cotswolds having run all 10 stages (only 12 runners have done this).

3. *What is your favourite film?*

The Graduate, Midnight Cowboy and Deliverance.

4. *What sporting moment you are most proud of, (PB etc)?*

Completing the Snowdonia Marathon (1985) and the Snowdon Mountain Race (1986).



Dave relaxing at Lake Tekapo, NZ

5. *What is your favourite book?*

Anything by Ian McEwan, Sebastian Faulks or William Boyd

6. *How many years have you been running?*

31 years

7. *What is your occupation?*

I retired over a year ago; I used to be an Aerospace Engineer with British Aerospace at Filton, working on Naval Systems.

8. *How many miles a week on average do you run?*

Fifteen

9. *What is the first piece of music you ever bought?*

A Hard Road, an album by John Mayall's Bluesbreakers, featuring Peter Green on Lead Guitar (subsequently with the early Fleetwood Mac), who had just taken over in the Blues breakers from Eric Clapton.

10. *What is your favourite piece of running kit?*

Saucony Jazz running shoes, good on and off road.

11. *Secret crush?*

Benhaz Akghar, weather lady on BBC Wales TV, Thornbury probably don't know about her, she is gorgeous.

12. *Do you have any pre/post race rituals/habits?*

No

13. *Which is your favourite, winter or summer?*

I like all the seasons, they all have their good and bad points.

14. *Who is your sporting hero?*

Shane Williams, mercurial Welsh rugby winger, hopefully a member of the Wales world cup winning team in NZ this autumn (dream on!).

15. *How do you get through 'the wall'?*

I have never really got through the wall. I have run 13 marathons and have always ended up walking. My best was Gloucester in 1884 (3:45) when in training my longest run was about 7 miles, I had previously tried running up to 60 miles a week and doing 20 mile training runs but still couldn't get through the wall.

16. *Tell us about an embarrassing moment*

Went on a ski-ing holiday and got wrong bus from airport and ended up the wrong side of the mountain.

17. *What is your current running goal?*

To continue to stay fit and enjoy running, and continue to be competitive at least in my age bracket.

18. *When you were a child what did you want to be when you 'grew up'?*

Aeroplane pilot

19. *Do you have any secret ambitions?*

No

20. *Why did you start running?*

To get fit I started running with some neighbours, I then started running at lunchtime at work and within one year I was running the 1981 Kingswood Marathon in Bristol.

And Today Mark Williams aka Wolfy, this is your...20 Questions!

1. *Where were you born?*

Berkeley, Gloucester

2. *What is your favourite race?* Tour de France or did you mean one I have completed ? Marlborough Downs Challenge (33 mile off road) You have to do it with Arthur, just to see what being "Arthured" is really all about.

3. *What is your favourite film?* Green Street (West Ham Hooligans)

4. *What sporting moment are you most proud of, (PB etc)?* Ironman UK 2006 (Sherborne)

5. *What is your favourite book?* How to grow veg (Carol Klein) & Henkeeping (Jane Eastoe)

6. *How many years have you been running?* Far too long...about 12 years properly?

7. *What is your occupation?* Police officer Field Intelligence.

8. *How many miles a week on average do you run?* 8-15 miles. I was injured August 2010 but see Q17

9. *What is the first piece of music you ever bought?* Alvin Stardust: My Coo Ca Choo

10. *What is your favourite piece of running kit?* Toilet paper !!!!!

11. *Secret crush?* I have so many ! I couldn't possibly tell you

12. *Do you have any pre/post race rituals/habits?* I drink lots of coffee before races and lots of beer afterwards.

13. *Which is your favourite, winter or summer?* I enjoy both, but probably would favour Summer due to the longer hours to enjoy the garden.



(Sorry!)

14. *Who is your sporting hero?* No one in particular, but I always get emotional watching the Paralympics. Now that is inspiring.
15. *How do you get through 'the wall'?* What wall ? I just stop running if it gets that bad.
16. *Tell us about an embarrassing moment?* Far too many and even more embarrassing.
17. *What is your current running goal?* To get fit enough to complete the Cape Wrath challenge.
18. *When you were a child what did you want to be when you 'grew up'?* An adult, still struggling to get there.
19. *Do you have any secret ambitions?* Yes, but it is a secret
20. *Why did you start running?* To combat the beer and food intake.

In the running and triathlete community the wearing of race T-Shirts has become a sign of accomplishment and fashion. Choosing just the right T-Shirt for that special occasion can be a daunting and difficult task. The following guidelines have been compiled (in fun), to help the responsible T-shirt wearer avoid potential embarrassment and/or elevate their perceived status in their athletic community.

This list was formed from using various tri and runners' submissions, and then acquired, edited, exfoliated, and added to by the author, Bad Ben, who is nothing to do with TRC!

Note: This is meant to be a tongue-in-cheek review of the sometimes superstitious regard runners and triathletes have for their finisher shirts.

T-Shirt Etiquette Guidelines:

1. A shirt cannot be worn unless the wearer has participated in the event. There is an exception, though: "significant others" and volunteers are exempt.
2. Any race tee, less than a marathon distance, shouldn't be worn to an ultramarathon event. This goes double for the wearing of sprint-tri shirts to Ironman and Half-Ironman events. It simply doesn't represent a high enough "cool factor" and sends a red flag regarding your rookiness. It's like taking a knife to a gunfight. It's probably best just to wear a generic name-brand athletic shirt, and go hide in a corner until race time.
3. When you are returning to a race in which you have previously finished, then wear the shirt from the first year you completed the race. Don't short-change yourself by wearing the shirt from the year before. It doesn't adequately display the feat of accomplishment or the consummate veteran status that you are due.
4. Never wear a race event shirt for the (same) race you are about to do. Only rookies do this. It displays a total lack of integrity and might put the bad-heebee-jeebee-mojo on you for the race. Wearing a T-shirt of the race, while currently running said race, is discouraged. It's like being at work and constantly announcing "I'm at work". Besides, you won't have the correct post-race shirt then...unless you like to wear sweaty, pitted-out clothes on a regular basis. If you do, then go back to the swamp, Gomer.
5. Never wear a shirt from a run that you did not finish. To wear a race shirt is to say "I finished it". Exceptions: see guideline #1.
6. A DNF'er may wear a race shirt if... the letters DNF are boldly written on the shirt in question (using a fat Sharpie or a

Marks-A-Lot).

7. During a race, the wearing of shirt from a previously completed year is acceptable. Wear the oldest T-shirt you have from that race (see guideline #3). This is probably a good practice because you now have no excuse to drop out since you've done it before.

8. If possible, runners should buy significant others T-shirts which can be worn without regard to running the race. (see guide #1). Keep in mind, they support your "running Jones" more than you think. They also have ways of punishing you that you can't even imagine. Or maybe you can.

9. Volunteers have full T-shirt rights and all privileges pertaining thereto. So there. Remember, you can always volunteer for a race and get a shirt. I encourage this as your civic duty to be a member of the running community. Races don't happen without volunteers, folks.

10. No souvenir shirts: therefore, friends or anyone else not associated with the race may not wear a race shirt. If your mom thinks that your Boston shirt is lovely, tell her to QUALIFY for Boston herself, & send in her application early for next year, so she can earn her own shirt. A downside to this: she still has plenty of time to write you out of her will between her training runs for the big race. Note that your mom CAN wear your finisher's shirt under one of these 4 conditions- 1) you still live with your mother; 2) she funded your trip to the race; 3) she recently bailed you out of the slammer; or 4) All of the above. There is an exception to this guideline: (refer to # 1...If you are a "non-traditional family," and your mom actually is your Significant Other).

11. Always wear the race shirt of your last race at the current race's pre-race briefing. The more recent the race, the better. This is a good conversation starter. However, avoid the tendency to explain how that it was a training run for this, and this is just a training run for the next, etc. It just sounds like your rationalizing mediocre performances. Sometimes it's best to live in the here and now.

12. Your t-shirt should be kept clean, but dried blood stains are okay, especially if it is a trail race or a particularly tough event. If you're an ultrarunner, you can even leave in mud and grass stains, (and porcupine quills). Not washing-out the skunk scent is pushing the macho thing a bit too far, though.

13. Never wear a T-shirt that vastly out-classes the event you're running. It's like taking a gun to a knife fight. Or like unleashing an atomic bomb among aboriginal natives. You get the idea.

14. Also: never wear a blatantly prestigious T-shirt downtown or at the mall among non-running ilk. People will just think you have a big head, which you do. You'll also get stupid questions, like, "how long was that marathon?" If it's a shirt to a 50 or 100-miler, they'll think it's a shirt for a cycling event or just think you're totally nuts, which (of course), you probably are.

15. Never, ever, borrow a race finisher's shirt from another runner to wear to an event that you didn't run. If you do, remember that in Dante's *Inferno*, he wrote about a special Hell for characters such as you; right between Tax Collectors and Lawyers.

16. The Bad Ben Guideline: All children or grandchildren of mine can wear hand-me-down race finisher's shirts for races that I've run in. When they are asked, "did you run in that 100-mile trail race?" They can proudly respond, "no, but my daddy (or grandad) did." If your progeny has put-up with you being an ultrarunner, they have said rights too. If you have completed an Ironman, your kids also have the same rights. They've put up with a lot of crap (or outright neglect) over the years, and deserve to wear them.

17. The Bryner Guideline: Never wear a shirt that has more sponsors listed on it than people that ran in the event. (Are you listening, race directors?) A shirt with too many sponsorship logos on it is just plain ugly. If you're a race director,

and have scored that many sponsors, how about sharing the wealth? Just give me a call at 555-6565, and ask for "Bad Ben." By the way, you can let ANYONE wear this ugly shirt; non-finishers and distant relatives, alike. If you respect your friends, kids, spouse or mother, though, you won't let any of them wear it. It would serve well as bedding in your kid's gerbil cage.

18. Never wear a shirt that has any sponsors on it that you don't agree with. For instance, if you're a Vegan, you shouldn't wear a shirt that proudly advertises "Omaha Steaks" on it. If you wear this shirt, the "Karma Gremlins" will catch-up with you. I swear that's why I fell and broke my nose in my last 50-mile trail run, or why I had plantar fasciitis for most of '99. I never should have ran in the 1998 "Fantastic 4-Miler." Why would they enlist a sponsor from an North Korean land-mine manufacturer, anyway?

19. The Spencer Guideline: If an event is cancelled at the last minute, but the event shirts were already given out, you can't wear the shirt unless you actually ran the race on that day. This means you will have to run your own unsupported event, through snow storms, hurricanes, or whatever lame excuse the Race Organizers came up with for cancelling said event. If you still want to wear the shirt, you have to mark it with a sharpie, "I didn't run this lousy event, and I'm all the better for it, thank you," across the front of it.

20. This next one is a big one, and has something to do with the need for more good taste and aesthetics in this sometimes ugly world. Never wear a shirt that is so old, thin, and threadbare that you can see the *colour of your nipples or chest hair through it*. This seems to be just a "guy thing," especially and old-codger-runner-guy thing. Here's the test guys: if you're too scared to machine-wash your 1978 Tab Ten-Miler shirt for fear of it wafting down the drain as mere subatomic particles, then it's probably too transparent to wear in public. If you can (still) remember your great performance at that particular day and you want to save it for posterity, PLEASE have it framed so that you can keep it on the wall of your den or your "I love Me" room, and (at least) out of public view. Better yet, have it sewn into a quilt. You can then sit on your couch and read back-copies of Runner's World, cuddled up with your "runner's binky," with a glass of warm milk.

21. By the way, if you don't know what terms like DNF, volunteer, or Significant Other are, then you shouldn't wear any race shirt until you know what they mean, and you shouldn't have any meaningful relationships, either. You should probably become a hermit and/or New Age "Tantric" runner, sitting at home in the lotus position performing virtual marathons in your mind, while sniffing used GU packets, incense, and patchouli.

T-shirts must be used sensitively. Worn responsibly, they can help expand one's consciousness and immerse you in a great conversation with your running brethren. Worn stupidly, they can cause fright, horror, vacant stares, sprained ankles, and general social unrest. Don't be a "T-shirt Terrorist." Follow proper T-shirt etiquette to do your part for world peace.

Happy trails, Bad Ben

And finally:

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to this edition of Prattle & Run. I aim to produce the next issue around July, but will make sure you all know via Club night and the website. Please send any articles or photographs you think may be of interest to me at judy.mills@live.co.uk