



Spring 2012

Thornbury Running Club on-line magazine



Triumphant after the Dursley Dozen - see report on page 11

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Captain's Column

I reckon we have had a great winter for running, both weather wise and for the club. We had a record breaking Riverbank Rollick, and a record number of members in the Dursley Dozen. Today (1st April) we had a record number of club members at the Hill Village Cream Teas, not that this fact has anything to do with anything, but thought I would mention it anyway. It just goes to show how important cake is in a runner's diet. Karen and Malcolm Carr rushed back from Vietnam to be there!!

So what about 'Spring'? There are a couple of events coming up that will need maximum club member's support.

Firstly our 'Try Athletics Day' on April 19th. This is a Thursday night so rather than meeting at Turnberries we will all meet on the Mundy playing fields at 7pm. We are hoping for as many 'new' people as possible so spread the word to anyone you know who might be interested, and also mention to family and friends. There will be the usual running and walking groups setting off from the Mundy's and also an effort session led by Craig. If we can all wear our club tops and make everyone really welcome, not only will the club benefit but we will possibly get a few more people hooked on our wonderful sport!!

Thursday 31st May is the date for the 3rd Chepstow Mob Match. Chepstow won the first one at home, and we won the second one at home, so let us see if we can break the sequence! It will be a 5km run on the Severn Bridge again, where every runner counts, so the more the merrier.

Rob.

TRC's Ship Inn 'do'

Thanks to Karen Carr and to Sarah Bradley for organising this year's dinner-dance. Karen tells us what some missed ...

Last year's highly successful March 'do' at the Ship Inn, Alveston, was repeated again this year, with another fine time had by all.

Once again Paul da Vinci, of The Rubettes fame, provided music which even Rob Watkins couldn't resist dancing to, despite the fact that just 12 hours earlier he'd completed the High Peak Marathon in Derbyshire, a 42-mile night-time navigation endurance challenge.

'By the end of the evening I think everyone had danced!' said Karen Carr, who co-organised the event with Sarah Bradley.

She continued: 'Pete Mainstone told a few 'jokes' and presented an award to Val James for all her hard work every week in looking after the tea-making, and recalled the story of when she had her bike pinched one Thursday night. Arthur told her to put it around the back somewhere which she did and the kids at the youth club thought it would be a good idea to ride it. Arthur eventually found it minus the lights!'

When runners weren't throwing themselves around the dance floor, or chuckling at their compere's 'jokes', they were tucking into a three-course meal and enjoying a quiz set by Sarah Bradley, which was won by Viv Heyes, Kathy Pearce, Sonya Hawkins and Jean Hawkins, plus other halves.

There was also a lucky dip lottery ticket on each table and £10 was won by Ros Rowland's table, to be split equally - that's £1.25 each!

All in all, a great night out for the 59 people who attended.

Karen Carr



PARTY PEOPLE: Romy Gill and Liz Dix

Carrying the Flame

In this edition our 20Q 'victim' is one of TRCs two Olympic Torch Bearers (the other being Jo Plumbly). Malcolm says: "I was nominated as a Torchbearer because of my involvement with the football club over the past 30 years, having been on the club committee for most of that time and holding various posts from manager, treasurer, and vice-chairman and first team therapist. I think my fundraising for the two London Marathons helped, having raised about £1750 for BUI and Dreamflight.

"At the moment all I know is that I will be doing one of the Bristol legs on Tuesday 22nd May, I assume late afternoon/early evening, but won't know the details until the end of April"

So - Today Malcolm Carr this is your...20 Questions!

1. Where were you born? - Hitchin, Hertfordshire
2. What is your favourite race? Not sure that I really have one, although finishing my first London Marathon gave me my biggest "high". I enjoy John's Sunday morning runs as much as any races!
3. What is your favourite film? The Godfather
4. What sporting moment you are most proud of, (PB etc)? Individually - finishing my first London Marathon in 2009 and as a team, my football club in Hitchin winning our first County Cup final. But both of these will be exceeded by being a Torch bearer in the Olympic Torch Relay in May.
5. What is your favourite book? A couple - The Hungry Caterpillar and Alfie & Annie Rose books, used to enjoy reading them to my daughters when they were little.
6. How many years have you been running? Since 2008
7. What is your occupation? Having taken early retirement in 2004, I work part time as an accident investigator for insurance companies.
8. How many miles a week on average do you run? Not many at the moment, but usually 20 -25.
9. What is the first piece of music you ever bought? House of the Rising Sun by the Animals. (Was going to buy Hippy Hippy Shake by the Swinging Blue Jeans but the record shop had sold out!)
10. What is your favourite piece of running kit? My Asics 2160s
11. Secret crush? Can't say as Karen will probably read this – but it is no secret that I had a "thing" for Debbie Harry after seeing Blondie on tour in the 70s.
12. Do you have any pre/post race rituals/habits? Pre-race yes – panic!
13. Which is your favourite, winter or summer? Summer – really find it difficult to motivate myself to go running when its cold and wet.
14. Who is your sporting hero? Don't have one, but used to be Bobby Moore.
15. How do you get through 'the wall'? Not sure that I've ever been there – I tend to ease off if I see it coming!
16. Tell us about an embarrassing moment - County Cup Final for Thornbury at Yate Town's ground – warming up as a substitute in front of the main stand and fell flat on my face to the delight of the crowd!



Less embarrassing was walking round Lake Louise and being stopped by a group of Americans and being asked if I really was Billy Bob Thornton.

17. What is your current running goal? Just to get my fitness levels back and speed up a bit as well.

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

19. Do you have any secret ambitions? Having just returned from a great trip to Vietnam, I want to see a bit more of the world before I get too old!

20. Why did you start running? To stop Karen constantly telling me how much fun it really was (and also because no one would pick me to play football!)

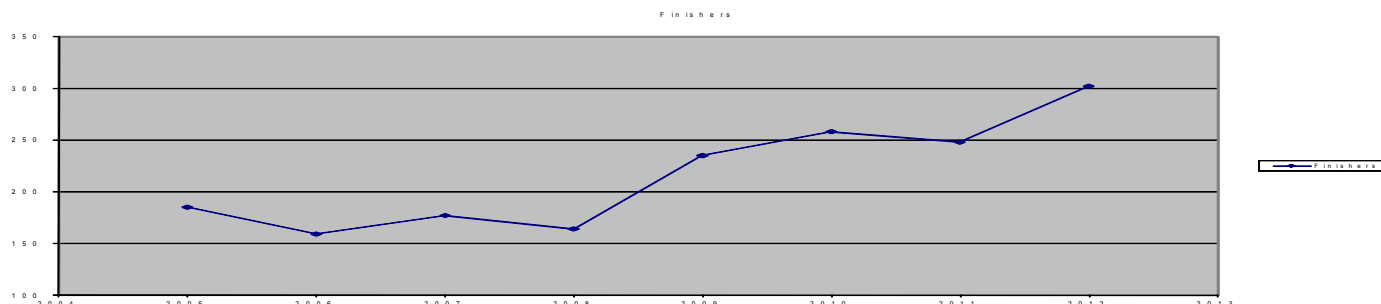
TRC RACE REPORT -and the Rollick

The Riverbank Rollick got TRC's New Year off to a great start on January 15 when it broke three records in one go!

- It attracted record numbers, with 336 entries and 302 finishers.
- Two new course records were set.
- And the event raised the largest amount ever - £2,000.

This was the first time since the event began in 2005 that numbers have exceeded 300.

Organiser Dave Andrews said: 'I am not sure why entries were so good, I just think the race has a good friendly reputation, and the race has its own unique character, and growth in numbers has been small but steady over eight years.'



New course records were set on what was a fine sunny day with good running conditions. The winner Gareth Green, of San Domenico Road Runners, Cardiff, recorded a time of 55:56. The first lady Lucy Richen, of Westbury Harriers, finished in another record time of 63:35.

There were some excellent individual performances by Thornbury runners: Rob Cowland was 8th overall in 59:52; Rob Watkins 20th & 3rd MV40; Claire Watt was first LV45 and Judy Mills 2nd LV55.

The men's team event was won by Westbury Harriers, with Southville Running Club second and Thornbury Running Club (Rob Cowland, Rob Watkins, Jim Godden & Rob Hopkins) third.

The ladies' team event was won by Southville Running Club, with Westbury Harriers second and Thornbury Running Club (Claire Watt, Jo Plumbley & Becky McInnes) third.

THIS YEAR the TRC Aquathlon, which is usually held at Bradley Stoke in March, was called off because of the difficulty in finding sponsors. Hiring the pool alone costs £500 and the search for sponsors had become such a time-consuming job that event director Sandra Webber decided to put the event on hold until economic conditions improve.

THE club's next race is the Sundayhill 10K on July 12, followed by the Oldbury Power Station 10 which has been provisionally booked for September 16. All the races are vital sources of income for Thornbury Running Club and their success depends on good organisation from start to finish. Please make sure you do your share of when the call goes out for volunteers – don't always leave it to others.

Dave Andrews & Jacqueline Wadsworth

Runners and dangerous dogs– a toxic mix.

Having been badly bitten by a dog recently I began to take an interest in what the Government was (allegedly) proposing to do to amend the 1991 Dangerous Dogs Act and the supplementary 1997 legislation. It is now clear that in focusing on a small number of so-called dangerous breeds (American pit bulls and a small number of other similar nasties) the current legislation is missing the point that the problem is not just the dogs but irresponsible owners. A piece was taken out of my calf not by a pit bull but by a little Jack Russell.

When I shared this incident with a number of fellow runners in our club and others in Avon AA, I got a shower of emails from runners who had been bitten not once, but in one case *four times*. Blaise Castle woods was mentioned several times (though I was bitten on the canal towpath near Sharpness). Some of the data concerning dog-related incidents are of variable quality. However, the following are broadly accepted as an accurate indication of the scale of the national problem:



Playing, herding or hunting prey? Only the dog knows!

- The Communication Workers Union (CWU) estimates around 6,000 postal workers are injured every year by dogs.
- Hospital admission statistics show 2,510 adults and 1,277 children were either treated in accident and emergency departments or admitted to hospital for dog-related incidents in 2006-2007. (I spent a total of 6 hours in Frenchay.)
- 8 people have been killed by dogs in the last 4 years (6 children and 2 adults)
- 197 people have been seriously injured in dog-related incidents in the last 4 years (92 children and 105 adults)
- Between 2004 and 2008 the RSPCA saw a 12-fold increase in reports of dog fighting.
- According to *Guide Dogs* around three guide dogs are attacked by dogs each month.
- According to the *British Horse Society* there has been an increase in the number of horses (and their riders) attacked by dogs, with 74 horses being attacked between 2007 and 2010.

I have no data on runners, but it would be interesting if *Runners World* or similar magazine were to invite readers to send in their experience so that we could bring the data together and get the Government to take this matter seriously. In March 2010, when the previous Government began a consultation on the various options to tackle the problem of dangerous dogs and irresponsible ownership, there appeared to be cross party agreement, but nothing much has come of it (despite overwhelming public opinion).

It would be helpful if runners now put themselves at the forefront of this debate whenever there is an opportunity to influence it. The key points to press are:

We need to focus on *irresponsible owners*. There are 10 million dogs or more in this country but only a small minority of these constitute a problem, due to lack of training and control by their owner.

We need to re-focus our attention on 'the deed not the breed'. Many different dogs can be bred to be dangerous by irresponsible owners, as I can testify.

We need to bring in Dog Control Notices, to prevent attacks before they happen. It is often clear that a dog is eventually going to do harm, and such a dog should be on a lead and/or muzzled.

We need to extend the law to cover private property. Currently if you deliver a flier for one of our races through someone's door and a dog takes your finger off, you have no redress in law.

If attacks do happen, we should make it straightforward to be able to prosecute that owner. (In the USA he or she would end up being sued for a very large sum!)

We need to consider microchipping all dogs, as Northern Ireland and Wales are doing, so that owners can be traced.

Finally, if you are threatened or bitten by a dog, you should **report it** to your local Council's Street Care (in Thornbury this would be tel 868000) and they will send a Dog Warden to pursue the matter. Or address

Coincidentally, as this was going to press I read an article in Country Walking magazine about dealing with loose dogs whilst in a public place.

A dog is a pack animal. It will protect its territory, and it will protect the rest of its pack. For a pet dog, this means its owner and family. Working dogs such as collies seem to find it hard to differentiate between a runner and a sheep, so may try to move a runner by nipping at its heels.

A dog will be prepared to attack if it is frightened. Try not to do anything which alarms the animal: this may mean dropping to a walk, which is annoying but is better than being bitten. Speak to the dog calmly; they are used to human voices and if they are having trouble working out which species you belong-to, this will help. Avoid sudden noises and movements: if you shout, either at the dog or its owner, kick-out or wave your arm (or a stick) it will understandably take this as a threat.

A dog about to attack may stare, posture, growl and exhibit stiff body movements. Its hackles – the hair behind the head and along the line of the spine – may be raised. Dog trainer Graham Thompson says: “the key is not to look at the dog, but stand sideways to it or with your back to it. Consciously relax your whole body by loosening and dropping your shoulders and slouching a little while you move away slowly. Keeping a backpack or loose jacket between you and the dog can also protect you from a bite, but never waggle these as this will increase excitement.” Communication between you and the dog is mainly about body-language.

As Gareth found, an aggressive and ill-mannered person is more likely to have an aggressive and ill-mannered dog, but many a well-trained family pet can nip if it receives the wrong signals from a stranger. It is therefore important for dog-owners to see both sides of the picture. I usually have my dog off her lead, and I believe she wouldn't hurt anyone, but I need to be sensitive to others' feelings. When she trots up to a stranger she is usually looking for a sandwich, and her attention is usually well-received, but on the rare occasions when it is clear the person is not a dog-lover I make sure she is called away immediately.

For a runner or walker who has had a bad experience it is literally a case of 'once bitten; twice shy' but as Gareth points out, the problem is irresponsible dog-owners. The vast majority of owners and dogs are quite harmless!

Judy Mills

Rerun?

Well, you weren't expecting this! *I* wasn't expecting this! Jacqueline thinks Prattle and Run is too good to let die, so she has persuaded me to continue as a team effort (we're good at teams in TRC!) From now on Jac will be cajoling, persuading and bullying you all for articles, which she will then throw at me in an electronic sense so that I can create order from it all.

Prattle Re Run? Is this a good title? It's been Prattle and Run for years: is it time for a new name with a new birth? Suggestions please.

Judy Mills

THE 2011 RUNNING YEAR – by Gareth Thomas

In our last AGM we heard interesting accounts from the Officers and Club Captain of the activities and achievements of the Club over the past year, and since most of our members were diverting themselves in other ways that evening I was asked if I could write something for wider dissemination in *Prattle & Run*. So here it is.

Rise in numbers

The calendar year closed with a total membership of 169, compared with 163 last year. Men outnumbered women by a relatively small margin (90 to 79). There were 34 new members (15M, 19F), who more than compensated for those who left. Of the total membership, 56 took out individual subscriptions to England Athletics. This reflects the increasing number of events, particularly Cross Country, for which *individual* EA membership is a requirement for entry. (Our own races are run under ARC's rules rather than UKA's, so we don't have to make this a requirement for runners coming to us.) Because we had over 50 EA members we qualified for two places in the London Marathon, which were eagerly taken up.

Charity cheer

We decided for the first time in the history of the Club to adopt a charity for the year, and I was delighted that we had collected more than £1300 by the close. This was an opportunity for a photo in the local press, which was good news for the charity concerned (Hammer Out), and indirectly for the Club too. I noticed that the event was also recorded in the minutes of the Avon AA when it last met.

No money worries

Our finances remain healthy, despite the fact that we were slightly down on the year. This was due to purchases of kit, and of race materials for our annual events. We will recoup the outlay on kit over this year and next, and the race materials have a decent shelf life, so really there is not much to get concerned about. What we have to stress every year, however, is the importance of our races as the foundation of our finances. Some concerns have been expressed that some volunteers are slow to come forward for marshalling and other duties, and the burden seems to fall on the same individuals every year. We are determined this year to spread the workload more fairly.

Storage solutions

In the course of the year, over a couple of days, a small team transferred our race equipment from one building to another at the farm where we store it, at the same time providing new shelving and storage containers to make it all much more accessible. This has been a boon to race directors and sector marshals who drop in to find what they need for race day. It is not always appreciated how important it is to keep an up-to-date inventory and to ensure that everything we need is to hand. I was reminded of this when I saw Dave Andrews in the barn picking up over a thousand safety pins he needed for the Rollick. A needle in a haystack came to mind....

Behind the scenes

We remind ourselves from time to time that although the Committee members themselves play an important (largely unseen) role in managing the Club's admin, outside the Committee, a number of members can be relied upon to help whenever called upon, and we all know that the Club could not function without them. There is furniture to move, there are floors to sweep, refreshments to be provided on Club Night, cakes to be baked for races, kit to be purchased and sold, collections for charity. There are races requiring directors, not to mention marshals and helpers, and other runs such as the Cotswold Way, the Severn Walkway Relay and The 5-Valleys to co-ordinate. There is press liaison to let others know that we exist, and there is assistance to the Oldbury Fun Run and to schools and other bodies wanting help and advice to organise their own fun-runs. We pride ourselves too, that we do all this pretty well – or that's what others tell us.

Great results

Although not on everyone's agenda, as our Club Captain pointed out, racing remains very popular for a good number of members, both in running and triathlon. Considering we are a small club, we had some great results in 2011, both locally, nationally and internationally.

- In April our male vets team won the AAA 4 x 5mile relay at Bitton.

- In June we were victorious, when over 40 members ran the 5km Mob Match against Chepstow. This year's match is being hosted by Chepstow on May 31.
- Also in June our women's team repeated their excellent performance from the previous year, by finishing 4th in the Cotswold Way relay. At the same event, Maria Hobbs, Clare Watt and Martyn Green set new club stage records.
- Our women's XC team have done well in both Gwent and Gloucester leagues. Unfortunately the same cannot be said for our men's team, getting enough chaps on the start line has proven difficult at a number of races this winter.
- Further afield, Trinity Booth became UK Ultra Race Champion after competing in 6 Ultras across the country. (Sadly, she has had to leave us in 2012 to move away.)
- In August, Roger Denton finished fifth in his age group in the European Long Distance Triathlon Championships in Finland.
- Later that month, our Men's Vet Team finished a brilliant third at the National Triathlon Relays in Nottingham.
- In September Zoe Betteridge won bronze at the European Quadrathlon Championships in Bude, Cornwall.
- Roger Denton showed up again in November at the World Long Distance Triathlon Championships this time finishing an excellent 13th.

Club honours

During the year the Club conferred Honorary Membership on Ed and Jean Hawkins, in recognition of their contribution to the Club.

Social scene

The social scene went pretty well too. In February, the annual dinner was well attended, with delicious food and great entertainment at the Ship Inn, Alveston. Then on a glorious summer evening over eighty of us enjoyed a garden party in Rockhampton with home-made food, drink and a live band. In December we had our traditional Christmas run followed by a buffet feast at Thornbury Cricket Club.

Club colours

By national standards we are a small club with a large number of 'social' runners. We hope, however, that with the revival of the Road Race Championship and the new 'Flying the Flag' competition (see the website for details), we are sending out a message inviting more of our members to put on Club colours to compete. Let that be the New Year's Resolution.

Gareth Thomas

Cross Country Report 2011/12

Mixed successes for our cross country runners this season! But also some unexpected highlights

1. Gloucester League

Four events make-up the Gloucester League; this year these were hosted by Bourton RR at Adam's Cotswold Farm Park, by Gloucester at the Crypt School; by CLC (Cheltenham) at Pittville Park and by Tewkesbury at Tewkesbury School.

For individual placings, the best three scores of the season are counted. In the team events Senior Men need 6 to score, Masters 4. Senior and Master Ladies need 3 in a team, and all events count towards the final team standings.

Individuals:

WOMEN:

<i>Jnr/Snr/Vet Ladies (Best 3 of 4)</i>	<i>Cat</i>	<i>R A C E</i>	<i>Best 3</i>	<i>Posn</i>	
<i>Joanne Plumbley</i>	<i>Thornbury RC L35</i>	<i>41 40 999 22</i>	<i>103</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>6thLV35</i>
<i>Becky McInnes</i>	<i>Thornbury RC L</i>	<i>34 44 49 29</i>	<i>107</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>7thSL</i>
<i>Clare Watt</i>	<i>Thornbury RC L45</i>	<i>999 45 42 25</i>	<i>112</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>6th LV45</i>
<i>Rosina Rowland</i>	<i>Thornbury RC L45</i>	<i>44 49 53 33</i>	<i>126</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>8th LV45</i>
<i>Judy Mills</i>	<i>Thornbury RC L50</i>	<i>78 81 78 51</i>	<i>207</i>	<i>48</i>	<i>6th LV50</i>

Angela Bushell and Caroline Lansdown also ran one race each in the Gloucester League.

In the Masters Team Competition, Thornbury Ladies were 5th and in the Ladies Team Competition, 7th..

MEN:

Jnr/Snr/Vet Men Best 3 from 4 races)			R A C E			Best 3	Posn
<i>Nick Langridge</i>	<i>Thornbury RC</i>	<i>M55</i>	<i>122</i>	<i>999</i>	<i>132 80</i>	<i>334</i>	<i>65 4th M55</i>
<i>Jeremy Clothier</i>	<i>Thornbury RC</i>	<i>M60</i>	<i>163</i>	<i>154</i>	<i>163 114</i>	<i>431</i>	<i>83 5th M60</i>
<i>Pete Mainstone</i>	<i>Thornbury RC</i>	<i>M60</i>	<i>999</i>	<i>159</i>	<i>164 110</i>	<i>433</i>	<i>84 6th M60</i>

Robb Hopkins, Watkins and Cowlard, Paul Thomas, Gary Slater, Paul Horsfall, Steve Selwyn and John Francksen all ran at least one Gloucester League race.

Thornbury men were only able to field a full team in one race, and the Masters Team was only complete in three of the four races, so no team places are counted.

2. Gwent League

There are five races throughout the season, this year at Bath, Bridgend, Brecon, Blaise and Swansea (Not in that order but I liked the alliteration!). All an individual's races count (the worst score is not dropped as in the Gloucester League). Both Men and Women need 5 team members to count and 4/3 respectively in the Masters Teams.

WOMEN:

Overall results:

<i>Place</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Cat</i>	<i>Club</i>	<i>Pts</i>
<i>27</i>	<i>R. Rowland</i>	<i>(45)</i>	<i>Thornbury Running Club</i>	<i>490</i>
<i>39</i>	<i>C. Watt</i>	<i>(45)</i>	<i>Thornbury Running Club</i>	<i>428 (only 4 races completed)</i>

No other Thornbury Ladies came in the top 60.

Veterans Over 45

<i>2</i>	<i>R. Rowland</i>	<i>Thornbury Running Club</i>	<i>254</i>
<i>8</i>	<i>C. Watt</i>	<i>Thornbury Running Club</i>	<i>203 (4)</i>

Team event:

Senior Women Division 1

10 Thornbury Running Club

Clubs in 11th and 12th place were demoted to Division 2: it was a close thing!

Veteran Women Over 45

4 Thornbury Running Club

MEN

Senior Men Division 2

11 Thornbury Running Club Demoted to Div. 3

Male Veterans Over 50

23 Thornbury Running Club

Male Veterans Over 60

=6 Thornbury Running Club

3. TRC Championships

The nine races of the Gwent and Gloucester League qualify, with the **Best 6** scores to count. Points are awarded; 25 to the first Thornbury finisher in each race, 24 to the 2nd and so on. The Championship winner is the runner with the highest 6 scores. There is also an Age Adjusted championship, where the finishing times are re-calculated using an accepted multiplier. Where the outright winner also has the highest age adjusted score, the age adjusted trophy will be presented to the second place runner.

For Age Adjusted purposes, the multiplier used is the age of the runner on the date of the first race of the season.

Throughout the season, although due in part to injury, it has been difficult to get a full team of male runners, and this is reflected in the low team places and demotion in the Gwent league division. Only two men and three women runners completed 6 or more of the races, and in both cases the outright winners – Clare Watt and Nick Langridge – also scored highest in the age adjusted table, the Age Adjusted trophies therefore going to Ros Rowland and Pete Mainstone.

4. Season Highlights

Top of the list must be Arthur's demonstration of how not to get changed perched on a 3-legged-stool. Fortunately for most of the Ladies team, they had left before his little (?) display. Is it significant that he hasn't run a XC race since?

Look to the future! Rosie Allen, Steve's daughter came 3rd in both her U13 races. Sadly she has been snapped-up by Westbury Harriers – for now! At Blaise, Abi Young (daughter of Simon) and her friend Katie Draper ran their first races in the Novice Girls category. We hope to see them again – and it means Dad has no excuse to not run.

Rob Cowlard's sprint finish at Blackbridge was an indication of Things To Come for him this season. If he is able to make more races in 2012/13 the Thornbury Men's team can only benefit.

Purchase of the tent means that we no longer have to huddle-together for warmth in inclement weather. Thankfully there is a large gymnasium at Tewkesbury where the races were held in a blizzard, but where shelter is limited we can now keep out of the wind and rain in our new sign-written acquisition.

And a warning! Pete Mainstone has vowed that he will get the men out and running next year. Be prepared!

Judy Mills

2012 TRC Spring Marathoners

Who better to assess the runners in this spring's crop of marathons than John Grimsey, marathon expert and trainer of countless marathon virgins?

Half of the TRC "team" at London got their entries through "good for age". That is some achievement. I'm not sure that TRC has ever managed that number of "good for age" entries

Nancy Harding – Got her London place on "good for age" with a time of 3hrs 27mins from last year's London (repeating her "good for age" from the previous year). Somehow always finishes looking like she is just doing her warm up (does she take a short cut?)

Judy Mills – Yet another who got her London place on "good for age". I'm sure this is her 1st London. I'm not sure that London will have enough hills, mud and solitude for Judy to enjoy the run. Maybe nobody has told her that the streets of London aren't paved with gold, they are covered with hot and sweaty runners on marathon day

Jo Plumbley – Yet another who got her London place on "good for age". I know that Jo did London a couple of years ago – but since then she has gone away to do some "extreme" events. Similar to Judy she probably needs to be told that this marathon is just a single day event and isn't at altitude.

Paul Thomas – And yet another who got his London place on “good for age”. I don’t think he has ran London before but he does have a 3:13 marathon at Brighton to his name.

Mark Williams – Plenty of quick marathons in his past. Does that mean they are now too far in the past? A great fan of running London standing out from the crowd (do I need to explain that comment?). I’m not sure this is the same person who, as club captain, always used to say –
Pain is temporary. Pride is everything.

John Watt – Got into London with one of the TRC club place. I think this is his 1st marathon. I’m not sure how he could have been running for as long as he has and has yet to run a marathon! He is certainly taking his training seriously.

Hillary Collins – Her 2nd London. After being out injured for a few years she has made her comeback by getting a London place. She is committed to her training although her work hours often interfere with training schedules.

Vivienne Hayes – Her 1st London (but not 1st marathon). So serious about getting her miles right that when the distance is a little short she has to do that extra bit. She has done lots of “secret” training with Sonya who does make them do more hills than I would consider putting into a Sunday morning run.

Nigel Hale – Got into London with one of the TRC club place. It would have been his 1st London (but not his 1st marathon). Unfortunately he decided to get injured while running around the Hackett one dark night. I’m sure he will want to do another marathon this year to make up for the disappointment

2012 Greater Manchester marathoners -

Arthur Renshaw – He probably has more marathons “under the belt” than the rest of the TRC Spring Marathoners, perhaps with the exception of Pete. As the TRC web site says – “*His PBs include 1:23 for half marathon, 2:15 for 20 miles and 3:08 for marathon. Arthur knows all about hitting the wall and in his words is a legendary expert at getting it wrong!*” I guess he was homesick and wanted to revisit the scene of his earlier marathons. I may be wrong – but I can’t see that he will be going for a PB at this one.

2012 Cape Wrath marathoners –

Judy Mills – Obviously doing London as well (see above). This one seems more akin to a “Judy event”

Arthur Renshaw – Obviously he is doing Manchester as well as Cape Wrath (see above). Is this one more akin to an “Arthur event”? Who know? Arthur probably doesn’t. It just depends on what happens on the day

Pete Mainstone – A man more used to the Welsh valleys than the hills of Scotland. I notice he likes events well away from Wales and his training is in the Cotswolds which is so quintessentially English. Obviously a man who has done plenty of marathons

Clare Watt – Her 1st marathon. Obviously running very well – but what a marathon to choose as the first one. It is part of the Cape Wrath Challenge so it is at the end of a week of other challenges and it is described as “*this is quite unlike a normal road race!*”

2012 Edinburgh marathoners -

Steven Dimond – He hasn’t run a marathon for a few years but he is certainly showing plenty of enthusiasm for running this one. He is now a regular for the Sunday morning run.

Elizabeth Dix – Her 1st marathon. As you would expect she always shows LOTS of enthusiasm for going out and putting in the miles whatever the weather and whatever the route. She does come out on a Sunday morning run prepared for all eventualities.

Sarah Bradley – In the past she has been a fan of the Brighton marathon – but I guess she now wants to see what is north of the border. Very focused on her Saturday morning training regime and doesn’t want to join our Sunday morning wit and repartee (can I blame her?)

John Grimsey

What Dozen't Kill You, Makes You Stronger!

Rob Watkins reports on TRC's winter target race which saw our men's team in great form

Every February a number of TRC members run the Dursley Dozen, looking back through past results I noticed the same names cropping up year after year. Then someone suggested we 'target' this year's race to see how many club members we could get on the start line. Nineteen was the answer, making us the best represented club in the race.

This event is fairly low key but people are always willing to travel from afar, it has a good reputation as being both scenic and tough. Entries are generally around the 400 mark, with participants ranging from 'very good' club runners to 'have a go heroes'. That basically means any one from TRC that can run/walk for a couple of hours will do just fine. The course this year had more off road which added a little distance and time but everyone I spoke to was definitely in favour of the change. The route starts with a good pull up hill to Stinchcombe Golf course, which spreads the field pretty quickly. Then over the next 9 miles the course dips down and back up the Cotswold



escarpment several times before the final plunge back down into town, with the finish line in the pedestrian precinct. There had been a light covering of snow which made it a little slippery in places but probably not as slick as if it were covered in the usual mud.



First over the line for TRC was Rob C in a handsome 20th place. Roger Denton was just behind in 24th despite five and a half hours of training the day before and an hour of swim training that morning! Rob W and Rob H completed the men's team (first 4) in 33rd and 68th respectively. Vic Harding (85th) was next followed by Adam Mills (147th). Then came a run of girls, Becky (148th) Nancy (190th) Emma (195th) Jacqueline (243th) and Liam (245th). Mike Willis (250th) was next closely followed by Pete Mainstone (273rd) and Judy Mills (276th). Completing the 'Sky Blue and Red' team were Steve Dimond (305th) Colin Symington (316th) Selina Davies (335th)

Arthur Renshaw (365th) and John Francksen (412th).

Our men's team were just beaten to the overall prize by Pont-y-Pool & District Runners. Our male vet team however were triumphant,

Special mentions to Judy Mills finishing 2nd in her age group despite an achilles injury. Adam Mills (no relation (as far as I know)) who finished an excellent 6th within the club in his first event of this kind. Liam's full on war paint was excellent, but by his own admission didn't make him run any faster!

WELL DONE TO ALL! Certainly targeting a particular race is good for the club and is fun for all that take part, so I'm open to suggestions to which race we should aim for next?

*Rob Watkins
Photos: Dereck Freeman*

In at the deep end – the benefits of water-running

Aqua-jogging has never really been taken seriously in the UK, which is a shame because training in water has a great deal to offer athletes, fit or injured.

It is equivalent to running on a treadmill, but there's no impact, no injury risk, and decreased muscle soreness. It also improves your posture and running style, strengthens your core, and allows you to train at high intensity even with an injury because the water supports the body, says coach Linda Ward, who runs a water-running session at Thornbury Leisure Centre every Tuesday at 11am, as well as evening sessions at Chepstow Leisure Centre.

Water-running is best described as running on the spot in your own patch of water, it doesn't involve racing up and down the pool. The athlete wears a flotation belt around the waist and is suspended in deep water, immersed up to shoulder depth. There is no contact with the bottom of the pool.

The legs should move up and down rather than 'cycling' in a circular motion. Together with the arms they work against the resistance of the water, giving a cardiovascular workout as well as developing muscular strength, without the jarring impact that comes from running on land



Water-running coach Linda Ward gives poolside instruction
Photo: Catherine Dunn

Elite athletes like Kelly Holmes and Paula Radcliffe have long sung the praises of water-running as a way of maintaining fitness while injured. And recently a very fit Mo Farah was shown training on a treadmill submerged in water.

But despite these endorsements, water-running has never really taken off in the UK. 'Many runners remain ignorant of the benefits of water-running, perhaps because 'aquafit' still tends to be associated with women in rubber hats dancing around in the water!' said Linda, who was inspired by an aquafitness workshop 11 years ago and has been spreading the word ever since.

The workshop was run by Canadian Charlene Kopansky, a pioneer of aquafitness and president of the Canadian Aquafitness Leaders Alliance. Linda has since worked with CALA to run workshops in the UK.

'In this country aquafitness has always been the 'cinderella' activity among fitness professionals and swimming associations, with neither doing justice to the subject. However, when I introduced water-running classes as a pilot in South Wales about seven years ago, they were instantly oversubscribed and successful,' said Linda.

The key to successful water-running is good technique; once that has been mastered everything else will fall into place. Ideally athletes should do their sessions with a water-running coach who can monitor technique. The next best thing is for athletes to go water-running together and keep an eye on each other's technique. What follows is a guide to water-running for novices.

For more information on water-running, can contact Linda Ward at lindawardaqua@yahoo.co.uk

Equipment

The only piece of equipment you need to start water-running is a flotation belt, which are available to borrow at Linda's sessions. Worn around the waist, you should be submerged to shoulder depth. Some athletes without much body fat will sink below this level – in which case, attach an inflated swimming armband to the front of the belt. Do the belt up as tight as you can. Women often prefer narrower belts.



A flotation belt should be worn tightly around the waist
Photo: Catherine Dunn

There's no need to pay more than £20 for a belt to start with,' said coach Linda Ward. 'And you certainly shouldn't worry about zero-gravity bodysuits, dumbbells or weighted socks when you're starting off.'

Take a drinks bottle to the poolside – you'll sweat in a heated pool.

Technique

Good water-running technique is essential and can take a several sessions to acquire. Make sure your arms and legs are working equally, and use core strength to support your body.

What to do:

- Focus on a 'long back' with a level pelvis – hips point forward like headlights.
- Hold arms with elbows fixed at 90 degrees, make a gentle fist with thumbs on top. Move the arms backwards close to the body, then forward like a pendulum. Relax.
- When it comes to the legs, the key thing to remember is: don't cycle. With knee bent at right angles, there is no conscious effort to lift the knee. Instead focus on a downward movement, pushing the heel below the hip.

What not to do:

- Don't allow the lower leg to move in front of the knee.
- Don't bob up and down – this means your movement is assisted by the buoyancy belt.
- Don't lose concentration – if you don't feel you're working very hard then your technique may be getting sloppy.

In the next edition of Prattle and Run – how to train, with sample water-running sessions.

Correct - focus on a 'long back' with level pelvis



Incorrect - don't let the lower leg move in front of the knee. Make a gentle fist - no thumbs up.



Photos: Bristol Subaquaholics (subaquaholics.co.uk)

The 'High Peak Marathon' March 2.

Thornbury Runners seem to respond to the call of the wild - peat moors, 'hags and groughs', fells, heather and large lumps of stone!

For many years Jim Godden and friend Eddie Winthorpe have taken part in the High Peak Marathon, a night fell-run of around 42 miles over the moors of Bleaklow and Kinder in the Dark Peak. Usually they coerce two Thornbury Runners - one male and one female - to make up their 'mixed' team. This year it was a return to the course for Rob Watkins, with yet another 'new' lady team member, Nancy Harding.

A month prior to the race whilst doing a recce of the course Jim and Eddie doubtless saved the life of a disorientated, exhausted walker on Bleaklow, but Jim was to miss this year's event.

Rob says of the race:

'We had to find a team mate at the last minute as Jim Godden went down with the Norovirus, but our stand-in unfortunately pulled out after 2.5 hours.

'That was ok though, we were allowed to carry on as a team of three. Nancy was a star, she slipped early on and must have pulled a thigh muscle which tightened later on in the night and meant we were reduced to walking much of towards the end.

'We finally finished in 13h 07m still quicker than a dozen teams although as we were not complete our position didn't count. Frustrating but that's the nature of this event.

'If we could find a willing very fit woman we could nail this race next year. Although the winning mixed team were also 2nd overall in 9h 25m which is hellish quick'

(Does Cathy know he's looking for a 'willing very fit woman?')



Before the race - Nancy wonders what she has let herself in for!

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All looking incredibly good (or relieved!) after the race

Rob Watkins