Cumberland Fell Runners - July 2024 Newsletter



1 - Joss Naylor, photo by Danielle Ledbury; Why we run.

Editor's note

Welcome to the July 2024 newsletter and a new format! I hope this makes it a bit easier to enjoy on phones, tablets and computers . We'll see how the format goes. Please get in touch with feedback, technical, good and bad. As ever, many thanks to all that have contributed!

If you've articles ready for the next issue, or have comments and corrections, don't hesitate to email me at jackgilbert89@gmail.com. Previous newsletters and other articles are found on our website.

Enjoy!

Jack

The Committee



2 - **Chairman -** *Mark Wise*



3 - **Vice Chair, Website Administrator -** *Adam Cresswell*



4 - **Secretary -** *Charlotte Barker*



5 - **Membership Secretary & Newsletter Editor -** *Jack Gilbert*



6 - **Team Captain -** *Ruth Stanley*



7 - **Team Captain -** *Sam Holding*



8 - **Lead Junior Coach, Equipment Officer -** *Tony Jewell*



9 - **Lead Senior Coach -** *Barry Johnston*



10 - **Treasurer -** *Ann Cummings*



11 - **Statistician, Website Administrator -** *Darren Parker*



12 - **Race Organiser Coordinator -** *Andrew Bradley*

13 - **Race Selection Committee -** *Charlotte B, Andrew B Jane M, Jennie C*



14 - **Welfare Officer -** *Isabel Mancebo*



15 - **Welfare Officer -** *James McLaughlin*



16 - **Press Officer -** *David Wood*

Club matters

New members

A big welcome to our new members! We look forward to meeting you on the fell if we've not already!

Rebecca Howe, Wesley van Schelven, Mieke van Schelven, Finn Hawley, Philip Hawley, Claire Elliman, Alice Maddams, Juliet Hardill-Jones, Rachel Jeff, Elijah Clements, Emma Atherton, Stella Atherton, Rían O'Mahony, Saorlaith O'Mahony, Dave Spain, Kate Whitmarsh, Mark Brewer, Ricky Fee, John Crayston

New club members now are given a 'CFR Club welcome pack'! This includes freebies: buff, bag and car sticker. If you are a new member and haven't got yours yet contact Jack at jackgilbert89@gmail.com. Ideas for future merch welcomed!

Next members meeting (and social things!)

The date of the next members' meeting will be communicated by SiEntries and posted on Facebook as well.

- Casual summer social (in place of Bob Graham Relay)
- Member's Meeting in September - date to be confirmed.

CFR Club kit

Contact Tony: Email: jewelltony@yahoo.co.uk

Orders are being taken for CFR Hoodies, contact Tony for details..

We also have a newly designed batch of CFR buffs from Scimitar Sports. If you'd like to purchase a new one then please get in touch with Jack (probably about £5).

Member's Meeting Tuesday 9th July 2024

Members attending

Charlotte Barker, Mark Wise, Adam Creswell, Dot Patton, Jane Mottram, Juliet Fullwood, Jack Gilbert, David Wood, Paul Jennings, Jenny Jennings, Barrie Johnson, Darren Parker, Alison Wright, Jennie Chatterley, Dan Worsall, Ruthie Stanley, Ian Grimshaw, James McLoughlin and Peter Crompton.

By Teams. Tony Jewell, Tammy Connor and David Burton.

Apologies. Andy Bradley, Kath Farkas, Sam Holding, Ann Cummings, Isabel Mancebo, Sian Spencer.

Joss Naylor. Barrie Johnson was asked to speak about the passing of Joss Naylor, and he did so very eloquently. Happy memories of Joss were shared with the club.

1. Approval of Minutes from Members Meeting, Tuesday 16th April 2024. Approved

2. Matters arising. Club summer challenge discussed . Unanimous agreement to postpone this until next year. Charlotte to look at replacing the BGR relay with a social on the same date.

a. Club groups for communication. Generally agreed that these were a great success and a positive step forward. Thanks were given to David Wood and Charlotte for such prompt action in setting up and dealing with the new platform. Minor criticisms that the large number of groups was leading to rather too much posting of trivia and guidance to be given on how to use some of the groups to avoid too much repetition. David Wood to action.

b. Autumn relays. Sam Holding has had a reasonably good response from members prepared to run for the male teams and felt that he had enough to work with. More participants would be helpful.

Ruthie has had a less good response from the ladies and did not have sufficient interest to make a ladies team for either the FRA or Hodgson relays, but had a few further leads to follow.

It was reiterated that the relays are highlights on the fell running calendar and that speed was not the essence and that members should not feel at all intimidated by them.

We agreed to encourage all members to participate whenever the opportunity arose, particularly focusing on ladies, in the hope that we can present a ladies team in both races.

c. Ennerdale Presentation. Adam and Barrie reported that this had gone extremely well, and that Colin Dulson (CFRA) had not got wind of things. Dan was also commended for taking on the running of this iconic race which is now a CFR race. The race will have the guidance of Colin next year to assist when and if needed.

Winter League. Charlotte has over recent years chosen the races for the Winter League and felt that we should really have a committee for race selection. Charlotte, Dan W., Adam, Mark, Darren, and Barrie agreed to do this. Ann Cummings was also mentioned in absentia. Discussion around running a CFR only race such as the Two Lakes (Crummock and Buttermere) both short and long which could also be a good way of getting more members to race in what might be considered a less pressured environment.

It was noted that consideration as to insurance coverage for these events and whether this is required.

Presentation Evening. After a brief discussion it was decided that the Ennerdale Brewery would be a good venue for the Presentation Evening. Charlotte to look at dates. Agreed not to have the Presentation Evening on the same day as the Sale Fell Race. Both dates and venue TBC.

Race cut offs and staggered starts. There was a general discussion around this borne out of concern that race cut offs were in some cases too stringent and not in the spirit of equality and diversity. It was accepted and in agreement with Julie Carter, FRA Welfare Officer, that “older women were suffering most with cut offs, but (that) others are adversely affected” Julie Carter from an e mail to Adam.

There were also concerns that in some of the longer races that the earlier cut off times and points were too stringent with runners being cut off at early points who could well have met the later cut off times. Some tight cut offs were also considered to be putting people off entering races.

It was agreed that at this point that CFR could only lead by example and in relation to CFR organised races. We further agreed to have a meeting with our Race Organisers and Alison Wright, Jane Mottram, Ruthie Stanley Dot Patton Jennie Chatterley, Ann Cummings, Barrie Johnson, Mark Wise and Adam Creswell particularly in relation to the Ennerdale, the Newlands Valley Races and the DHMR to discuss the issues. Adam was to arrange this.

Post meeting Adam has had communication with Julie Carter (recently appointed as Welfare Officer for FRA) who is “trying to make progress on these matters” .

Julie in her e mail to Adam was very complimentary to Paul Jennings and his DHMR team to his “measured approach and I think that he seems to have been a lot more successful than many long race organisers at balancing safety, marshal well-being and runner inclusivity”

Julie is trying to progress FRA guidance for Race Organisers to encourage races not to exclude competent older runners.

From evidence that Julie has gathered her belief is that we are probably only talking about extending cut offs by relatively small amounts or staggered starts for the older age groups.

“These are all things that need more discussion in our community so that all races can come up to the standards that CFR are trying to set in terms of the ethics of non -discrimination around age and gender” Julie Carter.

Also post meeting Adam and Mark have been number crunching in relation to CFR races and will provide a full report after we have had our meeting with Race Organisers etc. It would seem on an initial look that nobody was cut off at the Newlands Memorial in 2023 or 2024. The cut off at Dale Head is 2 hours 50 mins and the slowest finisher got to Dale Head in 2 hours 22 minutes and in 2023 in 2 hours 7 minutes.

The DHMR cut offs are as follows Grasmoor 2 hours 15 minutes, Newlands Hause 3 hours, Honister Pass 4 hours 15 minutes, Innominate Tarn 5 hours, High Stile, 6 hours 15 minutes and Melbreak 7 hours 30 minutes. These will be discussed at the meeting.

In relation to The Teenager with Altitude the Newlands Hause and Dale Head cut offs are 2 hours 30 minutes and 3 hours 50 minutes respectively. A small number of runners have exceeded but been very close to these cut offs in recent years and results suggest that all competitors were allowed to continue in the race.

The Ennerdale cut offs are Great Borne 1hour 15minutes, Red Pike 1 hour 45 minutes, Black Beck Tarn 2 hours 45 minutes, Green Gable 3 hours 30 minutes, Kirk Fell 4 hours and Pillar 5 hours.

Not wishing to pre judge anything it would appear that it is the longer races and in particular the Ennerdale that will require most discussion.

Adam is hoping that Julie Carter will be able to attend our meeting.

Club Races and New Races. Concern was expressed that in running so many long races that we might be overstretching our resources. The smaller races were considered less of an issue.

Paul (DHMR) and Les (Newlands Races) both had difficulty in getting a full complement of helpers. It was acknowledged just how big a responsibility it is putting on these races and we all agreed to reinforce the need for help from our membership with these big races particularly now that Dan has taken on The Ennerdale.

The individuals that actively and frequently support our club races were thanked.

Junior Update. Tony Jewell gave a very concise report about how well things were going with the juniors in all age groups and just how committed everyone was. Mylo was mentioned as being an inspiration to the younger members.

Tony requested funding for club members Claire Ellerman and Leeann Barber to attend a coaching course at £160 per person. This was unanimously agreed.

Any Other Business

Joss Naylor. The funeral arrangements for Friday 19th July were discussed. The upshot was that there will be a club run from Bleach Green at 8 am aiming to rendezvous with other club members at Black Sail Pass at 11.30 to descend into Wasdale Head for midday to allow time to walk to Down in the Dale Bridge to ensure we are in good time for the procession.

Hybrid meeting quality. Adam briefly indicated some concern regarding the audio quality of the Teams meeting for those in the room and on the Teams call. He took the action to purchase an improved speaker and microphone set up for future meetings and a basic system has since been purchased, which will be tested at the next club meeting.

Time and Date of next meeting.

This will be on a September Tuesday evening in the Shepherds Arms at 8pm . Date TBC.

Member's Meeting Tuesday 16th April 2024

Members attending Charlotte Barker, Mark Wise, Adam Cresswell, Sam Holding, Jennie Chatterley, Dan Worsell, Andy Bradley, Kath Farkas, David Wood, Juliet Fullwood, James Mclaughlin, Ann Cummings, Tony Jewell, Stuart Walker, Ian Grimshaw, Leeann Barber, Paul Arts.

By Teams Isabel Mancebo, David Burton, John Reynolds.

Apologies Paul Jennings, Tammy Haywood.

1. Approval of minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 30th January 2024.

Approved.

2. Matters arising

Promote benefits of FRA membership in Club Newsletter . Completed.

Auto renewal of Club Membership through SI entries. Completed.

Update on Sunday Socials. Adam and Kath provided an update. Everything operating well. Adam and Kath liaising well. Adam posting the runs and intends to post them at the same time as the Tuesday Club runs. 33 people in attendance on Sunday 14th a record. Kath mentioned that new attenders were being encouraged to join CFR.

Constitution. Uploading to website. Ongoing. Adam to continue with this.

Defibrillator. Mark to action purchasing a second-hand unit. Cardiac Science G3 Automatic unit sourced for £510 including VAT . With new batteries. Guaranteed for 12 months but should last for 4 years before battery replacement at a cost of £200 required. Since the meeting this has now been purchased but has not yet been delivered. With additions namely CPR Resuscitation kit, carrying case and bag the total cost inclusive of VAT was £610.68.

3 Club summer challenge. After discussion it was agreed to have a Bob Graham relay. Charlotte to suggest some potential dates. It was thought that the Club Captains would be involved in co-ordinating the teams. Sam was present but not Ruthie.

All members are able to take part in the challenge as each team will have lots of different elements to it. It was discussed that this is social in approach and enables us to go to some new places/fells!

4 Road affiliation. A brief discussion only. We need the road affiliation for our juniors to compete in cross country championships and other events, so we do need to keep the club affiliation. Sam was going to speak to road clubs in the area to see if they might drop their "Fell" affiliation to encourage some road runners who are also fell runners to be able to run for CFR as "First Claim Other" if members of CFR also.

5 Club groups for communication. It was agreed after discussion that CFR had rather a lot of sub-groups and that not all CFR members were necessarily aware of them all.

David and Isabel both suggested that we have a community approach to the WhatsApp groups so at least they would all be in one place with a drop-down menu. This would centralise and improve communications especially for important or urgent announcements. David and Charlotte are well on with this already. Subsequent to the meeting this has now been actioned with thanks in particular to Charlotte and David.

Any other business

Paul Jennings requested marshal help for the Darren Holloway Memorial Race (Buttermere Horseshoe) 22nd June. It was agreed to include this request in the next newsletter along with a list of CFR races where help would also be appreciated. It was agreed to remind club members of what a responsibility it was for the organisers to put on a race and the very real need for marshal support.

A note on Joss, by Barry Johnson



17 - Joss' Funeral, Terry Abraham

Sixty plus years ago, Joss and I met when I was in my early twenties. He is a few years older. My first walk with him was onto Illgill Head and Whin Rigg. We returned to our start from Brackenclose via the Wastwater screes. We started running and competing together in the late seventies. We both

shared a mutual like and respect for the annual Mountain Trial. As the event is run from a different location in the Lake District every year we would go for a recce run in that area as soon as the location details were released and endeavour to anticipate the actual route. We never did get it right. On one recce on the Helvellyn range we decided a possible checkpoint might be on St Sunday Crag and set off from Raise on two different route choices. I arrived 10/15 minutes later than Joss to find him rebuilding the summit cairn.

On our many long runs and adventures that we were individually or jointly participating in like the BG, 2500ft Round, Lakes, Meres and Waters, Sun to Sun, 60 at 60, 70 at 70 and more we supported each other as pacers and support. Probably the most significant for him is the Joss Naylor Challenge, Pooley Bridge to Greendale, which attracts scores of attempts every year with runners aiming to complete the run in a given time according to their age group and to raise monies for charity. Thousands of pounds are raised. Joss and Colin Dulson who jointly pioneered the challenge both supported my crossing 50 per cent each when I turned 60. It is a challenge Joss has always been proud to have established.

Joss helped me on numerous occassions to present prizes and give talks at events I organised such as the Coledale, Buttermere, Cockermouth Sports Festival, Lakeland Mountain Triathlon and many more. He was always encouraging to competitors and complimentary to all the helpers, especially the 'tea ladies'! A lovely person to share time with, on the hill, around a table, a hoot in company. His many athletic achievements and exploits are well documented: the records he set, his support to others and his massive fund raising efforts. He was a caring, humble, humorous character who will have touched us all.

CFR PRESIDENT, CFR RUNNER, CFR MATE.

Ennerdale by Dan Worsell

During a quiet club meeting of only five attendees, the issue was raised by Andy Bradley and Paul Jennings that Colin Dulson, 30 years the race director of the Ennerdale Horseshoe, wished to be no longer.

Conversation at that point sounded a bit bleak to me. There was talk of not being able to find marshals, and the fact that CFR was spread thin across many races. It was suggested it may be difficult to find somebody to take it on and that the race may disappear. I had and still have not been involved in the sport for very long. But I was aware of the Ennerdale Horseshoe. Therefore, the idea that it would just disappear seemed a terrible thought, so I uttered the following sentence, which may come to haunt me over the next 30 years, “I will take on the race if need be”.

At which point two pairs of eyes lit up at the sight of a potential victim, one pair in particular “Well, before you say yes, I need cover for Buttermere Shepherds Meet this year, so why not try that”.

A little bit further down the line, having directed a race (all of the organisation done by Andy himself I should add, for fear of reprisal). I enjoyed the highs of putting on an event that people can come and enjoy in a fantastic setting, and the lows, attempting to stay calm whilst waiting for an U15 runner to emerge out of the clag as the back marker, and onto the final descent line, whilst his parents watched on (he did). I decided that I would quite like the idea of taking on a race, especially one as important and significant as the Ennerdale Horseshoe, this was aided by a large amount of persuasion from Barry, as well as questions about whether I had done my core workouts.

I had the chance to meet with Barry a couple of times, to understand the context of what I was taking on. I also got to meet a few times and chat with Colin about the race and what it meant. This only emboldened my wish to take on the race and the challenges it brings. The history and the records and the people who have been involved is too tempting not to get involved.

I am not naïve to the challenges of the race, neither am I unaware of what it will force me to go to the club and ask for. I will be asking and pestering people for help (this article being just the start), as the race is not only an undertaking to take part in, but also an undertaking to marshal. High mountain checkpoints for extended periods are a huge thing to ask of people to do for the joy of it. Colin had a huge team around him and created a real family feel to the race, this will my aspiration to continue in that vein if I can.



18 - Colin and Tina Dulson, 30 years management of the Ennerdale. Photo by Barry Johnson

On a more serious note, I also plan to follow through on some conversations I had with Colin during the handover period, about the integrity of our races moving forward. We live in a safety conscious world, which in many ways is a good thing. However, Colin spoke of the pressures he had felt around the question of introducing using trackers and other forms of technology to ensure people could be monitored whilst on the hill. He worried that the introduction of this technology, whilst brilliant for concerned race directors, went against the ethos of the sport. We discussed the fact that if we want to keep the ethos of the sport as it is, then the systems we have need to become more robust. Better communication and better number checking being the fore front of that. Thus, allowing participants to run hard in the hills, happy in the knowledge that getting back to the finish is between them, and a map and compass. I personally could not agree more with Colins sentiment.

This along with the very important discussion about cut offs that Richard Eastman has gathered data to support looms large in my mind, as a director of one of the Lakeland super longs. This sudden increase in responsibility is not lost on me either.

As for the way forward, I am unsure, as I am not heavily involved in the politics of it, whether the Ennerdale will become a CFR race, or remain as CFRA. I will search for guidance on this from other more senior members of the club. All that I know is that I will be directing it as a member of CFR and asking for help from CFR members. I have already had several pledges of support which is amazing to already have backing from the club. If you are reading this and think you would like to be a part of it as well, the more the merrier. So far, I have seen, organising a race is reliant on having a great team around you. I understand I am asking a lot of the club. But I believe that moving forward we can continue with the amazing atmosphere I have felt at the Ennerdale's I have attended thus far, and hopefully improve further on it. Whilst it is a beast of a race and not to be underestimated, it is one of the jewels in the crown of the Lake District fell running calendar. So even if you cannot help marshalling, I highly recommend coming to watch or running in it, just ask Ruthie how good it is, she hates AL's and she loved it! I cannot wait until race day 2025 to set off my first Ennerdale Horseshoe Fell Race and begin the races next chapter.

Juniors report by Tony Jewell

The work of CFR Juniors continues to grow with enthusiasm and energy that is a credit to the coaching staff, juniors and parents/carers. Sessions happen come rain, hail or shine on Saturday mornings at 10am, alternating between Kirkland Leaps and Sale Fell. The training/coaching is varied, fun and as to be expected from those delivering it, of a very high standard. In terms of developing the correct techniques at a very young age, CFR junior members are in very good hands. As we know, skills learned properly at a young age stay with us for a lifetime.

Currently there are 44 juniors on the books. It is common for 27 young people to be in attendance on a Saturday. The task of coaching large numbers of juniors of varying ages and stages of development takes a lot of planning and delivery. The continued growth in the numbers, particularly from the Lorton area, is testament to the quality of the product.

Additional support is provided to Tony Jewell by Leeann Barber and Claire Elliman, who are in the process of accessing additional training and qualifications. Both Claire and Leeann, also take a Wednesday evening session for Juniors in the under 15 age categories, working on longer and more challenging runs. This assists to build stamina over a distance relative to their physical development, protecting their health and injury prevention.

The FRA English Junior Championship concluded on Sunday 7th July, with the final race, of the 6-race series in Wales at Clwydian. 8 juniors and their families making the journey.

Under 9's

Male - Thomas Mathieson (8th male/10th overall)

Under 11's

Male – Thomas Tacon (7th male/7th overall)

Female – Charlotte Mathieson (5th female/14th overall)

Megan Connor (13th female/30th overall)

Anna Giddings (14th female/32nd overall)

Under 13's

Boys - Joseph Giddings (27th male/38th overall)

Under 15's

Girls - Evie Youngman (12th female/26th overall)

Alice Hardy (17th female/33rd overall)

This venue certainly presented the toughest challenge of the series and a huge well done to all the juniors who gave their all. They performed with great determination, grit and huge amount of skill.

The other races in the series were Duddon Dash, Howgills, Rossendale, Shutlingsloe and Weaver Hill.

As a result of their participation in some or all of the above races, the following have achieve the final positions in the series;

Under 13's category

Joseph Giddings (6 races) 18th place

Samuel Youngman (4 races) 30th place

Jack Thwaite (1 race) 54th place

Under 15's category

Male - Charlie Tulley (4 races), 19th place, Luke Davison (3 races) 29th place,

Female - Evie Youngman (6 races), 15th place Alice Hardy (5 races) 19th place.

Under 19's category

Mylo Jewell (1 race) 17th place. Mylo's participation was greatly reduced due to focusing on and preparing for his school exams. He has now returned fully to his running and has been supporting/pacing on a few Bob Graham Rounds.

Additionally, a large number of the juniors have competed in the following fell races;

Blake Fell

Grizedale Grind

Two Tops Dash

Latterbarrow Loop

Gavel Fell

It would be fair to say each race has presented its own unique challenge in the Junior Championship.

The current leaders in the championship are as follows;

Under 9's

Male – Freddie King

Female – Chloe Moore

Under 11's

Male – Thomas Tacon

Female – Charlotte Mathieson

Under 13's

Male – Jack Thwaite

Female – Alice Maddams

Under 15's

Male – Charlie Tulley

Female – Alice Hardy

Under 19's

Male – Mylo Jewell

The juniors have 4 show races over the remaining months of the year to look forward to as part of the summer championship. They will then move into 5 cross country races.

The juniors consistently provide support and encouragement to each other, whether it is in a training or racing environment. This has grown over time and CFR Juniors now has a real sense of team ethic and camaraderie amongst the juniors which is great to see.

Sunny Spine by Simon Franklin



19 - NB I took an old Nokia as my mandatory phone and therefore took no photos. All pictures have been generated by artificial intelligence. Words have been generated by very basic intelligence.

Misty Kinder – Sunday 9:30am – 5 miles

An hour and a half ago I was surrounded by 100 excited runners and the unmistakable tense atmosphere of a big race start. At least a year of build up of training (on flatter terrain thaN I like), kit check panic and visualisation was all finally about to be tested, and yet the time leading up to it had crept forwards so slowly

But now I'm alone. The clag and rain deadens sound and I can't see more than 50m ahead or behind me as I jog along through puddles and over limestone. My 7kg pack feels light and all my worries are gone. It's too late to wonder whether I have the right compass, enough water, or the right combination of base layers. It's liberating. I sing to myself as I skip past the Kinder trig point and towards the Downfall. I feel euphoric, A big adventure lies ahead, and I can't wait.

Sick at Pondon – Monday 3am – 56 miles

If I'm awake for it, three o'clock in the morning is always a low point for me and this one is no different. I've treated the first day of the race like an ordinary ultra, running the flats and downhills and hiking the ups, eating and drinking a little less than I should and hardly resting. It felt OK and I had reached the first checkpoint in high spirits. After a short stop to eat, clean my feet and change clothes I had bowed to inevitable and teamed up with Alex to set off into the night. Alex and I did the last 120 miles of the Northern Traverse together in 2022 and had agreed to see where we were after the first day before deciding whether to do the same again. We'd worked together well then and it made sense to do the same again.

It had been drizzly and windy but warm as we had negotiated the bogs of Wuthering Heights country and I was starting to feel low. Descending down to Ponden Reservoir my stomach was now finally rebelling, as it always likes to do. Retching by the side of the path, I tell Alex to leave me, in a Captain Oates display of self-sacrifice, but he waits at a respectful distance until I've finished and we continue on in silence.



I'm not even 24 hours in and feeling terrible. I keep moving, knowing the sun will be up soon and hoping for a boost from that and from the pop-up checkpoint outside Cowling, but I know I'm silent, and in my head I'm thinking how bad I will feel if I stop so early.

At the CP, we're given a runner in a bad way to look after on the next section. Everything is a matter of perspective, and seeing someone looking so bad (he retires at the next road crossing) makes me feel better. As does the bacon sandwich, and by the time we reach Gargrave I'm feeling great.

Bob – Monday 6pm – 86 miles

Bob seemingly appears from nowhere as we pass a farm at the bottom of the climb up Fountains Fell. Bob is a black and white Jack Russell who skips along a constant 50 yards ahead of us, always finding the best lines up the hillside. If we stop, he stops and waits for us to continue. We question each other to make sure we are both seeing him. I have 2 Jack Russells and he looks like a cross between the two of them, making me wonder if I have willed him into existence.

We get to the top of Fountains Fell but Bob doesn't stop; he hops over the stile ahead of us and leads us on the muddy descent towards the road separating us from Pen Y Ghent. At one point we have a proper stop as the descent has been hard and Bob comes back to us to be petted. Alex takes a photo and we both wonder if it will actually show me petting fresh air.

We lose sight of Bob when we reach the road and assume he has gone back to the farm, but near the top of a sunny Pen Y Ghent he appears again. A dog owner near the summit holds him and says his tag shows he lives about 10 miles away. She takes him off to return him home, so we never find out if he knows the whole of the Pennine Way. We reluctantly go back to navigation by map and GPX.

Hardraw Mudslide – Tuesday 3am – 105 miles

We've now been awake for over 40 hours and are pushing on to get to the checkpoint at Hardraw and the promise of a tent to lay down our sleeping bags and battered bodies for a sleep. Turning finally off the Cam Road we're expecting a gentle descent down to Hawes and a gentle jog across fields to our dreamtime, but what we have now found is hillside bogs and mudslides. I did the Baby Spine in Winter 2019 but have no memory of this horrendous section of skidding and squelching. I fall over for the 50th time and swear loudly into the night. We're both angry as only tired people can be.



There is no sign of the lights of Hawes for what seems like hours, but finally we reach a weirdly textured, ankle torturing farm track and silently fume our way to the Hardraw sleep palace in the

sunrise. As we take off our shoes and socks and rucksacks, we're suddenly euphoric and everything is wonderful again.

Dufton Scone – Wednesday 4:30pm – 160 miles

During Tuesday, we had settled into a gentle rhythm of fast hiking through the northern Dales to another sleep at Middleton and then on through the beautiful Northern Pennines. Reaching High Cup Nick in afternoon sunshine, this whole experience had moved on from race to relaxed walking tour of all the sights I've imagined when tracking runners on the Winter Spine.

And now I'm sitting in the sunshine, looking out on the village green at Dufton. I've finished my first latte and a cheeseburger, and now I'm spreading cream and jam on a scone. Other runners are lying on the grass chatting.

I look down at the number on my rucksack. Written across the top of it in a dramatic font it says "Britain's Most Brutal". I take a sip from my second latte.



Gregg's Hut Mission – Wednesday 6:30pm – 169 miles

Alex is sitting outside the bothy in the sunshine, but I have a mission. I stand on a chair to reach a ventilation grille and there is what I'm looking for; an electrical cable tucked up inside it. I take a photo with my Nokia 1.5mp camera and head back out to Alex.

Two days earlier, when we had been sitting eating our rehydrated curries in checkpoint 1.5 at Malham Tarn, John Bamber, who runs this Gregg's Hut CP during Winter, had jokingly asked if I could check if the solar power cables he'd fitted in the hut were still OK. The bothy is not used in the summer race but is a crucial spot for people to warm up after the climb over Cross Fell. It's frequently snowbound and the chilli soup there has resurrected many runners. Everyone in the Malham CP had laughed but I had taken this task on board, thinking that it would give me extra motivation to make it to CP5.5 when I will next see John.

I climb down off the chair, determined to surprise John in a couple of days time with a cable status update and a photo before the Cheviots.

Alston Dream Sequence – Thursday 1:30am – 180 miles

All the sleeps so far had been in tents outside, so reaching Alston YHA and the promise of an actual bed had been a beacon of comfort shining through Wednesday.

An hour after lying down though, it has not gone as planned. Having to try not to disturb the other sleeping runners has kept me awake long enough for my feet to start throbbing, and I can't sleep. There is a limit of 6 hours in any checkpoint and with admin to do either side this means a maximum of 3 hours to sleep. I need paracetamol, but my first aid kit is downstairs with my rucksack. Eventually I get up and stagger into the bright lights of the YHA dining room.

Over the last few days, we have seen the same faces when we've been at checkpoints as everyone is going at roughly the same speed. We see the people close to us and the people 3 hours ahead of us (who are getting out of bed when we arrive) and 3 hours behind (who are arriving as we get out of bed).

Now though, I've broken that pattern and I see only strangers around me. I'm very disorientated and wonder about all these weird unfamiliar faces who seem to be doing the same race as me.

After finding my tablets, I get lost trying to find the bedroom but get back into bed and the pain in my feet magically subsides after 15 mins. I fall asleep straight after. The whole race has these moments that feel like they could finish everything; missing the chance to sleep, leaving a blister too long before sorting it out, forgetting to drink for an hour. I've dodged another one and remain vigilant for the next one.



Shitlington Crags Mob – Thursday 9:30pm – 216 miles

It's late in the evening but the sun is still warm. Thursday has been a magical trip along Hadrian's Wall followed by a stop at the Horneystead oasis, one of the many farms that have an honesty system working. The farmer and her husband are out in the midgy evening bringing round coffees and ham sandwiches and we're in a group of 8 or so, knowing that we're probably only 24 hours away from finishing.

We're now heading up to Shitlington Crags, and we've grouped together. It's been great to be with Alex, but now there is new conversation and jokes and sleep-deprived high spirits. The last final miles heading to the checkpoints have dragged over the last three nights, but this time everyone is

laughing and suddenly we're at Bellingham. This will be the last sleep before the finish. For the first time I feel that this finish will happen.

Kirk Yetholm Finish – Friday 9:02pm – 268 miles

My feet really hurt. I'm staring at the tarmac and grimly trying to keep running.

We've hiked the 220 miles from Hebden on Sunday night until now. It's about 4 miles from the end and the previous 5 miles have been really difficult for me. A hot day over the rolling Cheviots took its toll and Alex was much stronger than me. The never-ending slabs heading to Hut 2 had been a real low point, btu seeing Alex striding ahead of me had kept dragging me along when if I'd been alone I'd have slowed down to a crawl.

The safety team at Hut 2 included a friend called Kate which had lifted me from my slump. I had tried to be cheerful going into every checkpoint, probably annoyingly so, but it was easy to do as I'd enjoyed almost every minute of this adventure. Now though, it was so close to finishing that it was hard to keep ignoring the pain and fatigue. Alex was insistent we should run in to get it over. I knew he was right, but as we headed to the last hill on the road I had retreated inside my head.

But suddenly we are the top of the last descent. Running starts to feel easier. We're talking about what we're looking forward to when we finish; beer, pizza, dogs, family.

Alex had given us a target of 9pm to finish. As we see the village below, we hear the church clock strike the hour and we smile. We float over the green, through the arch and kiss the wall of thr Border Hotel. I scoop up my dog and carry her with me. There's a crowd of people, it's still sunny and we're all smiling.

This was exactly how I imagined finishing. The whole adventure is too big to see all at once in my head at the moment, but I know I'm happy.



Bagging the Lake District Tarns by Dot Patton and Jane Mottram

After the Wainwrights came the tarns. What is a tarn? The word tarn is Norse in origin, 'Tjorn' means tear drop or small mountain lake. We rather liked tear drop as it perfectly describes the shape of many tarns.

There are types of tarns too; tarns formed by glaciers, tarns with incoming and outgoing streams, tarns supporting aquatic life or just small mountain lakes. After some research several lists of Lake District tarns emerged but Jane and I settled on a list of 197 which probably included all of the definitions.



20 - Goats Water

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Our first tarn was Cogra Moss on New Year's Day 2019. Followed by Blackbeck, Haystacks and Innominate Tarns on 10th Jan . We were in no rush – Wednesday was our day to run, often thwarted with rain or one of us away, so we slowly picked away at them relishing every trip. Of course we had the Covid years to contend with and the accompanying restrictions .At the close of December 2023 we had completed 163 tarns and had had enough!



21 - Wetherlam Tarn

The remaining tarns were too far away to bother with or needed a good long dry day not a wild winter one! Some of the tarns on our list had filled in with vegetation and some so tiny we wondered why they were on the list. Some were quite remote and required navigation to reach, some were just a stones throw from the road. Depending on the weather they were like mirrors, reflecting the mountains above or wild, like a rough sea. All were just beautiful and a delight to find.



22 - Place Fell Tarn

At each tarn we had to dip a hand (or Ella the dog went in) and photograph, we now have 3 books of tarn photos!

So … what about these tarns?

The prettiest – Tarn At Leaves

The best setting- Red tarn (Helvellyn)

The wildest – Devoke Water

The most surprising - Snipeshaw Tarn (well hidden)

The most disappointing – Little Meldrum Tarn (just a bog)



23 - Tarn at Leaves

So how do we fill our Wednesdays now? Well we are visiting favourite fells and swimming – yet another list! Also just begun the Joss Naylors Lakes, Meres and Waters in separate stages which might take a while!



24 - Red Tarn, Hellvellyn





25 - Jane and Dot

Ennerdale Revisited by Peter Taylor

Talking to Joss and beating Jasmin 😉

[2013] Water was a major concern. I spotted the distinctive, lanky figure of legendary fell runner, Joss Naylor, winner of the first nine Ennerdale races. Surely at 77 years old he wasn't setting off to run in the blistering heat? I grabbed my chance to ask about water. He spoke for a few minutes, but the only word I picked out of his broad Cumbria dialect was "beck". I'm pretty sure he was deliberately joshing with me.

[2024] Eleven years ago, I had a crack at the Lakeland Classics Trophy Series. This year, a return to the Ennerdale Horseshoe prompted me to re-read my race report and reflect on the differences a decade makes. Please excuse or skip this rather indulgent article!

The most obvious change is age. First time around I was in the open category and now I'm a v50. My other big change is location having moved to Cockermouth from near Chester. For me, that translates into fewer kilometres a week, but more climbing. We've double the number of kids too. I still fit in training around family, tending to run before breakfast or home from a family fell walk, but I also now train with the CFR juniors and our eldest, Calum.

We'd been very lucky all week on holiday in Eskdale, with warm sunny weather. I'd taken it relatively easy, although had carried Calum [1yo] up a few hills. Race day was the hottest yet. Visibility was great, but finding water was going to be difficult. After my failed attempt to speak to Joss, he strode off with a tiny knapsack which looked like it dated from the first race in 1968. Lots of runners had running rucksacks with bottles and bladders. I reassured myself that the faster runners had the usual minimalist bumbags.



A recce a few weeks earlier had taken 6 hours 30 minutes, left me drained and no wiser about route choices. On the plus side, the forecast was clear with a possible −5°C windchill (in June!) – way better than 2013's heatwave. I was also sporting a CFR vest, running for the Joss's club!

We were glistening at the start. Although Joss had only a 20-minute start, he was arriving at the first top as I approached. I'd gone off with the leading group and slipped back on the first steep ground. But I didn't panic and settled into a rhythm. Everything was going well as we climbed Red Pike. There were three of us together, but I had to leave the group for some boulders. The irony struck me, as this was the fell race with the most toilets I'd ever seen – not the one village-hall toilet for 200 runners of Dunnerdale, but a Scout centre with rows of them! Unburdened, I set off in pursuit of the others towards High Stile. As we descended High Crag and traversed Haystacks, we were caught by four or five runners. Our line was poor and I'm sure we lost five minutes on the ill-defined summit (I can't understand why Haystacks was Wainwright's favourite).

The first climb felt bigger than ever, but I was pleased with my position. Still too fast, but not plummeting too far down the order. Thanks to Darren's brilliant map and notes, and the runners I was following, my lines were much better than in 2013. I also drank and ate from the off being wiser with age.

We'd been out for 2 hours, and I had deliberately just finished my water, hoping to fill it between Haystacks and Green Gable. Fortunately, we crossed a tiny stream – the only one on the whole route.

The weather was delightfully cool, but nothing like predicted windchill. In fact, I arrived at Blackbeck still carrying water.

Over the next 10 km, I swapped position a few times with the first lady, Jasmin Paris. I was feeling reasonably good, but knowing I needed to eat and drink more. Many of the marshals had carried water to the summits, but a mouthful every few kilometres was far from sufficient. And it was also difficult to eat feeling so dry-mouthed. I managed a few jelly babies and hoped to avoid bonking.

On a rare glance up from my feet, I saw the whole Lake District stretched out before me, filling my exhausted body with happiness. [Back then, living in the Lakes was a pipedream!]

Some heroic marshals had lugged water to Pillar. I took a few gulps and trotted on. I lost touch with the Jasmin on the way round Scoat Fell. From Haycock, the ground became easier and, with most of

the ascent done, psychologically it felt like the remaining run was downhill. But the finish was still more than 10 km away!



I was having a good battle with a v50 Dark Peak runner, pushing each other to plod faster. To my surprise, we caught Ross and I started to drop them both. I used Darren's notes to bypass Caw Fell via two styles, having to stop on the second to stretch out cramp. Despite the cool conditions, and a few gulps of water Steve and others had kindly carried to the ridgeline, I was now craving water.

I picked up the pace on the good ground from Iron Crag, but was slow on the climbs. My water was long since drunk. Could I keep going?

Jasmin was sitting on a pile of rocks, blood pouring from a cut on her chin. I stopped to check she was ok, asking if she wanted me to stay with her and whether she was dizzy. She was shaken but insisted that I continued.

The final descent was a hobble. I glanced at my watch. If I pushed I could finish in under 4 hours 30 minutes. But I didn't care… I didn't want to push; just lie in a steam. [Strictly forbidden according to the 2024 Portaloo poster.]

Last descent… along the lane… over the bridge… through the trees… the finish! Jen and Calum applauded as I entered the finishing funnel.

I collapsed in the shade, utterly spent – three seconds inside 4 hours 30 minutes in 20th position, but a massive 45 minutes behind the winner. [And just ahead of the (injured) Barkley Marathons finisher!]

Ross seemed to catch me with ease at the foot of the last climb. We were within 10 second at the top, but his young bouncy legs took 1 minute 20 seconds from me on the decent. I crossed the line in 4 hours 54 minutes in 30th much quicker than I feared after my recce. In fact, I was delighted. As a bonus, I was the beneficiary of an extremely generous 5-year age banding, picking up 2nd v50, which was undeserved with two v55 men ahead.

Thank you to all the marshals and race organisers!

A Winter (mostly) Wainwright Project by Mark Wise



Peter Crompton had this bright idea to complete all the Wainwrights over the winter months and I agreed to accompany him on the journey.

I am not sure quite where the idea came from but think that it was a combination of pub talk and making sure that we kept going over the winter period when it can be difficult to maintain momentum during those dark wet short days. It also gave us a good reason not to attempt a winter Bob Graham which was clearly even dafter beer talk. Peter for once showed good sense saying that this was a mad idea.

Another motivation, albeit largely unspoken, was age. How long can we keep doing this for ? What will we do with ourselves when we can no longer run the fells ? Scary prospects ! We must keep going.

The project began mid-November, the 16th to be exact. We had a joint birthday celebration outing to Dubs hut accompanied by the legends Les Barker, Paul Johnson, Darren Parker and Owen Mills, complete with take away curry, possibly a first at Dubs hut. The first two Wainwrights picked off were Brandreth and Grey Knotts in the dark. It was seriously wet particularly underfoot. We had thought that we would have the hut to ourselves but ended up sharing it with 4 weed smoking Liverpudlians who were entertaining even though they hogged the fire and, with our permission, used our firewood and dry clothing. After a very cold and largely sleepless night we ventured outside and ran to Haystacks both feeling a little hungover. Les, Darren Paul and Owen got up very early and left to either go to work or with other tasks in mind.

What then followed was a series of, fairly local, trips out taking in many of the Western and North Western Fells. We had a seriously cold and windy outing on 27th November, Ullock Pike , Longside, Carlside, Skiddaw and Bakestall. By the end of November after 6 outings we had 32 under our belts.



December saw 13 outings and the tally had moved up by another 54 to 86. There were some memorable trips. 4th December. Melbreak, Starling Dodd and Great Bourne were done in foul weather, and I remember feeling extremely relieved to get off the fell after Great Bourne. 5th December. A different day altogether. Cold and windy but sunny with a lot of snow underfoot, all very ethereal around Longlands, Brae Fell, Great Sca Fell, Meal Fell and Great Cockup. Cascades of half frozen powdery snow were swirling round us as we ran downhill. 6th December. Another glorious day without Peter but joined by Rod Welford and Steve Whitehurst. A trip across the bog that takes in Walla, Bleaberry, High Seat, High Tove, Armboth, Raven Crag and High Rigg.10th December needs a mention too. Absolutely awful weather taking in Latrigg, Lonscale, Skiddaw Little Man and Dodd. Mist, snow, rain and probably the windiest conditions I have ever encountered on the descent off Skiddaw. There were two people on the top with full packs crawling as it was the only way they could make progress against the wind. We were once again glad to get off the hill. 29th December saw another bad weather day when we did Grike Lank Rigg and Caw Fell. I was beginning to realise that Peter was getting more like a parent. " It's not far" "It's just around the next corner and over the next rise" "Its only a short run it will take a couple of hours at most". Anyway after nearly four hours and coming off Crag Fell down to the lakeshore in the dark with no head torches I was beginning to get the measure of "Mad Dog" Crompton. Everything is always further, harder and takes longer than he says it will. I would say that half of the outings in December were done with seriously poor visibility which did not help, but we were now on a mission and it felt like we could get this done early in the New Year however things were to get in the way.

Christmas knocked a hole in things as did colds and family visits. This meant that Peter and I got a little out of sync in late December and January, but this added another dimension. I had a few outings with Rod Welford and Steve Whitehurst and Peter caught up with the Walla to High Rigg outing but accidentally missed out Armboth. On another day we did Armboth together as a catch up and then went on to Steel Fell (except we didn't) both in foul weather. I got back home only to find, courtesy of Andy Bradley of the Wainwright Police, that we had fallen short on Steel Fell. He was

right. A complete waste of a trip out for me having already bagged Armboth back in early December. The 8th of January was memorable. Leg two of the Bob Graham on a day that was so cold that our water bottles froze. We didn't see a soul until Helvellyn and we both said when we got to Dunmail that if anything had happened to either of us that we wouldn't have lasted long up there. When we got to Dunmail having deposited my car earlier in the day for the return journey to Threlkeld I realised that I had left my car keys in Peter`s car so that I wouldn't lose them on the run. Fortunately, there was a walker also parked at Dunmail who gave us a lift back to Threlkeld. January 10th was another good day. A very cold and snowy Fairfield Horseshoe with extras. We bumped into the intrepid Hannah Barber complete with baby near Hartsop How.



There were only 6 outings in January adding another 40 to the tally bringing me to 126. The most memorable was on the 18th in bright sunshine but with crisp snow on the ground. We were down in Wasdale and did two sides of the valley. Illgill head, Whin Rigg, Seat Allan, Middle Fell and Buckbarrow. We met Dave Burton. A Glorious day.

February saw 6 outings adding 28 to the total . 154 in all. Highlights for February included Grasmere Common with the addition of Steel Fell for Andy Bradley who did notice. We thought that we would add Steel Fell to the Grasmoor Common round as Peter said it would only add about a mile to the route. A Crompton mile is 4 actual miles, they are a bit like dog years except in miles. I really should know better. This was memorable for the extreme cold, wet and appalling visibility. Rod Welford was with us, and we were all desperate to get of the fell being in danger of becoming hypothermic . What should have been one of the best rounds from a scenic point of view was anything but. We all made a promise to go back in good weather to see what we had missed. Another difficult day was on the 14th of February, Yewbarrow, Red Pike, Scoat Fell, Steeple and Haycock. Very poor visibility, cold with sleet and hail. We lost our maps for a good half hour and nearly bailed out before Steeple. Luckily things cleared enough for us to get our bearings, but it was all a little scary.



By the beginning of March, we were travelling further afield. Fusedale, Coniston Boredale, Longsleddale High Street etc. 29 were added over 5 outings bringing the total to 183. Peter and I got more out of sync towards the end of the month not so much in terms of numbers but peaks. I had been out of action for ten days with a horrible bug and Peter had been in The Democratic Republic of Congo for two weeks seeing his daughter. This was to make for an interesting April and a fair bit of duplication for both of us as we endeavoured to finish the project together by the end of the month which had been the intention at the very outset.

April saw 9 outings for me but two of them were duplicates and the same could be said for Peter. The final day came on 30th when we set of from Wasdale in foul weather and did Lingmell, The Scafells, Slightside and then a long trek out to Green Crag. We had omitted Green Crag on 13th March having encountered seriously bad weather after Hardknott and Harter. This had been the only day we didn't achieve what we had set out to do. It was the right call at the time, but we were rather wishing that we had done it on the allotted day. We dropped into the Woolpack Inn had a beer and managed to cadge a lift back to Wasdale to retrieve the car. Job done ? Or was it ? It was 214/214 for me but Peter had forgotten to do Binsey as I thoroughly enjoyed pointing out. Peter being Peter went straight out and did it the minute he got back home so we completed on the same day.

It felt good doing this although a little difficult to fit in amongst races, other running commitments and life in general. It took us both around 45 outings over the period and certainly got us out when we otherwise wouldn't have bothered, mutual bullying helped.



It made us realise that we could keep going and that will continue to do so. It taught us both a lot about the fells. They are unpredictable and we were often not properly kitted out despite thinking that we were. Always take more gear than you need. Take a battery pack. Don't just rely on mobile phones as they are seriously hard to use in the cold and wet. Take a head torch even if you think you will be back down in good light. The list goes on.

Anyway, a memorable winter taking in many places I had never been and may never go to again. Many thanks to Crompers, Rod Welford, Steve Whitehurst, Mark Steel and Ann Marie Frankland for being such great companions and for navigating. I am probably the only person to have completed the Wainwrights without looking at a map! Thanks also to Elaine and Heather for being so long suffering and with such good grace.

