

The

Dash

June 2019



Chairman Simon Fox completing the Joss Naylor Challenge and meeting the man himself.

From the editor...

Well it looks like summer is finally here. Yet again another busy month with people doing things from The Old County Tops to Chairman Fox completing the Joss Naylor Challenge in awful weather conditions and becoming a Grandad. Congratulations to Emma and Chris on the birth of Phoebe.



The latest group of beginners graduated from 5K to 10K with the completion of the Morecambe 10K at the beginning of June and there were several Dashers at the "Heat-wave" Freckleton Half Marathon too.

Able assisted by Sharon Cocker it was great to be involved with the registration and results for the Aggies Race which again was very well supported by Dashers both running the race and out on the course marshalling. Thanks are also due to Mark Duckworth for his photography many of which I used in this edition.



Next month is the ever popular Don Ashton Memorial Race which is superbly organised and promoted by Calvin Ferguson and if you don't fancy running it I am sure there will be opportunity to help out and marshal.

With all the sport that the summer provides I particularly like to spectate on the Ironman and this year will be on our doorstep with the cycle route passing Hoddlesden and Blacksnape. There's a rumour that a Dasher will be taking part this year..... watch this space.

Debbie
Biscuit

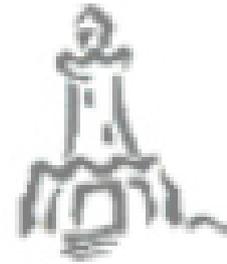
Enjoy the sunshine, and keep dashing



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Darwen Dashers Running

Club: Founded 1990

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When/where to meet us:

Tuesday
The Sunnyhurst, Tockholes Rd,
Darwen BB3 1JX
19.00
All Welcome

Thursday
The Sunnyhurst, Tockholes Rd,
Darwen BB3 1JX
19.00
All Welcome

Check our Facebook page for details of runs which are taking place on club nights. If you have not run with us before, please get in touch before you come so we can arrange for somebody to meet you.

The Dash

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Contributors Debbie Bevitt, Chris Cash, Simon Fox, Helen Jones, Louise Oldfield, Calum Rigby, Deborah Robinson, Gareth Taylor.

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Darwen Dashers Running Club



@DarwenDashers



**On Facebook:
Darwen Dashers
Parkrun Information
Page**



All contributions for the The Dash to be sent by 1st of each month to:
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Chairman's Chat



Hello Dashers.

I was re-reading my notes from last month's column and I see that I was semi-jokingly predicting terrible weather for when I was doing the Joss Naylor Challenge. Well, the double bluff failed big style and I did indeed get horrendous conditions for a large proportion of it. Ah well! Many thanks to the many Dashers who freely gave their time in supporting me on the attempt and to all those who sponsored me. £1800 was raised for Prostate Cancer UK which is a phenomenal amount. Well done everybody.

June has really turned into a month to remember as Cath and I have just become Grandparents for the first time. Welcome to the world Phoebe Hannah. 7lb 4 oz for all the stats fans out there. Mother and baby are doing fine.

Just to keep everyone in the picture I recently took our donation of £650 for the defibrillator to the Treasurer of ROSA.

They were extremely grateful and have promised to organise some sort of publicity thing involving the Telegraph when it is installed.

As I write the Witton Park Trail Relays are coming up so good luck to all competing and well done to Gareth T for all his hard work in organising the teams. If you aren't racing maybe you could go down to support? It's a really good event with a great atmosphere.

I was out on the course of Aggies Staircase race last week and it was really good to see so many Dashers yet again giving their time to help out. It was a perfect night for it too so well done to Chris for sorting that out!

There were some great performances by Dashers as well. If you enjoyed that then why not help out at the Don Ashton Memorial race on Thursday 4th July? Details on Dashers site and FB page or just contact Calvin.

I was saddened to hear that prolific race organiser and massive supporter of all things to do with local running, Andy O'Sullivan, is battling with cancer. Many of us have been given an encouraging shout out by Andy at races so please join me in wishing him all the best in his fight.

Enjoy your running



Simon



From the Fell Captain

Another eventful month in the Fell running calendar where we have seen huge feats of endurance. Dot watching Paul Tierney doing the Wainwrights was just simply unbelievable and a record that will take some beating i expect.

Closer to home our very own Chairman competed the Joss Naylor Challenge with 127 seconds to spare. 15 hours to cover 48 miles and 14,000 feet. I was honoured to be part of the support crew and covered the last 2 legs with Simon. The weather was horrendous on the first two legs and i fully expected another 8 hours of something similar. Thankfully the weather gods were a bit kinder and whilst not tropical sunshine it wasn't half as bad as forecast.

Steel fell to High Raise was covered in clag and was a tax on mine and Alex Buckland's navigation skills but with this section out of the way and Kev Smith and Staners seeing to his dietary needs things were going well.

Bow Fell came shortly after and it was clear Simon was suffering and struggling to eat. As a supporter on these events you are somewhat helpless at times - you can carry, offer food and drink, navigate and encourage but essentially it is down to the man on the ground to stick one foot in front of the other and keep moving.

Leg 3 finishes with an out and back of Great End and a descent to the stretcher box at Styhead where we were joined by Amy, Action Man Paul Taylor and Stubbs. I won't lie - it was good to hand over the navigation reigns to Amy at this point and Great Gable passed pretty quickly with Stubbs' tales and laughing at Paul carrying a rice pudding in a sandwich bag.

Time was tight across the whole of this last leg and we were all willing Simon along as the mountains ticked by.

Clag from Pillar to Steeple didn't help the job and we lost some time as descended to Haycocks and then started the slog to Seatallen. It was only at this I think that Simon let himself believe that the pass might be possible. I remember standing next to him when he asked and could see how much it was hurting him - "keeping tapping it out Chairman, you're doing reeeeaaly well" was my response (his response to me most weeks). The last climb up Middle Fell and subsequent descent was stressful as the clock ticked by. Never I have willed someone so much to keep running, put one foot in front of the other and get down.

With 127 seconds to spare he touched the bridge at Greendale and was greeted by Joss Naylor himself and the pass was complete.

I know how much he has worked over the past 6 months to prepare for this, I knew how much it meant to him to prove to himself he could still suffer and go deep. He most certainly did that - and i was proud and hounored to be a part of it. Chapeau Chairman - Chapeau.



In the fell champs, James Mellor was the only runner at the Ennerdale Horse-shoe and five turned out at Paddy's Pole. Battle commenced once more, with Amy being not only the first Dasher back but also first Lady. She really is in a rich vein of form currently - rumour has it, husband Joel is either drunk off white Zinfandel or driving to Pete Bland's to spend her winner's vouchers.



Next up is Stoodley Pike - an up and down 3 miler. Perfect for runners who might want a go at fell racing.



Gareth Davies



From the Road Captain

I will start off by saying what a fantastic turn out we had at Morecambe 10k, We had 29 Dashers and won a number of categories so well done to all taking part or receiving a prize. We also had 8 Dashers running in last Sundays Freckleton half marathon. The championship tables are now taking shape as more and more Dashers running the qualifying six or more races. Just a reminder that your six best scores count plus every race after this gets another 10 points. Richard Marsden is currently leading the men's and Sharon Cocker is leading the women's.

2019 Road Races Remaining:

14 July - Towneley Park 10k
4 August - Lancaster 10m
2 September - Stockport Hatters Half Marathon
27 October - Accrington 10k
20 November - Preston 10m

The teams are now entered for the Witton Park trail relays on Thursday 27th June (big thanks to Rebecca Simms for helping with this), we have 9 teams have a go with x2 men's, x4 men vets, x1 women's and x2 women's vets. This should be a good evening so if anybody not running wishes to attend and support then you're more than welcome to come down.

Finally I would like to congratulate again Simon Fox for his fantastic achievement with his Joss Naylor Round. I was only running with him for leg two but you couldn't have had worse weather for a 'summer's day'. Well done – you've done the club and yourself proud raising over £1500 for a worthy cause in the process!



Gareth

Are hills our friend? – Freckleton Half

Sunday 16th June was the latest championship race for the Darwen Dashers in one of the oldest Half-Marathons around at Freckleton. (55th to be precise with Ron Hill still holding the record at 64.45) The race was an unusual later start at 2pm which provided the opportunity for more carbo loading and warm ups. On review of the weather five days previous it was due for rain all week but dry / sunny on Sunday which later changed to rain all day two days prior. On the day itself though it was down for rain at four o'clock and overcast at 2pm which seemed like it could be ideal running conditions but how wrong were we? (or I?)

At 1:55 we all got our positions behind the line with Paul, Richard and myself right at the front. We looked up and it started to mildly rain and once again, we thought this could be ideal running conditions.

“Promptly” as they advertised, the horn was sounded at 2pm and we were off! Richard took the lead as usual with Paul and I side by side until we left the track where Paul took his usual advantage on myself.

All seemed relatively well for me one mile in when I became conscious of the number of people passing. Slightly dismayed I looked at my watch to see a pace of 7:02 for the first mile and recalled I started right at the front and quickly needed a reality check!! Once my reality was firmly realigned, I set in for the remaining 12.1 miles feeling relatively comfortable with the mild conditions, when at that point, the clouds disappeared, blue skies became throughout, and the sun began to beat down.

For any “normal” person out walking on this day, this would have been perfect and lovely, but for us, it was soon to become a runner’s nightmare!

Plodding along, one has to say that this was one of the greatest organised runs I have done with water stations both official and it would appear unofficial along the way. In total I believe there was ten, all with water and also sponges which were brilliant as the sun had soon started to take full effect as it was becoming unbearably hot. What was also an added pleasure was that many stations had showers / sprinklers along the way which was delightful to run through, (unless you weren’t expecting one to be turned on as you run past, i.e. Mr Conlon lol!) Continuing on, it became hotter and hotter to the point where even Rick actually stopped for a quick rest and water at the 11-mile marker to only start up quite quickly once again realising that Paul was closely on his tail.

On running around, I was asked the usual question that you are get “Bit too flat for you this isn’t it Darwener?” “Usually we brush it off with a casual yes but as I was going further round I actually began to realise for the first time it was!

Personally, this was my second time I have done a half, Darwen being first which I naturally took advantage of the hills for speed both up and down which us Darreners are renowned for. However, now I found myself in a position where I had to push more physically for the speed. (Yes, Mr Morris I know!! – Speed training!!).

For me personally, this was certainly a very steep (or not so in the case of Freckleton) learning curve for me in how to train, plan and run a flat course at distance. So, in answer to the question, are hills my friend? I would certainly say yes but also need to make the flats my friend too.....

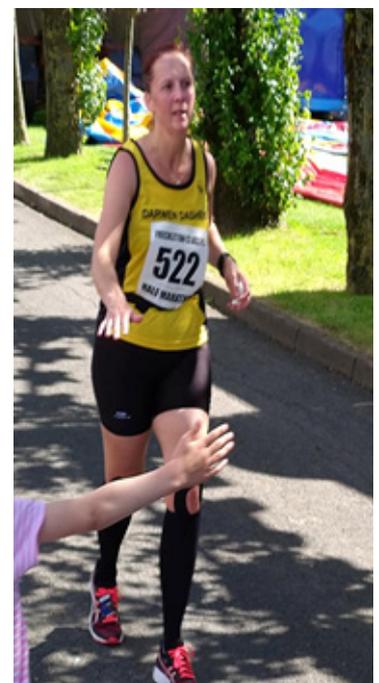
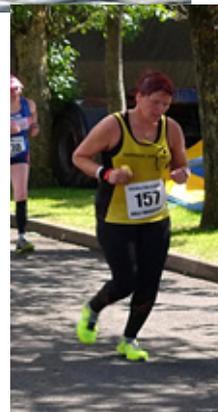


Everyone thankfully completed the race safely on a very challenging day with the finish times respectively being –
 Rick M 1:38,
 Paul C 1:39,
 Me 1:44,
 Phil S 2:01,
 Chris C 2:08,
 Shazza C 2:08,
 Viki 2:15,
 Sharon D 2:22.

Marky Mark (AKA Lucozade Man)



In regard to learnings on this and in particular for one of our Dashers, maybe have a few less Proseccos on a birthday weekend prior to a half marathon Shazza??! Lol. That said, Shazza did amazingly well in it, which I know I wouldn't have been able to do, so well done even more so and belated birthday wishes from us all!!!



From beginner to Dasher

My name is Hannah. I'm a single mum to two girls. I work full time as a theatre practitioner at the Royal Blackburn Hospital. I've been qualified for nearly 7 years. But I've worked for the same trust for 20yrs (in sept 2019).

I started my dasher journey just over 3 yrs ago. I only know this as it came up on one of my memories on Facebook from my first park run.

I turned up on a Wednesday evening at Darwen leisure centre and met the wonderful Alison Abbott. I completed the 10 week course and it was time to do our graduate park run at Bolton. I was unable to attend due to being on night, so I decided to do my graduate park run the week after at Witton. I'd heard some stories regarding the beast but thought to myself it can't be that bad surely. So off I plodded with barcode to Blackburn. I completed my first graduate park run with a time of 45 minutes (I think).

After completing my park run. I then progressed to the improvers group on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

I tend to run mostly on Thursday due to the fact I work till 9pm on a Tuesday.

As a New Year's resolution I said I'd like to do at least one 10k. Im booked on to do Blackburn's on the 17th November 2019. But then I thought I could do with doing one before this so booked on to Beaverbrooks in Blackpool on the 12th May and I was joined by Andy H and Sarah M, which was great. This was my first ever 10k and hours before the run I was dreading it thinking to myself "why am I doing this". However I completed the run in 1 hour 22mins. I felt so proud with my time as I estimated about 80min for 10k (so I wasn't far off).

So in the improvers group we started working to complete Morecambe 10k, which took place on the 2nd June 2019. I also took part in this run and my time was 1 hour 24mins.

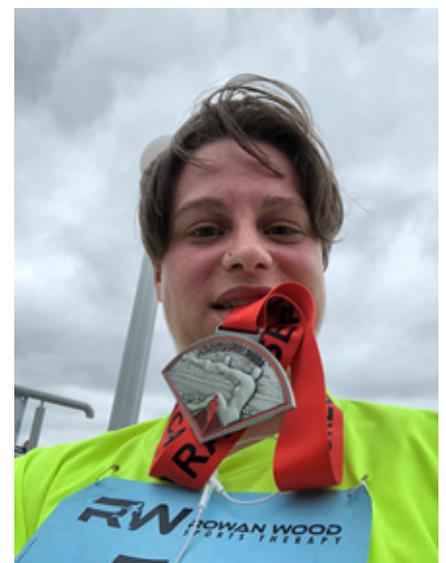
I felt so proud to be a dasher when Brian, Chris, Dominique, Sharon, Viki and Rick (and someone else I'm sorry I don't know her name)

ran with me to the part where I picked up the pace and completed the run.

I sometimes enjoy my running and the Dashers are a great gang of people and I couldn't be more proud to be part of a better team. You never know I might plan to do a half marathon before I turn 40!!!!

Thanks for reading you are all fantastic people

Hannah xx



The Old County Tops fell Race

18th May 2019



I didn't really know what the Old County Tops was when I agreed, at some point in the winter, to enter it. Amy is wise in matters of pain and suffering in Lakeland and she said it was "a good one" and "one I've always wanted to do" so hey -ho, I said yes.

Over winter I was a bit pre-occupied with the Fellsman so didn't think much about this race as May seemed a long way off. When, like a train, May started to get closer I sat down with the course notes and plotted the route onto a map. Well two maps actually, as it didn't fit on one. It's 35 plus miles, somewhere over 11000 ft of climbing and takes in Helvellyn, Scafell Pike and Conistone Old Man, the highest peaks of the old three counties. It's also a pairs event so if the pair fails to hit check points together or one drops out, then both are out. There are also quite a few route variations, many bits are off path and cut off times at check points that catch a few every year. Oh dear, this wasn't looking good.

Over the spring we reced the route in two halves. The first half alone wrecked my legs and even in April, a recce of the descent straight off Scafell Pike wasn't possible as it was still covered in snow. This second recce took about 9 hours to cover 26 miles so progress wasn't exactly rapid. On a selfish note, this was all great as I was now worried about the Old County Tops and very relaxed about the Fellsman.

Race day came and, as we drove up Great Langdale at about 630, it all started to get exciting. The weather was dry and clear with cloud forecast on the tops first thing then fog on the tops in the afternoon. On the plus side there was no wind but on the minus side we might have little visibility for the crucial direct descent off Scafell Pike in the early afternoon. Registration and kit check were a well oiled machine but here the pressure is ramped up. You see it works like this. Kit check gets you a free wristband, the wristband get you your number, your number gets you your free

"the most coveted T Shirt in fell running" when you finish the race. I'd never heard Amy say she wanted anything much apart from beer and a dog, so the fact that she had been talking about the T shirt for a month made it super important that we finished!

We'd arrived and registered in good time so now there was an hour to relax, chat, have a brew and eat something. Oh, and to notice that everyone else looked really, really fit, lean and hard conditioned. Folk were talking to Amy about her Bob Graham, their Bobs, and other people's Bobs.

It all made my Bob-a-job in cubs seem a bit trivial but it was clear that this wasn't going to be your average 6 mile fell race.

Although Amy and I are miles apart in terms of ability and age (not ideal for a pairs race!) we are both a bit obsessive about planning and preparation.

The preparation had gone well; we were both fit and had run well in our prep races. Kit and food for the race was all tested and we had a race plan. The 8 am start came and off we went, starting almost at the back of the field of 140 pairs of runners and lobbing along down the Langdale valley.

For the first 45 minutes or so the route climbs over Silver How and drops down towards Grasmere. Although being at the back meant a few lost seconds in queues for gates and styles we trotted along ticking off the early miles as easily as possible, staying nice and relaxed and enjoying the race.

At Grasmere there is a mile of road and then the route branches off up Tongue Gill. From there it's just a big old climb upwards, first up to Grisedale Tarn then Dollywaggon, Nethermost Pike and up to checkpoint 2 on top of Helvellyn.

Part of our plan was to be really conservative early on, not get excited and "race" and that running an equal pace through the whole race gave us the best chance of finishing, as long as we made the dreaded cut offs.

We climbed well, steadily overtaking a few people and again trying not to use up too much energy early on and reached CP2 2 hours and 18 minutes after we had started. We were 105th out of the 140 teams at that point, but it was 1 Top down, 2 to go.

Visibility off the summit was not great but we ran off on a bearing which would take us fairly directly down towards CP3 at Thirlmere. This is where the race really starts to batter your legs. After having climbed over 2300ft up from Grasmere to Helvellyn you then drop all that height in about a mile and a quarter and in about 20 minutes, so it hurts quite a lot.

We had a little navigational wobble here as we dropped into a deep valley where we probably didn't want to be, but 400 yards of scrambling through fallen trees saw us back on the right route and into the check point.

The navigation error cost us about 10 minutes and we were now back in 122th place. After a quick stop for water, malt loaf and to adjust shoe laces we set off for Angle Tarn, over by Scafell Pike.

Now there is no set "route" but the most direct is to go up Wyth Burn to meet the Coast to Coast near Low White Stones. When I had recced this bit in February it had been horrible; mile after mile of bog and slow going. Now it was far drier, we found a better route and the miles were easier to tick off. Things were going well and we were in good spirits although I had this nagging doubt that I was using too much energy up for each mile travelled. I was eating and drinking plenty but I was dripping sweat and didn't feel good. Still, it wasn't meant to be easy. From just below Low White Stones we needed to find a curving line around High Raise and then across to Stake Pass. When we had recced it we made a Horlicks of the route and ended up too far down the flank, scrambling up and down streams and through bogs.

This time we found the perfect line and scooted across above the difficult ground to Stake Pass and the path to Angle Tarn.

Angle Tarn is important for two reasons.

Firstly, at about 17 miles into the course it's the one place you can bail out before the climb to Scafell Pike and secondly,

if you are not there by 1330 you will not make the next crucial cut off at Cockley Beck.

We made it to Angle Tarn with 35 minutes to spare and we had improved our position to up to 109th place but I felt the worst I've ever felt in a race by this point. I was really hurting, eating wasn't helping for once and I felt like an old dumper truck, stuck in first gear and revving itself to bits. Great news when your team mate is going like a V8 Alfa Spider, just burbling along on tick over! I must have looked as good as I felt because Amy even asked if we were bailing or continuing.

I was really worried at this point about letting Amy down, knowing I should be much stronger than I was feeling. I was also worrying that this race, coming 3 weeks after a 63 mile race was just a step too far.

It's so odd that no matter how bad you feel at one moment, 10 minutes, 20 minutes or some point in the future you start feeling better.

Everybody goes through it at times and most people say the same thing.

"Just keep going and it gets better", so we carried on and it got better.

I love the way these long races mess with you and sure enough by Esk Hause I was going well again and the world was a beautiful place. On the climb up to Scafell Pike we had passed 10 teams and came in 99th.

We have often discussed why we run well as a pair and it's because we both see every glass as being half full and are both super positive about things that happen in races. Looking at some of the other pairs around us who were having similar wobbles, there were solo runners way ahead of the struggling runner, piercing glares and folk stood on outcrops with hands on hips waiting. When I'd been having a hard time my pair had waited for me, helped me, fed me flap jack and kept me going, showing that good teamwork generates a result much greater than just the sum of the component members. Scafell Pike was cloud free so we decided to bite the bullet and take the direct route off; the one we hadn't been able to recce due to the snow.

The risk was that if we failed to find a good line we could end up wasting time in steep boulder fields or worse, getting crag fast. Amy had got her hands on some super detailed route descriptions and Google earth showed faint trods corresponding to these routes.

There were also a 3 or 4 pairs ahead of us going that way so we would get clues from their progress. What a blast! One lady from a team in front was very confident in her navigation and, with the rest of us scouting and looking for route options, we dropped 1950 ft round Rough Crag and Dow Crag to the River Esk in minimal time. The only down side with the rapid descent was that that thighs and knees were now screaming with the steepness of the descent. Once we crossed the Esk we again struck lucky and picked up a much better route towards Cockley Beck than we had reced. Cockley Beck has the dreaded four fifteen cut off.

The reason it's dreaded is that it's the last and most influential cut off, so it's the one that generates the most pressure and chops out the most runners.

We had descended well and overtaken a couple of teams so working our way across Great Moss towards Mosedale we were fairly much alone, cracking on and making good progress. Best of all, barring disaster we would be well inside the cut off. We made Cockley Beck in 7 hours and 17 minutes, with an hour to spare and having moved up to 90th place. The feeling of being well inside the final cut off was brilliant and we got such a lift from it that we set off on the last big climb towards Grey Friar and Great Carrs in really good spirits. It's a complete sod of a climb, especially late on in the race but at least it's the last big climb and we had great craic with one of the other teams, promising them faithfully that there was beer and ice cream at the top.

Again we found a better route than on our recce so that cheered us up no end. When we topped out and Amy said "Can we have a minute before we start running again?" It was a poignant moment as our pair had just reached parity of pain.

After a while we ran on and again it got better although by now it hard to keep running up any steep gradients and we were often reduced to just marching

on towards Coniston Old Man. At this point the out and back route to the Old Man starts and so everyone was greeting each other as they passed, shouting "well done!", "keep going!" and most often "T shirt's in the bag!". It was really lovely and sociable, the banter took your mind of your legs and it made you really proud to be part of such a friendly sport. You can't get much friendlier than the marshals on top of Coniston Old Man who had lugged up a drink of water and Haribo for each and every runner. The combination of ticking off the last "Top", turning for home and having Haribo sugar hit was incredible and we skipped off down the route towards home. This time on the out and back we were the ones shouting "well done!", "keep going!" and "T shirt's in the bag!". It was a sweet feeling!

We ran back towards Great Carrs and contoured round the hill to pick up a faint north easterly trod along the spur.

The grass was kind to run on after 30 odd miles on rocky paths and we were descending gently ahead of two or three other teams when Amy said "Can we

stop, can we stop." It was Amy's turn to have a wobble and, as the others streamed past she said that she had just suddenly lost all her go forward. The V8 Spider had run out of petrol. We raided both running packs for the last of the rocket fuel flapjack and she ate the lot as we picked up the line along the spur.

Again we had arrived at the point of "Just keep going and it gets better", so we carried on and again it got better. Really quickly this time and as soon as the V8 Spider was flapjack powered she fired up again!

Dropping off down to Wrynose Pass was hard on the legs but when we got to the road and the dreaded steep tarmac mile down, rather than feeling sorry for our knees we ran down playing at aeroplanes, like Mick Wilding does. Unintentionally I think we annoyed the chap who had to walk down backwards as his knees were shot but it's a race and we were aeroplanes!

At Castle Howe we thankfully left the tarmac road and ran across the rocky tracks past Blea Tarn and back into Great Langdale and the finish. Phew! We came 90th out of 140 starters and finished in 10 hours and 27 minutes.

It's a fabulous race, run by super people and it's a privilege to be a part of the camaraderie it generates. There are many races which are longer in terms of miles or time on your feet but this one is amazing as it crams in so much ascent, so much descent and so much beautiful, harsh Lakeland running into one day. And at the end there's that T shirt.

Is it the most coveted T Shirt in fell running? Well we think it is!

For info this is a V8 Alfa



and this is an old dumper truck.



Iain Asher the Dasher

Running with my best friend



A few of you will know that I run with my Weimaraner, Kyla. She's a lanky lady with far too much energy so running with her is great for both of us. I started running with her on a lead which isn't good for her neck or my arm which I swear is several inches longer than the other after those early runs. So I did a bit of research and found some other canicrossers on Facebook.

I arranged to meet up with them for advice on kit and I invested in a harness for Kyla with a bungee line and belt for me. It's not cheap at around £100 all-in but well worth the cost for both safety and comfort. I can't tell you how wonderful it is being pulled up a steep hill by an enthusiastic running dog. It isn't quite as much fun on the downhills where it's a real white knuckle ride and all you can do is focus on staying alive and upright!

So what is CaniX?

CaniX is getting out with your best friend and doing what they love best – running.

You will never find another running partner who gives you more motivation than your dog. Any breed of dog, large or small can do CaniX. All dogs love to run and tapping into their natural instinct means CaniX requires very little, if any training.

Benefits of CaniX

There are benefits on many levels for both you and your dog, including:

- improved health and fitness.
- more energy, better sleep.
- slows the ageing process, live longer (a lean dog lives, on average, up to two years longer than an overweight dog).
- healthy appetite.
- more responsive with commands and other training (agility, obedience, etc).
- less aggressive (good for socialisation).
- less destructive (relieves boredom).

Events

There are lots of specific canicross events although many are a distance away. It was a bit of a leap of faith when I decided to enter the CaniX Fur Nations series as these were my first events and the Welsh and Scottish locations were hundreds of miles away. Barry and I decided to plan a holiday around them so at Easter we headed to Pembrey Country park near Llanelli in South Wales. We were blessed with (almost) the hottest Easter on record and a fun and friendly introduction to caniX.

Now I can get my knickers in a twist about most things so I was really quite nervous before the first race, especially as I was on my own having been abandoned by Barry in favour of parkrun (no change there). I needn't have worried though as the whole thing was very well organised. I had visions of 200 dogs and their humans all setting off at the same time but we set off at 20 second intervals. The forest paths were quite narrow and winding and

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The forest paths were quite narrow and winding and Kyla and I hit the first 90 degree corner at break neck speed. As she shot off round the bend I was flung out to the side just like on the cyclone fair-ground ride, nearly taking out a couple of marshals in the process. We settled down into a steadier pace after that and a good time was had by all. The safety of the dogs is paramount and there were frequent water stops and paddling pools for the dogs to cool off in.

It's worth mentioning that if your dog shows any of the following signs: vigorous panting, struggling to run, collapsing, vomiting, looking for shade, laying down, white sticky saliva (it should be runny), you need to stop; find shade, give lots of water to drink, saturate your dog or place them in water and call a vet if they don't improve rapidly. At the pre race briefing someone asked if there were water stations for humans and the organiser said 'no, we only care about the dogs'!!!

We took little Buddy our elderly Westie to Pembrey on what turned out to be his final holiday. He couldn't walk very far so we invested in a doggie stroller prior to the trip which meant he was pushed around South Wales like a little furry prince in a carriage. This got him a lot of attention and meant we could take him just about everywhere. He even managed a paddle in the sea. We love o Canicross is definitely type two fun, you know the kind that us runners love and that's only really fun when it's over. The England leg of the series took place at Cannock Chase in the Midlands and as in Scotland there were two 5k and one 10k race.

The Scottish events were held in the grounds of Glamis castle near Dundee over the first bank holiday weekend in May. This is a spectacular setting and well worth a visit. The course at Glamis were a little more 'challenging' involving steps and a river crossing with two 5k and one 10k race. The steps were a bit tricky as they occurred during the first half mile of each race, they went steeply downhill and there were lots of them.

Picture me clinging onto the handrail being dragged by a 30kg dog pulling as hard as she could. This was immediately followed by the river crossing. Kyla doesn't like water so after some quite intense persuasion she reluctantly got in the water then immediately leapt for the other side which was around fifteen feet away.

Oh how we laughed.... when we managed to escape the water without drowning.

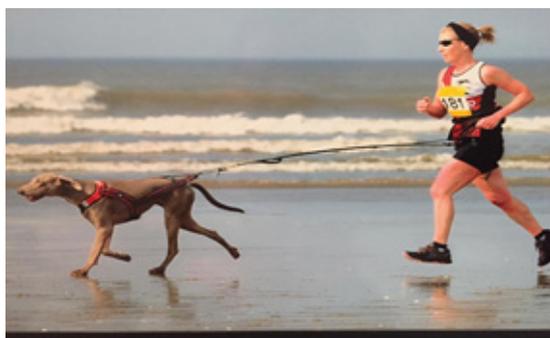
Canicross is definitely type two fun, you know the kind that us runners love and that's only really fun when it's over.

The England leg of the series took place at Cannock Chase in the Midlands and as in Scotland there were two 5k and one 10k race. By this time Barry was well known amongst the other runners and had become quite a legend with his encouraging shouts to all and his renditions of the well known classic 'we're running for England, ENGERLAND!' He was easily recognised by his parkrun 'cowbob' hat and was thanked by lots of competitors on the Team England Facebook page.

We've really enjoyed our first Canicross season and whilst I don't profess to be an expert I'm happy to share what I've learned if you're interested in running with your dog and want some advice. Barry is also available for cheer-leading and general support at events ;)

Happy running everyone.

Karen Shackleton





Lytham
Beer Run

Friday 5th July 2019

4th July 2019

Evening Fell Race Don Ashton Memorial Toekholes

NEW BEGINNERS GROUP STARTING WEDNESDAY 3RD JULY 2019 –

If you want to start running, get fit, have fun and meet new people - then this is definitely for you !

This 10week block of sessions will end at the beginning of September with a graduation parkrun at Avenham Park in Preston. We will be meeting in the café at Darwen Leisure Centre at 18:30 - for those of you wanting to join us, here's the link to register: <https://groups.runtogether.co.uk/.../5775a75c-7f7c-4386-bb6b-...>

it's not a
BIG STEP
TO START
RUNNING
(it's lots of little ones!)

FREE 10 WEEK COURSE WITH REGISTERED RUN LEADERS
At Darwen Leisure Centre

DARWEN DASHERS

DARWEN DASHERS

RUNNING CLUB



Donna Burrell enjoying Aggies Staircase Fell Race