

The Trotter

Number 2

January 2009



How do they do it?

As the marathon season gets underway, we ask some of the club's most seasoned long-distance runners to let us in on the secrets of their success.

We're all familiar with the scenario. You're having a drink with some people you've only just met and they learn that you're a runner. You know that it won't be too long before they ask the inevitable question: "So, have you done a marathon?"

Marathons aren't for everyone but there's something about the 26.2-mile challenge that has captured the popular imagination. So, if you are contemplating your first Big One, or if you have already signed up for a marathon and have started to panic, read on for some sound advice from four Trotters who have been there. They know your pain. But they also know that it doesn't go on forever.

Most novice marathon runners are daunted by the training involved. There's no doubt that you have to put in the hours, so what approach do our experts take?

Sue Brown finished 2008 as the club's fastest lady over 26.2 miles. "Make sure you choose a training schedule that fits in with the rest of your life," she advises. "Otherwise you'll struggle to complete it."

"Remember that a training schedule is a guide that you can adapt. I use www.halhighdon.com. His website is brilliant for all distances. I change the days around to suit me and whatever else is going on in my life. There are not many runners who can complete a marathon

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News Desk

Look out for these Club Championship races coming up over the next few weeks:

25/01/2009	Section 5 Braunton 10m
01/02/2009	Section 4 Fulford 5m
04/02/2009	Section 4 3K Exeter Track
08/02/2009	Section 3 Bovey Tracy Cross Country
15/02/2009	Section 5 Plymouth Hoe 10m
24/02/2009	Section 6 Dalwood 3 Hills Challenge
01/03/2009	Section 1 Bideford Half Marathon
04/03/2009	Section 4 3K Exeter Track

A very Happy New Year to Trotters everywhere! If you haven't managed to shake off your post-Christmas torpor yet, now is the time to pull on those running shoes and get out there for a New Year scamper. It's not so cold as it was, so you've got no excuse...

The Bovey Tracey Cross-Country, which the Trotters organise, is coming up. The event is on Sunday February 8. Race Director Howard Cotton is in need of marshals and helpers, especially timekeepers. "Don't forget that you can officiate at this event as well as taking part in a race, so putting on a marshal's bib doesn't mean you don't get a run," he says. "I'm particularly keen to recruit timekeepers but I also need people to back up the timekeepers and you don't need experience for that." If you can help, get in touch with Howard: howardcotton@yahoo.co.uk

There will be a practice run for this event on Saturday February 7. Meet at the Parke Estate car park, at 0930.

Do you have access to a van? If you do, and you can help out at the Bovey Tracey Cross Country, Howard would be very grateful.

We would like to say a big thank you to everyone who helped out at the Christmas bash. Once again, it was a great night out. Thanks to your generosity, the Christmas Card appeal raised £117, which this year goes to Newton Abbot St John's Ambulance. The club is matching your donation, so that makes a healthy chunk of cash for a charity that we work closely with throughout the year.

Here's an important date for your diaries: Wednesday February 15. This is the date of our AGM. It will start at 2000 in one of the classrooms behind Newton Abbot Leisure Centre. Training will begin at 1830 on this evening. Any motion for consideration at the AGM has to be proposed, seconded and submitted to Secretary Mark Becker 14 days before the meeting. If you wish to stand for office - and some committee positions will be falling vacant this year - get someone to propose you and second you. Again, get your submission to Mark 14 days in advance.

As in previous years, top of the agenda will be the future affiliation strategy of the club. Do we continue to affiliate to EA and ARC? Or do we do something more radical? It's up to you. For the latest on our dispute with EA, read Membership Secretary Dave Dunn's report on page 5.



Milos Erben

You need your mates when motivation falters

without training and building up the long runs – except perhaps for Smokes and Ewan!”

“Make sure you choose a training schedule that fits in with the rest of your life. Otherwise you’ll struggle to complete it.”

Club Chairman Roger Hayes has completed six ultras and 25 marathons. “Try to get four 20-milers in your training programme,” he says. “Run your long runs at a fairly brisk pace and mix up your training with plenty of speedwork. Going eyeballs out every Wednesday is a must!”

“Stay off hills unless your marathon includes some juicy ones. Swimming is great for those who suffer with backache from doing all those miles. Have a cold bath for a minimum of 10

minutes after long Sunday runs. It really helps the legs the next day.”

Dave Tomlin collared the fastest male marathon time last year with an eye-watering 2.40.24 at Taunton. You can read all about his experiences at Taunton on page 6. “I like following a 12-week training plan,” says Dave. “I run for six days a week, but not all hard days. You must have at least two easy days in a week, to let your body recover

from the other hard sessions you will be doing. Keep your training consistent and don’t worry if you are tired and need to take a day off. It won’t hurt and you may come back stronger the next day.”

What if you have entered a marathon but work and family commitments have scuppered your training schedules? Dartmoor Discovery and marathon veteran Julia Proctor says there’s no need to panic: “If you manage to fit in one 18-mile training run, you can get round a marathon. Notice the ‘get round’, though. It will be slow. It will be painful. But you will get to the end.”

Julia also believes that it’s important not to neglect speed work. “It makes a real difference to your chances,” she says. “Although running a marathon for a PB can be quite traumatic. Sometimes it makes more sense just to jog along and enjoy the sights. I personally find I can only really race one year, and that has to be the first one!”

There is one aspect of marathon training that is completely out of your control, whatever magical programme you adopt. “During marathon season, you can guarantee that the worst weather of the week will be on Sunday morning. It’s the law!” observes Julia.

Inevitably, over a long training period, there will be times when your motivation falters. Sue has some sound advice: “Ask around the club and see if anyone else can do the long-distance runs with you. It helps to have the company of others, especially on those 15-, 18-, 20-mile runs. I couldn’t have done my marathons without the help of the girls (there are too many of you to mention individually but you know who you are). In our club there are always nutters willing to do the distance, even if they have no marathon lined up!”



Lucky underpants and a Vaseline odyssey

“Include some goals along the way, such as a 10-miler or a half marathon. Race them hard to learn what you can do. Create your own training programme, with tick boxes.”

“Include some goals along the way, such as a 10-miler or a half marathon,” suggests Roger. Race them hard to learn what you can do. They should be a good indicator of how your training is going. Create your own training programme, with tick boxes. Once the ticks start coming, you won’t want to miss one. It’ll help motivate you.”

If you say so, Rog! Each to their own. If it works for you, do it. Much is made of tapering ahead of your target race, for example, but opinions do differ. “Taper, taper, taper!” says Julia.

Roger disagrees. “Don’t taper too early. I like to do my last 20-miler two weeks before race day. However, I only run on the Monday of the week of the marathon. Then I rest completely.”

Dave aims to taper three weeks before the race. “Get plenty of rest and early nights,” he advises. “Limit the alcohol and drink more water.”

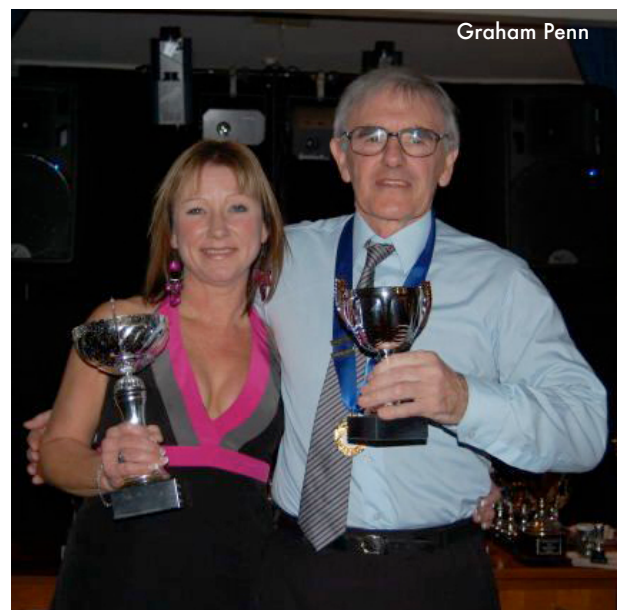
When it comes to The Big Day, Dave believes that what’s going on in your head is just as important as your physical state. “Plan the route out in your mind,” he says. “Visualise yourself running strong and stay positive. And have fun: we run because we enjoy it, after all.”

“Don’t forget to breathe. Don’t change your race plan if someone else’s is different: only you know what works for you. Don’t ask Chairman to pace you. Don’t pee on a celebrity’s foot in the start pen.”

Sue suggests that you set yourself three times: one you would really like, one you would be happy with and one that gets you round and safely across the finish line. “Remember that thousands of spectators at big races like the Flora London Marathon dream being able to run 26.2 miles but never achieve that goal. Be proud of yourself and enjoy the fantastic feeling that you will get when you cross the finish line,” she says.

“My approach to the start is probably not the best one to follow. I have done my best times off the back of lots of sightseeing, a few beers, and not much sleep. But it works for me, so I don’t think I will change that. I’m not suggesting anyone tries this approach but, as I said, your marathon has to fit around the rest of your life, not the other way around. Look out Edinburgh, here we (that’s Adey and I) come!”

“Any marathon requires respect,” warns Roger. “Twenty-six miles is a long way! Don’t pile too much pressure on yourself. It took me far too long to go under three hours, mainly because of the pressure I put on myself. Choose a low-key marathon if you want to have a good go at breaking a PB. Once I’d gone under three hours once, I found it relatively easy to do it again.”



“On the day, try to stay relaxed, remember all those hard training runs you’ve done, all that effort! Be positive, try to forget the first half of the race and concentrate on the final 13 miles. To achieve a good marathon it’s all about the last 10K. Have a squeezey energy gel every four miles after the first eight.”

Julia has raced enough marathons to know what works for her. “Bathe yourself in Vaseline before the start,” she declares. “Don’t forget to breathe. Don’t change your race plan if someone else’s is different: only you know what works for you. Don’t ask Chairman to pace you. Use gels – they work! Don’t pee on a celebrity’s foot in the start pen. Try to cry *quietly* as you come up to the finish. It’s far less embarrassing.”

And finally: “Don’t forget your lucky underwear.”

We won’t if you don’t, Julia.

The very best of luck to all those Trotters taking on marathons this year. We salute you.

Calling a truce



Dave Dunn updates us on the club's dispute with England Athletics and concludes that we have taken this one as far as we can.

I know this is boring, but pay attention as it is also very important – well, I think so at any rate!

Those of you who opted to pay the additional £5 on top of your annual subscription when it came up for renewal last April may have been wondering when your England Athletics membership card was going to arrive. The reason for the delay was that we as a club were in dispute with EA over the payment of fees.

Cast your mind back to the membership year 2007-8 and you may recall that at an extra-ordinary AGM in July of 2007, a vote was taken to affiliate not only to England Athletics but also to the Association of Running Clubs (ARC). At that time, in addition to the annual club affiliation fee due to EA of £50, all individual “competing” members were asked to register with EA and pay a registration fee of £3 each. For the membership year 2007-8, your committee decided that the club would pay that £3 for all members who wished to be registered with EA as a competing member, and who also agreed to having their personal details sent to EA. Seventy-two of our members took up that option and the monies were sent to EA during the autumn of 2007.

Due to problems EA were experiencing with their sub-contract printers and teething problems arising from the introduction of a nationwide membership scheme, membership cards were not sent out to any of our members until April 2008 – ie after the end of the membership year in question!

At our AGM in February 2008, a vote was taken to decide that we should continue to be affiliated to both EA and ARC, but that any member who wished to be registered with EA as a competing member would have to pay their own individual registration fee, which had now risen to £5 per member. This £5 was collected from a total of 104 of our members, together with our club's own membership fee, as part of our membership renewal process.

As your committee felt that we had been short-changed by EA for the membership year just ended, we decided to withhold the equivalent sum to that previously paid to EA, and just sent them the balance of that collected. EA declined to bank that cheque and held out for full payment, refusing to send out any membership cards in the meantime. This stand-off continued until quite recently when a sub-committee consisting of Tina Caunter, John Ludlam and myself met Sonya Ellis, the

EA's manager in the South West, and put our case for withholding the fees due. Sonya listened to what we had to say and took our points on board, but also reminded us of the other benefits of being under EA's umbrella.

As far as our members are concerned, the principal benefit of being a registered EA competing member is the avoidance of the £2 levy at EA-permitted events. In the past, the £2 levy was only payable by unattached runners, ie anyone not belonging to an affiliated club. Now, membership of a club is not enough to avoid paying the levy – you have to be a paid-up registered EA competing member as well.

When the full committee met on 12th January, the decision was taken to end our protest and pay EA what was due. It is now hoped that EA for their part will speedily despatch membership cards to our members that paid the £5 during 2008.

It hasn't gone unnoticed that several race entry forms are asking if you are an EA member, and if you are, they are then asking for your EA membership number (some forms, such as that for the Plymouth Hoe 10, are calling this the EA competition licence number). If you did pay your £5 for EA registration in 2008, I can tell you your EA number if you need to know it.

If you haven't paid that £5 fee for EA registration, then in races such as the Hoe 10 you must pay the full entry fee, as you are not entitled to the £2 discount.

I hope that I have explained some of the history behind our dispute with EA and where we currently stand. At next month's AGM you will have the opportunity to decide whether we still wish to be affiliated to one, or other, or both organisations. The EA member registration fee for 2008-9 will stay fixed at £5 and becomes due from April 1, as will your Teignbridge Trotters annual subscription. Each individual member can decide whether they wish to pay this £5 fee. Once collected, the monies would be forwarded promptly to EA, and we trust that they in their turn will keep their side of the bargain and issue cards by return.

If anyone would like to discuss this whole issue in greater depth, please see me after training on any Wednesday in the White Hart. Buy me a pint and I'll do my best to answer your queries.

Perfect day

...Well, almost. Dave Tomlin looks back over his blistering win at last year's Taunton Marathon.



John Ludlam

It's a Zen thing: Dave gets in touch with his inner Dave during last year's Dartmoor Discovery. Just ignore the hailstones, mate...

If you know me, you'll know that I'm not one for high-mileage training, mainly because I tend to pick up injuries and don't manage my training very well. But, back at the beginning of 2008, I thought that it was time to stop messing around, to use the talent I had been given and to train properly.

So I approached Mike Eveleigh – you know, the old-timer who used to be pretty sharp in his time. He hasn't got any marathon experience but he has a wealth of knowledge in fast running. I have my own ideas on how to train, as I have been running since I was about nine years old. But you can't beat having someone to coach you, so you can moan at them when it's all going tits up!

I managed 11 weeks of hard training, with various races in-between, to sharpen myself up and arrived at the race day injury- and illness-free, which, as we all know, is a hard thing to do.

I had chosen the Taunton Marathon. It's an undulating course with a few hills which are not too bad. I don't really like flat courses, such as the Flora London Marathon, because my calves tighten up a lot.

Race day comes and it's a sunny Sunday without a cloud in the sky, but still a bit cold – ideal. Sharon, my lovely girlfriend, and myself jump into my trusty VW wagon and head off to Exeter. Five minutes into the journey, as we were heading up to Exeter racecourse, it started snowing a bit! Then a bit more, then a lot more. Then it turned into a raging blizzard, slowing us down to a crawl. As we approached Telegraph Hill about 10 cars and ourselves had to gingerly slip and slide down the slope. It was a bit hairy but there was no way I was going to miss the race after all the training I had done! Luckily it started to clear at the bottom. Phew!

The rest of the journey was incident-free and we arrived 75 minutes before the start, allowing plenty of time to get warmed up and get nervous.

The time went quickly and, before I knew it, BANG we were off. The half marathon and full marathon started together. Several Trotters were running, including Sharon, who was running her first race for the Royal Blues and aiming for a fast time. I was going for a sub-2.40. This goal has been bugging me for a while now, since 1996, when I was lucky enough to win the New Forest Marathon. And I knew I was in shape for going under it. A time of 2.30-something sounds so much better than 2.40, eh? Anyway back to the race.

We all leave the start line with Chariots of Fire blaring in the background, which is enough to spur anyone on. My plan was to run 5.50-minute miles. I had felt so good the week before at the Teignbridge Ten, running 5.44-minute miles, that I decided to go for it and see how long I could keep it up for.

Cruising through the first mile in 5.40 I was happy and relaxed. From past races at Taunton I know the mile markers are not that accurate, so I find it's best to run how you feel. So I tucked in behind the half marathon runners in about 10th place. The first five miles are a gradual uphill – not steep but enough to feel them and definitely a drag on the second lap.

Coming up to a water station at about five miles, the runner I was following decided to grab a drink and basically stop. I don't know how I missed him but had to do a side-step that Will Carling would have been proud of. It kinda spurred me on, though, and I went through mile seven in 5.44. Still running well, I moved up to 7th place in the half and 2nd in the marathon, with a Taunton runner who had previously won the marathon twice 30 seconds ahead.

I wasn't worried. I knew I had done the training. I felt strong and, with 19 miles to go, anything can happen.

I saw my Mum and Dad out on the course, which helped spur me on. My parents used to be Trotters but are more into their cycling now and belong to the CTC. They whiz around at high speed on their tandem. Well, so my Dad says. He has a PB of 1.24.05 in the half. I think he could have gone faster but he spent half the time chin-wagging with other runners. Surprised they didn't trip him up!

Anyway where was I? Oh yeah, the marathon. I was still running well, through blustery snow showers. We were approaching 12 miles when I surprisingly caught the marathon leader up. He was running on the left and I decided to charge through on the right as fast as I dared, so he couldn't latch on to my heels. But looking at him, I wasn't worried as he seemed pretty tired.

I didn't dare look back and pushed on to the halfway mark. The crowds were great as I approached the end of my first lap, calling my name over the PA as the leading marathon runner, which was a buzz. I saw Stew Dunn and gave him a kinda fist wave. The things you do when you are pumped up, eh? I flew through the start/finish area and back out on the road for my second lap.

I bellowed out "COME ON!" as I was so pumped up. The people walking on the pavement seemed a little frightened of me.

Who knows what they thought of me!

Now I was beginning the second, lonely lap. Anyone who has done the marathon will know that everyone disappears, even the marshals. That's another story. But I was lucky enough to have a lead car to chase, which is a great buzz. Paul Tergat, eat your heart out! It really makes you feel special.

I pushed on and started to count down the miles, while trying to stay calm and relaxed in my running. I was staring to dehydrate slightly. I could feel my legs slowly tightening up. Those water cups were just not good enough. By the time my hand had slammed into them and I went to take a drink, there was only a dribble left. "Damn'," I thought. "I really need to drink."

Luckily, I was coming up to 16 miles, where my Ma and Pa were ready with a sports drink I had made up and a Go gel. I gulped down the drink and Go gel and it really hit the spot. I still think now that, if it

John Ludlam



Those lines in the road, they're there for a reason, you know. And that reason is Dave...

And the clock ticks ever faster...

hadn't have been for that drink, I would have blown up with 10 miles to go.

I kept watching the race clock on the car, trying to work out my time and how long I had in hand to try to go sub-2.40. I had started to lose time at 15 miles due to dehydration and did a few 6.15/6.24 miles. I had to get back to 6-minute miles or under. I went through 20 miles in 2 hours 50 seconds, which would have brought me in at 2.38, but now was the dreaded last 10k!

I had to do 39.09 to break it. Unfortunately, there are two hills to crawl up in the last four miles, which are fine in the first lap but painful in the second circuit. I managed 6.26 at 23 miles but on the bigger hill I started to cramp up a bit and had to shorten my stride to avoid my legs locking up. I crawled up it in 7.12. "Damn!" For the last two miles I dug into my unknown reserves and just kept telling myself that I was doing a 2-mile time trial at Brunel. I think it helped: 25th mile in 5.49. Good. I had 1.2 miles to go.

I checked the race car clock again. It said 2.33.00. My mind was buzzing, thinking this is gonna be close: seven minutes to do 1.2 miles. Normally it would be easy, but not with 25 miles in my legs. I tried so hard to run fast and relaxed but my legs were so tired. I had to keep pushing on. I saw Watsa, he was shouting "Go, Tommo, go!"

Coming up to 26 miles, the race car got stuck behind a wedding running group of about 15 people. Normally I would laugh and shout something at them, but I had a time to go for, mile 26, 6.07. I had 52 seconds to go sub 2.40! I knew it would be desperately close. I went as fast as my legs could carry me, but I'm sure the race car clock started to speed up the nearer I got to the finish line! They seem to have a funny way of doing that. With 120 metres to go, I looked at my watch to see it painfully click over to 2.40!

I was gutted. I felt sick with pain. I couldn't believe how close I had been to breaking it. I turned the corner and saw a sea of blue Trotter hoodies. They were going mental. I had mixed emotions. I was about to

win the race but I had set my heat on going sub-2.40. I had trained harder than ever and was so focussed on doing it that the win came second. I waved to the Trotters and went through the line in 2.40.24.

I punched the air in annoyance and shock my head. To the people watching this probably seemed odd but we all have goals and I had missed mine. Sharon shouted to me and I went over and hugged her feeling sad I had missed my time by a mere 25 seconds. Arghhh! But I was also happy that I had won. All the Trotters were coming over and hugging me. My work-mate, who had done the half marathon, came over to thank me for running for his charity. The charity supports a neonatal ward where he and his wife had tragically lost their infant child. It puts it all in perspective really, eh?

I showered and met Sharon, Mum and Dad outside, where I picked up a trophy and a very nice cheque for 100 quid. Great, that's another pair of trainers, I thought. Sharon had done 1.53.06 and was only six seconds off her PB! But she'd made improvement of six minutes in 2008 already, so she hadn't done too badly. We all headed home happy but tired.

I would like to say thanks to Mike Evo for guiding me in the right direction. I hope that next time we can crack it, eh coach? And a big thanks and sorry to Sharon for putting up with me whinging on about that 25 seconds for 48 hours non-stop!

Go for your dreams, Trotters, and train hard. It does work!

Didn't he do well?
Here's how that
run broke down.

Mile splits: 1m-5.40
2m-5.57, 3m-6.01,
4m-6.01, 5m-5.54,
6m-5.59, 7m-5.44,
8m-5.49, 9m-6.01,
10m-6.01, 11m-6.24,
12m-5.41, 13m-5.48,
14m-5.50, 15m-6.13,
16m-6.14, 17m-6.25,
18m-6.16, 19m-6.24,
20m-6.21, 21m-6.15,
22m-6.22, 23m-6.26,
24m-7.12! 25m-5.49,
26m-6.07, 0.2-1.19.
Total 2.40.24!

Key times: 10 mile
59.10, halfway 1.17.30,
20 miles 2.00.50, finish
2.40.24.



Venice, 2007. Who needs scenery when there's a lovely grey motorway to run along?

Membership Report

Membership Secretary Dave Dunn knows who's who alright

Now that The Trotter is published monthly, I shall be able to update you all on the latest recruits to our ranks almost as soon as the ink is dry on their membership applications. This does mean that there won't be so many new members to tell you about each month, compared with when it was done quarterly, and I won't have very long to find out any juicy tit-bits about our new members to help add substance to my report. However, I shall do my best, and it will allow me to tell you about other membership issues as they arise.

There are just two new members to report this month, bringing the total of fully paid-up members up to 193.

Our newest recruits are: Katie Foster, 25, from Shaldon and David Hoggard, 44, from Combeinteignhead.

Katie is a student nurse who has been introduced to us by another resident of Shaldon, Susie Ashleigh-Thomas. Katie has been studying in Liverpool, so her appearances at training have been somewhat limited, but she is more than welcome to adorn the corridor at Dyrons any Wednesday that she's able. So far, Katie has been enjoying the training.

David was once a member of Torbay AC, finishing 12th in the 2004 running of the Dalwood Three Hills Challenge, beating one Ian Langler of Dawlish Coasters into the bargain, before again finishing inside the top 20 the following year. I'm sure that once David finds his feet with us and regains his former fitness, he'll give a good account of himself both on the roads and off them.



Club Records

We're only a couple of weekends into the New Year, yet already one club record has fallen. At the recent January Jaunt, a 10K race starting and finishing in Plympton, and taking in the delights of the Saltram Estate, Gia D'Aprano trimmed 28 seconds off her own FV50 10K record set only last year at Torbay, by stopping the watch on 47.04.

Looking ahead to upcoming races, the Braunton 10 gives the opportunity for any lady in the FV55 category to get their name on the roll of honour, while Gia may want to cash in on her good form and attack Tina Caunter's FV50 mark of 1.21.46. More realistically, next month's Hoe 10 represents an easier target, both for Gia and for Matt Dunn, of whom I have inside knowledge that he's aiming to substantially improve his own Junior Male 10 miles record. No pressure then, Matt! The FV60 record held by Marion Luker at 1:44:01 since 2003 could also come under attack from the likes of Susie Ashleigh-Thomas or Angela Weeks.

A full list of all our club records can be found at www.teignbridgetrotters.co.uk.

Captain's Corner

Men's Captain Stewart Dunn is feeling rather regal

No doubt most of you will have noticed that I've been conspicuous by my absence over the past few weeks. This has been a very busy time for me: births, deaths, Christmas, New Year, moving house and not to mention a rather serious bout of man flu that had to be dealt with to prevent an epidemic

Hopefully, normal service will have resumed by the time you read this.

As we are all aware, it is the start of a new year. Personally, I have not set myself any targets or goals yet. I'm just taking each day as it comes. Despite this, I'm sure many of you have already begun rigorous training for races this year. Don't forget that you can earn yourself free membership for next year if you complete the 2009 Club Championship. I'm sure this year's championship will be just as exciting as last year's.

I have a bit of a tendency for going on about myself so, starting this month, I'm introducing an honours list. This will comprise names and reasons why they have been honoured. I guess you could say it's a bit like the Queen's honours but better! here are my first pair of fine Royal Blue knights:

Ronnie Jones, for services to running: 5th overall at the Oh My Obelisk.

Chris Cleave, for services to running: 12th overall at the Oh My Obelisk.

While we're on the subject of giving a mention to people who deserve a shout, I'd like to pay tribute to our older runners. Over the years, they've given a tremendous amount of loyal service to the club and we owe them a lot. Injury and other frustrations may prevent them getting on their feet as much as they would wish but we know they're Trotters through and through and we're very grateful for their contribution. And it's great to see our M65 guys, Bryan Hayes, Graeme Baker and Syd Willocks out there at races, giving it their all. Look out for a feature on older runners in next month's edition of *The Trotter*.

I would like to sign off in style but, as it's me, this will have to do....

I wish good luck to all my guys this year. May it be as successful as last year and may the good times roll.



Milos Erben

Insider Information

If you're new to the region's running circuit, look out for our Insider Information features. They'll brief you on what to expect from upcoming races. This month, Tina Caunter tells us why the Braunton 10 is what running's all about.

For those of you who haven't got out of the Christmas and New Year mode yet, how about entering the Braunton 10 on Sunday, January 25? What better way can there be to kick start the racing season than an undulating course through quiet country lanes with a couple of hills thrown in for good measure? The Braunton 10 is one of those races that reminds you why you took up running. You're at one with nature and the odd runner or two.

It starts with a lap of the race track, where shouts of encouragement from friends and family set you off through the village into those quiet lanes. The first of the hills comes at about 3.5 miles. Take your time on this one, as it has some hidden extras, with views at the top. Some more undulating lanes follow, before you ascend the second hill.

As you leave this hill behind, don't forget to look at the spectacular views of the Bristol Channel and Lundy Island, before descending gradually down again. During the final mile, be ready to tackle a very steep drop into the village. The race ends with a quick sprint to the finish line, on the race track, where there is a standing ovation from friends, family and runners alike. It's a little taste of what those top athletes experience as they enter the arena.

Time to collect your T-Shirt, and meet up with fellow runners to evaluate the race. Off for a quick shower, and then to the local family establishment for a well-earned pint, and lunch if you so wish. There are lots of prizes to be won, and it's a great way to fly the Royal Blues. So, come on, get that application off, or enter on the day. Your team needs you. I'm looking forward to seeing you all there.





Who is he?

This month, we welcome the return of our popular spot the Trotter puzzler. Who is this young fellow?

We're loving that side-parting, my boy! And he was clearly ahead of his time with a jacket and t-shirt combo that wouldn't be seen again until the heady days of Punk Rock. Those brows are a tad furrowed for one so young. What can be on the little chap's mind, we wonder? Never mind, we're sure it can be fixed with a tanner's worth of liquorice and lemonade...

A bottle of good Rioja goes to the first person to identify correctly the individual in this image. No correspondence will be entered into, the judge's decision is final, etc., etc.



The Trotter

Editor: John Ludlam

Many thanks to everyone who contributed to this edition.

Next month, we take a look at running for older people. Is there life after 60? You bet there is!

Have you got a Trotters story to tell? Or is there a feature you'd like to see included? We'd love to hear from you.

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