

The Trotter

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Win or lose? Reconciling running's twin impostors

In the first of a two-part special, **Steve Rawlinson** offers a thought-provoking meditation on what draws us to running – and why we're so bereft without it.

The following article provides a personal account and wider reflections on the subject of running. It grew out of a time of uncertainty, not knowing the outcome of a heart operation and having to re-appraise my involvement with running. The piece was conceived some time after the event, recalling my experience of recovery, aided by a few diary notes and conversations.

When things become turbulent, it tends to have a shaking-down effect psychologically, as well as physically, undergoing a transition (or initiation) of sorts, seeing through a glass darkly. Change is a difficult path to navigate and I found myself both resisting it and embracing it in equal measure.

Accompanying the swings in mood and shifting realities was the realisation of the continuity of opposites — that sickness and health were curious bedfellows, being two sides of the same coin. From the perspective of sickness (and morbidity) one sees health in a very different light (and visa versa), seemingly poles apart, unconnected, and/or conflicting. From this confusing, shadowy place of uncertainty I came to appreciate better the significance of life's interweaving



nature, using my relationship to running and belonging to a running club as backdrop.

I want to start with a disclaimer. It probably comes as no surprise, but I am not, and never will be, a runner in the true sense of the word (with a capital R). That shining accolade I reserve for those who were born to run and have undoubted talent in the sport. I do not consider myself in the same league and would be suffering delusions of grandeur to think otherwise.

And yet, I'm not totally self-deprecating and I do consider myself a runner of sorts, taking pride in what I've achieved, but who, nevertheless, continues to struggle with that elusive meaning of achievement. It's such a slippery term, and, as they say, you're only as good as your last race. Even the most decorated, fleet-footed of runners will agree about never resting on your laurels.

So if not a Runner, but better than, say, a weekend jogger, (it's all relative, of course) where does one fit in to this broader running

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News Desk

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

9/6	Dawlish Coastal Dash
11/6	West Down 10K
11/6	Umborne Ug
12/6	The Ruby Run
12/6	Plym Valley Challenge
19/6	Torbay Half Marathon
19/6	Over The Hill and Farway 10K

Hopefully, by now most of you will have experienced the delights of Coombeshead College, our new home on Monday and Wednesday evenings, writes Roger Hayes. My team of car park attendants (Skins, Steph, Monkey and Tarq) have done a great job over the past few weeks, ensuring we get as many cars as humanly possible into the car park. It has been executed with military precision! Thanks, guys. Also, thanks to Buzz for staying at Newton Abbot Leisure Centre and directing those that forgot or didn't realise we had moved.

It seems a little unpredictable as to how many other cars are parked in there before we arrive, but we're confident we can get a total of about 38 cars parked up, which has served us well thus far. Please note that we won't always be there to oversee the parking. Therefore, if you see double parking going on now, that's because we know who is showering afterwards and who is going straight home after training. Please don't double park unless you've been told to do so. Those ladies I have spoken to have been full of praise for the number of showers (six compared to three at Newton Abbot Leisure Centre) and more importantly how nice and hot they are (unlike the leisure centre). We are still having a few difficulties getting our noticeboard relocated, but hopefully that should happen sooner rather than later.

One problem that we will encounter is the fact that the College is closed during bank holidays. We will however still be able to use the car park and will therefore meet there. This is obviously relevant for the forthcoming May bank holiday. Please make a note that on 27 June we will have to meet at the leisure centre as the College is being used for exams. A reminder nearer the time will be placed on the website noticeboard.

I'm pleased to report that we have at last found a new home to store our ever expanding array of club equipment. We have hired two lock-up units on the Brunel industrial estate. This will mean we can keep all the gear together under one roof rather than items being kept here, there and everywhere. Once it's all together, it will be quite an impressive haul of race equipment, all of which will help to ensure our races run smoothly and professionally. We have recently purchased a new timing device that is a far cheaper alternative to hiring a chip system to record times. We needed something to replace the old style manual method of recording times, especially at the Totnes 10K, as last year's race was just too big for that set-up. I'm confident this new bit of kit will do the job.

Hopefully you will be reading this before Dennis's BBQ has taken place. If so, then I hope to see as many of you there as possible, for it promises to be a great Trotter social gathering. The big question is, will he have killed the pig? There is a 45-minute run organised for anyone wishing to participate. This gets under way at 2pm from Dennis's house. For those with a SatNav, the postcode is TQ3 3YB.

I recently experienced my first, and probably not my last, sleepless night, worrying about the Dartmoor Discovery. Make no mistake the race is a monster and without my race team, who have been brilliant from day one, I would not have been able to cope. We had our final meeting last week, all 3 hours 24 minutes worth. Preparations are now pretty much all in place, although I will be a lot happier when the t-shirts finally arrive! We will have runners coming from all over the country, and at least four are from overseas. Many will be experiencing a race organised by the Teignbridge Trotters for the first time, so let's make sure it's one they will remember for a long time to come. To give you some idea of the scale of the event, I've listed a few stats.

If you have volunteered to help then thank you so much, we couldn't stage it without you. Sadly, we have had to seek help from outside the club, namely the Dawlish Coasters, the Guides and students from Ashburton College. When you consider our membership is over 185 it's a shame that we couldn't 'keep it in house' — something to address next year perhaps! From a personal point of view, I get far more pleasure and satisfaction from helping at our races than entering them.

What a great turn out of Trotters for the Edinburgh marathon! It's been a long time since we had so many ladies finish a marathon. I think I counted seven listed in the results. Wherever you're racing, continue to wear that Trotters vest with pride.

Some DD stats

10 drinks stations, 9 of which will have runners'

personal drinks

81 marshals/helpers

6 teams of timekeepers

3 ambulances staffed by St John's

14 radio operators from the Dartmoor Radio Club

150 packed lunches

85 at the Friday night pasta party

Scores of tired but happy people at the legendary after-race disco!

Amid my crisis of confidence, it was no longer apparent why I ran

family? (and the Trotters is a broad church). What's the pecking order and/or one's place in the food chain? Don't we all have to know our place? (hierarchical thinking!) Being the competitive creatures that we are (universally speaking), knowing your place is either something you accept with good grace (and tread water) or use it as a springboard to effect change — improving PBs in order to move forward. Once accomplished, we all change and move on and up to the next level, but forever shadowed by what kind of runner we have left behind. Are these the type of games we play? Jostling for position, always wanting to test our mental and physical mettle, pushing the boundaries of possibility, facing challenges anew, keeping us going as runners. 'On, on!' is the inexorable call. Full steam ahead; no stopping.

A school teacher asked a student, 'John, will you please conjugate the verb "to go" for the class?' The kid began, 'I go... um... you go... ehmm... he goes...' 'How about a little faster?' asks the teacher. And the kid retorts, 'Sure! I run, you run, she runs...'

Instead of this onward and upward motion, the striving toward greater achievement, driven by a belief in betterment and continuous improvement, I want to change direction, go in reverse, retracing steps in order to recognise the downward, vertical journey that has more to do with 'In, in!' than 'On, on!'

What are we into here? The background for this change in direction, prompting a change in perspective on my overall running performance, resulted from being diagnosed with coronary heart disease. The diagnosis came as a bolt from the blue given I had just started running marathons. I was even referred to the hospital cardiac unit as the 'marathon man'. It's on record! Though flattering, it really reflects the scarcity of runners who pass through their doors. I also add that there were those cynics for whom it was confirmation that running was bad for you, displaying a profound ignorance, such narrow-mindedness failing to understand its curative powers. I know this from my own experience working in mental health services, where running can be extremely therapeutic, helping recovery.

The overriding concern during my own recovery process, which went fairly smoothly due to my residual fitness, was the unexpected loss of confidence in what had previously been familiar and routine, i.e.,

what I could, should or shouldn't do in terms of running. I was brought down to earth with a jolt, life taking on a sharper focus, seeing the world through different eyes. The infirmity meant a lack of spontaneity in my approach to running: purchasing a heart rate monitor to keep me in check, running by the prescribed method of 'perceived effort', and having to scale it down to what was possible and safe. Though a time of self-doubt, and of feeling somewhat flat, it did, nevertheless, present opportunities to reflect on my overall situation.

Cutting to the chase: I began to dig a little deeper, asking, with all its twists and turns, and ups and downs, what role running played in my life. Maybe it's one of those



Keep on running: Steve at the Torbay Half.

plays on words, the answer(s) lying in the question. We're simply 'playing'. (Playfulness being a large part of running, and rightly so). But given the gravity of my particular situation, and what was at stake, it was useful to weigh up the pros and cons. I wanted more meaningful answers to those generally given, i.e., generic, mundane health-related ones, such as, maintaining fitness and well-being. These, after all, are the tangible products of running (like trophies), and not underlying reasons in themselves. I hoped that, by trying to connect with those hidden motivations and drives behind running, it would somehow re-ignite a flagging interest, rekindle a spark in order to re-frame, and perhaps recover a large part of my relationship with running that had worn thin through over-familiarity, having lost its charm.

Strange as it may sound, amid my crisis of confidence, it was no longer apparent why I ran. This is probably the opposite of the norm, under which running is the most natural thing in the world. This being the case, it doesn't warrant any soul-searching, making the questioning process, the 'whys and wherefores' of running, completely redundant. Surely this is a major reason for its mass appeal — simply placing one foot in front of the other and off you go.

However, when hitting a wall and being faced with having to stop through a life-threatening illness or from a serious injury, then at such moments we're thrown back on ourselves, searching for answers, having to confront our demons of doubt, frustration and disappointment, having to stay with those intrusive symptoms (though you may wish to escape them!) Ouch! This is a pain of a different order to that of race pain: the feeling of being restrained, sidelined; the fear of falling behind, slipping back, losing touch, not knowing what the future holds. Although you are trying to remain the eternal optimist and stay in control, all this extraneous stuff whirls around, trying to find expression. Throw into the pot, also, the blind instinct to get back on the horse, like a true hero, keeping the faith despite the setbacks.

I know we are pre-disposed to react in different ways to an enforced separation from the sport we love. But this shadow side of running can feel quite dark and isolating. Though trying to repress it, unthinkable consequences loom large, a vision of our world turned upside down. Though extreme, even hellish, I think this is probably a common experience (a [ga]lactic acid effect of the psyche?)

So, we turn again to what is in this phenomenon called running. What keeps us in it? One thing seemed certain at the time. Running had become a necessary part of my life, but without my fully appreciating the extent to which it had taken hold, having become so compulsive, even addictive. There were inescapable similarities with addiction. Did this account for the afflicted, over-exerted heart, the organ that sustains running? Maybe I had become too narrowly focused...

Next month: addiction, tarnished heroes, cyborg runners and finding yourself on the Haldon Trail.

Coaching update



Coach Coordinator **Rod Payne** has the latest figures and highlights some great achievements.

Well, folks, another month has flown by and it has been a really good one for the Trotters with some highly competitive training sessions and some notable race successes at all distances. We are still establishing ourselves in our new home at Coombeshead College and there is no doubt that the facilities are better but, from a personal point of view, I feel it will take a while for it to feel like 'home'.

At long last we welcome back our Club President to coaching in his old slot with the improvers on a Wednesday. Unfortunately dear old Buzz has not recovered sufficiently to run with the group so he acts as rear gunner on his push bike. So we now have The Ben Ten on Monday and Buzz on a Bike on a Wednesday. What next? Suggestions please!

We are well into our spring programme of sessions and it is great to be off the roads and enjoying some stunning

countryside around Newton Abbot. Look out for our away runs. The first one is being hosted by Noel Fowler on 6 June at Shaldon. Details will be posted on the website.

I am now nearly five months into the job of Coach Coordinator and I am now genuinely getting a feel for what kind of sessions you want, and there are some sessions that are failing to appeal to you. Others are clearly more popular and variations on this type of session should be explored and developed. The loop around Decoy Lake is popular and is in a great environment. Similarly loops around Forde Park also proved popular. Is there a theme evolving here? Thankfully, the speed-based sessions are now becoming more popular.

As usual, we have recorded numbers for each training session in the month and the figures are April numbers are shown here. Numbers are slightly down on the month but the good news is that

there has been a much better distribution of numbers throughout the Wednesday group. This is proving to be extremely valuable to us as we are establishing trends and patterns to hopefully assist us when planning future programmes.

Members' achievements

Some of our more recent recruits are now regularly seen on the race circuit and some are showing up us old hands. Phil Perry continues to improve and in under a year with the club he can now hold his own in all of the training groups. Keith Anderson has also dipped his toe in the water and made an impressive showing at The Sandygate Loop and followed it up with a very creditable 10K. These examples demonstrate that the beginners and intermediate groups are doing what it says on the tin.

TEIGNBRIDGE TROTTERS – TRAINING NUMBERS APRIL 2011

MONDAY GROUPS		Coach/Lea	Nos	WEDNESDAY GROUPS		Session	Venue	Coach/Lea	Nos
Numbers in brackets = Sessions by Coach in Month									
4.4.11	10 mile	Ben	10	6.4.11	Endurance	16 x 80 seconds	Bradley	Ewan	20
4.4.11	Teigngrace	Eleanor	31	6.4.11	Speed	3 x 10min relays	Bakers Park	Fizz	11
4.4.11	Beginners	Tarquinn	34	6.4.11	Intermediate	Social Run	Up to Coach	Tommo	26
				6.4.11	Improvers	3 – 5 Miles	Up to Coach	Rod	11
11.4.11	10 mile	Ewan	11	13.4.11	Endurance	Parluff	Bakers Pk	Clare	13
11.4.11	Abbotskerswell	Ian	19	13.4.11	Speed	10 x 400m	Courtney Pk	Eleanor	19
11.4.11	Beginners	Jan	6	13.4.11	Intermediate	4 x 600m (200 m jog)	Coach Road	Rod	11
				13.4.11	Improvers	3 – 5 Miles	Up to Coach	Tarquinn	10
18.4.11	10 mile	Ben	12	20.4.11	Endurance	The Big One	Buckland	Ian (2)	6
18.4.11	Templer Way	Ewan	21	20.4.11	Speed	10 x 1 minute	W'borough	Tommo (2)	22
18.4.11	Beginners	Eleanor (3)	7	20.4.11	Intermediate	30 min + 4x400 m	Bakers Park	Jan (2)	14
				20.4.11	Improvers	3 – 5 Miles	Up to Coach	Fizz (2)	9
25.4.11	10 mile	Ben (3)	7	27.4.11	Endurance	5 x loops of Decoy A c/w	Decoy	Rod (4)	28
25.4.11	River Teign	Ewan (4)	9	27.4.11	Speed	Relays	Bakers Pk	Watsa (1)	9
25.4.11	Beginners	Rod	6	27.4.11	Intermediate	Hill Reps	Bakers R'side	Clare (2)	11
				27.4.11	Improvers	3 – 5 Miles	Up to Coach	Tarquinn (3)	16
				Total	378 members	Total of 28 sessions Total of 8 nights	Averages 13.5 members per session 47.25 members per night		

Marsha Garrard (London), along with Sarah Schutte and Mary Goulden (Edinburgh), are all now no longer marathon virgins, with fine times in the bag. Sarah cracked the four-hour barrier at her first attempt. Nathan Elphick is still running down his Tracy and in the process is getting faster and faster.

The Ben Ten Monday group has settled on a nucleus of 10 to 12 and this has helped Tarquin and Wavell to achieve sub-three-hour marathons and enabled other members to achieve half marathon and marathon PBs.

Dennis Milstead was going great guns as a result of Ben's group. Now running in the MV50 age group he has had the audacity to set a PB at 10k. This was unfortunately followed up by a pulled hamstring suffered at our first Sandygate loop. I am pleased to report that Dennis has recently had a trot out with the beginners as part of his comeback.

You're just getting quicker and quicker

Throughout the club our members are getting quicker and quicker, achieving PBs too numerous to list. Well done to all of you. I hope you feel that your team of dedicated leaders and coaches are playing a part in your success. Keep working hard at the sessions, work off of each other and give each other plenty of praise and encouragement. It makes for a more lively and enjoyable session and puts the coach in a good mood.

Again, I ask you for your constructive feedback on the sessions we offer to you. We value your opinions.

So, until next time, enjoy your training, good luck with the racing and keep fit and well.

Membership Report

Dave Dunn introduces some new faces and celebrates tumbling records.

Now that we are just about two months into this particular membership year, the number of late renewal forms coming through my letter box, or thrust rather shame-facedly into my hand at training, has slowed somewhat, and I can announce that we currently have 192 members. Of these, six are life members, and another eight are second claim Trotters. Interestingly, the number of second claim members is on the decrease, as both Adam Caunter and Caroline Clark have transferred their first claim allegiance from Newton Abbot AC & WRN respectively, while Sue Hewings and Camilla McHugh are going through the same process.

Of our 184 first claim members, just over two-thirds (124) have opted to be registered with England Athletics as competing members. This ratio is well up on both last year and the year before. While it might reflect a bit more trust in the governing body, I think the increase is largely due to the very healthy numbers of Trotters who are out there racing on a regular basis. Nowhere is this more true than among our more recent signings, and I anticipate that this trend will continue.

So that leads me nicely on to my introductions of the eight new faces who have joined our ranks since the last edition of this magazine. First of these new members to introduce to you is Patrick Gaskins (45) from Teignmouth. Patrick is a keen rower, but no mean runner either, as shown by his 9th place finish in last month's Haldon Heartbeat. Yet to be seen at an official club training night, Patrick (a good friend of Ben Epps) has been out on a few long training runs with the likes of Tarquin and Chairman.

Next up is Jessica Parkes (32) from Newton Abbot. Jessica had been running with the Women's Running Network prior to becoming a mum. Now looking to get back into shape, Jessica has joined us and is a regular member of the Wednesday evening improvers' group. Husband

and wife John and Lorna Martin are next in line. Both 51 and from Liverton, John and Lorna are quite experienced runners who have quickly found their feet in our main Monday evening group.

I know that Jess Whitehouse (32) from Kingsteignton has just purchased some club kit, so look out for her in your next race! Jess, too, has been a regular at our new venue of Coombeshead College since our move from Newton abbot Leisure Centre. The membership application form filled out by Mark Atkinson (45) from Newton Abbot just dropped through my letterbox without me having any previous contact with him. Apparently, Mark has been attending training on the Mondays when I've not been able to make it, and vice versa, so that we've only met the once. Like the majority of runners, he seems like a very decent fellow!

New member Debbie Hall (43) is from the metropolis that is South Knighton. Other than that, I'm struggling to tell you anything else that I know about Debbie, but no doubt Debbie will make herself known to us all in the coming weeks and months. Finally, Niki Portus (34) from Ilstington has joined us on a second claim basis. Niki is another daughter of second claim member Jim, who is regularly to be seen on our local TV news in his role as Chief Executive of the South West Fish Producers. Niki finished this year's London Marathon accompanied by Dad Jim inside the 5-hour mark.

There are three notable birthdays among our members in June. Caroline Campbell and Debbie Clarke will both celebrate their 40th birthdays, while Rebecca Weare turns 35. Apologies for revealing a lady's age, but happy birthday to you all and may you enjoy running with their new veteran status. We particularly wish Debbie well as she continues her recovery from her recent health problems and we hope to see her back with her trainers on before too long.

Record breakers

May has certainly been a productive month for new club records. Two were set on the same day in the same city, yet in two different events, when Wilf Taylor broke Dave Taylor's MV60 marathon record at Edinburgh with a time of 3:29:52, while Graeme Baker (pictured) wiped Dave Foster's MV70 half marathon record from our books with a new mark of 1:46:47. Wilf knocked 14 minutes off Dave's six-month-old record, while Graeme trimmed almost four minutes from Mr Foster's mark, which had stood for seven years.

In fact, Graeme has found a new lease of life since turning 70 only at the beginning of April. First, he just failed to better another of Dave Foster's records in the Virgin

London Marathon, missing out by 5 minutes when he had looked set fair to dip inside Dave's 4:28 for such a long way.



Then Graeme succeeded at Ivybridge where he had failed in London, by knocking over a minutes off Dave's seven-year-old

10K record for the MV70 category by stopping the watch on 49:19.

A full list of our club records can be found on our website. I'm sure that Graeme has already noted that there is a vacancy in the MV70 10-mile slot, which he'll be aiming to fill as soon as there's a suitable opportunity.

The coming month doesn't offer too many chances to write one's name into the record books locally. The Ruby Run and the Torbay Half are both challenging courses, particularly if the weather turns warm, so Trotters may be looking further afield for PB opportunities. Wherever you're racing, don't forget to tell our Press & Publicity team all about it. Fizz and Rodders will be ready with notepad and pencil to record your triumphs, or perhaps your trials and tribulations!

Captain's Corner

We've nailed it again, declares Tarquin.

After winning the first male team award at last year's Ivybridge 10K, we have returned to win it again! Make no mistake, this is the one I wanted... And I mean REALLY wanted! Only Tommo was available this year from last year's winning trio. However, Adam Caunter, who has now joined as a first claim member, stepped into breach and provided a very tasty addition to our 'fast boys'. But we still needed a third Trotter male to step up to the plate and to be able to run a sub-37-minute time, or somewhere very near that. I was down to run, but coming only six days after punishing my body to complete my first ever sub-three-hour marathon, I did not believe for one minute that I



Top Trotter team: (l to r) Adam Caunter, Tarquin and Dave Tomlin.

could realistically play a part in a first team challenge. However, on the night, all three of us managed to fire on all cylinders and we came together to win the first male team award again.

It has given me such a buzz to be part of that winning team and the feeling of pride as I ran out from the start with two other guys in Trotter vests, right behind the leaders, was immense. For me this is what being men's captain is all about — getting a team together and then leading from the front to help make it happen. And, to reinforce what I have been saying about the new Trotters making their mark, Nick Stevens was close behind with a big PB in a time of 38:28. Nick is our newest Dartmoor Discovery Trotter entrant and this is very encouraging stuff from him, as he is normally used to running in the longer distance events. It all augers well for the future; especially given the fact

that we have a number of other fast boys who will be available for other races. To add to this, Graeme Baker won the 1st MV65 prize and in so doing so, grabbed our MV70 10K club record (there was no MV70 category at Ivybridge, so Graeme stepped down an age group to give the younger boys a run for their money!)

But this has not been the only team prize that we've won since I last wrote, back in March. Successes have also come at the Taunton marathon and at the Tavy 13 half marathon. At Taunton, Tommo chased the lead car down and won the marathon in a scintillating time of 2:44:42. This is the second time Dave has won this event, but this year is all the more remarkable, as he has come back from a rather nasty infection during the early season build-up. On top of this, Dave injured his knee in the week leading up to the Taunton marathon and, at one point, it was uncertain whether he would even be able to take part. To complement Dave's fine win, Garry Smart and Wavell Vigers finished in the top ten and the three of them attained the first men's team. However, rather disappointingly, while the race organisers recognised this award, they did not have any physical prize or trophy to give out for this. Apparently last year's trophy was not returned, so they weren't able to award it this year. Come on Taunton Carnival Committee (the race organisers), get your act together! Nothing, however, can take away this fine achievement from the three of them and, with Garry and Wavell both running a three-hour marathon time in their first ever marathon, it makes it all the more special for them.

Only a week later, our main man Tommo was at it again. This time at the 'Tavy 13' half marathon he came in second place after a fine effort over a very tough course, amid scorching temperatures. Backing Dave up were Simon Boobyer, with a strong 1:31 time, and Stephen Barker with a gritty 1:40. This brought the trio the second male team prize. It was Stephen's second team award as a Trotter, following his part in the winning team at the Oh My Obelisk race, back in February. Stephen is continually improving and is definitely a great addition to the Trotter racing fold.

More success has come for our men with some fine individual achievements lately. Last weekend during the Edinburgh half and full marathon a number of Trotter men achieved some great things. Graeme Baker, not content with setting a new club

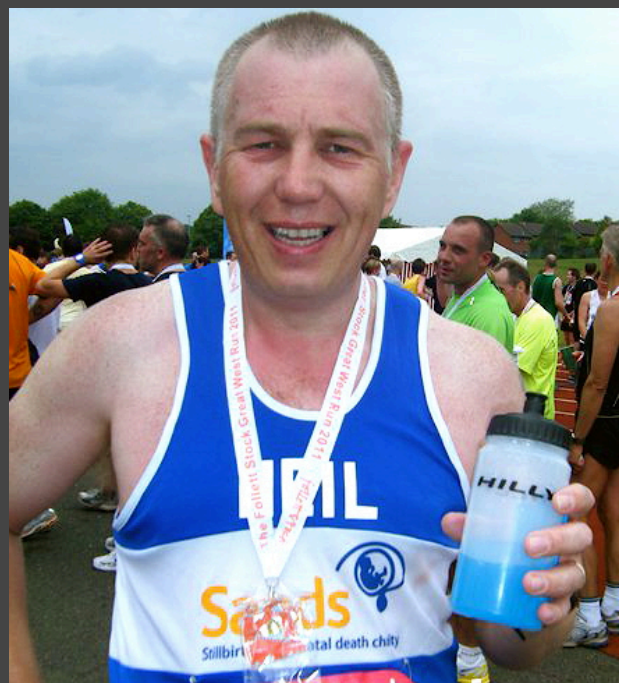
MV70 10K record at Ivybridge, the week before, recorded a fine 1:46:47 in the half marathon, which set another club record for the MV70 category. He is definitely on a roll at the moment and I can see Graeme adding a few more club records to his name before this year's out. Not to be outdone, Wilf Taylor, after spending some time at a secret marathon training camp, set a new club MV60 marathon record, with a fine time of 3:29:52, despite struggling with a number of nasty injuries during this training this year. To add to these fine record achievements, Wavell Wigors battled the wind and rain to join the exclusive sub-three-hour marathon club, with a fine time of 2:58:34. Simon Boobyer and Bruce Campbell also achieved fine PBs, to add to the Trotter success at Edinburgh, with 3:09:43 and 3:25:52 respectively. Well done also to Nathan Elphick on completing his first ever marathon, in a time of 3:47.

Another individual achievement that I would like to mention is one from Dennis Milstead, who will be hosting the club's annual BBQ this weekend. Dennis has for many years tried to get his 10K time down below the 45-minute mark, but it has always been a bogey time for him. However, with true guts and determination, Dennis smashed through the sub-45-minute barrier, by nearly a minute, with a tough run at the Easter Bunny 10k on Easter Monday. Although the course is relatively flat, the weather wasn't kind, with hot sun melting all but the toughest runner. Dennis has shown what racing should be about — attempting to better oneself, by setting goals and working towards them. Dennis never lost sight of this goal and in the end he attained it. Well done to Dennis and I hope as many of you as possible will join me at his BBQ on Sunday to congratulate him on his fine personal achievement.

So, now we move on to the big race event of the year — The Dartmoor Discovery. It is now only days away and all the hard work that Chairman Rog and his team have put in will pay off. Now it's down to the runners to actually do their stuff and tackle this tough race. So many other factors come into play with this race on top of the 32 gruelling miles. The weather always plays a massive part and we will be praying for sympathetic weather for the day, although most weather conditions will pose one problem or another. As mentioned earlier, Nick Stevens has now joined the Trotter team of Dave Tomlin, Ewan Walton, Adrian Bailey, Stuart Moulson, Roger 'Smokes' Hales and yours truly in the inaugural year of this

renowned race being a Trotter event. Please wish us all well and if you are out on the course, helping with the marshalling, be sure to give all the Trotters a big cheer and plenty of encouragement!

After the DD, our next team event will be the Erme Valley Relays. This event takes place on the evening of Friday 1 July, starting at 7pm. With the race HQ at Ivybridge Rugby Club (parking at Ivybridge railway station) this relay race is for teams of four runners, with each runner completing one 2.5 mile loop apiece. I will be looking to enter teams for this event, in different age-categories, so please check your diaries for your availability. It's always a good event, with plenty of chances to see many top runners from all over the South West.



Congratulations to Trotter Neil Pallant, who recently completed the Great West Run, in a highly creditable time of 1:54:08. Neil was running for the Sands charity, which supports those affected by stillbirth or the death of a baby and funds research in this vital area.

The Trotter

Editor: John Ludlam

Many thanks to everyone who contributed to this edition.

Next month: Full report on the DD and more Jogging with Jules.

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

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