



The Trotter

Issue 9 October 2022

Running into Autumn

Cross Country Capers

Awards Night news

John Scott Trophy

Welcome



Can't believe it's Autumn already and our final race of the year, The Templer Ten, is fast approaching. Of course there is still the John Scott to look forward to, exclusive to TT members. Check out details here. Loving training with a range of runners through club nights. If it's been a while, do come back - there is a session for everyone. Enjoy the read.

Ali Clayton



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CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP



Club Championship Secretary, Graydon Widdicombe, shares the latest news.

As the club championship approaches the end for 2022, it's still all to play for in both the men's and ladies' competitions, with plenty of races still to go, and points up for grabs.

Since my previous Trotter article, we had to find a replacement race for the cancelled Frome Half and also we had word that Bicton Blister wouldn't be happening. There aren't many halves around in the last few months of the year so we replaced Frome Half with Exe Estuary Half, which is on a challenging course, but I think most enjoyed it nonetheless! We knew the timing wasn't ideal as it was the same day as London Marathon, but we were a bit short of options at that point, sadly. Exmouth Harriers are organising a separate race (Westdown Wander) on the same day as their cancelled Bicton Blister, so that was an easier swap for us.

As mentioned elsewhere in this edition of The Trotter, The John Scott Trophy is again part of the Club Championship, and I'll be working out the (often controversial!) handicap start times. It's a great event, and as it is only open to club members, club kit is not required to be worn. I'll put a post up on Facebook nearer the time asking for race times for me to work out the handicap, but the **deadline for entries will be 7pm on Friday 18th November.**

Looking to next year already, but Eleanor and I start thinking about next year's competition around now, where we try and put in a good mix of old favourites alongside new races. A general comment is that it does seem a shame that some well-established races have been struggling recently, and generally we do try and support local club races when creating the competition. I think club races are such an important part of the local running scene (they're great fun, affordable and well organised) and it is a shame to read about some races struggling for entries.

As usual I will not publish the standings for last 2 or 3 races to keep the winners a surprise for the awards night but if you do spot any errors at all in what I publish, please let know!

Thanks a lot, and good luck in the final races.

Graydon Widdicombe - Club Championship Secretary.

THE JOHN SCOTT TROPHY 2022

This year's event will be held on Sunday 20th November at 3pm.

For those of you who are new to the Club, the John Scott Trophy is a great Trotter-only race. It's a 4-mile handicap event. In advance of the race your individual start time will be calculated (based on recent 3k, 5k, 10k, or Sandygate Loop times), with the aim being that all runners cross the finish line within a few minutes of each other. Closer to the event, Graydon will put a post on our Facebook page asking for your times so that he can calculate the start times. You'll have until 7pm on Friday 18th November to let him know.

The course itself starts on the grass area beside the bridge just past the Sandygate Inn, Kingsteignton, and takes runners up a two-mile section towards Gappah, following quiet country lanes. Then, runners turn around and run back the way they came, to the finish on the same grass area. It's a great course as you're always in sight of other runners either on their way out or on their way back, and of course, the element of friendly competition makes it all the more enjoyable.



Entry into the race is a festively-wrapped present worth £5 (that you bring with you to the race), and then after the event it's a chance to socialise with fellow Trotters over a festive meal and a drink. The person who crosses the finish line in first place gets the first pick of the presents on offer, the second over the line gets second pick, and so on.

The festive roast dinner will be at The Rec at 5.00pm. The cost of the two-course meal is £12 and your menu choices will need to be made in advance for Nicki and her team.



You can book your roast dinner (and make your menu choices) and pay the £12 on our website, where you find Club kit etc, from ***now until Monday 14th November.***

NOTE: As this is an internal Trotter event, club kit does not need to be worn to comply with the club championship rules.



**Saturday 17th December
Newton Abbot Rugby Club
7pm - Midnight**

The Trotters blue ribbon social event of the year is certainly one not to be missed. Come and join us and help celebrate some wonderful achievements. The night gets underway at 7pm, with presentations starting promptly at 7.30pm.

Tickets are £15 each and can be purchased via the link on our homepage. For that you'll get a lovely hot/cold buffet and the chance to strut your stuff on the dance floor when the disco gets underway.

The deadline for ticket purchases is midnight 11th December



A date for your diary:
Tuesday 28th February 2023
Newton Abbot Recreational Trust
7:30pm start

Marshall points 2022

Points so far compiled by Nathan Elphick

MEMBERS			MARSHALS					
First Name	Surname	Points	DD	Heller	Totnes	Ladies	Templer	Cake
Liz	Barnett	5	X	X	X	X		X
Nigel	Barnett	5	X	X	X	X		X
Ian	Langler	5	X	X	X	X		X
Suzie	Mills	5	X	X	X	X		X
Stuart	Moulson	5	X	X	X	X		X
Bev	Dennis	4	X	X	X	X		
Andy	Distin	4	X	X	X	X		
Ben	Elphick	4	X	X	X			X
Nathan	Elphick	4	X	X	X	X		
Dominique	Harcourt	4	X	X	X			X
Deborah	Hart	4	X	X	X			X
Roger	Hayes	5	X	X	X	X		
Yasi	Jeffery	4	X	X	X			X
Steve	Major	4	X	X	X	X		
Lucy	Payne	4	X	X	X			X
Julian	Scanes	4	X	X	X	X		
John	Skinner	4	X	X	X	X		
Susanne	Westgate	4	X		X	X		X
Keith	Anderson	3	X	X		X		
Ryan	Anthony	3	X	X		X		
Sarah	Blanchard	3	X		X			X
Nathan	Bodley	3	X	X		X		
Corinne	Bright	3	X	X				X
Eamon	Crowe	3	X	X	X			
Tracy	Elphick	3	X	X		X		
Tim	Hartley	3	X	X		X		
Tim	Hassell	3	X		X	X		
Caroline	Hayes	3	X	X				X
Joe	Hornsby	3	X	X		X		
Ruth	Johnson	3		X	X	X		
Arthur	Moulson	3	X	X		X		
Sarah	Pike	3	X	X	X			
Debbie	Proctor	3	X	X	X			
Christian	Robinson	3		X	X	X		
Derek	Skinner	3	X	X	X			
Bob	Small	3	X	X	X			
Graham	Terrill	3	X	X	X			
John	Tweedie	3	X		X	X		
Courtney	Webb	3	X	X		X		
Mandy	Wheeler	3	X	X	X			

Marshal points continued

Graydon	Widdicombe	3	X	X	X	
Alexis	Wilson	3	X	X	X	
Jacki	Woon	3	X	X	X	
Chris	Andrews	2	X		X	
Helen	Anthony	2	X			X
Eyvoll	Aston	2	X		X	
Pete	Aston	2	X			X
Kevin	Besford	2			X	X
Angela	Blakesley	2	X			X
Alan	Boone	2	X		X	
Gary	Caunter	2	X	X		
Jan	Caunter	2	X			X
Alison	Clayton	2	X		X	
Natalie	Cusack	2	X	X		
Roger	Easterbrook	2		X	X	
Lucy	Evans	2	X	X		
Angela	Evans	2		X		X
Becky	George	2	X	X		
Ed	Hounsell	2	X		X	
Alan	Kember	2		X	X	
Duncan	Knight	2	X	X		
Kim	Knight	2	X	X		
Kate	Lenthall	2	X	X		
Lily	Moulson	2	X	X		
Kim	Nichols	2			X	X
Rod	Payne	2	X	X		
Tim	Pratt	2	X		X	
Bon	Rymel	2		X	X	
James	Saunders	2		X	X	
Kay	Shillabeer	2	X	X		
Garry	Smart	2	X		X	
Wilf	Taylor	2	X		X	
Eleanor	Taylor	2	X		X	
Marie	Taylor	2		X		X
Allen	Taylor	2		X		X
Jayden	Taylor	2		X		X
Ollie	Thomas	2	X			X
Sue	Tremlett	2	X		X	
Kris	Ward	2	X		X	
Russell	Wheeler	2	X		X	
Kate	Williamson	2	X			X
Travis	Wood	2	X			X
Mark	Wotton	2		X	X	
Clare	Youngman	2		X	X	
Luke	Ashington	1	X			
Rex	Barnes	1	X			
Jamie	Barnett	1		X		

Marshal points continued

Steven	Blackburn	1				X	
Kate	Blackmore	1	X				
Peter	Blakesley	1	X				
Gary	Brooking	1		X			
Sarah	Burningham	1	X				
Bruce	Campbell	1				X	
John	Caunter	1	X				
Tina	Caunter	1	X				
Anna	Cawrse	1	X				
Chris	Cleave	1	X				
Claire	Comber	1				X	
Paul	Conlan	1	X				
Tamsin	Cook	1			X		
Reg	Cross	1	X				
Isabelle	Cummins	1					X
Sam	Crowe	1				X	
Sarah	Frost	1	X				
Susanna	Goffe	1			X		
Lizzy	Gorst	1			X		
Joanna	Griffin	1	X				
Phil	Gwynne Smith	1	X				
Roger	Hales	1				X	
Kate	Heaton	1			X		
John	Holland	1	X				
Teresa	Holmes	1	X				
Sonia	Hughes	1	X				
Sally	Inglédrew	1	X				
Tess	Irons	1	X				
Mike	Jones	1	X				
Sara	Keatley	1	X				
Richard	Keatley	1			X		
Brian	Lewis	1			X		
John	Ludlam	1				X	
Alex	Lyons	1	X				
Alexis	Marsh	1	X				
Phillp	Nordon	1			X		
Gavin	Parrot	1			X		
Maurice	Piper	1	X				
John	Pullen	1		X			
Hamish	Rae	1				X	
Martin	Randall	1				X	
Andrew	Rattlidge	1				X	
Sarah	Ross	1	X				
Neil	Rutley	1				X	
Sharon	Sharples	1			X		
Paul	Sharples	1			X		

Marshal points continued

Narina	Shorland	1	X		
Neil	Skinner	1	X		
Judy	Smallshire	1	X		
Anne	Smart	1	X		
Dermot	Smyth	1		X	
Matt	Steele	1			X
Rachel	Steele	1			X
Kathryn	Steemson	1		X	
Tony	Stepney	1	X		
Sharon	Still	1		X	
Julia	Street	1			X
Jason	Trevenen	1	X		
Jon	Tubman	1	X		
Can	Vickers	1	X		
Ewan	Walton	1	X		
Gary	Watson	1			X
Francesca	White	1	X		
Geoff	Woods	1		X	

The following people have also baked cakes for club races: Pat Atkins, Lucy Bailey, Joanne Baird, Wendy Goldthorp, Liz Nuttall x2, Jemma Bennett, Caroline Bowden, Sara Collman, Zilpah Walton.

Points are awarded for every race marshalled for the club. An extra point is awarded for baking 3 or more cakes for our races. Points awarded for marshalling and baking cakes earn you rewards.

Anyone with 2 or more points will get a free entry to the club trip in 2023. Anyone with 4 or more points is eligible to go in the draw at the Annual Awards evening for one of eight £50 vouchers to be used at a running race of their choice. Anyone with a maximum of 6 points is eligible to go in the draw for a London Marathon place.

If you spot an error or have been missed off then please contact Nathan Elphick via our facebook page.

Never too late, you've still got time.....

Home made cakes are needed to sell at the Sibelco Templer Ten.

Please contact Dominique Harcourt if you can supply one for

Sunday 6th November.



Club Membership

Membership news with Secretary Kevin Besford



As I write this, we are midway through our renewal cycle, the first one with our new provider, SI Entries, and I am pleased to say while touching wood that there have been no issues with anyone's payments, be it renewal or our many new members joining for the first time.

As we reached our year end mark, our numbers fell just short of 300 standing at 294, though I am pleased to say that already since that date, we have had a steady stream of new members joining us. Of course, there will be a percentage of non-renewals and a very small number have informed me of this, so it will be interesting to see where we stand when things settle down at the end of October.

With the new membership year, we were looking to pass any requirements / communication with UK Athletics / England Athletics back to the individual members. We have had to rethink that plan as EA have told members they are not allowed to pay their fees directly to EA but must pay through their club. What other organization can you think of that only accepts payments from a third party? I certainly struggle to think of any. So, the message to members registered with EA is keep tabs of when payments are due as they have a different year end to us and please do not leave it to the last minute before paying your £16 through the club.

I am pleased to now be fully back in attendance at training nights after, to put it mildly, a challenging year and have ventured into the improvers group in recent weeks.

If I have not met you, please do come and introduce yourself and, given time, I feel sure I will get back to knowing all your names.

We have had a dip in numbers taking part in the couch to 5k recently, so if any of you have any ideas of how we can reverse this trend, please let myself or John Skinner know.

If you know of anyone that could benefit from joining that group, please bring them along and feel free to keep their company initially and of course do continue to encourage people who are not beginners to come along to the world's best running club.

[Membership news continued ...](#)

There have been a number of new members since my last ramblings so in no particular order we have:

Ian Fleming from Kingsteignton, Glyn Bell from Teignmouth, Phil Hamling from Newton Abbot, Yoni Vogelius from Totnes, Sally Merryfield, Paul Hewson, Amanda Lacey, Olivia Mills, Bonnie Oldham and Carly Ellis all from Newton Abbot, Lucinda Bufton from Shaldon and Graham Howell from Moretonhampstead.

Please make them all welcome whenever you find yourselves running with them in a session.

It's **HAPPY BIRTHDAY** to quite a large number of members who celebrate notable birthdays in **October, November and December.**



Dylan Cooper 35, Mel Sheehan 35, Craig Churchill 45, Dominique Harcourt 45, Shelley Rattlidge 45, Kathryn Steemson 50, Gary Brooking 50, Rosey Oakes 55, Julian Shelling 55, Dermot Smyth 55, Vicky Hales 65, Alan Kember 65, Judy Smallshire 70, Tim Hartley 70 and finally Bob Small 75.

To all of you enjoy racing in your new age category.

On On.

Kevin Besford
Membership Secretary

Captains' Corner

Men's Captain, Ben Elphick introduces himself



Hello Gents

I would like to kick off my first Captain's Corner by thanking everyone for being so supportive and helpful as I get to grips with my new role. Influenced by those who give a great deal of time and energy for this amazing club, I really wanted to give something back. So, when the role of Men's Captain came up, and after much trepidation, I put my name forward.

It certainly was a baptism of fire with the fast-approaching Erme Valley and South Devon Relays needing to be organised. Thanks to those who put their names forward, and for those who stepped in at the last minute. Both events went off without a hitch and we had some great results, with the V40's and V60's winning at Erme Valley, and the V50's and V60's winning the South Devon Relay. A very successful start which I hope we can continue next season.

Now as this is my first Captain's Corner, I will tell you a little about my running adventure so far and plans for the future. Running as a hobby started for me on the 1st of Jan 2020. After listening to Nathan and Tracy talk about racing for the Trotters, I decided to join them at Haldon for my first Parkrun. Tracy dragged me up to the front to run with her. That lasted about 2 miles before I came to a stop ready to throw up. I pushed on again, somehow finishing with a 25:13. I joined the Trotters a few weeks later looking forward to taking part in lots of races and social events, but sadly Covid hit and that was that. Slowly races and club training nights came back and despite a few injuries here and there, I started racing, predominately on roads but with the occasional trail (Haytor Heller). As with any runner, there has been lots of highs and lows, my best run has to be Exeter Half this year where, despite torrential rain and wind, I negative split my way to a 1:38:48, my first sub 1:40 half. My worst run was attempting the DD, with a combination of not enough training and having just received my first Covid jab. I managed to make it to mile 23 before collapsing. A scary moment but one I have learned a lot from. I have massive respect to anyone who has completed this phenomenal event.

Captains' Corner continued

I feel like 2022 has been a good solid year for me so far, as I set out to run a sub 6 minute mile, sub 20 5K, sub 45 10K and a sub 1:40 half marathon. After completing these my attention has now turned to training for Marathon distance. I want to do a Sub 4 hour marathon next year and push closer to a 1:30:00 half.



Ben on racing form

Now for the Club. This year has seen some awesome achievements already. Just in my time as captain I've seen personal bests and club records being smashed. Congratulations to James Saunders who recently broke the MV60 marathon club record by 17 mins. Not only that but equalling the 10k record one week earlier, what an effort! James Long who won the North coast 110km in an outstanding 14:14:42. It has been great to see the emergence of a group of new younger members this year, with the aforementioned James Long first Trotter home in the DD, Jake Gluyas-Harris and Hamish Rae regularly pushing for top honours in many races this year. Bright futures ahead for them. The wealth of talent at this club is massive and it will be fantastic seeing each and every one of you push for your goals in the coming year.

The Trotters' Facebook page often has information on men's future events, or you could email Ben, at menscaptain@teignbridgetrotters.co.uk.

The Trotters' Ladies' captain, Natalie Cusack, can be reached at ladiescaptain@teignbridgetrotters.co.uk.

Another one bites the dust!

Roger Hayes on disappearing events

Next year would have seen the 40th anniversary of the Taunton Marathon. There aren't many races, particularly marathons that can boast that achievement. Sadly though, due to the increased financial burden and dwindling numbers, it's not going to take place.

I spoke to John Lewis, the long-standing RD, a man I've got to know quite well over the years, and between him and the Taunton Carnival Committee, they took the tough decision to cancel the race. Personally, I don't see a way back from here. Sadly, the race will join the ever-increasing number of road marathons that have had to fold.

It was very much an old school race, nothing fancy, but very well organised by a small band of volunteers. The half marathon consisted of one lap, run entirely on the road, with a mixture of quiet country lanes as well as busy main roads. The marathon was run over the same course but with two laps.

The race will always have a special place in my heart - I thought I'd share a few memories with you.

I first ran the half marathon, a distance they introduced a few years after the marathon began, back in 1991. I keep a log of all my races, recording various bits of information about the race and my performance. Looking back, I see I paid £3.75 to enter the race! I set my half marathon PB at Taunton in 2007 (my 102nd half marathon), coming 22nd out of 1098 runners, in a time of 1:18:30. I remember the day well, feeling really strong, even managing a 5:28 last mile. Oodey and the kids all did the fun run, another distance they introduced to try and make the day inclusive.

Taunton was always a great warm up for London, falling as it did on the first Sunday in April. When I started on my marathon journey, I used to run them both. I always felt it important to support our local marathons, especially the road ones. The contrast between the two couldn't have been greater. When you start that second lap at Taunton you're pretty much on your own, it becomes a very lonely race. I enjoyed that though, just you, pounding out the miles, more of a mental battle than anything else.

When my son turned 18, I set him a challenge to run a marathon. He trained hard, joining the gang on weekly burger runs. Taunton was the chosen the race. We ran it together and I was so proud of him for completing it. It was a very special moment when we crossed that finish line together.

The only blip on what have been so many happy memories at Taunton, actually came this year. I was going well up to 21 miles, on for a GFA for London, when my calf suddenly went. It felt like someone had shot me in the back of my leg. It was a long 5mile walk to the finish!

I do fear for the future of these mid-sized road marathons. I know first-hand the work involved in staging such events, having been RD for the DD, which is why we should do all we can do to try and support them. If we don't then all we will be left with are a few big city marathons, charging a fortune to enter!



Roger and son

Cross Country Capers

Keith Anderson shares his love for cross country

Westward Cross-Country League – Love your Greens

Greens are good for you, my mum used to say, and after all this time I'm inclined to agree with her sentiment, though I suspect she was talking about veg, while my thoughts are more towards mental wellbeing.

If pressed I'd probably say my favourite colour is blue, but I confess I'm affected more by certain tones of green. Green mainly says serenity, rest and calm to me, whether it's the grassy expanse of a cricket field, a leafy forest glade or a companion's choice of eyeshadow on a sad day; and it's the draw of the natural, green environment that moves me to enter cross-country races through the grey months of winter.

Sunday 9th October marked the first event of the of the Westward League, 2022/23 series – a cracking day at Newnham Park, Plymouth. Eight of us – Wendy, Helen, Hylda, Ewan, Roger, Joe, Carl and me – represented the Trotters in beautiful sunny conditions; and for any lover-of-greens like me it was a real treat, especially at the end of such a scorching summer. Lush grassy fields giving way to undulating leafy woodland helped make for ideal conditions overall. Some spectacular racing took place and mention must be made here of Helen's stunning first place in her age-group.



Ewan, Wendy, Joe, Helen, Carl, Roger and Keith (plus Hylda, not in the photo).

Cross country continued

Aside from my whimsical pastoral reflections there are good reasons to take part if you get the chance. Cross-country gives opportunities to compete amongst some of the very best runners in the region, even when this takes the form of gasping in admiration as they lap you for the second time. It provides the chance to test your legs on challenging terrain and to pit your will against the worst weather the winter months can offer. Some would describe it as character building.

There are other motivating factors: one big thing is that entry is free! (Paid for by our lovely club); though 'tis true, you do need to be a member of England Athletics (EA) to take part. If you're not in EA already, then it'll cost you £16 (click on <https://teignbridge-trotters-running-club.clubtrac.co.uk/products/individual-ea-athlete-registration-1331>).

Sixteen quid may sound a lot, but it'll buy you the five remaining races of this winter's season – a mere £3.20 a pop! And you'll get other discounts from EA membership up to renewal time next April.

The distances you can expect to run vary slightly depending on the venue, but typically it'll be 8500m for men and 5500m for women. Don't worry if you think you're slow – this really is a time when making up the team is what matters.

Here's the programme for the rest of the season, ready to put on your calendar:

13 November – Newquay

4 December – Exeter

15 January – Westward Ho!

12 February – Plymouth (tbc)

5 March – Redruth

More details online: <https://www.city-runs.co.uk/westward-league/>

Convinced? Of course you are. Wendy Goldthorp is the Trotters' Cross-country captain and it's Wendy who looks after everything on our behalf, including entries and sharing transport on the day, so watch out for her postings on our FB page or message her direct to say you're keen to have a go. When you turn up, you'll immediately spot the Team Captain from her distinctive, nay, iconic, retro-chic tracksuit – yes, you've guessed it – in Purest Green.

You can contact Wendy Goldthorp at crosscountrycaptain@teignbridgetrotters.co.uk

Double Act

Tim Hassell and John Skinner on their commentating career for the club

'You're on the mike Skinns.' This from Squaddie a couple of hours before start of the DD all those years ago. No choice, of course, I was petrified. Despite my experience fronting legendary cult band 'The Shed' and conducting art workshops and demos very much in the public eye, live commentary presents an entirely different challenge. So be it. I jumped in at the deep end, after all the DD is usually a 4-to-5-hour stint. Squaddie is a hard act to follow. I've always had a soft spot for crooning songs to comic effect. Over the years SQ and I have collaborated on several artistic ventures, after all for those who were lucky enough to witness it, who could forget the legendary DD quiz/play starring SQ and John Skinner in dual rolls, firstly as ballet dancers before morphing into a brace of Shakespeares for the second half, Tim Hassell as a somewhat dubious Brazilian life guard, John Tweedie played a kind of demented Shakespearian drummer, whilst Deb Hart and Oodie acted as our glamorous assistants. Most memorable, pure showbiz gold dust.

Back to the DD, I managed to bumble through and apparently showed enough flare to be permanently saddled with the gig. However, the commentator is only as good as his right-hand man, and it came to pass, on a dank and dour Autumnal Sunday morning, at the Passage House, the then venue for the Templer 10, I was presented with the mighty Tim Hassell and a beautiful partnership was born. Incidentally the history of the Templer 10 is most interesting. The writer Leslie Chatteris's famous character, Simon Templar, conducted most of his escapades and skylarks on the highways and byways that network between Haytor on Dartmoor and world-famous conning tower at Stover school, between the years of 1928 and 1963. Hence the Templer Way. To this day Templar descendants attend the event. Extraordinary!

Recently I caught up with Tim for a chat.

How was your first date? What I remember about that day was arriving to park cars at The Passage House Inn, the venue in those days. I was told that once everyone had arrived, I should report to John Skinner to help with finishing announcements. This sounded incredibly dry and boring to me, but I did what Dave Dunn told me and went forlornly down to the finish arena to do my job. It didn't take long for Skinns and me to realise that we had a similar, off-tangent sense of humour. The finishers started coming through initially to rather muted announcements, "Here comes the winner, well done, give them a round of applause" and ended up in a riot of laughter filled wry comments "here comes the fluorescent helmeted Musketeer, just in case he fell in the Teign and needed the RNLI". With the experience of years, we have added and finessed to our repertoire and have managed to coax many a finisher to do the "aeroplane celebration" as they cross the line, however the Holy Grail of a "choo choo train with coal stoker finish" is still to be achieved.

What is your role? I feel my job is to prevent any nasty or awkward moments of silence during the event by prompting Skinns with throwaway comments for him to chuck out over the mic which I do regularly throughout our slot. Sometimes I throw in something inappropriate to make him laugh not expecting it to be transmitted to the expectant crowds but time and time again he lets me down.

Are you subject to drugs tests? We are not but this doesn't mean that we don't try to remain "clean" as far as is possible. We usually steer clear of any alcohol until the last runners come through the finish although at a recent DD, we made the schoolboy error of falling into the pub after the start of the race (we were passing by, the door was open and we were convinced someone had called our names). The landlord took complete advantage of us and started insisting that we sample as much of his fare as we could, and we were too polite to refuse this charming member of the Princetown business community. I remember coming round at about 3.30pm when the mic was handed to me, and I saw Skinns weaving his way through the spectators on his way to make room for one more beer. It was at this point that I realised how important it is to have a "moments of silence prompter" with you at all times but I think I got away with it.

What is your fondest commentary moment? There are too many to have a favourite. There are recurring jokes, The Scandinavian Marshals at the end of the race (Finnish Marshals), the Templer Ten and its opportunity to regale the audience with tales of how TV's The Saint (Simon Templar) had grown up in the area and thought a nice walking track would be a good legacy to leave. We have a bit of fun with people's names and always get a smile and a wave from a finisher who has been declared to be Mel Gibson's sister or such like. I'm not sure that many people listen to a word we say but I do know that it entertains us and that fulfils some kind of community service by keeping us from annoying the general public on a Sunday.

Towards the end of the infamous DD quiz/play you may recall that Squaddie and myself had a dispute regarding our tonsorial elegance.

Whose hair did you prefer and why? I wasn't really looking at either of your hair choices, I seem to remember spending most of the night doubled over with laughter every time Tweedie hit the drum set, he was minding while dressed as a Tudor Jester. During the dispute you mention I was in the attic trying to remember what lighting buttons Squaddie had told me to press to finish the show and wishing the two of you would get on with it.

Do you have any secret regrets concerning your choice of stage costume for said evening? I have no regrets (life is too short) and I would have too much to regret if I thought about it. If I'm being honest, I should have paid more attention to personal grooming - Bob Marley would have been jealous.

Would you take your show on Tour? I think this is possible in the future, Skinns and I have been asked to perform a role on Strictly Come Dancing, but we have so far resisted as it doesn't fit with our ideology. No doubt one day the money will talk, and you will see us on Fox TV or headlining the Commonwealth Games.



Fun at the DD after party!

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