

***The Trotter** magazine*

SPARKLY CHRISTMAS ISSUE

No. 4 DECEMBER 2023



They've done it again! Super-champions Jacki and Roger

**A VERY
MERRY
CHRISTMAS
TO ALL OUR
READERS!**



A few words from the editor . . .

*First and foremost, while I've got your full attention and before you move on to the **juicier** parts of this special Christmas Trotter, a very important announcement:*

2024 AGM

Teignbridge Trotters Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 20th February 2024 at 7.00pm

The club's AGM will take place in the function room at the Recreational Trust, Newton Abbot.

Nomination sheets for committee and non-committee positions will be on display before club training nights, until two weeks before the meeting.

Resolutions should be sent to Secretary Liz Barnett along with the names of the proposer and seconder, two weeks before the AGM.

secretary@teignbridgetrotters.co.uk

Committee positions:

Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Club Championship Secretary, plus seven general members.

Non Committee positions:

Child Protection Officer, Cross Country Captain, Ladies' Captain, Men's Captain, Press & Publicity Officer, Welfare Officer, Social Secretary

Please put this on your calendar right now and make every effort to attend.

And there's more . . .

POINTS MEAN PRIZES!

LONDON MARATHON:

Any England Athletics (EA) affiliated club needed over 39 members with an individual EA licence (costs £17) to be guaranteed an entry in to the 2024 London Marathon. The Trotters had roughly 20 such members, so sadly didn't automatically qualify for a place. Instead, we were entered into a draw with other such clubs (456 of them) and stood a 50% chance of getting a place. Unfortunately, we didn't get pulled out of the hat and therefore didn't get a place. 2024 will be the first year ever the Trotters didn't get a place.

8 x £50 RACE VOUCHERS:

Only seven members with four or more points from this year contacted Liz before the 30th November deadline (as advertised in the last edition of the Trotter). As with the London Marathon place, there was no need for a draw at our December committee meeting. The following seven members will receive a £50 race voucher (they are transferable to other members and must be used in 2024).

Nigel Barnett
Liz Barnett
Tim Pratt
Tim Hassell
Roger Hayes
Caroline Hayes
Julian Scanes

2024 PRIZE STRUCTURE:

If you get the maximum six points next year you are eligible for all the prizes on offer. Those with four points are eligible for all the prizes for four points and fewer. Those with two points are eligible for the two-point prize only.

2 points ~ Free Club Championship race (Muskie's Madness 10K)

4 points ~ A chance to be entered into a draw for one of 8 x £50 race entry vouchers.

4 points ~ £10 discount per person, per night for the Club Camp, up to the value of £20

6 points ~ A chance to be entered into a draw for a London Marathon place.

Assuming all our races go ahead next year, the prize structure will remain the same for 2025. If we have over 39 EA licence members by July next year we will get a guaranteed London Marathon place!

P&P Officers

—some exciting news from **Chairman Roger**

For those of you that don't know, I have some great news - we have not one but two new Press & Publicity Officers - they are going to share the role.

Please see below a five point plan from them:

- Please agree with your fellow Trotters running the race, who's going to send us the race report. Obviously if you're the only Trotter running the race this doesn't apply. If you know of any PB's that would be really helpful.
- Please send us the link to the results once they have been published.
- We can't be expected to trawl through the results looking for Trotters that aren't listed. Therefore if you know of a Trotter that took part in the race but isn't listed as one in the results, please let us know.
- Please send us your best team or individual photos. They need to be good quality high res images.
- The Mid Devon Advertiser have a deadline of Sunday evening, so all reports will need to be sent to us by 7pm. If we fail to make the deadline, which can often happen if the results aren't available till the following day, then the report will roll over till next week.

A reminder that we can't include Parkruns or any multi-sport events, such as triathlons.

We look forward to receiving your reports, highlighting some great performances and getting the spotlight back on the Trotters.

Kind regards,

Derek Skinner and **Roger Easterbrook**

Roll of honour

Who won what in 2023?

Men's Club Champion: Roger Easterbrook

Ladies' Club Champion: Jacki Woon

Men's Fastest Marathon: Kevin Woodard (2:56:31)

Men's Fastest Half Marathon: Hamish Rae (1:16:22)

Men's Fastest 10K: Jamie Barnett (33:03)

Ladies' Fastest Marathon: Susanna Goffe (3:17:43)

Ladies' Fastest Half Marathon: Helen Anthony (1:34:21)

Ladies' Fastest 10K: Chloe Olford (41:29)

Most Improved Male: Kevin Besford (nominees: James Saunders, Bob Small, Tim Hassell, Stuart Moulson)

Most Improved Female: Liz Nuttall (nominees: Rachel Steel, Pat Atkins, Jo Randall)

Most Promising Male Newcomer: Steve Weeks (nominees: Glen Palmer, Jacob Day, Phil Reynolds, Simon Watts)

Most Promising Female Newcomer: Chloe Weeks (nominees: Madeleine O'Sullivan, Nicky Swann, Evie Tucker)

Committee Cup: John Skinner (nominees: Stuart Moulson, Jacki Woon, Dominique Harcourt, Bob Small)

John Scott Trophy: Kay Shillabeer

Ross Cup: John Tweedie

Dennis's Cup (Coach/leader of the year): Clare Youngman

Trotters Celebrate 2023 Achievements

This is the article Roger Easterbrook submitted to the Mid-Devon Advertiser

Teignbridge Trotters Running Club gathered together for their annual awards at Finlake on December 16th. The large gathering celebrated multiple running achievements by new, established, young and mature runners on a raucous night with food, drink, dancing and live music. Chairman Roger Hayes delivered another enthusiastic and wonderful awards night. The formidable Jacki Woon won the Ladies' Club Championship, breaking yet more records after a fine year of race performances and becoming a 6-time winner of the coveted shield with maximum points. Fast becoming a hall of famer! Woon is an inspirational runner delivering quality performances time and time again.

The hard-fought handicap competition takes place over multiple race categories and distances through the year with 8 races needed to count. The 2023 ladies' runners up included the consistent and talented Mandy Wheeler (2nd in 2022) and Helen Anthony. The Men's was decided by the thinnest of margins like a wafer thin mint in Monty Python. Roger Easterbrook narrowly beating James Saunders and the ever-young Alan Kember repeating his 2022 3rd place.

The prize winners included Fastest 10K: the fleet footed Chloe Olford (41:29) and Jamie Barnett (33:03). Fastest Half Marathon: smooth and stylish Hamish Rae (1:16:22) and Helen Anthony (1:34:21). Fastest Marathon: tough and gritty Susanna Goffe (3:17:43) and Kevin Woodard (2:56:31).

The award for Most Improved Runner was a hard one to call and it went to Kevin Besford, looking in great shape just ahead of nominees James Saunders, Bob Small, Tim Hassell, Stuart Moulson. Most Improved Female: won by Liz Nuttall after a number of super performances this year (nominees: Rachel Steel, Pat Atkins, Jo Randall).

The Most Promising Male Newcomer: won by the committed racer and new member Steve Weeks (nominees: Glen Palmer, Jacob Day, Phil Reynolds, Simon Watts). Not to be outdone by her dad, Chloe Weeks matched him, winning a tight contest for Most Promising Female Newcomer just ahead of nominees Madeleine O'Sullivan, Nicky Swann, Evie Tucker.

Committee Cup, for valuable and significant contributions during the year, won by the likeable and eloquent John Charles Skinner for his Couch to 5K achievements helping so many new runners develop and progress. The other nominees included: Stuart Moulson, Jacki Woon, Dominique Harcourt, Bob Small.

The 4-mile autumn handicap race for the prestigious John Scott Trophy was won by Kay Shillabeer. John Tweedie was awarded the Ross Cup, and Dennis's Cup in memory of former member Dennis Milstead for the Coach/leader of the year was won by an exuberant Clare Youngman.





**President John
Caunter with
Roger, Club
Champion**



**Jacki,
Club Champion**



**Clare, best
coach/
leader**



**John,
Committee
Cup winner**



**Championship
completers:
Kay, Eamon, Rod
and Corinne**



**Seven top athletes:
Helen, Susanna,
Debbie, Rachel,
Mandy, Jacki and
Sarah.**



**Kevin: most
improved male**



**Kay: John Scott
Trophy Winner**



**Steve: most
promising male
newcomer**



**Chloe:
most
promising
female
newcomer**

How it all unfolded

Club Championship Secretary, **Deb Hart** gives us the breakdown for 2023 and reveals the 2024 races!

My first year as Club Championship Secretary has given me such an insight into the enormous amount of planning that goes into organising races. The Race Directors have a huge amount to do, not least trying to get landowners permission for us runners to run off road in races like the Feighan Fury and Muskies Madness. There was only one Championship race cancelled this year due to not getting landowners permission.

The Club Championship this year saw eight ladies and 10 men complete the required sections. The ever-impressive Jacki Woon has had a fantastic year, finishing the competition with the maximum 400 points over 12 races. This will be the sixth time that Jacki has won the Female Club Championship, what more can this lady do?

For the men we have the phenomenal Roger Easterbrook, three times a winner, again with the maximum points of 400 over 12 races and just pipping James Saunders who's had a great running year, by 1 point.

Well done to both Champions, worthy winners and everyone who finished the competition this year.

I would just like to mention our Ladies Captain, Debbie Elphick who competed in 15 club championship races this year, an EPIC effort; what commitment, well done Debbie.

Final Standings Ladies	Total Points	Races Completed	Sections Completed	Position
WOON, JACKIE	400	12	5	1
WHEELER, MANDY	394	10	5	2
ANTHONY, HELEN	388	8	5	3
ATKINS, PAT	374	9	5	4
ELPHICK, DEBBIE	372	15	5	5
RANDALL, JOANNA	371	11	5	6
BRIGHT, CORINNE	354	9	5	7
SHILLABEER, KAY	322	8	5	8

Final Standings Men	Total Points	Races Completed	Sections Completed	Position
EASTERBROOK, ROGER	400	12	5	1
SAUNDERS, JAMES	399	10	5	2
KEMBER, ALAN	390	10	5	3
RUTLEY, NEIL	383	12	5	4
KNIGHT, DUNCAN	381	10	5	5
ELPHICK, BEN	377	11	5	6
ANDERSON, KEITH	357	10	5	7
PAYNE, ROD	338	8	5	8
SYNGE, TIM	322	8	5	9
CROWE, EAMON	303	9	5	10

Turning to the 2024 Championship, as with every year, we are trying to support local club races wherever possible and have been in conversation with several clubs to let them know we are supporting their races in the hope that they will support us, which has been the case this year.

For 2024 the format has changed, with **16** club nominated races rather than the previous 20.

Date	Race	Section	Notes
07/01/24	First Chance 10k	10k	
14/01/24	Oh My Obelisk (13M)	Long Misc	
25/02/24	Looe 10	Long Misc	
10/03/24	Bideford Half	Half-marathon	
24/03/24	Feighan Fury	Mixed	
29/03/24	Fast Friday	10k	
18/05/24	Muskies Madness 10k	10k	Club Trip
13/06/24	Dawlish Coastal Dash	Mixed	
19/07/24	Chudleigh Carnival	Short Misc	Provisional date
27/07/24	Forest Flyer	Mixed	
09/08/24	South Devon Relays	Short Misc	
15/09/24	Truro Half	Half-marathon	
13/10/24	The ColyTEN	Long Misc	Provisional date
20/10/24	Plym Trail Half	Half-marathon	
03/11/24	Cornish Marathon	Mixed	
Nov/24	John Scott Trophy	Short Misc	Date to be confirmed

Six of these races must be completed and runners **must complete at least one race from four of the five categories and an additional two from any category** in order to qualify for the Championship. As you can see there are two races with provisional dates and one to be confirmed. The Club's **Race Diary** (on the Teignbridge Trotters website) thanks to Eleanor, will be kept up to date as and when.

It would be great to see more of you enter the Championship in 2024.

Go on....be brave....

Happy running and Happy New Year to you all.

Who's who 2024

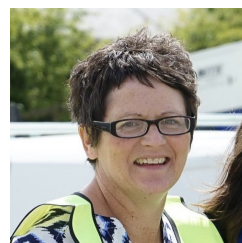
Essential information about our Trotter races next year. Put the dates on your calendar and make a note the top personnel: Race Director, Assistant Race Director and Chief Marshal.

DD Saturday 8th June

RD Liz Barnett

Ass RD Chair

CM Nige Barnett



HH Saturday 20th July TBC

RD Eamon Crowe

Ass RD Chris Andrews

CM Debbie Elphick



Totnes 10K Sunday 4th Aug

RD Rod Payne

Ass RD Lucy Payne

CM Derek Skinner



Ladies 10K Sunday 22nd Sept

RD Debbie Elphick

Ass RD Jacki Woon

CM Nige Barnett

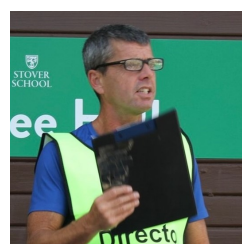


Sibelco Templer Ten Sunday 6th October

RD Chair

Ass RD Liz Barnett

CM Nige Barnett



Stuart's Journey

From my first London Marathon to my last (maybe!)

by Stuart Moulson (affectionately known as Steptoe Stu)

My running journey with the Trotters started in 2006, just before I ran my first marathon, London. Go back two years—in 2004, I was an overweight non-runner! Then a freak accident where I fell out of my loft changed everything. I broke my back and spent a month in hospital. I had a six-month-old daughter and a two-year-old boy and I realised how lucky I was not have been paralysed. It really frightened me and I was determined to finally get fit and run a marathon; something I was good talking about but not actually making it happen!

It was my final appointment with the spinal surgeon at twelve months where his first words when I walked in were, 'Do you still want to run that marathon you talked about?' Oh yes, I said!

I'd already lost some weight through cycling over the year but now I had the green light to run! I started training in the early autumn and one of the highlights I remember vividly was being able to run a full 8 minutes without stopping, it was the first time I actually felt like a runner.

March 2006 I thought I'd join a running club to give me something to come back to after the marathon. That's where my love affair with the Trotters began. I was made very welcome from day one; something I still hear from people joining today. I ran London that year in 5 hours and 6mins and it felt amazing. It sounds strange to say but breaking my back was a good thing in my life; it just changed the way I thought about life.

A year later I was bringing my two wonderful children up on my own, a difficult but incredibly rewarding experience. I was still able to run and get myself fully involved with the Trotters, including being on the committee, it was like an extended family with brilliant friendships. I participated in the race scene but my favourite by far was the Dartmoor Discovery. I was hooked after my first effort in 2007 and did the race for ten years in a row.

Then in 2017 I had a niggle in my hip after Braunton 10 early in the year. I carried on and tried to ignore it! In 2018 I needed to see a consultant and was told that my hip had osteoarthritis in it and I would need a hip replacement. It turned out that the impact on my hip when I broke my back had caused the hip to deteriorate and now it was completely knackered. So in September 2018 I had a full hip replacement. I was back running in February 2019 but was only going to do short runs because of the advice from the surgeon, my marathon days were over! I wasn't running much through the Covid years of 2020-2021 but every time I did run my leg wasn't feeling right and I just put it down to lack of fitness or maybe my new hip wasn't working properly. It all came to a halt at our own John Scott race in December 2021 where I came last again! My right leg just wasn't right, running was just no fun anymore. I couldn't lift my foot properly and I was catching it on the ground and it was making me fall over. I was worried that if I fell on the replacement hip I could damage or dislocate it; it wasn't worth the risk.

2022 was a write-off for running and there were times that I thought I'd never run again. I obviously kept up my involvement with the Trotters with the committee and my marshalling at all our races.



Then February 1st this year I finally had a neurological consultation appointment where I was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease. The news was devastating for me and if I'm honest I still haven't come to terms with it yet! Parkinson's is a progressive neurological condition. This means that it causes problems in the brain and gets worse over time. But everyone's Parkinson's progresses differently. The consultant said exercise is essential to help slow the progression. In my mind it was basically another green light to run again! I will be on medication for the rest of my life, which helps mimic the dopamine my brain isn't producing. Without the medication I simply can't run.



now that brings my story up to date. Some of you already know that I'm going to run the London Marathon 2024 for the charity Cure Parkinson's, a charity that funds research that slows, stops or reverses Parkinson's.

It's going to be a massive challenge for me but I'm up to 11 miles so far in my training and I'm so determined to do this. The right side of my body doesn't function properly and gets tired but I'm running and bloody enjoying being back in the company of all you lovely Trotters.

Some of you know my story, but it hasn't been easy to write and 'put it out there'. We all have setbacks in life 'shit happens' and this really is shit but I have an amazing family and wonderful Trotter friends and really appreciate the support I've already been given.

Parkinson's is progressive so eventually it will stop me running, I obviously don't know how long that will be, so if this is my last marathon I'm going to give it everything!

As I say I'm running and raising money for Cure Parkinson's. If you able to support me by donating on my Just Giving site that would be absolutely amazing.

<https://www.justgiving.com/page/stuart-moulson-london-marathon>

Merry Christmas and Happy Running to you all,

Stuart

London Look-out!

Multi-marathon runner Sue Tremlett takes us through her running history and tells of a very special project that will take her to next year's London Marathon

Like many Trotters probably, I've been entering the London Marathon ballot for a number of years. For me it is at least 9 times without success, but it could be more; I've lost track! Then earlier this year I spotted a post on the Trotter Facebook page about a charity place—with the Towersey Foundation—being offered to a member of our club. I hastily replied and to cut a long story short, as only two of us had responded, the charity's chairman Tony suggested the successful person should be decided by a toss of a coin. So, the other interested party (John Pullen) and I arrived at Tony's house - without having been told the identity of the other in advance - the said coin was tossed, and I got to call. I decided on Heads and as soon as I'd said it thought I should've said Tails - but as luck would have it the coin landed heads up. In fact it was quite comical as the secretary of the charity tossed the coin and it landed in a fluffy dog bed where neither she nor I could initially see the result without our glasses! Luckily for me John and Tony were able to verify that it was in fact Heads. John was very magnanimous and we agreed that should anything happen (injury etc - heaven forbid) he would take over both the place and the sponsorship.



The Towersey Foundation is a fantastic local charity that provides musical therapy for those in palliative care, in hospices, homes and wherever required. Apparently, the charity is offered a place in the marathon every four years - I believe last time a Trotter ran for the charity it was Mark Walker in 2019. My sponsorship is going quite well, the charity haven't really given me a target, but I'd like to raise as much for them as I possibly can, so if anyone hasn't yet given, please do - you can find me on JustGiving.

I didn't start running until I was almost 47, having started with the Women's Running Network when I lived in Exeter. After a couple of years, I started doing 10k events, then progressed to 10 miles, then half marathons. I ran my first marathon, the infamous City2Sea, with some like-minded running friends from Exeter - and I loved it. They didn't! As a result, I needed to find some local runners to train with for my next marathon (Brighton) and so I joined the Teignbridge Trotters. Having run one marathon in 2016, I ran two in 2017, then 10 in 2018 (things escalated quickly after I joined the club!) and so I decided to try to do 12-in-12 (twelve marathons in twelve months) in 2019, which I did, rounding my total up to 25 just before the first pandemic lockdown.

What spurs me on? Friends, fundraising, self-esteem, confidence, health & fitness - you name it. I am really excited about London. People tell me it's amazing and not like anything else - I hope they are right! I'm not great with crowds so that could be interesting"

I have currently run 47 official marathons, although I have done less over the past 18 months for a number of reasons (including getting a dog and training to be a Pilates teacher!), and I am now thinking that I may aim for London being my 50th marathon. And before anyone asks, NO - I'm NOT going for 100! - that has never been my game plan.

I've been asked about my training plans ... umm, I don't really follow training plans, never have! - although that's probably something I should not admit. I have usually found others from the club to do longer runs with and try to increase distance far enough in advance but in all honesty, I tend to do my own thing: plenty of running and some cross-training. I think the times I have actually been 'ready' for a marathon I could count on one hand. I'm not a speedy runner and never will be so I'm not really worried about times, I think my PB days are behind me, but I do always try to do my best and be quicker if I can. My preference for running marathons is off-road or trail rather than road and most of the ones I have done have been off-road. Ironically, I think my favourite marathon, the one I felt strongest and I think my personal best, was Barcelona with a small group of Trotters - great support and a lovely city (time 04:27:41).



Sue with Shaz, left, and Emma

Double Century!

Following a bit of gentle badgering, Chairman **Roger Hayes** has agreed to describe his journey to 200 marathons, and what a journey it's been!

When Keith asked me if I'd write a piece for the Trotter on my 200th marathon, little did I realise my research would take me back to races and events I'd long since forgotten. The journey started on the 12th September 1993. A group of Trotters hired a mini-bus and drove up to the New Forest to take part in the marathon. It chucked it down for pretty much all of the race. I ran with Smokes, who was also doing his first ever marathon. He caused quite a stir when he lit up a fag as he walked through the finishing funnel. Little did either of us know what was to unfold over the coming years - not just the marathons we ran together but the great friendship we formed.

I managed to get into London the following year and knocked 5 minutes off my New Forest time (3:22:32). However, it's safe to say that I

hadn't really caught the marathon bug as my next one wasn't till 1997. 1998 saw me run London and New York. I'd lowered my PB to 3:07:46 at London and had high hopes of reducing it further at New York. However, at mile 18 my groin strain became a double hernia! I pretty much collapsed when I crossed the finish line. They wanted to take me to hospital, but my travel insurance didn't cover 'dangerous sports' so I had to sign a disclaimer and was left to my own devices! Four more 'London's followed; I'd got pretty close to that elusive sub 3. I decided I needed more of a low key race and took myself off to Abingdon in 2003. It paid off as I ran a new PB in 2:55:13. I have to confess to shedding the odd tear as I crossed the line and the realisation of what I'd done started to sink in.

2004 saw me take part in my first European marathon—Paris. This was closely followed by my first DD. Smokes had been banging on about this race for many a year. I entered just to shut him up! The upshot was I hated it, got dreadful cramp and vowed never to do it again. Surprise, surprise, I got drunk at the after race disco and told anyone and everyone that would listen that I'll be back next year! The Amsterdam Marathon (also in 2004) was the Trotters' first official foreign marathon trip. I loved the whole experience, we all had such a laugh. I've since been on all 16 Trotter foreign marathon trips (more on some of those later).



Roger completes marathon number 200



Two Bridges Ultra 2005, L to R: Smokes, Ewan, Dave Dunn, Roger, Chris Wride, Robert Tinnyunt

A group of us headed up to Scotland in 2005 to take part in the DD's sister race, the Two Bridges 35-mile ultra. As it happened it turned out to be the last time that race took place. I'm assured it had nothing to do with the Trotters rendition of 'you can leave your hat on' at the after race disco! 2007 and my 24th marathon saw a new PB at London in a time of 2:51:44. It was my fourth and final time I broke 3hrs. Getting a sub 3 has become a bit of a benchmark in the running world, I did it when I was 40. I have nothing but admiration for Trotters doing it in their 50's - that is serious running! 2007 saw the biggest Trotters foreign marathon to date. There were 42 of us that made it over to Venice. It rained most of the time, which meant we spent quite a few hours in our 'little local'. We cleared them out of booze so often, I swear one of them spent most of the night fetching endless crates of beer with his sack trucks. I think I got to bed the night before race day at about three in the morning. We had to be up again before 6am. I spent most of the race stuffing myself silly at the feed stations. How I managed to keep up with Steph Ross, who managed to set a new club record, I will never know.



Unobtrusive: Roger's famous Trotters banner at London Marathon 2012

It wasn't until 2010 that I started to really get the bug for running marathons. Up until then, the most I'd run in single year was just five. 2010 saw me complete 14, including my first LDWA (Long Distance Walking Association) marathon - The Birmingham Canal Canter. 2011 saw me clock up another 17, during which time I ran my 50th. I started to get into multi-day events. Along with Smokes and Marsha Garrard, we did the Druids Challenge - three ultras in three days. I remember not getting a lot of sleep, we slept in a sports hall with 200 other runners. You can imagine the noise, not to mention the smells! 2012, Smokes and myself decided we needed to get the job done and get to



100 up! With Smokes at the DD 2013

that magical 100 mark. I banged out 33 that year, Smokes was only a couple behind me. I had a go at the Quadzilla - four marathons in four days. Marathon Queen, Sally Ingledew, had recommended it. It involved running round Caldecotte Lake in Milton Keynes seven times - per day! I'd got a good block of heavy mileage weeks in beforehand, but as you know, it can all come unstuck very easily. I managed to get faster each day, surprising myself at how good I felt on day four. (3:38, 3:30, 3:26 and 3:19). We had to travel some miles that year, as there weren't the amount of local marathons around like there are now. Getting hopelessly stuck in traffic on a Friday night on the M6, heading to Manchester to do a double, springs to mind!

We decided that our 100th would be at the DD, and so on the 1st June 2013 we realised a dream. My day was not the best. As Race Director, I was waiting on the finishers t-shirts to arrive. They were being delivered to the Plume of Feathers Inn whilst the run was taking place! Whether the stress of it was too much I

don't know, but I got the worst cramp I've ever had at mile 22. It persisted until I limped across the finish line. I'd hoped to be able to enjoy my big moment but quite frankly I was in bloody agony! As often happens with runners who reach the 100 milestone, I lost my mojo for marathons. I only did 12 over the next three years. Lisbon was one of those, and remains to date my favourite Trotters' foreign marathon trip.

Smokes pretty much retired from doing marathons - he took the sensible option! I needed a new running buddy. It was about that time that Allen Taylor joined the club and we soon struck up a friendship and started running marathons together. We had some early starts as we headed to Dorset for many a White Star Running event. 2018 saw me complete another 19. If I'm honest, it was around then that I started to think about getting to 200. I notched up my 150th in 2019 when I completed another 17.



Racing with Allen

2019 was a special year, as Stan, my son, completed his first marathon. We ran together and I was so proud of him when we crossed the line together at Taunton, he ran superbly, clocking 3:20:38.

Covid then got in the way a bit, as did numerous injuries - torn calf muscles, fractured rib (fishing related!), fractured foot. There were times when I wondered if I would ever get across the line. However, all those setbacks were nothing compared to Allen, who suffered a nasty, almost running-career-ending injury. It sadly meant I needed a new running buddy - enter Del Boy! 2021 saw me complete my 18th London Marathon, which is still my favourite road marathon. New local running companies came onto the scene, Winding Paths and Running Events Devon were two such companies. It meant ticking off numbers was so much easier, less travelling, less expense etc. That said, I still enjoyed going away in our motorhome with Oodey and the dogs and doing the odd marathon. In 2022 I managed a further 17 marathons, which included the Conquest of Avalon 30 miler. That was my 17th ultra and remains the last ultra I've run.

If you're still reading, fair play to you, you'll be glad to read I've finally arrived at 2023 and my 200th marathon! I had hoped to be able to do it at the DD in June, but one of those torn calf muscles put paid to that. I could have waited till next June, but I just wanted to get it done. I chose the Cornish Marathon.

A proper old school marathon that I've done a few times in the past. I knew there would be lots of my running mates there, as it's a popular race in the marathon world. Oodey came down with me. I was determined to enjoy this one, unlike my 100th. The RD had given me race number 200, and I was good to go. I enjoy hilly courses, the first 10 miles of the Cornish fits that bill nicely. I managed to avoid the rain up until the last mile, when the heavens opened. I got cold and those that know me, know I don't do cold, give me 30 degrees any day. I ended up having to go flat out to break 3:40, which I did with seconds to spare. It's funny isn't it, even when you tell yourself you're not worried about what time you do, how you end up putting pressure on yourself to get under a certain time. I was so focused on my watch that I completely missed my welcoming party at the finish. Nige & Liz had come down specially, as had my daughter and her boyfriend. The Barnetts had even made a banner (no doubt Nige will be wanting something similar when I watch him at London next year!) Oodey had made a cake and I knocked back three pints of Guinness rather too quickly! Still, it was job done. Before you ask - I have no aspirations of going for 300. I think it's time I listened to my body and restricted myself to one or two a year. I know I've done a couple since and have a few more lined up till May next year, but after that that's it - honest.

I've met some great characters on my travels, made some great friends, discovered new places, got hopelessly lost (numerous times!), run in all sorts of weather, good times, bad times, all of which have given me so many memories. I've enjoyed sharing a few with you. I hope it inspires one or two of you to take the plunge and have a go at running a marathon - it's a magical distance.

On On

Chair



Stan Hayes supporting his old man at Taunton 2019

TEIGNBRIDGE TROTTERS – LECTURE SERIES

Bob Small explains the thinking behind a proposal to help all our performances

Over the last few months Ewan Walton and I have been pondering on our great running club, and how very fortunate we are to have a huge range of differing abilities and interests; whether male or female, young or older, doing your first couch to 5K or a club champion, we must all, surely, be seeking ways to improve our performance or just to enjoy running more. This may be just making that first 5k a more comfortable experience or setting a PB over the marathon distance. So, whilst putting together a proposal to Chair, they saw Helen Anthony's Facebook post regarding Andy Middlebrooke's talk on the Application of Science to Running; the response to this talk was very encouraging and tended to confirm their view that people of all standards *do* want to see how they can improve.

Whilst the Monday and Wednesday training sessions are invaluable, there are many other factors to consider in the search for improved performance or enjoyment. The Club is thus considering staging a series of lectures on a week-day evening when well qualified speakers can help us achieve our goals.

Below are a range of subjects which we have drawn up which you might find interesting. If you're interested in attending please will you chose up to 6 of the subject matters which interest you most and let me know your choices in order of importance to you. My email address is bobposhpig@gmail.com You may also wish to add one item, not included in the list, which is of particular interest to yourself.

- Avoidance and treatment of injuries
- Clothing and shoes
- Diet and hydration
- General health and supplements
- General conditioning
- Keeping a diary
- Menstruation and the menopause
- Mental approach to training and racing
- Preparation for race day
- The value (or not) of Long Slow Distance (LSD)
- The value (or not) of High Intensity Training (HIT)
- The older runner
- Training programmes
- Weight training

We will collate all the answers and then, hopefully, will go forward with the 5 or 6 most popular choices as voted for by yourselves. There will be a cost to these lectures but we're unable to say what this will be until we know what the subject matters are and who will deliver the lectures.

We look forward to hearing from you and please be sure to send your answers into Bob by **Sunday 31st December** - bobposhpig@gmail.com

Moving straight on from performance-enhancing talks, let's offer kudos to some of our top runners:



L to R: Alan Kember MV65 Half Marathon 2024, Bob Small MV70 Half Marathon 2019 & MV75 Half Marathon 2024 & 10K 2024 and James Saunders MV60 Half Marathon 2023. Unfortunately Peter Kirby, the other club member to gain an England vest, was unavailable for the photo. Peter was in the MV70 age group when he won his England marathon representative vest.

And a bit of background from [Alan](#), [Bob](#) and [James](#):

Alan writes about his Great South Run:

When someone says “You could qualify to run for England in the Masters” the first reaction is, of course, to think they are crazy; or maybe just being nice and a bit over optimistic... either way clearly this is well beyond my reach. But when two wise folk say this (that is, Bob and James) ... it made me think. So, starting 2023 as a newly turned VM65 and realising that I had NO injuries I thought I'd give it a go. I see the half marathon as probably my best distance these days so I booked into the Great South Run in Portsmouth. It's a 10-mile event but qualifies to run for England by age group for the Masters' half marathon, which is during next May's Manchester half marathon.

I stayed at the same Hotel that Bob and his dear wife Tracy had organised, and had a lovely meal with them the night before. Next day getting to the starting line was disorganised chaos! With such a big event of 24,000 runners, we were strongly encouraged to go to the Park and Ride on the edge of Portsmouth ... it seemed like all 24,000 of us obliged! Bob and I queued for 40 mins to get a bus which only took us to the city centre, more than a mile from the starting line. Bob and I ran all the way to the start and just got there on time. Talk about getting your pulse up! But the course was flat, it was dry and there was no wind (it can be notoriously blustery) ... so I was up for it! And Bob and I did ok. We both qualified for the Masters, and broke the VM club records for 10 miles. Never been so chuffed in all my life!

So, I suppose the thing I learned from this was ... there are lots of ups and downs in running...but every now and then it can come together ok. Just hoping to stay fit now for next May. Thanks to Bob and James, and to you all for your support and encouragement.

Bob's Long and Winding Road...

Difficulties assail us all at one time or another whether in life in general or just in terms of our own running. We have to deal with those problems one way or another and then, especially, give thanks to those who are able to help us through those challenging times. Although this piece is about some minor athletic achievements, it is wholly dedicated to the excellence of the surgeons and all their support staff at The Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital without whom none of the following would have been possible. It is also hoped that this piece might serve, in some small way, as an inspiration or help for those who might be suffering from ailments, illness or injury and to show that recovery is possible with the correct treatment and with belief and a positive attitude.

Bob lost all of 2022; bowel cancer, chemotherapy and then a broken right hip, sustained in a fall, sidelined him completely until the first week in December. In November he had turned 75 and was already making plans for his return to fitness. There were three initial aims: - first was to get up and running again, no matter how slowly, in order that in the first 6 weeks he could lay a very basic level of fitness before travelling to Australia for 6 weeks to see his daughter Beth. There, in the warm weather, he could slowly build the training so that, when returning to the UK, he would have built an increased level of fitness from which he could spring forward to competitive fitness for the summer.

The plan worked well. Being absolutely committed to following the surgeon's and physiotherapist's instructions, he started with just 30 second efforts on a treadmill very slowly; that was built up very steadily so that on New Year's Eve he was able to complete a Park Run in Brighton in 30.37. In Singapore and Australia 4 Park Runs at differing venues saw gradual improvements. On returning home in late February, with still relatively low levels of fitness but with belief in his ability, 4 further targets were set- to attack the MV75 Club records in 10K, 10 miles and the Half Marathon and then to qualify to compete for England, in his age group, in the half marathon.

Training continued apace and his first record was achieved at the Exeter 10K in July followed by a record run in The Severn Bridge Half Marathon in late September. Bob thought that Graham Baker's 10 mile record of 85 mins 25 seconds was going to be the hardest of the existing MV75 Club records to crack. Bob and Alan Kember both chose the Great South Run in Portsmouth as, although only a 10-mile race, it acted as an England qualifying race for the half marathon. The Great South Run is a huge event with anywhere between 20 and 25,000 runners. The plan was to follow the 85-minute pacer to the 9-mile point and then endeavour to step up the pace for the final mile. The first few miles passed by easily enough; arriving at the 5 mile point the crowds were huge, loud and very supportive. Passing that point right on schedule, the huge crowds lifted Bob and, for about 30 seconds, with goose bumps rising and tingling all over his upper body, the great temptation to race on ahead of the pacer was pushed away, Bob sticking right behind him. The only slightly difficult patch was between 7 and 8 miles where concentration was required to maintain the pace but then, when the 8-mile marker was reached, realisation dawned that he was now moving very well and now shortly before the 9-mile marker there were hundreds, if not thousands, of runners all in a head long rush to the finish. With increasing determination and pace, knowing that his time goal was to be achieved, Bob poured on the pace for the last half mile and crossed the finish line in 83 mins 31 seconds - well inside the previous record and the last mile having taken just a little over 7 minutes. Bob and Alan met immediately after the race, hugging each other, and celebrating their individual successes with Bob's wife, Tracy. A couple of weeks later Alan & Bob both received emails confirming their England selection; the race will be the Manchester Half Marathon in May.

Whilst pleased with having achieved his aims, Bob is prouder that he has been able to achieve those aims despite all the setbacks in 2022. He cites again the excellence of the NHS, his surgeons and support staff as the single and most important fact in enabling him to return to competitive running. It is also certainly true that confidence, positivity, belief, and a certain amount of hard work have been involved as well but none of these would have been of any use if the NHS had not delivered their levels of excellence.

James writes of his experience:

The proud opportunity of running for England in the MV60-64 age category was down to an out of the blue phone call from Bob Small. He highlighted to me that my time that I achieved The in London 2022, currently placed me 12th in the Run Britain rankings for my age category in the marathon distance, and that I should seriously think about trying to qualify for the EA Masters final to be held in Chester 2023.

All systems were go as I plotted my qualification route. The London Marathon on April 23rd 2023 was now my focus. I contacted Roy Brown, a great marathoner in his own right, who produced a 12-week training plan including great advice and encouragement as I ticked off the weeks. I missed just the one session during the block and felt ready to perform well in the Big Smoke.

The big weekend had arrived! I travelled on the eve of the race, collected my bib number at the expo and made my way to my Airbnb close to Blackheath. Weather conditions on race day were perfect, although a light drizzle made for slippery conditions underfoot. The race went to plan up to 26 miles, bang on the sub-3-hour target that I was striving for. I had been suffering with quad pain from mile 22 but this wasn't going to stop me, but the hamstring cramp with the finish line just 400 metres ahead most certainly did! Literally brought me to a standstill. I was distraught but thankfully another runner encouraged me to keep going. My time of 03:00:49, a new PB, wasn't the time I had worked so hard for, but it was confirmed that I had managed 3rd place in the qualification race. This exciting news took a few days to sink in, and although my target time wasn't met, the training was centred around trying to represent my country and the wearing of the coveted vest, which I duly did.

Contact us

President: John Caunter president@teignbridgetrotters.co.uk

Chairman: Roger Hayes chairman@teignbridgetrotters.co.uk

Secretary: Liz Barnett secretary@teignbridgetrotters.co.uk

Treasurer: John Caunter treasurer@teignbridgetrotters.co.uk

Membership Secretary: Graydon Widdicombe membership@teignbridgetrotters.co.uk

Club Championship: Deb Hart clubchampionship@teignbridgetrotters.co.uk

Press & PR: press@teignbridgetrotters.co.uk

Men's Captain: Ben Elphick menscaptain@teignbridgetrotters.co.uk

Ladies' Captain: Debbie Elphick ladiescaptain@teignbridgetrotters.co.uk

Cross Country Captain: Wendy Goldthorp crosscountrycaptain@teignbridgetrotters.co.uk

Magazine Editor: Keith Anderson mag@teignbridgetrotters.co.uk