



Free the Vondelpark One!

ASK ALI?



Fashion Footwear Faux-pas

International Edition

May 2010

metro

mouthpiece

NEW
Energy
drinks
tested



Plus reports from Switzerland, New Zealand, Canada, Edinburgh, Fort William and Ballater!



EXCLUSIVE PICS

REVEALED!
Britain's
Got Talent
visits
Ballater

Leaves disappointed



CELEBRITY CORNER

Gordon Ramsays' sporting tips



Union of Shrine, Deity and Allied Workers

Demand action on Shrine Stamping outrage

Welcome to the Spring 2010 edition of the **metro** newsletter

OK – so we took a while to get this one out. I could try to tell you that we have all been in hibernation over what felt like the longest winter ever.

However, the reality is that most of us have been lining up in sub-zero temperatures at races local and far, freezing our bits-off at reps on a Thursday and/or getting ready for that all important spring marathon. Anyway, the point is – we have all been pretty busy and this Spring edition of the Metro newsletter shows some of the great things we have all been up to.

We have a truly international feel to this edition, with articles from our overseas members in Canada and New Zealand, as well as from those making a holiday out of their ventures

Congratulations Niku and Katie



Katie suffering from the Lynx effect says yes

abroad. Local representation is found in race reports on the Lochaber Marathon, and news from the Metro Run the Highlands Weekend – Polly

Tandy, the organiser of this successful training event is our 'Meet the Gurlz'. Also in this edition, the 2nd training article from Jackie on Lactate Threshold Training (to help to

understand what he is talking about), and a cracking article from Jamie Tait on his running experiences as a young man.

On a personal note, I'm the 'Meet the Boyz' volunteer this time round. So I have a correction to the Question: "Most Uplifting Running Experience?". Answer: Running over the line at the Windermere Marathon a couple of weeks ago, getting down one knee – and Katie saying "Yes!" – delighted!

Finally, another big thanks to Keith Fraser for putting this all together. Enjoy reading and keep your articles flowing in for next edition of the Metro Newsletter. Stay healthy and keep on running . . . Niku.



Metro Cr@p Caption Competition

For your chance to win **BIG** (i.e. a £10 Run-4-it voucher). all you have to do is simply come up with a "witty" caption to go with the photograph below.

£10 must be won!!!

Congratulations to Ali and Paul



Ali couldn't decide whether to go with the Hiaowatha or Worzel Gummidge look

Worried that he'd be the butt of all the jokes Kev wins the previous caption competition with - Richard to Kev, "Hey min, you still here, did I not go to your leaving do a couple of months back?" Congratulations Kev



This month's picture shows whether Gordon is Ythanically Challenged or Colin has just lost the soap?.

Have as many attempts as you want and make them as abusive and

insulting as you like.

Email entries entitled "Metro Cr@p Caption Competition" to niku_millott@hotmail.com or kefraser@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Find your ideal partner at **MetroMatch.com**

Know Your Enemy

Kevin Tulloch

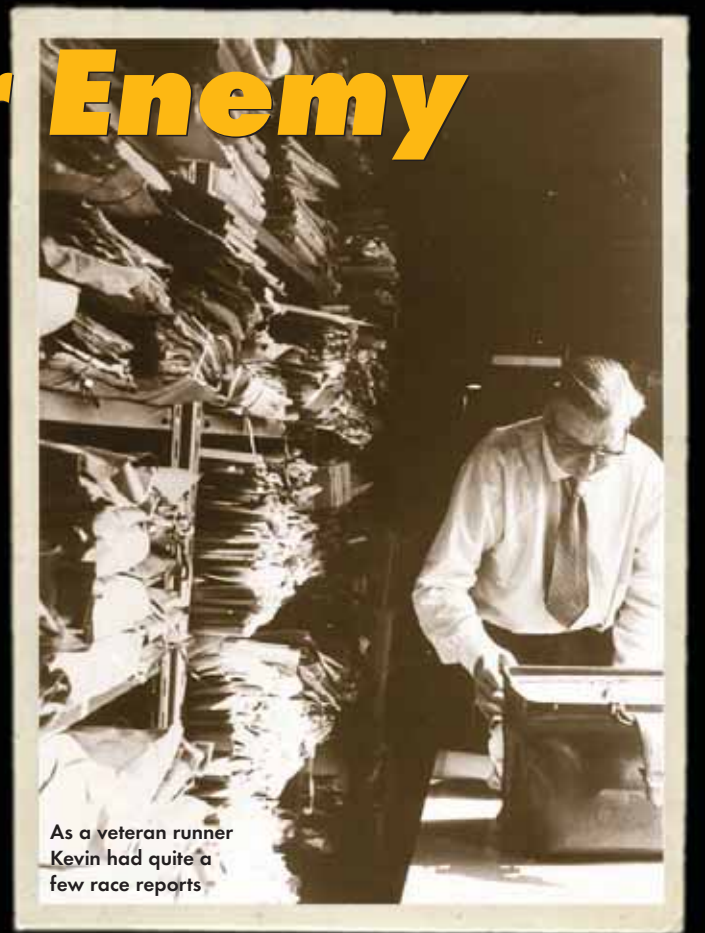
Some results I found while packing up.

Exert results from the "Ferranti 10 mile road race" that used to go from Balgownie playing fields, down the Parkway, out through Denmore industrial estate to Potterton and back via Parkhill road and the Braehead way, tough hilly course and you would probably get killed by a 17 yr old in a Citroen Saxo turbo if you tried it now.

These results are from 1988, before Metro was formed but I have picked out the names that then went on to join Metro.

As you can see that some of us now old duffers at the club were not always old and have run some decent times in the past !

Jackies dad went on to set a British age group record for the half marathon at Stonehaven, nice easy course for a record attempt ! and I think it was around then that Fraser Clyne was part of the British marathon team for the world cup in Hiroshima.



As a veteran runner Kevin had quite a few race reports

1	Fraser Clyne, (yes 10 miles at sub 5 minute mls!)	49:34,	33	Peter Jennings,	60:20
4	Colin Youngson, Vet,	53:06	41	Derek Dunn,	61:12
5	Rob Taylor,	53:17	52	Steve Simpson,	62:15
12	Bill Adams, Vet,	56:01	58	Jackie Stewart,	63:13
17	Steve Willox,	56:56	135	Scott Mitchell,	74:18
25	Steve Forbes,	58:48	140	John Stewart, Vet (Jackies Dad)	75:14
28	Ian Tack,	59:19	142	Alan Brown,	76:09
30	Charlie Benzies,	59:32	147	Charlie McConnachie, Vet,	77:44
	(30 runners under 6 minute mls!)		171	Gordon McCulloch, Vet,	84:31
32	That git with the duck hat, (Kevin Tulloch)	60:11	173	Izzie McDonald,	85:08

Summer arrived early at the new Glenlivet 10k



Donning their shades to take part in the Glenlivet 10k were left to right Elly McKay, Colin Campbell, Gordon McCulloch, June Buchan and Izzie McDonald



Run-4-it have 4 stores throughout Scotland -Aberdeen, Edinburgh and 2 in Glasgow and are Scotland's only independent chain of running shops. They carry a huge stock of running shoes, clothing and accessories and have a dedicated team of knowledgeable staff on hand for any help or advice you may require.

Metro members will get a **10% discount** at any of their stores, just discretely show your membership card when making a purchase.

Find Run-4-It at:

Aberdeen, 21 Holburn Street
Tel: 01224 594400

Edinburgh, 108 - 110 Lothian Road
Tel: 0131 2283444

Glasgow City, 57 Bothwell Street
Tel: 0141 2214300

Glasgow - Tiso Outdoor Experience
50 Couper Street, Townhead
Tel: 0141 5595450

RUNNING THE HIGHLANDS WEEKEND

8-9th May 2010
Polly Tandy

A team of 15 set off for Ballater to take part in a Running the Highlands weekend. The idea was to listen to some lectures from some sporting experts and try and learn a thing or two as well as go running in some of the beautiful countryside out on Deeside.



THE WEEKEND STARTED WELL

When the trusty minibus actually made it to Ballater, much to everyone's relief. After finding a parking space we all decamped to the Victoria Halls to be met by Neil and our first lecturer, Alan Sealy. Alan taught us about the importance of core

stability and took us through some of the likely mechanisms of injury. It is always much better to work with a physio who understands the compulsion to run and Alan certainly showed his natural ability in the hills when he guided the middle group on our first run.

We headed out to Balmoral to meet our other guides, Davie Armour and Ruth MacKenzie, who each headed up a group, split on expected pace. We had the weather on our side, but the

temperatures were below what we would have expected for the time of year. Nevertheless we set off to climb up on to the moorlands behind the Lochnagar Distillery.

Taking a photo was just an excuse for a rest from the relentless pace set by Colin, Louise, Phil, Laura and our guide Davie. The run totalled some 19km by the time we made it back to Balmoral Castle, ready to put some of Alan's stretching advice to the test.



Break dancers break down

The views from the top of the hill was amazing - a snowy Lochnagar and almost no wind to hamper our progress.



THE WEEKEND IN PICTURES

Janet and Jane discuss whether a rowie counts as cereal.

Shortly after we returned to Ballater for a sandwich lunch and then we were off to our accommodation for the night, the 5* bunk house, Habitat. A general scrum ensued for the one shower we had between 7 girls but we all made it through in the end. We had a short break (spent eating cake in a local cafe) before returning to the hall for a talk on Coaches and their Methods by Mel Edwards. Mel has over 125 years of experience in distance running and was one of Scotland's foremost marathon runners so was able to let us into some of the secret methods used by the most extreme of the coaches in year's past. We all hoped Jackie was snoozing as details emerged of coaches limiting their athlete's sleep, alcohol & food intake. Fortunately we decided not to do anything rash and headed off down to the pub to discuss our own alcohol intake. Ruth Wolfe showed off her drinking ability matches her marathon running ability by necking two drinks at once.



The following morning, after a hearty breakfast, we headed over to the Victoria Halls with a skip in our step (some more of a skip than others). We had a lecture on Sports Nutrition from Catriona MacIntosh, which turned into a very interactive session. We were encouraged to note down a typical daily food intake and work out if we were able to sustain our sporting prowess

Louise goes better with . . .

on chips, cheese and Irn-Bru. Catriona was very patient with us and also very pragmatic about what we can realistically do about our diets when we have busy lives. The only point she nearly choked was at Louise's confession about drinking litres of coke in a day. The rest of us secretly noted it down as the key to Louise's recent fantastic VLM time and vowed to try and sink a couple of litres a day.

WE WERE SOON HEADED TO THE ALEXANDRA HOTEL TO REFUELED OUR TEMPLE-LIKE BODIES WITH FISH & CHIPS AND STICKY TOFFEE PUDDING.



After Catriona, Emma Stewart came along to teach us Gerald Hartmann's Core Stability essentials, followed by some key stretches. Amongst much groaning and some unhealthy joint crunching we all managed to key into the right poses, well almost all of us



Jamie (Tait) Does Ballater



Kirsty amazed us all by managing to get her heel to her ear and we all wondered if she'd ever worked at the circus. Jamie's stomach growling drowned out most of Emma's advice, but we all managed to catch the comment about Colin Jackson's flexibility.

NO SHAME

Following on from Emma we had a sandwich lunch and then sat down for a short chat on speedwork and what makes a good sprinter, from Willy Russell. We then headed over to the park to try out some drills in front of Ballater's local football team as an audience. We agreed not to laugh at their pink bibs if they didn't point and laugh at our weird warm up (boo, moo, rat-a-tat-a anyone?).

LEVITATION SKILLS

We completed the drills by practicing our sprinting in teams and then breaking down the sprinting action and building it up again. Levitation was a key skill, mastered by a select few only.

PASSED OUT

Straight after the sprinting we headed off to the pass of Ballater for a seriously hilly 7 mile run. 7 miles was a total lie and in fact we ran more like 9.5 miles by the time we had finished but it was a beautiful circuit. Once again the weather was kind to us and we had some lovely views.

CASUALTY

The run back down the hill was very rocky and we took a few casualties. Sadly some of the group just stood around laughing heartily at the misfortune of others.



We also picked up a local lad on the hill and couldn't manage to shake him off. He kept singing to us so we kept him for entertainment.

All in all a great weekend was had by all - top weather, top company, top advice and top running routes. As Colin put it, Magical, Entertaining, Tough, Relaxing and Ooooooh so good!



METRO RUNNERS IN STALKING INCIDENT AND NOT A DEER IN SIGHT



meet the gurlz

NAME: Polly Tandy

OCCUPATION: Engineer

AGE: 33

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN RUNNING AND WHAT TRIGGERED YOUR INTEREST?

Running since 2000 – started training for the Edinburgh Race for Life and carried on.

WHY DID YOU JOIN METRO AND HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A MEMBER OF THE CLUB?

Joined Metro as I wanted training specific to road racing and I recognised a few of the girls from the podiums at races so I thought 'I want a bit of that'!

WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING A MEMBER OF METRO?

Training with other people who understand the obsession with running. Most people I work with think of my favourite pastime as just weird.

ANY SECRETS/SCANDALS/ EMBARRASSING STORIES ABOUT ANY FELLOW CLUB MEMBER/S?

Sadly no....but maybe after the RiH weekend

PERSONAL BESTS:

5K: Dunno – too short

10K: 42:17

Half Marathon: 1:31 (but it was

Lossie....does that count?)

Marathon: 3:45 (it was a few years ago)

MOST MEMORABLE/FAVOURITE

RACE: It's got to be the London Marathon really but I also loved the Beadnell to Alnmouth race – the length of the race depends on if the tide is in or out and within the first 100m you run through a river. Brilliant.



Polly leads the shrine stamping class.

MOST UPLIFTING RUNNING EXPERIENCE:

Running through Scolty Hill and Blackhall park on a summer's day. Beautiful.

MOST DEPRESSING RUNNING EXPERIENCE:

The Inverness half in 2010, shortly followed by the Ballater 10 in 2009 – in both races I felt like I was running through porridge.

FUNNIEST RUNNING EXPERIENCE:

I probably shouldn't admit to this but recently I was running at dawn in the VondelPark in Amsterdam whilst on a work trip. I saw a flickering orange light at the base of a tree and on closer approach saw that it was a flame. I duly stamped on it thinking how terrible it was that local vandals had lit a fire probably intent on burning the tree down and maybe setting fire to the park. It was only after stamping on it really well I realised it was actually a candle and the base of the tree was a little shrine complete with gravestone. Ooops.

ANY OTHER INTERESTS:

I am a keen road cyclist. I'm not much good yet but I'm gradually getting the hang of it. I'm cycling the Raid Pyrenees this summer, which is 720km of cycling in 100 hours with 11,000m of ascent from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean across the Pyrenees.

ANY ADVICE FOR A NEW RUNNER/MEMBER?:

If you ever wonder if you should go for a run, looking out of the window on a miserable day, you can guarantee you will feel better afterwards, so go! Skin is waterproof.

ANY REGRETS?

Not starting running earlier.



meet the **boyz**

NAME: Niku Milloft

OCCUPATION: IT Technician

AGE: 29

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN RUNNING AND WHAT TRIGGERED YOUR INTEREST?:

I cant remember 6 or 7, maybe 8 years ago. I was motivated to get fit by friend, and we ended up doing the Baker Hughes 10k, since then my mate has become a fat ba\$tard - and I have simply been trying to beat my PBs.

WHY DID YOU JOIN METRO AND HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A MEMBER OF THE CLUB?:

I joined Metro unofficially in the late summer 2007 - and officially in January 2008 after being asked to pay my way. What's the best thing about being a member of Metro?: When I first joined, it was all about being around like-minded folk. More recently, it's become about the friendly competitive banter between Capt. Rob and those younger!

ANY SECRETS/SCANDALS/EMBARRASSING STORIES ABOUT ANY FELLOW CLUB MEMBER/S?:

No - you all very well behaved. And I don't want to reveal any about myself!

PERSONAL BESTS:

3k: 00:09:42

5k: 00:17:14

10k: 00:34:11

Half Marathon: 01:14:29

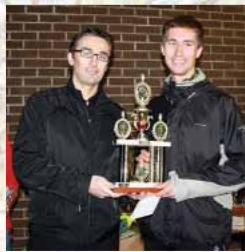
Marathon: 02:39:19

MOST MEMORABLE/FAVOURITE RACE:

Favourite race has to be the Baker Hughes 10k - simply because it's the race that got me started, and I have done it every year since. It's not the most scenic and there's usually strong winds in your face for most of it... but it's hassle-free in the place we live!

MOST UPLIFTING RUNNING EXPERIENCE:

I think it's about to come...more on this in a later edition maybe!



Niku gathers another bauble for his mantelpiece

Up till now, one of my most uplifting running experiences was running a 20 mile training run at Lochnagar last summer with club mate Paul. It was the most beautiful day, blue skies and sunshine views for miles and miles. It had the challenge of being a long-distance hill run with a relaxed no-stress air to it. It was also the same day, ultra off-road legend & West Highland Way Race organiser (among others) Dario

Melaragni died while doing what he loved doing most - out running with friends in the hills. This is unfortunately why it sticks in my mind - but also what makes it my most uplifting running experience. When I leave this world, I hope it's whilst doing what I love!

MOST DEPRESSING RUNNING EXPERIENCE:

The last few months have been a bit rubbish. Being out with injury since late January has played havoc on my training schedule, and as result I had to drop out of championship place at the London Marathon. Still not fixed due me not resting properly, and Windermere just round the corner - I think I had better properly rest it afterwards... But, then there's the Baker Hughes, and then Stonehaven...and all the other races I want to do... arrrggggghh!!!! (Depressing!!!)

FUNNIEST RUNNING EXPERIENCE:

Being told to F'off by Gordon Ramsay during my first marathon, the London Marathon 2006 was good fun.

ANY OTHER INTERESTS:

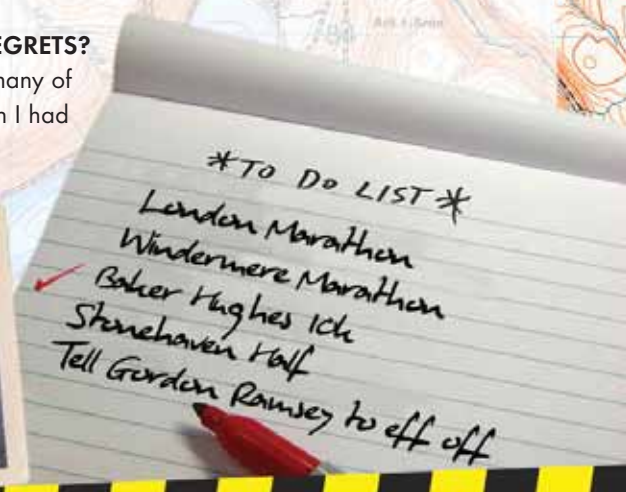
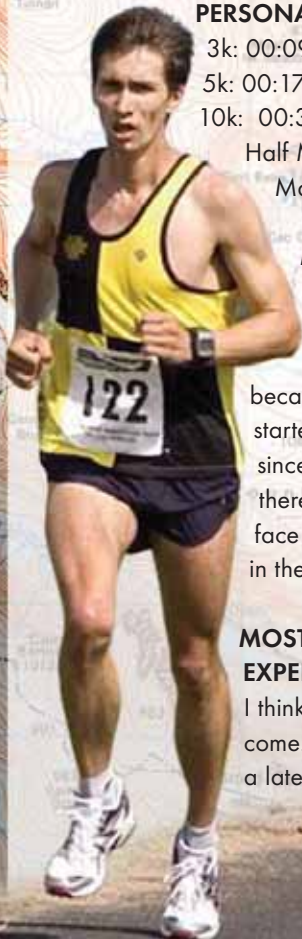
Yeah, mountain biking and more recently road cycling. Love to ski and even more so to Snowboard. Enjoy climbing and getting out for good hike.

ANY ADVICE FOR A NEW RUNNER/MEMBER?:

Set yourself some goals, make them challenging but achievable. Be patient, it takes time to build up miles without picking up injuries... and find yourself a running buddy who is slightly quicker than you.

ANY REGRETS?

As like many of us, I wish I had started earlier.



IT'S SNOW JOKE!

Kevin Tulloch



Running in Canada's Eastern seaboard is pretty much the same as running in Aberdeen, the wind is always in your face no matter what, all the downhill's go up, teenagers are cheeky oiks (Run Forrest Run!) and if it's sunny all day when you finish work and go for a run it starts to rain! So there you have it.

There is no real running club where I live but a pretty active group that meet at the local YMCA or the "Y" as it's called a couple of times a week (no cowboy outfits or handlebar moustached policemen) so I have hooked up with them for my long weekend runs and that is going well. Just like teenagers runners are pretty much the same the world over and all with similar stories to tell of athletic prowess, great runs and what might have been if it wasn't for that bout of flu, missed training, dog incident, bloody big hill, bad weather or the re occurrence of that old injury.

One major difference that I like is that car drivers are generally pretty courteous to runners as pedestrians have right of way here so if

you look like you are thinking of crossing the road the traffic screeches to a halt, that takes a bit of getting used to, I was at first stopping at minor road crossings to puzzled looks from drivers! Now I just have a quick look round and plough on across the road, better watch that one when I come back to Aberdeen on holiday !

Another difference is the wildlife, not the teenagers but the proper wild animal variety, I had the stories of the Coyotes and such like and there have been several recent daytime sightings along some of the trails through town that I use regularly and these guys are not Wylie Coyote and the Road Runner cartoons, they are mean, hungry and looking for a easy meal, I now take my cell phone just in case I have to call for help when I am stuck up a tree and I have a small whistle that I carry that is supposed to deter them, unusual sounds

and all that but luckily have not had to use it yet. The game was raised a bit last night when a motorist driving through the middle of New Glasgow at about 1:00am struck a Black Bear with his car! A bloody big Black Bear, in the middle of town, not out on the forest trails ! So a bit of internet research has been done and apparently Black Bears are the most timid of the 3 (Brown and Grizzly being the aggressive others) and are likely, I repeat only likely to run when they come across humans ! ! ! Never had any of this stuff running around Hazlehead, Brimmond or the Deeside line ! but on the up side there have been very few sightings of Cougar this year ! Where's the nearest gun shop ? ? ?

Not much to report on the racing scene as apart from a fun run on Hogmany I haven't done any yet as that side of things pretty much closes down for the winter, there are a few races starting to appear just now and I am registered to take part in the Halifax "Bluenose" marathon on the 23rd of May, Heather is doing the half, who would have thought me, a staunch Dons fan, living in New Glasgow and running the Bluenose marathon, ach well there goes the membership of the Aberdeen supporters club I suppose ;o)

All the best

Kev's disguise didn't fool the bears

Heather pares down to her last six layers for another summer run!



Kia Ora! **Andy Reid**

from Auckland, New Zealand!

Is it possible to become fed up of a sizzling hot subtropical climate? I think not!

Whilst Aberdeen has been experiencing a long hard wintery winter, down under NZ has been quite the opposite. The weather

here has simply been amazing, 25 degrees of glorious sunshine -though perhaps a little too hot and sticky at times!

Thus therefore makes for good running weather! In the evenings and at weekends

the streets are heavily dominated by a constant flow of runners / joggers, all notability of varying caliber. A high percentage of Aucklanders are joggers / runners or extreme cyclists which is an encouraging sight to see and one which has obvious colorations with its public's health. Interestingly, the runners 'down under' do run differently than in the northern hemisphere whereby they tend to run around the parks etc in a clockwise direction, just something I thought I would mention J

Since arriving in NZ I have struggled to find let alone join a running club. Clubs in Auckland are specific in a sense catering for certain groups, unlike Metro which caters for anyone and anything! I will continue to source a running club,

not merely for the running but for the social and atmosphere which such clubs as Metro generate.

To date I have completed a mere four races where I have come respectively in the top 10%. Unlike Scotland I have found it difficult to unearth regular races such as the standard 10k's or half marathons etc. There are lots of other types of events every weekend with running involved including triathlons, biathlons, ultra distance events, hill climbs, ministry of silly walks etc but the original 10k or half's are some what few and far between.

There are a few regular races such as the Auckland YMCA summer series which is a weekly event, held in Auckland domain (large park used for an array of sports-amazing place), distances include 3k, 5k, 10k however competitors are of the whipper snapper variety which leave you for dust! Another is O'Haggans 5k series, as the name suggests, Irish and pub, here you get a run and a pint for a few dollars.

As always it appears work is the driver of life where running and social time comes second place and merely fitted in where best or possible. New Zealand is simply an amazing place to live with so many interesting and beautiful places to visit. Due to busy working week it can be difficult to juggle it all however I try and get out at least 3-4 times a week to top up my tan!



Andy forgot one crucial element in the wheelbarrow race!

Occasionally I find my self in a nostalgic frame of mind thinking about the cold training runs around Aberdeen, the famous Turkey trot, more recently the Inverness half marathon, the countless memorable cross country runs / road trips and most of all the great people I met at the club.

On a final note I highly recommend New Zealand for anyone to visit and furthermore any runner just makes sure you look me up! I can not over state how amazing this country is and probably would not give it full justice if I tried! I feel extremely lucky to be here but conversely do miss the cold weather and Aberdeen folk.

I am due to spend a couple of weeks back in Scotland in April where I hope to catch up some of the club members.

Sweet as Bro!
Andy Reid -
halfpintlagershandy@yahoo.co.uk



It would be some time before energy drinks arrived in New Zealand





New Glasgow Resolution Run

31 December 2009
Kevin Tulloch

5k run on Hogmany, could be a laugh I thought, so off we went to the local YMCA to register, it was a well organised affair with the games hall given up to runners and their families complete with bouncy castle playground thing for the kids, free to register then a pre race toast of a glass of Gatorade and a reminder that it was a run, not a race and we ventured out into the -15 degree snow filled streets, sure enough it was not a race, there was no line up for the start and folk just started running as they emerged from the warmth of the games hall.

1st k was along quiet back streets and onto the main road where you could choose to fight with the cars on the cleared road or stay on the slushy sidewalk, I opted for the latter, then along the main road through downtown still ablaze with Christmas lights with me chasing a young pup who had taken off quite quickly, its not a race, right!

2nd k took us across a level crossing and onto the East river bridge crossing to the West side of the town and along the main road getting

ever more quizzical looks from drivers, the turning point came at 3k when we went on to a disused railway track and headed back toward the bridge with the early leader starting to pay for his quick start, the footpath here had not been treated and as a result was heavily rutted and frozen,, snow, each step was carefully placed.

Along the path for a k then back onto the bridge and head for home, coming off the bridge I saw the level crossing red warning lights flash and the gates come down, from a previous visit to downtown I remembered a underpass about 300m up the line so being in the lead I made a executive decision to head for that rather than wait for the train to pass as the trains here go on for ever, the rest of the field followed and then it was back on o the slushy sidewalks back to the "Y" where my Garmin showed 6k not 5, the route obviously had not been measured by the guy who does the Kinloss to Lossie half.

No finish line but the local press guy was there and I finished with the



Johnny Miles wins the Boston Marathon

pop of his camera flash and headed back to the gym, where there was a great spread of food laid out, chilli, subway sandwiches, doughnuts, coffee, hot chocolate, gatorade, etc, so a quick scoff of the food and we packed up and headed to the local pond to go skating and bring in the New Year.

Bit of a change from the usual Hogmany and bagged a win it what could possibly be my last race, sorry run, it was not a race, in a Metro vest, well when I say vest I really mean Metro jacket, it was -15 after all.

Cheers
Kev

To find put more about the Johnny Miles story go to -

www.davidblaikie.com/david_blaikie/boston/baa_1926.htm



The latest village person joins up as a new recruit



17th Jungfrau Marathon 2009

Michael Scheck

In February 2009 my boss asked me if it would be ok for me to support our projects in Norway from May 2009 onwards. This meant that every week I would have to spend a day or two in Norway. I was more than happy to do that, after all the projects were challenging ones. In terms of running it meant that I would have to change my routine though. Since the Norwegian lifestyle doesn't support overtime it was clear to me that I would have at least a day every week where I could go running from 4 pm onwards. That sounded like my best opportunity ever to run long distance. The only thing that was still missing was a goal.

A couple of years ago a friend of mine had given me "The ultimate guide to international marathons" by Dennis Craythorn and Rich Hanna as a birthday present. Now this book came in handy. In there Craythorn and Hanna described the Jungfrau Marathon as the most scenic marathon in the world. In fact, it is one of the most desirable mountain marathons in the world, which is reflected by the high ranking at marathon4you and by the fact that one has to register until the end of February in order to participate in the raffle for participation. To be honest, I could not imagine how 4,000 people could possibly run a mountain marathon together, given the fact that more than 6,000 ft had to be climbed in total (there are small downhill passages) and that some of the terrain consists of narrow, alpine paths. I thought that it must somehow work; otherwise people would not want to run this marathon again and again. I finally had a look on the Internet and was convinced. I immediately registered for it and – with Fortuna on my side – a couple of weeks later received the confirmation that I was allowed to participate.



To train for it I did not only do long distance running but also went on longer hikes. Midsummer came in handy and so the area around Stavanger became my training ground, Kjeragbolten and Preikestolen the sites of frequent visits.

After four months of preparation came the day of travel. My wife and I were flying to Zurich and took a car from there. It was Friday night already and the start of the marathon only thirteen hours away. Our route from Zurich to Interlaken (which is where the marathon starts) took us via a mountain pass. It was snowing at the top, which was quite scary. The finish line of the marathon would be substantially higher than this mountain pass. Would all the training have been done in vain and the marathon be cancelled? Luckily it stopped snowing soon. The following morning greeted me with lots of sunshine and there was just a small coat of fresh snow on the mountains. Nothing to worry about.

At 6 a.m. breakfast was served and the mood amongst all the runners was very good. Everybody was looking forward to the race, not the least because the weather promised to be just brilliant.

Interlaken is a small city in the heart of the "Berne Oberland" and squeezed between two lakes: Lake Thun and Lake Brienz. It is no miracle that it was already discovered for tourists in the 19th century. This has given the town a couple of splendid 5-star hotels like the Victoria-Jungfrau and the Beau Rivage. We however had to stay in a simpler (in other words affordable) hotel just outside the town centre.

After breakfast I went to the expo, which was close to the starting line. I got my starter package without any waiting, got rid of the luggage, which was to be transported to the finish line, and then enjoyed the show. There was a group of around ten guys playing the Alphorn and in front of them a group of people throwing flags into the air and catching them again – impressive. Directly before the start it was dead silent and then they played the Swiss anthem. A shiver went down my spine. These guys must have invented patriotism. I was ready for whatever would lie ahead of me.

Then the starting signal was fired and we went off. The first kilometers consisted of a round through Interlaken, which was absolutely flat. So far this was no different than a city marathon.

After 20 minutes I left Interlaken behind and went along the train route towards the Lauterbrunnen valley, passing Bönigen, Wilderswil, Gseigwiler and Zweilütschinen. In every town and at every train station on the route there was a big party going on. Lots of bands were playing and people were cheering us on using cowbells. I started very slow; after all I wanted to be able to see the finish line.

On the route to Lauterbrunnen we were gaining 800 ft height, but that would be nothing compared to what lay ahead. The huge 1,000 ft high Staubbachfall, a waterfall in Lauterbrunnen, brought at least the feeling of refreshment – after all the stand with drinks and food was not far away from it. After Lauterbrunnen there was a small lap that was flat – and that would be the rest of the flat part of the marathon. The water and food station at Ey was remarkably well equipped and also well used. Everybody knew that this would be a good chance to have a drink and eat something since the flat part would soon be over.

With the "Wall of Wengen" the real challenge began. Within the next 4 km we had to climb more than 1600 ft. This is where one can loose a lot of time.

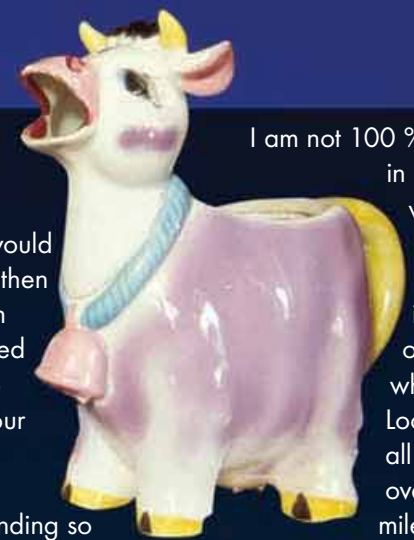
Some runners were still running, others were hiking and some even had to have rest breaks. This is also where the marking of the route changes from km to 250 m marks and every marking on the route has an emergency contact number and GPS coordinates on it. After what seemed like an endless struggle I took one more serpentine and finally was in Wengen – the town of the finish line of the Lauberhorn downhill ski race.

Finally race organisers provide decent energy bars



If you thought that the party mood in Lauterbrunnen would be hard to beat then you haven't seen Wengen. It looked like one of those arrivals of the Tour de France in a mountain town. People were standing so tight that the path for the runners was narrowing down to no more than 6 ft. Every runner was mentioned via loudspeaker and there was music everywhere. It was an ecstatic atmosphere.

Here more than 30 km were already behind us, but in terms of climb more than half of it still ahead. After Wengen came a passage of about 6 km along the mountain, which was spiked with short but steep uphill sections, which never left a lot of space to relax. Then, after the Wengernalp, one can see for the first time Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau. Due to the bit of snow from the day before the mountains were nicely coated in fresh white snow. It looked fantastic and made all the effort well worth it. Before the last and undoubtedly most demanding part of the run came, there was a short downhill section to the ski station Wixi. Trees were long gone and the final climb took us over 4km another 1250 ft uphill. The paths narrowed down so much that it made overtaking nearly impossible and at least breathtaking in the true sense of the word. This was by far not the top of one of the steep mountains around us; nevertheless I had problems getting enough oxygen in the body. I was simply not used to the height. The steep path then lead up to the highest point of the route, the Eiger glacier, 7234 ft high.



I am not 100 % sure anymore, but in my memory there was a bagpiper standing at the highest point, which in hindsight seems odd, but I think that's what it was. From the Locherflute onwards it is all downhill – 350 ft over a bit more than a mile to be precise. After a short tunnel the finish line is close. Thousands of people are standing next to the mountain path that leads to the finish line on the Kleine Scheidegg and cheer the finishers on. After 4 hours and 49 minutes – an hour and a half slower than when running a city marathon – I finally crossed the finish line. I was given the medal and met my wife. To be honest, it was so crowded, that for a moment I thought that I would never find her and what a stupid idea it was to not having agreed to a meeting point. The luggage hall would have been a better place to meet. Anyway, we were lucky that we saw each other. I picked up my luggage, had a shower and then we spent a couple of hours on the Kleine Scheidegg just to relax. We had cake and coffee and finally took the funicular back to the hotel. On the following days we did some easy hikes through the mountains and just enjoyed the scenery and our time in and around Interlaken.

Can I recommend the Jungfrau Marathon to anybody else? It depends...if you want to run a PB then definitely not, but if you are looking for a Marathon that comes with stunning views of some of the most scenic mountains in the Alps, that leads more uphill than downhill, that is perfectly organised, then go for it – you won't regret it.

Contact: michael_scheck@web.de

www.jungfrau-marathon.ch

Lochaber Marathon

18th April 2010
Clare Russell



Despite my good intentions, and having particularly enjoyed the odd Thursday night reps session since joining Metro in 2009, my best intentions went by the wayside when overworked and subsequently signing up for a couple of marathons in 2010. The resulting effect, Clare Russell – who the hell is she?

Anyway, it was with my usual sense of trepidation that I donned my Metro vest on the morning of the Lochaber Marathon. There are so many speedy runners in the club that I always feel a fraud when I wear my vest, particularly

in the hour before the race was the usual 20 toilet trips and attendance at the race safety briefing. On the toilet front, I have to say that I was suitably impressed! Top tip for future runners – if you go through the

you have the good fortune to be able to pass someone. No concerns on that front for me then.

Off to the start line, a very different marathon experience for me (my debut marathon and 'never again' run having been in Amsterdam in 2008). The crowd of runners was small but the atmosphere was warm and friendly, not sure about at the front, but the back's the best place to line up in my opinion.

The gun sounded and we were off, only to be hit by congestion at the exit from the field and reduced to a walk for all of a few paces. Then off again, through the housing estate and onwards. A wee uneven path down onto the pedestrian/cycle path out of the village saw the first casualty of the race, thankfully not me. An uneven surface tripped up some poor chap but thankfully a man on a bike was there to assist.

The race plan got underway quickly – having a PB of 4:03:02 at Amsterdam, I had my heart set on sub-4. In order to achieve this, I had a plan to aim for around 8:40 min miles (a snail's pace I hear you cry!) with the view to having about 12 minutes to spare at the end for the inevitable slowing down. Little did I know how much I would value these minutes....

Clare was impressed at how thoughtful the race organisers were



Flushed with success - Clare trots to a new PB

having been used to the anonymity of running for Jog Scotland, a huge all encompassing group on previous occasions!

Having stayed in a lovely B&B, breakfast of porridge and toast down, my first difficult decision of the day was what to wear aside from the vest. I was advised that it was quite cool outside, and indeed on turning up at the Nevis Centre car park it appeared that the correct decision was to wear a base layer in addition to the vest and shorts. Having registered the day before, all that was required

main hall and out the back towards the changing areas, there are lots of toilets and they're vacant!!! Most unusual for a race day! Despite this (I blame the organisers for being a couple of minutes late in starting the briefing), I missed the start of it – however, the gist of it was that at times you are running on the road, so no more than 2 abreast and watch you don't get clipped by the wing mirror of a very large bus if

Anyway, buoyed by the words of Claire Smith, 'the course is flat and even though it looks uphill on the way back it's only that way as the folks coming back are leaning forward a little through tiredness' or something to that effect, and another runner who advised me that she's been quoted as saying the course is downhill both ways, I settled into my race pace quite happily.

Within the first few miles the sun began to break through and I was glad to have taken the precaution of slapping on the P20. Having pinned my race number on over my waist pack with all my gels etc, I



Clare's landlady was disappointed to see her breakfast reappear at mile 25

then had to do my best Houdini impression in order to get the base layer off. I'm sure I'd have had far more success stopping, off loading everything, stripping off and putting it all back on again, and as my husband had pointed out, given that the average sports bra covers you from your navel to your neck, there would have been no indecency involved!



Sufficiently cooled, I continued plodding along, through Corpach and onwards. Although support on the course was sparse, there were enthusiastic supporters who cheered on everyone who passed, offered words of encouragement and even one who was handing out jelly babies – I declined for fear of the negative effects of the unknown.

The scenery was beautiful when I remembered to look

around and try to appreciate the experience, and the race plan was followed until the halfway point – gels every 4 miles (SIS, as practised in training), pace holding up well. For the most, I was running pretty much on my own. I don't seem to have perfected the art of running as part of a pack, and usually find the pace either too slow or too fast, although I did chat briefly to a chap from Aberdeen who was running the marathon having damaged his knees skydiving in the past.

The turning point was very well organised, with traffic being stopped to allow runners to cross the road and turn,



and it was with great delight that I realised I was now on the home straight. I continued plodding well until around 16 miles when I felt myself starting to tire a little (why, oh why does this happen? I'd followed my training plan and religiously done the long runs, even clocking up a 20 miler on the treadmill in the depths of winter when it was too icy to run safely outdoors). Safe in the knowledge that I had built up my spare minutes, I gritted my teeth and held on, knowing that the dream time was still achievable.

On the return, the views are truly spectacular with Ben Nevis to be seen on such a beautiful clear day. It really is a sight to behold, and I reminded myself that I was fortunate to be running on the flat! The pace did slow a little, but I took on board more gels, 16 and 19 miles, before taking the final one at 22 miles. I was undecided on this one and in future I'll remember, if in doubt don't bother, as it came up as quickly as it had gone down. Ever onwards

though, just 4 miles to go and I'd be home. The last few miles were a hard slog, but there were no real aches or pains, just a general fatigue.

The 25 mile point was where it all went pear shaped (skip this paragraph if you're eating!) – I was back on the wee bike path and was suddenly overwhelmed with the urge to walk. I told myself I could have 10 steps, got under the little bridge and suddenly my body decided it was time to rid itself of all the gels and water consumed along the way! Retrospectively, although I regretted the couple of minutes lost at the time, I think it was probably far better to happen here than on the finish line! To the cries of the local youth 'eeeeuggghh! Look at the wifie!' and a kind lady (has to be someone's mother – no way on earth I could do this) rubbing my back and offering words of comfort – hope I didn't splash her shoes – my body purged itself of all evil. I later described it as being like a scene from the exorcist, but was advised by my husband that it's only the girl's head that spins, she does not puke and I had my films confused!

Suitably relieved, the chap on the bike advised me that I had less than a mile and I should just walk it in. However, my watch was telling me that with less than a mile I could still make the 4 hour mark, and there was no way on this earth that I was walking anywhere if I could run! Off I went, slowing to barely more than a walk on the final teeny tiny wee slope to the housing estate, belted along the path and into the finishing field to see the clock showing sub-4. A sprint finish saw the clock record 3:59:04 (a new PB) and at this point I resolved that I would return for more reps!

Thoroughly delighted with my time, my immediate reaction was yes! I'd like to do this again! Just as well really – Edinburgh here I come!

Clare Russell

Running my way to the 30's

Jamie Tait



On the 25th May 2008,

I was standing at Musselburgh racecourse, the finishing point of the Edinburgh marathon, waiting to cheer our last 'leg' runner across the finishing line. I'd just taken part in the Hairy Haggis relay, a four person team event designed to give athletes a chance to run the same route as the marathon, but without having to do the whole thing yourself (in my case, the word athlete is used in the loosest sense). Now let's be honest, what a fantastic idea that is! Who on earth would want to run 26.2 miles themselves? Well before that day, certainly not me. My 8-mile leg was not only the longest distance I'd ever run, but also the longest distance I thought I'd ever run. However seeing the elation on people's faces as they crossed the line and taking in the fantastic atmosphere, my mind began to wander...

I'd just turned 29 three days prior to the Hairy Haggis relay, and already my thoughts were turning to May 2009 and reaching the dreaded 3-0. How would I celebrate this landmark occasion? Moping to myself about how life was passing me by?



Getting hideously drunk and waking up with the hangover from hell? Well as a matter of fact that's exactly what happened, but something else did too. I felt I needed to mark my 30th with a memorable event, and as our last leg runner crossed the line in a combined time of 04:12:45, the challenge of running a marathon suddenly entered my head. Could I run

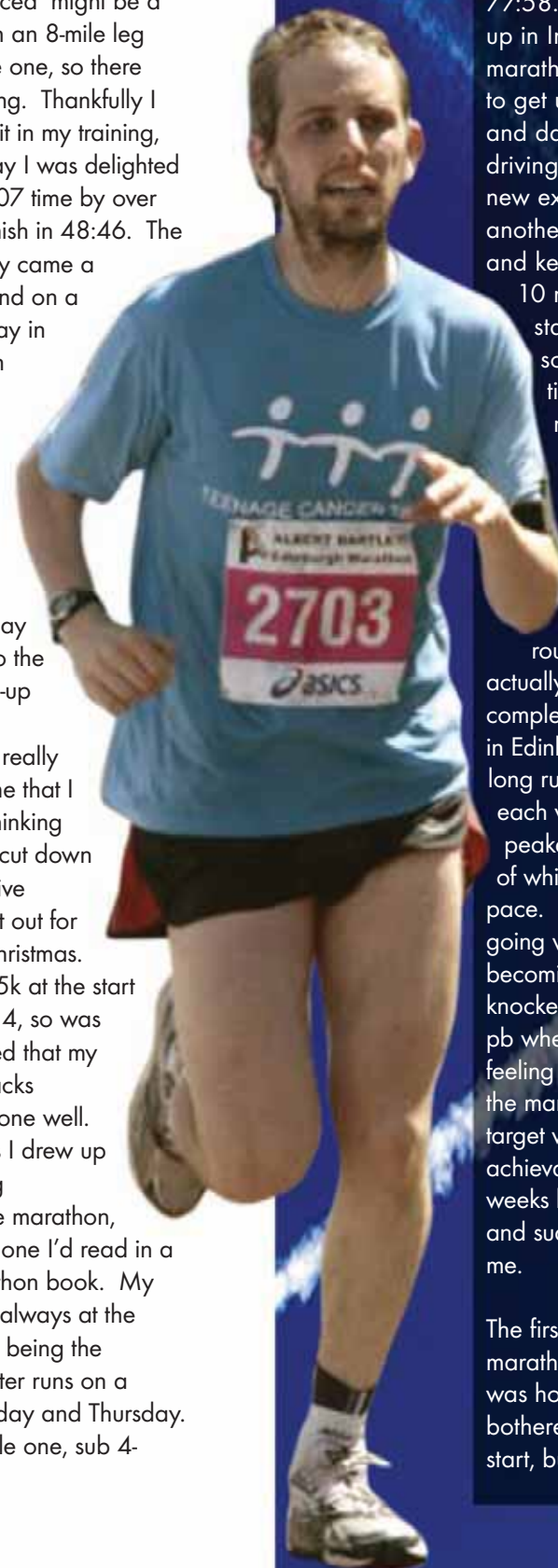
the whole thing myself? What were the chances of beating our team's time? I didn't quite make up my mind there and then, but the idea was certainly there. This is the story of what happened next.

I've never considered myself a runner, and having joined Metro in June last year, I understand how far away I am from being bracketed as such a thing! However I've always thought I was quite a fit person, I regularly played badminton, played the occasional game of football and generally looked after myself pretty well. So when I decided to sign up to the Edinburgh 10k with a group of friends in May 2007, I didn't think much of it. However I was in for a big shock. This was my first ever race but unfortunately it resulted in a terrible neglect of preparation. My training consisted of two runs, one of 2 miles and one of 1 mile, both of which I failed to complete without stopping. On the day of the race I managed to run the first 5k before having to stop to gulp down some water, catch my breath and generally prevent myself from having a heart attack. The second 5k was a mixture of walking and running, and I eventually crossed the line in 61:24, exhausted, sore and thoroughly dejected. I certainly didn't catch the running bug that day, but did at least tell myself that I'd do better next year.

A year more or less past without donning my running shoes again, but I'd learnt my lesson and stepped up the training for the 2008 Edinburgh 10k. Around the same time, my work were organising several teams for the Hairy Haggis relay, so I put my name down for

that extra little bit of motivation. Not only that, I was strongly 'encouraged' ('forced' might be a better word) to run an 8-mile leg instead of a 5-mile one, so there really was no hiding. Thankfully I saw a huge benefit in my training, and come race day I was delighted to improve my 2007 time by over 12 minutes and finish in 48:46. The Hairy Haggis relay came a few weeks later, and on a cold and windy day in Musselburgh, I ran 66:26 for my leg, just marginally over my 8-minute mile target.

I'd more or less decided a few weeks after the relay I'd take a leap into the unknown and sign-up for the marathon. However it wasn't really until December time that I started seriously thinking about training, so cut down on the normal festive excesses and went out for a few runs over Christmas. I did my first ever 5k at the start of January in 22:14, so was pleasantly surprised that my self-imposed cutbacks seemed to have gone well. Shortly afterwards I drew up a 16-week training programme for the marathon, roughly based on one I'd read in a Hal Higdon marathon book. My longest runs were always at the weekend (Sunday being the longest), with shorter runs on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. My goal? A simple one, sub 4-hours.



I had built in a few races as part of my training, the first of which was the Lasswade 10 mile race in week three. I'd never run this distance before so perhaps choosing a race described as a 'testing course' wasn't the best idea. The hills were extremely tough, so much so that I think my car would've even struggled to get up them in first gear. I had absolutely nothing left at the end of the race but was still happy when I crossed the line in 77:58. The following week I was up in Inverness for my first ever half marathon. Now I was beginning to get use to training in the cold and dark nights, but running in driving rain, sleet and snow was a new experience! I tagged onto another runner after about 2 miles, and kept at his pace right up until 10 miles at which point he started to fade. I still felt good so past him and finished in a time of 1:38:20, several minutes quicker than I'd hoped or predicted.

Training over the next few weeks continued to go as planned, and as time wore on it just became more of a routine, and *shock horror* I actually started to enjoy it. I completed my second half marathon in Edinburgh in 1:36:59, with my long runs getting gradually bigger each weekend. My training peaked at two 20-mile runs, both of which I ran at 8-minute mile pace. My shorter runs were also going well, and at the now-becoming-standard Edinburgh 10k, I knocked another 5 minutes off my pb when I finished in 43:17. I was feeling a lot more confident about the marathon and my sub 4-hour target was certainly looking achievable. The last couple of weeks before the marathon flew by, and suddenly race day was upon me.

The first thing to mention about the marathon was the weather. Now it was hot. Seriously hot. Not that it bothered me a great deal at the start, but as time wore on running in



temperatures in the mid 20s was proving more than difficult! Saying that, I reached the half way point in 1:42:50 and was feeling great, in fact up until mile 18 I was comfortably under 8 minutes for each of them. However that's when things got tough. I'd read a lot about the 'wall', and although I don't ever remember hitting it (perhaps my memory loss was something to do with turning 30 nine days before the marathon), I was suddenly running 9+ minutes miles and not able to do a thing about it. I had to stop around mile 20 for my one and only toilet stop (thankfully not a 'Paula'), with the next four miles particularly tortuous, only cheered by the countless jelly babies, jelly beans and jaffa cakes that I grabbed from the supportive crowds. I somehow managed to pick up the pace in the last two miles, and as I made my way into Musselburgh racecourse and saw the full and noisy grandstand, managed a semi-sprint finish for the last 200 metres. I crossed the line in 3:37:46, exhausted and sore as with my first ever 10k, but certainly not dejected. In fact, I was ecstatic. All the training had been worth it, every last minute of those cold winter runs and long weekend runs had been worth it. The sense of accomplishment was amazing, and I would urge every runner in the club who hasn't run a marathon to sign up for one soon. In fact, do it today! You certainly won't regret it.

So that's my story of running my way to the 30s. Looking back I realise how much I must have died in those last few miles (my 30k split

was 2:26:10), and the one regret I have from the race was walking for a couple of minutes around mile 22. However I'm still delighted with my time and the fact I set out and achieved my 30th challenge. When I moved up to Aberdeen last summer I wanted to continue running, so it's been great to join Metro (my first ever running club) and have the novelty of not only running with others, but also to vary my training, something I rarely did on my own. Although I'm not running as much as I did when I was training for the marathon, I repeated my Lasswade, Inverness and Edinburgh races this year and kept up my record of recording a pb in every race I've done (certainly an advantage of not doing many races!) So hopefully with everyone's continued encouragement and support I, along with every other member of Metro, will continue to knock a few more minutes and seconds off those pbs.

So what challenge awaits me this year? Well I'd like to do another marathon one day and get under 3:30, but am certainly in no rush to do so. It would also be good to reach the fourth Metro club standard but that will take quite a bit of time yet - maybe that should be my goal for when I reach my 40s! The main target this year is actually a walk and not a run, as me and some friends are taking part in the Caledonian Challenge, a 54-mile walk through the Scottish Highlands in 24 hours. We've managed to pass marathon distance in training and walk 30 miles in Kintail, with the 40-mile Clyde Walkway to come at the end of May. I'll take this opportunity to get in a shameless plug about our fundraising site for the Scottish Community Foundation at <http://www.caledonianchallenge.com/teams/TeamDONE>. We're keeping a regular team diary and also uploading photos onto the site, and any donation you can make to help reach our target of £2,500 would be much appreciated. Thank you!

A tale of 2 ultras

Jane MacAskill

Glasgow to Edinburgh Double Marathon (55 miles) 6th March 2010



Until the week before this event I was still undecided whether to run this due to lack of long runs and there was still snow and ice on the ground.

Well it warmed up and snow and ice went and I was driving down to Glasgow on the Friday. Up early on the Saturday, had to ask 3 different folks for directions to start area which was at Ruchill Park. Met up with a few folks I

knew and went to switch on Garmin only to find battery dead. I

ended up running the whole race with only a wrist watch so I knew the time. 9am set off for Auchinstarry Bridge

along the Forth and Canal, first checkpoint 13.1 miles, then

onto Falkirk Wheel 22 miles. The route was

pancake flat apart from a few ramps up and

down to cross roads. Up to Falkirk it was mainly old

industrial sites, path a bit muddy here and there but a good running

surface. At Falkirk Wheel we had the only hill of the whole race, walked up it

with support (OH Allan) and felt good. Onto Union Canal and it

became more rural. Plan was to run 25 mins and walk

5 mins from here, had to go through a smelly, dark and damp tunnel which went on for over half a mile, feet kept slipping on the cobbles and didn't put on

headtorch as I didn't want to know what was in there. Met up with a fellow runner who asked if I

wanted a chum for a few miles and he was happy to go at my slow steady pace. Linlithgow

33.75 miles, feeling good and running steadily. Kept trying to eat and drink regularly but I was

starting to get a bit sick of food. Then it was onto Broxburn 42 miles, still feeling okay and only a

half marathon to go and it was now gone 5pm and I had been on my feet for over 8 hours. I had an

hour and bit to get to Ratho before it got dark and where my two support runners would chum me to

the finish. It got dark about a mile before Ratho and I was feeling a bit scared out there on my own in the middle of no-where in the pitch

black with only a head torch. Then Gavin my knight in shining armour was there on his bike checking up on the various runners

and he chummed me to Ratho 47.5 miles. I was mostly walking now and glad of the company for the rest of the way to Edinburgh (55 miles).

My two support runners were truly fantastic, encouraged me and kept me going. From mile 50 my body slowly started packing in, threw up, legs and feet sore, and knackered. So it was a slow shuffle to the finish with support runners ensuring I didn't fall into the canal. And there in the distance was a crowd of folks at the finish, no sprint finish only the same slow shuffle over the line. 55 miles in 12hours 02 mins. Lots of hugs, 2 first aiders wrapped me in foil blankets, marched me to the pub where everyone stood up and clapped and cheered. A glass of champagne was placed in my hand and I knew I was in a bad way as I felt too sick to drink it just then.

Hardest thing I have ever done and I now know what its like to be truly exhausted and having to force your body to keep going. It took 3 days for my swollen and sore feet to recover and I ran the Inverness Half Marathon then I started to think I might manage the D33.



Jane's progress was hindered by the big pink obstacles at every mile



D33 (The Jam Sandwich Race) 3rd April 2010

This race had been specially created to be part of the new Scottish Ultra Marathon Series, all the races in the series are listed on the SUMS website.



Starting at Duthie Park it follows the Deeside way to Banchory and then it was round a cone and back to Duthie Park. As it was local it would be a shame not to give it a go. Met a lot of folks I knew at the start but sadly no other Metro runners.

Before long we were off and I settled into an easy/steady pace nearer the back of the field of approx. 100 runners. Out to Peterculter which I am sure many metro runners know very well, it was nice having cars stopping to let us across the Maryculter road. It was a fairly cool day and I was glad I had worn long sleeved top.

At Peterculter its a bit tricky if you don't know the route but there were big orange arrows to guide you but still a few folks went the wrong way here. Then onto the first water station/checkpoint at around 8 miles, time 1.26 a bit fast but feeling

okay. From here the course is a bit undulating following a minor road before hitting the path again just before Drum. Then it was up to the Invercauld Arms then left running along the grass verge on the main road before returning on to the path again. I really enjoyed this part of the route as I never normally head out as far as this on training runs. Before long the lead runners was in sight and from then there was a steady stream of friendly runners, apart from Charlie Noble who apparently was struggling big time.

Half way 2.58 not bad as I was aiming for a 6 hour finish. Stopped briefly to fill up with water and eat a couple of oatcakes. After about 20 miles or so I slowly started overtaking fellow runners and I focused on catching the next one and so on. Took me 1.38 to the next checkpoint, slowest split of the race, well there is a bit of an incline on this section. Then it was Peterculter where Claire and Rosey were waiting to chum me home the last 6 and a bit miles. Feeling tired by then but didn't feel as though I needed to walk so with Rosey and Claires support kept up a steady pace and I was reaching the point where if I stopped to walk that would be it. Claire dropped back to make sure struggling runner was okay before catching up with me with no effort at all. Legs were aching a bit around 2 miles to go, but felt strong. Nice downhill bit to finish in Duthie Park just at the boating pond.



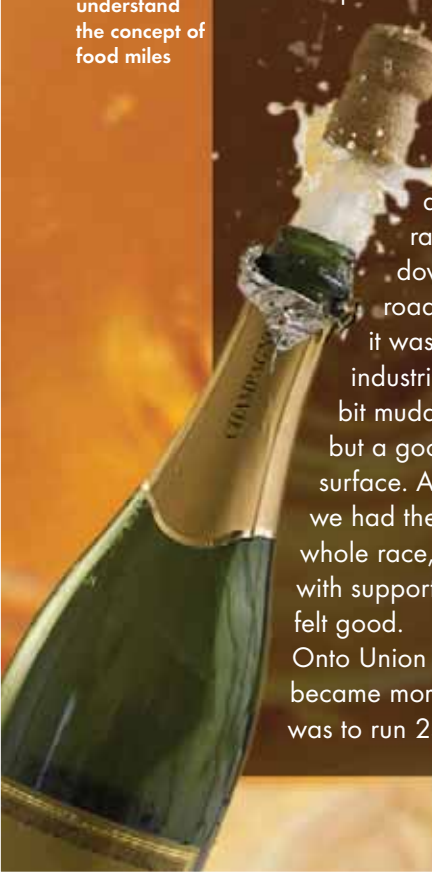
Nice hug from race organiser, George Reid, old friend. Chocolate medal and bottle of beer. Label said "Nice One", D33 the Jam Sandwich Race 2010. Train hard, pee clear.

Loved this race and will be back next year hopefully with a few other metro runners. If you aren't up for the whole thing then think about being a support runner as it really does give you a lift to have some with you when you are tired at the end of a race.

There is a saying "Only those who risk going to far can possibly find out how far they can go" I took a big risk doing the Double marathon and thankfully no long term ill-effects but I would think twice about running that distance again. On the otherhand I think 33 miles is a good distance for an ultra.



Jane didn't understand the concept of food miles



The second of three training reports by Jackie Stewart

An A-Z of effective training - this month

LACTATE THRESHOLD TRAINING

Many serious runners talk about doing Lactate Threshold Training, Tempo runs and so forth, but they usually talk in vague terms. They may call an 8 miler they run harder than usual a tempo run, even though the latter term has to do with a specific physiological concept. Below, we will look at what Lactate Threshold is to see how to improve it and, therefore, race better.

DEFINING LACTATE THRESHOLD

Your Lactate Threshold (LT) determines how fast you can race. When you select a race pace, you really select a pace that prevents the accumulation of Lactate (a by-product of carbohydrate metabolism). When you are resting, walking or running slowly, the amount of Lactate in your blood remains low and relatively constant because the rate of Lactate entering your blood is equal to the rate at which it's removed. As you progress from rest to walking to easy running, both the rate of Lactate production by your muscles and the rate of clearance by various body tissues increase. When you exercise above certain intensity however, the rate of Lactate formation is greater than the rate of clearance, so the Lactate concentration rises in your muscles and blood. This is your Lactate Threshold, the exercise intensity above which lactate clearance can no longer keep up with Lactate production.

Your Lactate Threshold is the most important factor in determining running performance in races longer than 10K. For the 10K, VO2 Max and Lactate Threshold are about equally important. For the 5K, a high VO2 Max is the most important physiological attribute, but a high Lactate Threshold is still important.

RUNNING ECONOMY

LTVO2 isn't the answer by itself; however, we don't all use the same amount of oxygen at a given speed. Just like some cars use fuel more economically than others; some runners are more economical than others in consuming oxygen. That is a more economical runner consumes less oxygen to maintain a specific pace. Your running economy

determines how fast you can run using a given amount of oxygen. If you can faster than another runner while using the same amount of oxygen, then you are more economical.

The primary detriments of running economy appear to be the proportion of slow twitch fibres (good for longer distance runners) versus fast twitch fibres (better for sprinters) in your muscles and the combined effects of your biomechanics. Best marathoners and 10K runners tend to have slower twitch muscles and are more economical than slower runners. Running economy is also related to some biomechanical variables, such as the length of the femur relative to the tibia, but no single aspect of biomechanics has been shown to have a large impact on economy.

HOW DO YOU IMPROVE RUNNING ECONOMY?

Although there's evidence that it improves with training, the secrets of improving running economy appears elusive. The most important factor may be the amount of years you have been running as opposed to any specific types of workouts that you run. Studies on running economy have been carried out and at this point, we are unsure to be able to prescribe

training programmes to improve running economy. We may find out that different types of training improve economy depending on the strength and weakness of individual runners.

DETERMINING LACTATE THRESHOLD

The best way to determine Lactate Threshold is to be tested in an exercise physiology lab. During the test, you run for several minutes at varying speeds. The Lactate concentration in your blood is measured by pricking your finger and analyzing a couple of drops of blood. If you cannot get this, the lower-tech method to estimate your LT is to use your race times. If you are an experienced runner, your LT pace is approx 15K to half marathon pace. This is because the LT determines the pace that you can maintain for races of these distances, for shorter races, you can exceed your lactate threshold and for marathons, it would be under. If your experience is mostly with shorter races, LT pace is roughly 10-15 seconds per mile slower than your 10K pace. Estimation by heart rate is approx 80-90% of Heart Rate Reserve, which is about 85-92 percent of maximum heart rate. Your 15K - ? marathon pace is probably more accurate and you can find the heart rate that corresponds with that.

IMPROVING LACTATE THRESHOLD

Although LT training is the most important type of training for distance runners, many runners don't understand how to improve their LT. The best way to do it is simple- train at or just slightly above your

LT. Although LT training may seem like speedwork, it is more accurate to view it as a determinant of your endurance, the ability to maintain a pace for a prolonged distance. There are three basic types of LT workouts. The objective of these workouts is to run hard enough that Lactate is just starting to accumulate in your blood. If you train at a lower intensity, there won't be as great a stimulus to improve it. If you train faster, you will accumulate lactate rapidly, which won't train your muscles to work hard without accumulating lactate. As discussed in the VO2 Max training, the most effective training does not necessarily mean training as hard as possible. The more time you spend at the proper intensity, the greater the training stimulus. The three types of training are Tempo Runs, LT Intervals and LT Hills. I will explain each.

TEMPO RUNS

The classic workout to improve your LT is the tempo run, a continuous run of between 20-40 minutes at LT pace. An example would be an easy 2 mile warm up, 4-5 miles at 15K-1/2 marathon pace and then 1-2 mile easy warm down (amazing, sounds like a good club night). It would be easier to do this on an accurate course, also using the Garmin that some of the boffins amongst you use. If you use a heart rate monitor, you can use the rate you reached to determine the proper intensity for subsequent tempo runs. Whatever the method, after a few runs, you should get a better feel for your LT pace. Low key races of 5K to 10K

make a great substitute for tempo runs. Just be careful not to get carried away and race flat out.

LT INTERVALS

You can gain a similar benefit by running these intervals, for example our 4 x 8 minute reps would give you around 32 minutes at LT pace. LT intervals are a good option if you tend to avoid tempo runs. The additional mental effort of tempo runs, however may pay off when the going gets tough in a race. Typical LT intervals we use. 5 x 1500 metres with 2 minutes recovery jog 4 x 2,000 metres with 3 minutes recovery jog 3 x 3,000 metres with 5 minutes recovery jog. You may think, but we get 3 minutes between reps at 1,500 metres, but lets put our hands on hearts and admit that we run harder than LT pace, hence the need for longer recovery.

LT HILLS

A great way to increase your LT is by running long hills. If you are fortunate(or unfortunate) enough to live in an area with a number of good sized hills, you can do LT workouts during a training loop by concentrating on working the hills. For example, suppose you run the club 10 mile course or a course at Countesswells. If you push up the hills so that you are running at LT intensity, you would accumulate around 20 minutes or so at LT during your run. Hence the reason we do Hill reps.

SESSIONS COULD BE :

- 10 mile run with varying hills and push up the hills.
- Various Hill reps as done at club nights.

HOW YOU PRODUCE AND USE LACTATE (the stuff that makes your legs sore the following days)

Lactate is formed from the incomplete oxidation of carbohydrates. When your body breaks down carbohydrates to produce energy, it forms pyruvate. In your muscle cells, pyruvate is either used to produce energy in the mitochondria (the aerobic-energy producing factories in your muscles) or reduced to produce lactic acid. The enzyme that produces lactate and the aerobic enzymes in the mitochondria compete for the available pyruvate. The key to lactic acid formation is the rate of pyruvate production relative to the rate of pyruvate use by the mitochondria. The limiting factor is generally whether there are enough aerobic enzymes and oxygen in the mitochondria to use the pyruvate as fast as it is produced. When the rate of glycolysis (which produces pyruvate) is greater than the rate of use of pyruvate by the mitochondria, then lactic acid is formed in the muscles and quickly converted to lactate (the salt of lactic acid). The

reduction in pH associated with lactate accumulation in the muscles inactivates enzymes and thereby limits both anaerobic energy production. Blood lactate concentration represents a balance among lactate production by the muscles, diffusion of lactate into the blood and its consumption by the muscles, heart, liver, kidneys. You produce and consume lactate even at rest, but as long as production equals consumption, lactate concentration in the blood does not rise. The body has several mechanisms for clearing lactate and the percentage of lactate which follows each pathway varies among rest, exercise and recovery. Some of the lactate is oxidised within the working muscles, while the rest eventually diffuses out of the muscles and into the blood. After entering the bloodstream, the lactate is primarily either converted to glucose in the liver or used as fuel by the muscles and the heart.

Meet the Committee



Janet McRoberts
Chairperson



Colin Mackay
Treasurer



Jackie Stewart
Secretary



Peter Jennings
Assistant Secretary



Rob Taylor
Men's Captain

Started running in April 1983. Completed first marathon in Aberdeen 5 months later in a time of 3.33.52. Looking back I didn't expect to still be running 26 years on. In 1989 I was part of the group who formed Metro Aberdeen Running Club acting as team captain in 91, 92 and 93. Some of my Metro highlights are finishing 3rd in the Malta Half Marathon, running the Aberdeen 10km in 31:21, and winning the Bennachie Hill Race 3 years in a row. Team events at both Local and National team events include the Edinburgh to Glasgow road relay where Team Metro finished in 7th place. I am looking forward to the coming year as team Captain, and hope that my experience will be of benefit to other members.

Rob



Claire Smith
Women's Captain

I joined the club in January 2006, as I thought it would be better to run in a group rather than running myself. I certainly don't train any more days than I use to but I certainly train differently. As I mentioned at the AGM I feel the club is great for support and encouragement and helps I achieve the goals that you might not have even considered had you not joined up. Along with training with Metro I also teach fitness classes which I feel compliments your running by adding in a bit of cross training. Whether it's a circuit class, spin or just simple body conditioning I would definitely say it all goes along to making you a stronger runner. Ask for details!!!!

Claire



Andrea Canale

I joined the club in 2007 after completing the New York marathon in November 2006. Having only actually started running in 2006, I seem to have spent the last 2 years marathon training with my next challenge being London 2010 for which I have gained a "good for age" entry. I really enjoy being part of Metro as it has certainly allowed me to become a better runner as well as meeting some new friends who I can share my long runs on a cold Saturday morning with followed of course, by a nice hot cuppie!

Andrea



Donald Simpson

I joined Metro after getting into a running rut and wanted a way to improve. I spotted the Metro web site and although daunting at first decided to give it a go. After only 6 months at Metro I had achieved personal bests at all distances with the support and advice from coaches and fellow members. I have now been a member for over 3 years (feels longer...joke!) and I feel it has not only helped my running but others aspects of my life! My running ambition is to complete the 5 marathon majors London, Berlin, Boston, New York and Chicago. 3 down 2 to go.

Donald

Final exposé of the committee's dubious background will appear in the next edition of the newsletter.



Niku Millot



Polly Tandy



Rowena Dustan



Steve Forbes

Race Fixtures

- 01 Jun Krunce Series - Race 3 of 6
02 Jun Auld Toun 10K Road Race
03 Jun Aberdeenshire Disability Sport 5k run
05 Jun Scolty Hill race and junior races
05 Jun Crimond Gala 10K Fun Run
05 Jun ASICS Haddington 5 mile
05 Jun Benbecula Half Marathon
05 Jun Strathallan 5 Mile Road Rac
06 Jun Race for Life - Glasgow
06 Jun Run for Scotland 5K
06 Jun Kinloss to Lossiemouth half marathon
08 Jun The Running Shop Beach 10K Fun Run
09 Jun The Roseisle Forest 4 miles
09 Jun Jog Scotland 5K Challenge, Hazlehead
12 Jun Caledonian Challenge (12&13 June)
12 Jun Skye Half Marathon
12 Jun Pittencrieff Park 5K
12 Jun Traprain Law Hill Race
13 Jun Peebles Beltane 10K and Junior 3K
13 Jun Race for Life - Edinburgh
13 Jun Dunfermline City Half Marathon
13 Jun The Mabie Forest 10K
13 Jun Moray 5k Summer Challenge
13 Jun Hoy Half Marathon Orkney
14 Jun Portobello 4 Mile Road Race
17 Jun Balmedie Beach Bash
17 Jun Cosmic Summer Series race (2of 4)
18 Jun Templeton Trail Race Dundee
19 Jun Balmoral Half Marathon
19 Jun Highland Cross Charity Duathlon
19 Jun Race for Life - Dundee
19 Jun Oldmeldrum Sports 5 Mile multi terrain race
19 Jun West Highland Way Race
20 Jun The 7 Hills of Edinburgh - The Challenge
20 Jun Arbroath 10K
20 Jun Dundee Half Marathon
20 Jun Race for Life - Fife
20 Jun Race for Life - Dundee
20 Jun Glen Moray 10 Mile & 10k Road Races
20 Jun FFT Knockburn Standard Triathlon
20 Jun Glen Moray 10 mile and 10k Road Race
20 Jun Peterhead Lifeboat Family Fun Run
23 Jun The Quarrelwood Run
26 Jun Eagle Crag Hill Race
26 Jun Finella Hill Race
26 Jun Eildon 2 Hills Race
27 Jun Follow the Herring XIV 10K
27 Jun The Ythan Challenge
27 Jun Falkland Hill Race
27 Jun Kevin's Day 10k and 3k Fun Run
28 Jun AAAC 10,000 metres club championship track race
03 Jul Barrathon - Isle of Barra Half Marathon
03 Jul The Corrieyairack Challenge
03 Jul Gairloch Highland Games Hill Race
03 Jul Luss Highland Games Hill Race
03 Jul Meall-an-T-Suidhe Hill race
04 Jul Race for Life - Aberdeen
04 Jul Half Ben Nevis Race
04 Jul Stonehaven Half Marathon and Ury Estate 3K race and Fun Run
06 Jul Krunce Series - 4 of 6
07 Jul Brig Bash 5 miles - Bridge of Earn
10 Jul Big Fun Run 5K Stirling
10 Jul Isle of Harris Half Marathon & Fun Run
10 Jul The Creag Choinnich Challenge 3 mile, 538m
10 Jul Forres Highland Games 10K Road Race
10 Jul David Shepherd Memorial Glamaig Hill Race
11 Jul The Famous Grouse Crieff 10K
11 Jul Big Fun Run 5K Aberdeen
11 Jul Heart of the Park Challenge 2010
11 Jul Brora 10k
15 Jul Mither Tap Race
17 Jul Big Fun Run 5K Dundee
17 Jul Tominabat Hill Race
17 Jul The Clyde Stride 40 mile trail race
17 Jul Laurencekirk Gala Tower 5k Hill Race
18 Jul Kelso 10K
18 Jul Big Fun Run 5K Perth
24 Jul Big Fun Run 5K Glasgow
25 Jul Big Fun Run 5K Edinburgh
25 Jul Ballater 10 Miles Road Race
28 Jul Killin Hill Race
28 Jul Turnhouse Hill Race
31 Jul Ben Rinnes 5 Tops Hill Rac
31 Jul Dollar Hill Race
01 Aug Dyce Half Marathon (A Metro Aberdeen Race)

Full details of all races
can be found at -

www.born2run.co.uk
www.scottishathletics.org.uk and
www.runnersworld.co.uk

