

WESHAM ROAD RUNNERS



OCTOBER 2020

October 2020

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Welcome

Welcome....to our October Edition of Wesham Road Runners Magazine.

As we are now clearly in Autumn, I am sure we have all been reflecting with a certain sadness on the events that we have not been able to take part in over the last seven months and the focus on training for competition that has been lost. We all understand though that these restrictions are in place for the right reasons and we have been able to focus on our local activities in a socially distanced way at Wesham. It has been encouraging to see our members keeping active by undertaking virtual events and taking part in our handicap series and long may this continue during these unprecedented times.

This month's magazine is full of interesting articles covering a wide range of topics including members own personal running experiences and memories from various races and different terrain runs.

I hope to see you at one of our events over the coming weeks, when you feel the time is right for you and in the meantime please do stay fit, stay healthy and stay safe.

Enjoy the read.....

Peter



Peter Rooney. Chairman of Wesham Road Runners



Northern Relays

Northern Athletics Road Relays

One of the highlights on our Club calendar is the Northern Athletics Relays; a chance for us as an Athletics Club to line up against the best teams in the region.

My first experience in these events was at Blackpool in 2014 when Men's Captain Garry convinced me to run; and what an experience.

Going out as first runner in our team was certainly a baptism of fire but with support from other Club members it was something I embraced.

As the nerves kicked in I asked the official if it was too late to enter the fun run! My sense of humour fires into overdrive when I'm nervous!! On finishing my leg with only two runners behind me I definitely gave Garry on leg 2 some work to do, but as a team we got the job done. The finishing sprint takes place on the track & with friends bellowing support on the home straight it certainly gets the adrenaline flowing.

Never once at that point did I think that a couple of years later it would be my job (with Kerry) to rally the troops.

The admin involved in these events is quite complicated; cut off times for arranging a "pool" of runners, more deadlines to select runners from that pool & then a final declaration process. Not to mention the pressure of hoping the paperwork is all in order on arrival at registration.....never do I want to hear over the tannoy "would the team manager of Wesham Road Runners report to the stewards".

Over the past few years we've managed to attract an excellent turnout, usually taking around 36 runners plus a support crew. With initial help & support from Garry I think the events have been successful & whilst trying to remain competitive we've also attempted to remember the spirit in which our Club operates.

A big Thankyou must go to Kerry who through-



out the past 3 years has worked closely alongside me as Captain but also to the members who continually show a desire to enter these events.

At Manchester last year it was remarked to me by two officials how impressed they were by our Club's turnout. It was also noted how so many of our runners not only supported each other in their running but also cheered other runners who had been deserted by their team mates.

This for me was one of my proudest moments as a Captain.

So hopefully we will be able to enter these events again next year; I'm sure we're all desperate to get racing again.



Stuart Topping

Age Related Championship

How does it work -I have been asked to give an explanation of how the age related championship works. Age related is a means of comparing performances between runners of different ages and genders. Anyone who has run a parkrun will notice that as well as a time there is also a percentage figure this figure is your age graded performance the higher the percentage the better the performance.

There is a complicated formula for working out age graded performances but we don't have to worry about that. The tables I use are www.howardgrubb.co.uk/athletics.

Using these tables if you put in gender distance time and click on age grade it gives you your percentage for that race. So the runner with the highest percentage is number 1 in that race runner with second highest percentage is number 2 and so on. Also using these tables gives you the time you would have run at your peak. Using myself as an example in the recent virtual 5k I ran 22:39 as a 71 year old using the tables gives me a percentage of 77.92% and a age adjusted time of 16:29 in the same virtual 5k stuart topping ran 20:28 as a 49 year old which equates to a percentage of 70.85% and an age adjusted time of 18:09 so because I had a higher percentage I would be placed in front of Stuart in the championship even though he has run a faster time.

The championship consists of 12 races of varying distances with the best 5 performances to count. The championship is for men over 40 and ladies over 35

Hope this makes the championship a little clearer.

Alan Hudson

Percentage	Standard
100%	World record
90%+	World class
80%+	National class
70%+	Regional class
60%+	Local class

Night Running

Over the last few years training for the Lakeland 100, we have been getting accustomed to running trails in the dark, enjoying the fun of the trail illuminated by our head torches. It gives a sense of freedom way beyond daytime, no sharing the trails with the masses, lots of spaces in car parks, far more wildlife to see and the chance to get lost. When I say lost, slightly of route is probably a kinder term.

So as the country was slowly eased out of the tight lockdown, we decided to get back out on the Cumbrian fells that we had missed for months. First up was our favourite place in the world, Great Langdale.

We usually set off late at night/early morning and then run through the sunrise. So off we went up the deserted M6. Van parked, running vest on and headtorches blazing, we set off on low level trails through Great Langdale to Elterwater. We sadly didn't quite get peaceful trails, after being locked up so long many people had come to this area for a spot of semi wild

camping.

Through Ambleside we trundled and then started the climb up onto the Kirkstone Pass. The weather by this point had really deteriorated and when we stopped at the car park for a nibble of a buttie, visibility was down to a couple of feet. The rain was absolutely bouncing off our faces and it was now bloody cold.



Quick decision time and we decided on being sensible. Avoid going into the high fells and retrace our steps. Dropping back down to Ambleside the weather returned to its low level calmness, giving us a lovely run back into Langdale after a stop in the park at Ambleside to scoff our food, while watching the daylight slowly win its fight against the cloak of darkness that had been enveloping us for the last few hours. The ridge lines appearing tinted with a stunning pink glow.

So not what we had quite planned but a safe 21.5 miles, in mainly peaceful solitude.

Our next adventure was to go back and do the full route from the above attempt. This time we got to the car park at the top of the Kirkstone Pass in perfect weather.

We ran on the trails along the pass to Brotherswater, not seeing a soul. Slow going at times as it is a gnarly section but great fun. Then a switch to the other side of the road to





run the trails through to Patterdale and Glenridding. Big climb commenced as the day arrived and the darkness slipped away to the other side of our planet.

Up at Grisedale Tarn we managed to count wild campers well into double figures. They had just started to rouse from their slumbers as we headed to the descent into Grasmere. We had already stood watching the lazy sun casting its first warming glow upon the fellside, as these campers snored their night away.

The long descent came and went and a relaxing run through fields and some road through Grasmere, dragged us merrily on our way to our return to Great Langdale. What a fabulous night, barely passing a car or person during 31 miles of soul cleansing trail running.

We had entered the Virtual Grand Tour of Skiddaw to help support the race organiser and decided our next night run should be on some of the route. So off to Caldbeck we went in the middle of what started as a starlit night.

First couple of miles takes you out the village and up to the fellside for the climb up High Pike. I had forgot to put the route on my watch and had taken the wrong OS map, so comedy capers commenced.

We have done this route many times and it is very simple, well it is in daytime, with rain and clag taking visibility down to near zero it turned out to be a little different!

About halfway up High Pike a heavy drizzle came in and the cloud base dropped below us. I knew there was a little tricky turn onto a trod up to the summit, so was really concentrating. All you could see was misty rain in the headtorch and about a metre of path ahead, everything else was just total blackness.

Now I really don't care that much if I screw up and die on the fell but I really don't want to be the cause of that happening to Angela, so my brain was working overtime as we slogged up the steep climb. One wrong turn was soon realised and we quickly hit the trod and reached the summit shelter safely. My word it was cold, rainy and windy up there.

The path down is very obvious in daylight, not so in the dark and misty dead of night. Knowing the route we got on the path from the top, maybe 50 metres later it was obvious it was no longer under our feet! We know we



drop to meet a path that crosses, that we then should take, so carried on until we decided we must have somehow missed it. So up we went again to the trig point.

This time I got the map out, so we could drop down on a compass bearing, this is when I realised this map stops short of covering High Pike by a few miles! Working from this map I still could do a pretty rough bearing that should hit the cross path. Off we went again, this time with my trusty compass.

The dark and mist does funny things to you brain and confidence though. After a while, again somehow coming off the path, we decided to head up and try again. This time we followed a little well used trod that came across us, hit the path we should have been on and finally got ourselves back on route.

Now cold from all the dithering about, we made sure we cracked on and enjoyed the run over to Lingy Hut for some much needed food. Light was slowly peeking through the very heavy sky as we headed to Skiddaw House, by the time we reached it the daylight had opened up the views for us to gauge our next move.

The plan was shelved for summiting Skiddaw as we couldn't even see it and the wind was even wild low down. So we took the easy low level trails around the back of Blencathra over Udale Common back to the beautiful village of Caldbeck. 24 rather interesting miles done in some awful weather, very invigorating.

The last run I will bore you about has another slight navigation error, again thanks to clag and my lack of paying attention, even with the route on my watch!

Late night as usual, this time running from Pooley Bridge through to Askham, back up to the Cockpit and over to Howtown and Martindale. Done in the dark with no problems, phew! Good yomp up Boredale Hause and over to Angle Tarn, still going smooth as silk.

Stopped here for a pork pie and noticed the cloud encircling us rapidly, all the way down to the valley floor. Not a problem though, we have done the route before, I have a map and compass, route on my watch and you can't really go wrong once you hit High Street, can you? Of course we bloody well can!



Followed a trod to see if I could spot the path on the other side of the ridge. Once on top of the ridge I still couldn't see owt through the clag. Back I went for some decision making.

As we decided what to do, a little hole appeared in the cloud and I recognised Haweswater down to our right, we knew then we had to retrace our steps and find the point the path split and we had taken the wrong one. Off we went, few hundred metres later I spotted a cairn through the mists, that was our path.

All the way back to Pooley Bridge we ran on some amazingly flooded paths, they had been dry when we set off. We enjoyed the most fabulous descent, splashing our way down like kids. We only passed two other people along the whole of this area, poor lasses literally jumped in the air as we flew past them, appearing from nowhere as we had slipped invisibly through the rain and thick cloud.

It was a tough 29 miles, with a huge amount of ascent, in some truly awful weather but by God did it make us feel alive. In a country that is so scared of risk, we seem to have lost the ability to live a full life. Nights like this make me realise why I am happy to take risk to live my best life, living half a life, isn't a proper life for me. Give me lonely high fells with Angela any day of the week over a comfy hibernation.

Running free, the darkness shrouding you in its sometimes ominous veil of threat of the unknown, is so life affirming. We have at times been well outside our comfort zones but you know what, I absolutely loved it. I wonder if Angela did, ha!



Charles and Angela Colby



My favourite race

It was a hot Spring day in 2016 and not long after my 40th birthday when I took part in my 1st marathon. The race? Liverpool Rock 'n' Roll part of the global Rock 'n' Roll Marathon Series. The good news is that over the course of the weekend, you could opt to run a half marathon instead of the Marathon or 5k the day before as an easy leg stretch.

Liverpool is famous for its iconic buildings and friendly people and it didn't disappoint. Starting off on a glorious Sunday morning from the Royal Albert Dock, the route initially takes in the beautiful buildings of the Three Graces. The scenic route has Superlambananas and a challenging climb en route to the two football stadiums in the first half.

Each mile there are bands/solo singers to cheer you on and coupled with the support along the route from the locals this makes it an

amazing run. The beautiful lush green parks, the Cavern Club and Penny Lane all feature as well as passing statues of footballers and famous Liverpudlians.

Did I get my best time? No! Absolutely not. It was too hot and at mile 17 I stopped to help a lady who had fallen. Being a nurse, I felt I couldn't run past although I'm sure my current coaches would tell me not to help anyone or anything now and focus on my race. Just ask Stuart Topping about the sheep I went back to rescue with my hubby after a run one Sunday morning this summer!

Liverpool Rock 'n' Roll Marathon is an iconic race and I would thoroughly recommend

Tanya Shaw

My favourite race

For a good few years, I have always watched runners coming through Freck on the Sunday of our Clubday weekend and taking part in the oldest continual half marathon in the Country. The event is held in the afternoon and always falls on Father's Day.

Julie had run it a few times and always enjoyed the great support around the village and so when I thought about running a half marathon, for me this was the natural one to do. As a bonus, I decided that I would try and raise some funds for Cancer Research in memory of my Dad who had passed away a few years earlier around Father's Day.

Training went well and I was glad to have the company of my good running pal, Robert Danson, who was also training for his first half. Longer distance training runs became the norm and we completed the total distance a couple of weeks before the event. For me, it was also helpful to be able to run from home to Parkrun, complete the course and then run home – a distance of 13 miles!

On the day, the weather was very warm, and whilst I had never seen myself as being competitive, I was looking out to see who else was taking part from Wesham as the event was on the Age Related and Road Running Championships. Additionally, I was eyeing up my Bronze standard which required me to do the run in under 2.02.

As is often the case, I got swept along with all the local euphoria and set off too fast, something for which I was to pay the price later on in the race! Going along the undulating route up to Wrea Green I felt comfortable and no niggles at all (I had been mindful of the leg break I had suffered less than two years earlier). Heading out through Moss Side I was still feeling reasonable, but I saw another Wesham runner (who will remain nameless) in front of me and who had decided to walk for a while. Checking that he was ok as I passed him it sowed a bad seed in me – he's a good runner and if it's ok for him to walk then it wouldn't do me any harm if I needed to pause for a few moments – fatal thought! Heading back along the main A584 is a long arduous route and that is when I thought I would

just walk for a moment or two which is what I did. This was not a wise decision and after a minute or so I could hear the words going through my head – you are a member of a Running Club, not a walking club! I managed to get going again and kept steadily moving forward. Arriving back in the Village I put a spurt on as I ran past The Coach & Horses as there were great supporters there who really encourage the runners.

Heading along Green Lane was a struggle as cramp was setting in but I was determined to keep going and turning into Bush Lane was a truly welcoming sight with lots of local vocal support..... and the finish line. Delighted to have completed my first half in 1.56.33, some three minutes behind my training partner, and to be there to welcome Julie back too! As a bonus I had also made it a day to remember by raising over £2,000 for a worthwhile cause.

The Rooneys and Dansons completed our post run analysis that evening over a meal and a few drinks and we were lucky enough to celebrate with Young Rob, who had taken the win in 70.26 – Wow!

Peter Rooney



Presentation Dinner

Whenever we normally see our fellow Wesham runners, they are wearing club kit or other running attire, but there is one evening in the year when this all changes.....our Annual Dinner Dance and Presentation Evening which is traditionally held on the last Saturday of November, on the same date as our Wesham 10K Winter Race. It is the social highlight of the year and sees members and their partners spruce themselves up, cast off their trainers and put on their glad rags!

Members come together at a local venue to recognise each other's running achievements in a variety of categories including our road and fell race championships in each age category together with our age related competition, to name a few. During the evening, we also learn of the winner of the most improved runner award as well as an award given by our coaches for the runner who has shown the most commitment to improving their fitness by using our structured coaching sessions. The presentations culminate with the announcement of the

much coveted Chairman's award which is given to the individual who has contributed to the overall success of Wesham Road Runners as a club, during the year – in the recent past, the recipi-



ents of this award have included Stuart Topping and David Taylor.

After the formal part of the evening, everyone moves into party mode with many trying to achieve a PB on the dance floor, with recent contenders including Mark (snake hips) Renshall, Garry (keep on running) Barnett, Lee (let's do the Fosters walk) Barlow and Alan (I'm not stopping) Taylor. Wesham is of course a big family and last year saw us all joined together to try and form one of the longest Conga trails ever seen snaking around the hotel!

Whilst we are unable to hold our Dinner Dance this year due to the current situation, we have booked ahead for another great evening on Saturday 27th November 2021 at The Villa, Wrea Green. Now is the time to get the date in your calendar.....and get practicing those dance moves!! A guaranteed fun and entertaining evening.



Julie Rooney

Committee Chat

Dinner Dance

You won't be surprised to hear that we have made the decision to cancel the Presentation Evening for 2020, given the ongoing pandemic. Get next year's date in the calendar though, Saturday 27th November 2021.

WRR Magazine - tell us your story

We want to hear from you, our members! We are looking for volunteers to tell us their story for the next edition of the magazine. We'd like to hear about your running story, whether it's your best or worst event, on road/off-road, anything goes. As we can't really race at the moment, we want you to share with us any events that you have done in the past. It doesn't have to be pages and pages, just something to keep us all motivated and remind us of what the good old days we like before Covid!

Darker Nights

As the nights are starting to draw in, please make sure that if you are running of an evening, that you wear hi-viz clothing. If you have any lights, then these are also great to make sure you are seen.

Local Lockdown

With regards to the latest local lockdown, we have consulted with our Covid-19 working party for clarification on what this means.

As we meet at the Cricket Club, which is our Covid secure environment, it does not affect Monday night sessions. However you must continue to book on before attending the club, maintain social distance at all times and do not run in groups of more than 6.

We have had to alter the structured sessions in that we can no longer have groups of 12. Therefore Wednesday sessions will be reduced to a maximum of 5 athletes plus a coach, but there will be 2 sessions available. See the website for what session is available each week.

Please ensure that you do not attend the club or any sessions if you feel unwell or have any symptoms associated with Corona virus.

