



Up and *running*

9th October 2019 Issue 4

Famous Face from the Past—Steve Crane

The nights are drawing in and Christmas is not too far away, it can mean one thing - it must soon be time for the Bedford Harriers Half Marathon. Sunday, 1st December 2019 is the date of this year's race, but we thought it would be interesting to take a brief look at the history of this great race.

1985 was a busy year for the Bedford Harriers – they formed as a running club and also organised a local marathon and half marathon. There had been races of these distances in Bedford before, but this was the first time our Club had been in charge of proceedings.

The races were held on the 31st October and reported in the local paper 'The Bedfordshire Times' as a double page spread. The races were originally located in Great Barford but moved in 2004 due to the popularity of the event.

A famous athlete of the time Dr Ron Hill MBE competed as a special visitor in the 1985 event gaining 14th place in a respectable time. The name Ron Hill may be niggling at the back of your minds – indeed it is same Mr Hill as in Ronhill Outdoor & Sports Company which he set up in 1970. Dr Ron was quite a runner. He is famous for a streak of 52 years and 39 days running at least 1 mile per day from 1964 ending in 2017.

Since 1985, the race has run every year and now starts and finishes at Wootton Upper School, as a single lap undulating race. The record for the course stands as - : Male - Paul Martelletti who completed it in 1:07:53 in 2009 and Female - Tracey Morris whose time of 1:16:36 was set in 2005.



The photograph shown was in 2005 with Bedford Town Band who were invited to play some seasonal music before the race started as it was the 20-year club anniversary. So, dust off your shoes for December 1st and enter or volunteer to marshal if you can and make it another great Harriers event.

Dates for the diary

- 9 October - **Run and Revitalise Run/Walk** - Meet at The Pheasant pub in Brickhill at 6:30pm
- 12 October - **Great Denham parkrun Harriers Takeover**
- 19 October - **Millennium parkrun Harriers Takeover**
- 1 December 2019 – **Bedford Harriers Half Marathon – Entries now open!**
- 18 January 2020 - **Awards night**
- 8 March 2020 - **Grizzly 2020 – hills aplenty**
- 29 March 2020 – **Bedford Harriers Oakley 20**
- 26 April 2020 - **Virgin London Marathon**
- 13 June 2020 - **35th Anniversary Celebration** - Bedford Rugby Club

Club Championship Races

- 13 October 2019 – **Great Eastern Half Marathon** (Peterborough)
- 19 October 2019 – **Endurance Life Suffolk Ultra**

Multisport Championship Races

- 20th October – **Cowman Duathlon**

3 Counties Cross-Country

- 3rd November 2019 - **Wellingborough and District**
- 24th November 2019 - **Leighton Fun Runners**
- 8th December 2019 - **Wootton Road Runners**
- 15th December 2019 - **North Herts Road Runners**
- 12 January 2020 - **Dunstable Road Runners**

Email from Australia - via Steve Crane

We thought it would be nice to share this email from Allyson Lindsay in Australia, that was sent to Steve Crane regarding Dea Ditchfield.

Hi,

I'm Allyson Lindsay from Australia. I participated in the Ironman 70.3 World Championship in Nice last weekend and one of your athletes, Dea Ditchfield, helped me up the finishing chute and across the line. I was going quite well on the final lap of the run - or so I thought - but unfortunately I have no memory from about the 20km mark on the run until coming to some time later in the medical tent covered in ice. With a high temperature. I got Dea's bib number from my finisher photos and saw in the results she's a Bedford Harriers AC athlete. I wanted to thank her for her kindness - and to be honest, I'd also like to apologise because I totally ruined her finish line photos

Are you able to forward this email to Dea for me? I'd be happy to hear back from her if she'd like to email me back. It's also fine if she doesn't want to - whatever she's comfortable with.

Hi Dea - thank you so much for your selfless kindness in helping me up the finishing chute in Nice. I'm truly sorry that I ruined your chance to get a good shot of yourself crossing the finish line. That was such an epic event and you deserved to have a good shot of you celebrating your incredible achievement. When I bought the photos I was blown away by how supportive you were to stay with me that whole time. I'm on the mend now and managed to finish - thanks to you and that lovely volunteer whose name I'll never know. I hope you enjoyed the race last weekend and that you're recovering well. Thank you again.

*Kindest regards,
Allyson (bib 720)*

Forest of Light Run - Jo Smythe

On 20th September, five Harriers made their way to Thetford Forest for the Forest of Light Run. The course was a 3k loop around the forest in the dark and the aim was to complete as many laps as you could in the 2 hours from 8pm - 10pm. Participants were asked to wear head or body torches, lots of people were in fancy dress and one participant had covered himself completely in fairy lights! The route wasn't lit up completely but there were illuminated sections every 400m or so that were quite beautiful. At the end of each lap there was the option to run down the finish funnel or grab a drink and continue for another 3k.

Simon ran alone whilst Jo, Lawrence, Tony and Vicky decided to run together. The first lap was very congested and therefore quite slow but the field thinned out by the second lap and we were able to complete the remainder of the run at our own pace. In fact, as the majority of participants were fun-runners very few people continued after the first hour at all.



The Marshals kept us entertained by singing and dancing which we really appreciated - one marshal danced and wiggled his arrow for the whole two hours! - and we got a Bedford

Harriers shout-out over the PA system when we completed our first lap which was a nice touch. It was the first time the event had taken place and there were a couple of teething problems - they had to delay the start by 15 minutes to get everyone registered beforehand, the congestion early on was frustrating and there weren't enough medals to go around although thankfully we all got ours. However, those things are easily fixed and otherwise it was a very good event.

Cumbria Way Ultra 2019 - Shane Gallaher

73 Miles (117km), 10,000 feet of ascent. Saturday, 14th September 2019

I love the Lake District. I am there at least ten times a year. Aside from all the slow-moving people-movers, packed with those walking family types, those caravans which are usually stopped in some passing place, "brewing-up", and bus-loads of pub-crawling tourists queuing up to order a pint or buy gingerbread, or some other Lakeland produce, the Lake District presents itself as the ideal running path. On this visit, I was determined to establish if I could traverse the entire length of it, following the Cumbria Way, faster than all those people-movers, caravans and pub-crawlers! All I needed to do was to stay with all those ultra-fit ultra-runners.

Registration for the Cumbria Way Ultra was conducted late on Friday night after driving the 6 hours of congested motorways. Kit was checked, I was given my free gel, thanks to one of the sponsors, had my tracker strapped to my running vest-pack, and was given leave to make my way back to the hotel for a few hours of sleep.

Race day: after a thirty-minute drive to the start of the Cumbria Way in Ulverston and a 5:30am pre-race briefing, runners were started in a surreal serenity of silence; the starter reminding runners and the assembled supporters moments before the final countdown that we were in a residential neighbourhood, and it was 6 o'clock in the morning. I questioned to myself why can't we cheer, reasoning 'Don't all lake-landers get up at 4:30 to go milk cows?' But my now alert consciousness answered this by declaring farmers no longer exist and I almost let out a cry of "to hell with all those holiday-makers, I want cheering!" My enthusiasm, coupled with a few days of tapering shot me to the front of the pack, joining with what I can only describe as people who looked like they have done this before, or more accurately, do this every day. All the advice I had received prior to the race; *don't start too fast, don't get excited, don't run faster than your marathon pace*, was stupidly left at the start line, and I was gunning it! Rookie mistake number one. Yes, this was my first 100k ultra, and I was learning quick.



Going into the first checkpoint at Coniston, 25k into the race, I was feeling comfortable and in 5th place. I wished my running partner for the last hour good luck as he ran off, not realizing that I was making rookie mistake number two; *don't spend too much time at aid-stations, especially at the start of a long ultra!* Before I could scoff down my third helping of watermelon, and second handful of vegan jelly-babies, I had lost three more positions to clearly experienced runners. Never mind, I thought, as I continued, now slowing my pace on account of being alone and fully immersed in the stunning scenery of a fine and rare cloud-free day in the Lakes. Before too long I had covered 45k, and had reached the New Dungeon Gill, the second aid station, and in 8th position. The volunteers there were a friendly lot, and I just wanted to say thanks, and spend some quality time with them. In doing so, I slipped another three positions. I am a slow learner.



Next up was the steepest ascent of the day, up over Stake Pass and into Langstrath. Going up was literally a fast walk in the park, but on descending the other side, I started to stride out a little too much and first the knee started to wobble, and then the groin pulled! Rookie mistake number three; *short-quick strides on steep descents – don't over-stride!* I had become not so competitive, the goal of finishing in the top 10, or in 15 hours was put-to-bed, and I was in limp-mode. 60k had passed, which was the longest I had ever run in one go, but I still had almost 60k to go. My pace halved, and I reached the third aid-station in Keswick after forging through a deep-dark tunnel of pain. Rookie mistake number four; *no matter what, stay positive. Don't be negative, and for god's sake, don't let others know that you are feeling sorry for yourself!* Sonia and the kids were there to support me, and suggestions of retirement, fueled by my negativity, were metaphorically thrown back into my face, forcing my tired body to raise to the challenge and continue up over High Pike. Darkness had descended upon the fells, and I was now moving at a quarter my original pace. It was nice, however, to now be in the last marathon of the day, and in the company of others, who were moving at pretty much the same pace. I didn't know what this pace was, as I had made the fifth rookie mistake of a newbie ultra-runner; I forgot to "turn-down" the GPS accuracy/frequency of my watch. It was no longer tracking me, and it had joined me in limp mode, and for the remainder of the race, I had no way of knowing how far I had remaining. This however raised my spirits, as I was no longer under the watchful eye of my watch. Amazingly, the pain of the groin also eased around this time, as long as I didn't increase the stride. It also started to rain, but I didn't care. Things were looking up.

It is surprising to recall as I write this that the next few hours just flew by. I was happy, I was moving, and I was certain that I was going to finish my first 100k ultra before the cut-off, even if I had a few hours sleep and walked the remainder of the way. In the end, I didn't sleep, and even managed to take back a few lost positions, and at 4:30 Sunday morning, 22.5 hours after starting, I stumbled into the courtyard of the Carlisle Castle, finishing in 38th place. While completing my first 100k run/race was an accomplishment, nothing will ever surpass the euphoria of running the length of the Lake District, in under a day, without having my pace slowed by any walking-family types, caravans or pub-crawling tourist. Job done.

Harriers Hill Training Weekend, 27-29 September 2019 - Elaine Massie

We all gathered in Ye Olde Nag's Head in Castleton for dinner on Friday night and met each other, along with Colin Papworth, our Head Coach for the weekend. We enjoyed a lovely meal and headed back to our accommodation. Most of us stayed in YHA Losehill on the outskirts of Castleton, a comfortable hostel which was more than adequate for our stay. Most importantly, it served a hearty breakfast and had a drying room - a facility we would use over the weekend!

Saturday morning we met for a short introductory chat and met Jon, Caroline and Nic, the other coaches. Our kit was checked and we were able to try some trail shoes and running poles - I use poles for hiking, but I've never tried them for running, so I gave them a go.

We headed out in the wind and rain to try out some techniques for running up and down steep, off-road hills - I was pleasantly surprised at how easy I managed to get up and down hills that I would never have thought about walking up and down, let alone jogging up and down!

A quick trip to Castleton's bakery to stock up on lunch (the pork pies were fabulous!) and then we headed off into the hills. We split into 2 groups - the faster runners making up one group and the rest of us of mixed ability the other. We headed up Cave Dale, a steep, rocky path and across the ridge towards Mam Tor - a 517m high hill that was once a Bronze Age fort. The second group split into 2 groups according to ability. My group was promised a cave to have lunch in: it turns out the word "cave" has a different meaning in the Peak District! A dip in the ground provided shelter from the wind, but the lack of roof meant we still got wet!

We got to the top of Mam Tor and the weather cleared on our way down, so some of us continued along the ridge to Losehill and enjoyed the scenery and the hills.



Hot showers awaited our return to the youth hostel and our kit was squeezed into the very full drying room. I took the opportunity to try some of Colin's demo trail shoes for Sunday - there's no drying room good enough to dry my shoes out overnight after a day of splashing through puddles! Saturday night we enjoyed a second group meal in another of Castleton's pubs, Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese. Unfortunately some of the group were waiting in another local pub, the Cheshire Cheese, but the confusion was soon resolved!

On Sunday morning we met at the Grindleford Station and headed up to the ridge line through a picturesque wood. The weather started out relatively nice and we had a good run up to the top of the first tor. Unfortunately the weather closed in and from there on it was somewhat wet - even the locals said it was an unusually wet weekend, even for the Peaks!



Again we split into 2 groups - the first running slightly further up Higger Tor and along the ridge, while my group went up Higger Tor and then back down into the valley. Both groups met at the café at the National Trust Longshaw Estate for much needed hot chocolate and Longshaw Slice (AKA Bakewell slice). The rain really started to fall just in time for our trot, which became a walk, down the valley back to Grindleford. It was a really pretty route through a woodland and my group went down to the bottom of the gorge across a raging stream, which is normally a trickle at this time of year!

Soaked through, we arrived at Grindleford Station Café, where we dried off, enjoyed a steaming plate of Yorkshire pudding, chips and gravy and a mug of tea. We said our goodbyes and headed back south to the flatlands of Bedfordshire!

Whilst the weekend was somewhat wet (to say the least!), it was really enjoyable and I for one learned a lot about running up and down hills, as well as a lot about myself. I now have the confidence to run across terrain I would have tippy-toed around at a snail's pace before the weekend. I found running with poles really useful and you may see me practicing with my hiking poles around Bedford! We met Harriers we haven't met before and made some really nice friends. I'm looking forward to the next weekend in the Peaks with Colin and his team. A huge thanks to Gill Fullen for organising it, even though she wasn't able to attend - a little matter of Ironman Kona took her away from the Peaks!

Club Charity Mile

The Club Charity Mile was held on 7th August 2019. 55 Harriers ran the timed mile, with Adam Hills coming in first with a time of 5:20. £100.30 was raised for the club charity, Autism Bedfordshire.