

STRUGGLER'S POST



North Devon Marathon BY JULIE COLMAN

The 30th June saw one of the toughest marathons in the country take place around the north Devon Coastline. The South Molton Strugglers embraced this and fielded more runners than any other club and achieved results beyond their expectation. Furthermore, the half marathon which is equally as challenging (but just half the distance) also witnessed a fantastic strugglers field!

For those that have never run a marathon before they were facing one of the biggest challenges of their lives. Not only running the 26.2 miles but doing so over some of the steepest climbs North Devon has to offer. The Esplanade at Woolacombe provided the perfect setting for the start and finish of this challenging event and all runners head out to Baggy Point, along Croyde Beach and the coast path to Saunton taking in breathtaking views along the way. The course then climbs back to Croyde and along the coast path back to Woolacombe at which point all the half marathon runners can celebrate a fantastic run and enjoy a well deserved cream tea. For the marathon runners, the torture is just beginning as they run straight past the finish line towards Morthoe, Lee and Ilfracombe and the final 13.1 miles of their race. A carefully placed Beer station at Lee did not tempt many of the marathon runners as most refuelled on the more conventional bananas, lucozade and jelly babies whilst being cheered on by fantastic support all the way around.

Seasoned marathon runner and historical ultra runner Steve Abel was leading the strugglers charge in the marathon at half way sitting in 3rd place but the second half tested his stamina and youth prevailed as Paul Cooke aka "young horse" was the first struggler back in an unbelievable time of 3.44.01 in 6th place. Steve followed just 1 minute and 40 seconds later in 7th and also taking the 1st Vet 45 prize. Our leading lady Lucy Goodman was the next struggler across the line in 4.01.57 just 20 seconds off the first female and winning the senior lady prize. Male club captain Chris Murrin continued his exceptional marathon form following up from his London marathon run and Dartmoor Discovery ultra in a time of 4.09.07. After completing the run he said "The hardest yet the most enjoyable run I have done!" These four secured the team prize for the South Molton Strugglers for the second year in a row a remarkable achievement for such a tough marathon. Claire Campbell and Elaine Fields were the next to finish, Claire having run all of the North Devon Marathons to date and winning 1st Vet Female 50. Elaine faced the mighty North Devon hills for the first time and enjoyed every minute of it finishing in 4.22.46 only 8 minutes behind the experienced Claire. Richard Connet was hoping to secure a PB and he certainly did after weeks of solid training including an epic "trail ferret" training week. Crossing the line in 4.23.15, he beat club mate Chris Simpson coming back after months off due to injury who finished in 4.36.41. Richard said "Awesome trail marathon, everything from the perfect running conditions to the wonderful scenery, organisation and fantastic helpers made it a day to remember". Tina McCracken was a marathon virgin and opted for the North Devon Marathon as her first following a bit of pushing from fellow club mates. Taking on one of the toughest UK marathons as your first is pretty brave and finishing it in 4.42.11 is just incredible! Richard Horn was just behind Tina in 4.44.51. Strugglers chairman Nik Whalley also choose the North Devon Marathon as his first ever and almost enjoyed every minute! "Great run, well organised and brilliant support. Definitely back for more next year!" He pulled a muscle about sixteen miles in and completed the last ten miles with steely grit and determination having to walk at least half. But the strugglers are a tough bunch and Nik wasn't going to let the coastal hills defeat him - crossing the line in 5.01.23!

The half marathon runners put in an equally fantastic performance despite only one trophy coming our way for Richard Westcott in 2.04.55 and winning the Vet 60 age category. Jim Gould was the first struggler across the line in a time of 2.03.47 switching from the full marathon to the half due to limited training. Becky Hopkins was chasing his tail and was our first female to finish in 2.04.24. Caroline Shapland and Daisy Adams battled throughout with Caroline prevailing in 2.13.11 and Daisy in 2.16.51. Kate Kilburn and Polly Goodman continued the steady stream of strugglers across the line both taking on the challenging course for the first time. Kate crossed the line in 2.24.56 closely followed by Polly 2.27.25. Having said last year "I'm never doing that again" Tringa Sibthorpe finished in 2.31.40 and again made the same statement, no doubt next year will be on the start line again. Sarah Rogers, deep into marathon training for her August debut marathon finished in 2.40.19 and Amanda Adams in 2.50.12. Jon Hibberd and Sue Carter completed the Strugglers line up in the half marathon crossing the line in 2.57.59 and 3.04.01 respectively.

Not only were the strugglers represented in force in both distances but many also came down to cheer on their club mates highlighting what a fantastic club the South Molton Strugglers are.

The Welly 10 BY JULIE YOUNG

My first 10k race turned out not to be my finest hour (or 1 hour 14minutes and 4 seconds to be precise). I know the area well and was back on home turf. I knew it would be fairly hilly but thought my Devon training would be more than enough preparation. It would have been I'm sure, but something occurred that I had not yet encountered whilst running. Heat. It became clear to me in the first kilometer that this was a whole new ball game. I felt drained, my stomach felt queasy and I really wasn't sure I would be able to finish. I had to walk quite a bit which didn't help my morale and I felt undeserving to be wearing my Strugglers vest!

Anyway, after a good dowsing by a kind drinks station chap, I was temporarily revived enough to run a good stretch and felt better in the last 2 km. I didn't quite manage a sprint finish but it was the fastest I'd run all morning. So not a great run but I can only hope that for Taunton 10k it may have cooled down a little to give me a fighting chance a better time. Hats off to my fellow Strugglers on the day (Claire, Lucy, Naomi, Paul and Mike) you make it look so easy!

Upcomming Fixtures

21st Aug Three Bridges
24th Aug Jurassic Coast 10k
30th Aug Forest Flyer
7th Sept Bideford Bay 50k

First 6 Months Being A Struggler

BY JACK FRIENDSHIP

My first time at a strugglers meeting, it was the second week of the beginners course. Luckily I wasn't alone as Ross was also there for the first time in which we both took comfort. My first run with the beginners felt wonderful as we were all in the same boat to put nicely struggling together .which was a real help in getting me personally motivated, as we were all coming on and advance at the same time. I think it must have been the 4th week and it was snowing a little which half the group took as a sign to stop coming to the course but there were a few of us who stuck to it. Throughout the course I managed to get out by myself doing a few miles here and there, which I used to help make it easier but you're always pushed so it never felt easier.

Just before the course ended me, Ross and a few others paid are sub's and felt really welcome to the group and sue really supported us coming from the beginners group to hers. My first proper race was the Bampton to Tiverton at 7.1 miles almost killed me off but by the end of it and with coming last I strangely loved it. The second was the Bideford 10k nearly all flat and with a great atmosphere plus there were lots of cakes and the drinks was flowing which I have found to be the theme throughout most the events I have been to. The 3rd and the last race I have done to date was the Crediton 10k which was multi-terrain and boy oh boy did that deliver, easily one of the most difficult things I have done so far. Also with the relays alongside all of this which have been really fun. Two of the best points to come out of all of this since January are.

My fitness is second to none compared to January, and my job which happens to be a bit labour intensive feels so much more easier

second would be my weight loss since January not of course noticeable as I only see everyone one day a week but I have lost 2st and 7lb so far and its coming down all the time which I am chuffed about, apart from my part clothes not fitting me now. oh well ,a good excuse to go shopping.

I just would like to thank everyone for all the help and support you have all given me.



Sciatica Part 1: Piriformis Syndrome

BY JONATHAN LAWRENCE

I have a lot of patients that complain of attacks of sciatica. True Sciatica is a pain that comes from the buttock all the way down the back of the leg to the foot. It may be accompanied by pins and needles and or weakness in the leg.

Often pain in the buttock or part of the leg is described as sciatica but in all likelihood is nerve root pain caused in the base of the spine or pelvis.

There are many causes of sciatica from the (rarely) very serious such as atumour, to arthritis, prolapsed spinal discs and Piriformis syndrome.

Piriformis syndrome is caused by the Piriformis muscle, which is situated deep in the buttock going into spasm and pressing on the sciatic nerve. This muscle helps to rotate the hip outwards and overlies the large thick sciatic nerve. This syndrome can take a while to resolve, depending on the cause.

The muscle can go into spasm due to overuse, overstretching and from abnormal nerve signals as a result of mechanical problems in the low back.

In the case of the latter cause it may be resolved by manipulation of the low back. With muscle strain gentle stretching and massage can help along with bathing in Epsom salts.

To find out whether the Piriformis may the culprit lie on your back, pull the knee of the affected side up towards the opposite shoulder. Compare both sides. If you cant get the affected side as far and if you get a burning pain or pain in the leg then it has tested positive.

Repetitive, slow gentle stretching in this position may relieve the problem but if not consult your therapist.

Sometimes the symptoms can subside during running but if running aggravates then you need to rest.

Happy pain free running!

Results

Quantock Beast

PAUL COOKE 37:02 - 2ND OVERALL
NAOMI HUGHES 53:20

Wellington 10

NAOMI HUGHES 00:56:52 10K
PAUL COOKE 01:04:34 10 MILE
MIKE CLARK 01:06:03 10 MILE
JULIE YOUNG 01:14:04 10K
LUCY GOODMAN 01:17:18 10 MILE
CLAIRE CAMPBELL 01:22:06 10 MILE

Haytor Heller

PAUL COOKE 00:43:52
MIKE CLARK 00:47:47
PAUL MORGAN 00:50:07
LUCY GOODMAN 00:53:27
CHRIS SIMPSON 00:55:12
Nik WHALLEY 00:55:19
CHRIS MURRIN 00:55:35
RICHARD CONNETT 00:56:40
CLAIRE CAMPBELL 00:58:46
WILL ADAMS 00:59:39
DAISY ADAMS 01:03:59
GEOFF ADAMS 01:09:17
AMANDA ADAMS 01:23:03
ROSS DENNIS 01:28:22

Seaview 17

STEVE ABEL 02:48:30
CLAIRE CAMPBELL 03:28:12
EMMA HILL 05:07:34

Bath Running Festival

MIKE CLARK 02:05:48 1st!!!

An interview with ...

PAUL BRAYLEY

- 1. How/why did you start running?** Because I was fat and wanted to get fit
- 2. How old were you when you started running?** 29
- 3. Your pre race fuel?** Porridge
- 4. Recovery food/drink?** Mars Bar
- 5. Any pre race superstitions?** None
- 6. Make of running shoe?** Saucony
- 7. Favourite race – and why?** Taunton 10k - short and good times
- 8. Sporting idol?** Mo Farrah
- 9. Recurring injuries?** Hip/Ass Cheek
- 10. Running aspirations?** To run the London Marathon
- 11. Any other sports/activities?** Kite surfing
- 12. Why do you run?** Enjoy it and very social
- 13. Best running achievement?** Sub 45 min 10k...so far
- 14. Closest club rival?** Nik Whalley
- 15. Favourite biscuit?** Custard Cream
- 16. Best excuse for not running?** Can't be bothered....
- 17. Who do you nominate for next months interview?** Someone a bit older.....Phil Pennington!