



**Town and
Country
Harriers
(TACH)**

ROUGH RUNNING NEWS

April 2023

Letter From the Chair

I know I'm not the only one who has lost time on the trails over the winter as a result of the various coughs and colds that seemed to be circulating; a particularly bad year for it. And it seems to have been a slow road to recovery for many folks with various post-viral issues. So do be kind on yourself if you're not yet smashing out the PBs and make the most of the lighter evenings to get out with TACH again for a great run with great company.



Ironwood, the Doynton Hard Half Marathon, and the Imber Ultra were three recent events where we had a great showing of TACH colours and hopefully it will be the same at the Cotswold Way Relay and Tintern Trot in the summer. And do please try to make the time to marshal and help out at our events – the Butcombe Trail Ultra is coming up very soon on Saturday 29 April, the Rowberrow Romp takes place on Thursday 8 June, and (subject to permissions) Purdown Pursuit in the summer all provide opportunities to support other runners in the way that their clubs support us when we run. Our race events also bring money into the club which we can use to fund social events and raise funds for local causes.

I and the Committee want all our TACH runs to be safe, inclusive, and enjoyable. On the theme of safety, whilst the evenings are now getting lighter, do please have a think ahead for your next TACH run about what you are doing and what more you can do to help the safety of our group runs. Carrying a spare layer or foil blanket, carrying a mobile phone, having some local knowledge of where we are running, and helping to keep the group together by sheepdogging back and checking on others, are some of the things that mean if there is an injury or incident on a run then we can all help each other and get out of the situation safely. I'm grateful for your help in this.

Nick
TACH Chair

Editors' Note



Welcome to your first Rough Running News produced by your new job-share commsmeisters, Tricia and Luke. Behind the scenes, we've been taking responsibility for sending you the weekly emails, leading on race promotions, and sprucing up Rough Running News with a few new ideas. We hope you're receiving the information you need to feel fully involved and included in TACH – if you have any ideas on how we can make TACH communications and Rough Running News even better, do please have a chat with either of us out on the trails sometime, or email us at comms@tach.club.





**TACH Grand Day Out Run and Summer Camp
17 June 2023
Tuckers Grave Inn and Campsite
Knoll Lane, Faulkland, Bath BA3 5XF**

This year, TACH will be hosting a Grand Day Out, including the option to camp at Tuckers Grave overnight to enjoy an evening of cider/ale, good company and music. Partners and children are very welcome to join too. Tuckers Grave was the CAMRA cider pub of the year in 2020.

There will be various social runs of different distances on the Saturday, all starting from Tuckers Grave Inn carpark at 10am. There will also be the option to walk if you prefer, or for anyone from your family (if they're joining you) who may be less excited by running than most of us are. Details will be posted on the run spreadsheet nearer the time – if you know the area, please do volunteer to lead a run. The shorter run will aim to be back at the pub for lunch. There is the option of various afternoon activities e.g. sports day, rounders, skittles, etc.

Tuckers Grave Inn serves food and sells a variety of ciders and ales. The site also has a café for teas/coffee/cake and lighter bites.

A live band will be playing in the pub on Saturday evening – free entry.

If you're keen to camp overnight, please book a pitch on the campsite by going to the Tuckers Grave website at <https://www.tuckersgraveinn.co.uk>. Families are welcome. Please do book soon to secure a space - please put "TACH" as the group name so that the owners can try to reserve us adjacent pitches. Why not make a weekend of it and book for both the Friday and Saturday nights?

**Butcombe Trail Ultra
Saturday 29 April 2023
butcombetrailultra.com**

It's not too late for any of your ultra-running friends or family to sign up for the Butcombe Trail Ultra, TACH's flagship event, taking place on 29 April this year. There are still places left for both the 50 and 56 mile races, so do please spread the word.

If you haven't yet offered to help out on the day, Andy Fagg is coordinating marshals and would love to hear from you. Every TACH member is encouraged to help out at our races to make them a success, and it's great fun too. It's also a good way to pick up a few more TACH championship points!





Meet a TACHer - Fran Pratt, TACH Racemeister

What led you to take up trail running?

I started trail running (although I didn't know it was called that) when I was about 12 and was inspired by Paula Radcliffe's London Marathon and the nearest place to run to me was trails. I wanted to run a 10km race but I was too young to enter, so I decided to run as far as I could, which turned out to be 18 miles. Then I became a teenager, stopped running for several years and picked it back up in my 20s.



What's your favourite distance and type of terrain?

50k of undulating muddy terrain with lots of good views.

What work do you do?

I'm one of the Product Managers for OS Maps which is a navigation mobile and web application. I'm always interested in hearing feedback, bad and good!

What's the most interesting book you've read in the past year, and why?

Running book would be "Where There's a Hill" by Sabrina Verjee - her determination is inspiring. Non-running book would be "Beautiful News" by David McCandless, a book full of infographics on all the things that are getting better in the world like "Britain's woodland cover is returning to mediaeval levels".

If money and time were no obstacle, what would your dream run be, and why?

I would love to run the South West Coast path, days of back to back running with rolling hills and great scenery. The only thing to consider each day is to run, sleep and eat.

You're on the TACH Committee – what's your role, and what's it like?

I'm Race Chair, making sure our four races - Butcombe Trail Ultra, Rowberrow Romp, Purdown Pursuit and Keynsham Dandy - run smoothly. Each race is organised by its own race team with a Race Director, Marshalmeister and Course Setter for each race. If you want to get involved, have a chat with me :)

If you had one tip for anyone new to trail running, what would it be?

Treat it like doing a country walk, start from a pub, enjoy the scenery, don't worry about how long it takes and have a drink at the end.

What's your favourite thing about TACH?

I love the community of muddy people that come together to cheer each other on virtually on Strava and Facebook, and out on runs and races of any distance.

Do you have a favourite running route you'd like to share with RRN readers?

The Rowberrow Romp route (<https://ridewithgps.com/routes/29136903>) is fantastic for the mix of steady climbs, great views and thunderous down hills. It also helps that it starts and ends at a great pub, The Swan.

If you had to put these in order from like to dislike, what would the order be?

mud - cider - bluebells - sunrises - black toenails - cows - nettles - gels - sunsets - getting lost - races - 5am alarm - marshalling - ticks - hills (up) - hills (down)

Mud, races, sunrises, marshalling, hills, cows, tarmac, gels



TACH Annual Award Winners

On Saturday 7 January 2023, TACH's popular annual Twelfth Night party took place after a two-year break during the pandemic. One of the highlights of our annual party is the awards ceremony. Award winners for 2022 are featured here. Could this be you next year?



TACH Championship Award – Jane Bennett

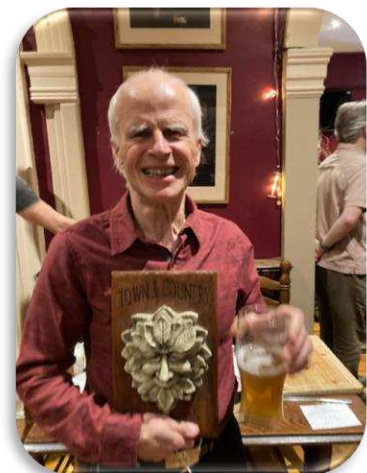
Jane collected the most championship points during 2022. Championship points are collected through run leading, marshalling, and writing Rough Running News articles.

Captain George Hancu keeps the tally for championship points throughout the year. The tally for the first quarter of 2023 can be found on page 19.

Green Man Award – Andy Fagg

The Green Man Award recognises contribution to the club. It often recognises someone who has worked behind the scenes to make our runs and races great – a real unsung hero.

Andy won the most votes from TACH members for the Green Man Award in 2022. This was in recognition of the great mentoring he has done with the race teams and marshals.



Graham Bazley Award – Sharon Dove-Jones

The Graham Bazley Award, in memory of a much-loved TACH member and former Chair of the club who sadly passed away in 2019, recognises someone who has encouraged participation – a TACH member who is persistently cheerful and has motivated, helped, or encouraged other TACHers during the year.

Sharon Dove-Jones won the most votes from TACH members for the Graham Bazley Award in 2022, for her infectious positivity, inclusion and enthusiasm.

The award is a shepherd's crook, a crucial tool when sheepdogging (although there are rumours that it also doubles as a pointy stick to encourage runners to keep putting one foot in front of the other...)





Re-introducing the Rowberrow Romp TACH 10k race, Thursday 8 June 2023

If you've joined TACH recently, you'd be forgiven for not having heard of the Rowberrow Romp. We haven't run it for the past few years due to a combination of covid and land permissions not being granted, but it's finally back on the evening of 8 June 2023.



The Rowberrow Romp is a challenging 10k race with plenty of Mendip mud, scenic forests, strenuous climbs, fabulous views and a thunderous descent.

As TACH members with access to this brilliant club for the ridiculously inexpensive price of £10 a year, we are all encouraged to help with organising this and other TACH races. Most of us will volunteer to marshal, and there will also be opportunities to help with course setting and other organisational activities.

We can all make this event a success by promoting it to friends, family and colleagues. There's a facebook event (<https://www.facebook.com/events/503427272004006>) and more information on TACH's website (<https://tach.club/#races>). Both provide links to the entry page (https://www.sientries.co.uk/event.php?elid=Y&event_id=11456).



There are prizes for the first three male and female finishers plus age category prizes too. 50% of the profits going to charity.

Entry is limited to 120 lucky people and costs just £14 (£2 reduction if affiliated). Entries close on 1 June 2023, or before if the event sells out.

What you can do:

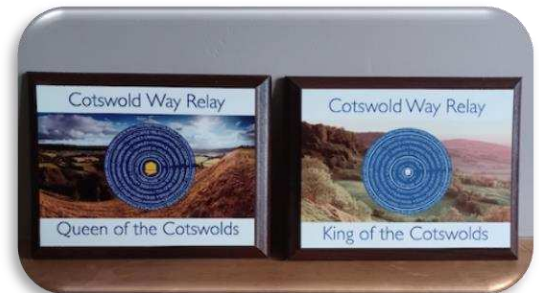
- Tell your friends, family, work colleagues and neighbours about the event and encourage them to sign up for the race
- If you're in any other running groups, promote the race to your fellow runners and add a link to the event via the running group's facebook page for members
- Click 'interested' for the facebook event and all your friends will then see information about it and may consider signing up
- Volunteer to be a marshal at the event
- Help out with course setting and any other activities on the day



Cotswold Way Relay – Saturday 1 July Tricia Allen

Like a tin of Quality Streets at Christmas, the Cotswold Way Relay is an annual family favourite for TACH. Organised by Team Bath Athletic Club, it takes place usually on the first Saturday of July. There are 10 stages to the relay, each approximately 10 miles long (stage 7 is the shortest at 7.3 miles, while stage 4 is then longest at 12.3 miles). It's not a relay in the traditional sense of the word – there's no baton to hand over at the end of each stage. Instead, each of the 10 stages set off usually an hour after the previous one has started. The race starts in Chipping Campden at 7am and finishes in Bath by 7pm or thereabouts.

Will you be someone who wants to start at the top, work your way down, and complete all 10 stages in Bath? Or are you keen to run it all backwards? (no, not literally, although that could be a novel idea...) Perhaps you're happy to mix it up and take whichever stage you fancy each year? Or maybe you have a favourite stage which you're happy to do year after year? Whatever your approach, everyone in TACH is invited to take part in this fun annual event. Every finisher receives a lovely hand-drawn print of the stage they've just completed – collect all 10 to become a King or Queen of the Cotswolds, when you will also be awarded with a lovely plaque to mark your decade or more of commitment.



The event is only open to running clubs or organisations, so we're very lucky that TACH Captain, George Hancu, has booked us three team places for this year's event. There are only 100 team places in total and the event usually sells out. As well as entering three teams, we're also encouraged to contribute a marshal for each running team. So if you want to take part but don't want to or can't run on the day, please do let George know and you'll be very welcome to be a much-loved marshal for the day instead.

Whilst it's not compulsory (we're not that kind of club), just about everyone entering the relay wears their club t-shirt with pride. So if you're new to TACH and you are running the Cotswold Way Relay, this could be a good opportunity to buy yourself a lovely green TACH t-shirt. It'll certainly help you to identify the two other TACHers on the start line with you. Please see page 17 for information on how to order TACH kit.

The Cotswold Way Relay costs £180 for each team to enter this year, but this cost is covered in full by TACH, so each lucky runner is effectively enjoying an £18 race entry for free. It's too good an offer to miss!

You can find out more at <https://cotswoldwayrelay.co.uk> and request a place in the event by emailing George at captain@tach.club. Do please let him know if you would prefer to run a particular stage of the race.



Green Man Ultra Sarah Smith

My “year ago” activity popped up on strava the other day. I had just finished the Green Boy and posted that I was “in awe of the Green Man runners”. I enjoyed the 30-miler and, according to my strava report, I “felt good” – but I couldn’t imagine running another half-marathon plus – and for another four hours. Twelve months later, I am a proud Woodwoose and can honestly say that I loved the whole thing.



In case you’re tempted, this is how I did it.

Before the race

I’m not a fan of strict training plans but I aimed for 30-35 miles a week from Oct – Dec and 40-45 miles a week in January and February. I took advantage of several TACH-advertised longer runs – including the Green Goddess and Butcombe recces – and in consecutive weekends in early February I ran Endurancelife’s South Devon trail marathon and back-to-back 17-mile GM recces. It certainly helped psychologically – I began to believe I could do the GM distance, and I loved all the runs. I also swapped my Salomons (worn since I started trail running and good for keeping your feet dry when it’s wet and muddy) for some Inov-8s (softer and more forgiving).

During the race

I deliberately didn’t set myself an explicit time goal (at least not one that I was prepared to admit) and my main aim was to enjoy the day. I listened to seasoned GM runners who said not to go off too quickly. I checked my heart rate rather than my pace and tried to stay calm and steady through the early miles. I was pleasantly surprised to see the 10-hour

time lord just before Check Point 1 (9 miles) and more or less stuck with him until Siston (22 miles) at which point he paused to get back on schedule and I fell in with three other runners who were going at about my pace.

Sharon had said she would park at Hambrook and run back to run with me and it was really uplifting to see her coming along the path. She gave me loads of encouragement and kept me going for the next 7-8 miles through the dreaded Aztec West / Bradley Stoke section – and at a good pace (my time between Check Points 3 and 4 was the 23rd fastest overall). Getting to Blaise, I felt I was almost home – just a 10k to go – and was really pleased to see Claire, who had also offered to support me and run the last stage.

When we hit the Downs, we were making good time and Ben, whom I had run with from mile 20 (he occasionally got away from me but would then get lost), was keen to push on to get under 9 hours. At this stage, pushing on wasn’t an option for me but, even at a steadier pace, I caught up with the 9-hour time lord on the



suspension bridge and – even better – found that he was walking the gradual incline up to the Ashton Court gates. Then, a quick stop for a group photo with the Green Man and downhill to the finish.

Fuel

There's often a bit of discussion about how to fuel yourself for a long run. So here goes:

Pre-race: 2 x toast with peanut butter and banana

Check Point (CP) 1: Malt loaf (possibly 2 slices)

CP2: Bean and cheese slice (Aldi, vegan, highly recommended) and ginger cake. During the long gap between CP2 and CP3, (about half) an energy bar that I had been given at the Endurancelife race.

CP3: Most of a marmite and cheese bagel – finished off climbing up Spaniorum – and some cola. There was no cake!

CP4: Running up through Henbury, a sachet of Gu chocolate energy gel (also from Endurancelife). I'm not normally a fan of gels but this one was incredible. At CP4, more cake (lemon) and some orange segments that Claire brought.

Not sure what a nutritionist would make of it, but it worked for me and I managed to avoid a low period. I felt pretty good all the way round and could keep running the flats (although the definition of "flat" might have tightened towards the end). In the spirit of whatever works for you, one runner's plan (what I saw of it) included a vape at the start and CP2, the biggest bag of jellybeans I have ever seen and a kebab going over Dundry. Ultras take all sorts.

Of course, the best fuel was the support and encouragement of everyone on the day. Running and chatting (and even laughing) with Sharon and Claire – and the other runners – helped make the miles go by. Seeing other TACHers along the way was also a huge boost – thanks, Liz, Andy, George, Luke, Tom, Fran and Emma (twice) – not to mention Nigel, the cheery supporter who popped up every 4 or 5 miles for the first half.

The GM organizers, supporters and participants are a great crowd. It's a super friendly event. I feel privileged to have taken part.



Sarah Smith completed her first Green Man Ultra on 4 March 2023 in a time of 8 hours, 49 minutes and 31 seconds. She was the 36th person and 5th woman to finish the race that day. She is now in the Green Man Ultra Winter Hall of Fame (female) which you can find here:

<https://www.greenmanultra.co.uk/winter-hall-of-fame-female/>



Green Man Take Two Tom Hunt

On 7 March 2020, two weeks before the first COVID lockdown, I ran my first Green Man Ultra. I had a rough lead-up to the race with less training than I hoped and foot pain that meant I lost two whole weeks which then lead into my taper. It's fair to say I struggled on the day. I made the terrible mistake of following the 10-hour timelord at the start. My legs were sore by Keynsham and a run walk strategy began from there on. It didn't improve from there, but I did manage to finish within the cut off, in 11 hours and 34 minutes. I was pleased to have done it, but it was quite far below my hopes for the day.

Then it was lockdown. And with the combination of my race being done, a lack of social interaction, and various injuries, my running from then on was sporadic. I had some good blocks of training, but never managed to stick with it. Fitness faded and thoughts of any long runs were not common. This included several races including the 2022 Summer GMU30 entered but not raced.

Thankfully lockdowns ended and a slow return to social running and seeing friends meant I could slowly build my running up and rekindle some enthusiasm. In May of 2022 I had entered the 2023 Winter GMU45 in the hope I could build up over most of a year. By the time I reached October I was running fairly regularly but I had a really sore Achilles that would not go away, keeping me away from anything long. My only saving grace was that due to getting a dog over lockdown, I had been getting out for plenty of walks on the off days (one of the many contributing factors).

So in October 2022, I made a conscious decision to "just start training" for the

GMU45 and to do whatever I could to help me through it. My first port of call was a recommendation from Tom Farman for sports massage and injury recovery. We targeted releasing tension in my calves and hamstrings connected with my bad Achilles and general recovery from

runs and occasionally my back. It is very hard to know for sure but I think had I not done this, I would not have made it through. My motto for runs here was "If I can run further, and not hurt more" that's an improvement. And this worked. The Achilles pain lasted well into the January, but never got worse and by race day was gone!

In January 2023 I had a bit of a scare, badly twisting my ankle on a dog run before our Twelfth Night party. Luckily while this ankle STILL hurts today if I twist it weirdly, it did not stop me running, and never hurts while running/walking.

In the lead up to the race, I made one other key change. I practised with Tailwind for nutrition. I knew in 2020 I had struggled to eat real food. I just didn't feel like it and so was not getting enough calories in. But I am good at drinking so fuel in the water could work for me. My final long run was a marathon from home taking in the GMU route from Ashton court to Keynsham. It seemed to settle in my stomach although I still found that run very hard at the end.

And then suddenly it was Race Day! I knew I was better prepared than before.





But I did not feel like I was fitter. My goals had dropped from sub-10 to sub-11 to I hope it will be OK. I had made a deal with myself to start slow. I had planned to keep my heart rate below 170 (I have quite a high heart rate) but stay ahead of Nick (the 11 hour timelord). This plan went right out the window as I could not keep my heart rate that low while being ahead of Nick. I think race day adrenalin makes this tricky for me. So I switched to 'run by feel' and kept ahead. Slowly Nick dropped away and I could no longer hear the "interesting" facts.

I worked my way over Dundry and ran with a few different people. I didn't feel like I was making good time but when I reached Keynsham I realised I had made good progress and I felt a LOT better than in 2020. This was the first of many mini mental boosts during the day that kept spurring me on. The next section was where my heart rate settled. I felt more relaxed and was chatting to various different people and allowed the miles to slide by. All the way to Hambrook, I managed to keep making good progress.

At Hambrook I had my longest stop. A few minutes to replenish water and eat and I sat for maybe 20 seconds. I immediately started feeling lightheaded and decided I needed to press on. Luckily this did not resurface.

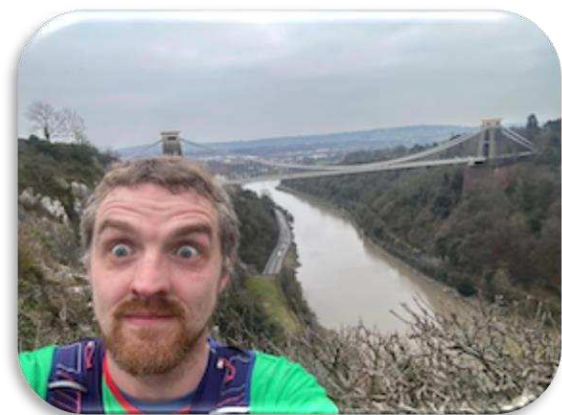
Next up was Bradley Stoke and Aztec West. I was not looking forward to this, but it ended up being my best bit of the race. For Hambrook to Blaise I was placed 29th overall in the race and this was all down to not walking any of the flat sections. In 2020 I walked a huge amount here.

Just after Aztec west we saw Luke Merrett. A pack of frazzles and the

information that the 10-hour timelord was just ahead was another boost. We caught him soon after this, and after hearing he was aiming for 9.45, I was pretty elated. This was the final boost I needed to push to the end, even running some of the hills.

The walk up to the Downs was still a slog as ever but the end was in sight. A quick stop for a selfie at the observatory and then down to the Suspension Bridge where I met Fran (with Fern) who ran me into the end. I suspect I was gabbling. But I was really happy and knew sub-10 was happening.

I ended up across the finish line in 9 hours and 39 minutes, just shy of 2 hours faster than my first try. I was elated.



As I write this, it's now a week later and I have managed to run twice and was only hobbling around until Monday. This fulfilled one of my stretch goals of "not being broken" by the race.

I could not have predicted such a result and for the first time feel like I might actually be an ultra runner... BTU50 in 7 weeks!



The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner? Phil Boler

I used to see running as the ultimate solo sport. You choose your own route, you fit it into your own schedule, and you run it at your own pace. You might only share it on Strava, or on Facebook if it's a personal best. For a long time, I bought into this philosophy, until one of my work colleagues asked if I'd mind if she joined me on my run home from work. I felt confused; why would anyone want to share their precious running bubble with another person? But I'd always got on well with Clare and I said 'Yeah, why not'. She was much leaner and more athletic than me. 'As long as I'm not going to slow you down'.

We were already chatting as we left the building; two friends in high-viz, streaking through the December night at a conversational pace. A bit of work gossip, plans for the weekend, a funny story or two. She told me her little girl had been very ill and they were all going on holiday together in the Spring. We talked a lot about running. Clare was a member of a local club in Kent and wondered if I'd like to join. I was curious. Perhaps running was a more sociable hobby than I thought. As the miles fell away into the darkness behind us, I realised that a pavement feels less punishing when it's shared.

In life we each have our own path, and we alone can follow it. But we never follow it on our own. Other paths and other lives converge with ours, and for an all too brief time those paths are shared. Our friends, our families, the strange people we're thrown together with for reasons

we only understand many years later, the ones we love, and the ones who love us. But those paths eventually separate forever and the time we share becomes all the more precious.

Clare's daughter Hannah shared a path with us for nine years. Nine precious years. Clare continues to run.

I joined TACH early last year and was blown away by the enormous sense of community. I particularly love our wonderful Thursday night social runs with mud and head torches, the lively conversations, and the promise of a pint at the end of it. Those times are so precious.

My friends at TACH have inspired me to explore how far I can go with my running, hence setting myself the enormous challenge of doing my first ultramarathon - The Butcombe Trail 50 Mile Ultra. Training is going well and the official recces around the Mendips have been invaluable.

I'm also doing this event this for a truly incredible charity. Solving Kids Cancer (<https://www.solvingkidscancer.org.uk>) were a light in the dark when Hannah was going through her treatment back in 2010, and everyone's generosity and support is going to get me through those long hard miles. Thank you for sharing the path!



If you'd like to sponsor Phil to encourage him to make it to the finishing line when he runs the Butcombe Trail Ultra on 29 April, do please visit Phil's JustGiving page:

https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Philip-Boler?utm_source=copyLink&utm_medium=fundraising&utm_content=Philip-Boler&utm_campaign=ppf-share&utm_term=f0dcbe544d614eaf810add8eb4e5a831



Doynton Hard Half Marathon Tom Farman

“Wet mud, dry mud, cow mud” is the strap line for the Doynton Hard Half. This is Emerson Green Running Club’s annual trail half marathon, centred around the pretty village of Doynton east of Bristol. The race has built up quite a reputation, a loyal following (it sells out every year) and some surprising TACH connections; more on that later. 2023 was my second year of running Doynton and cemented it as my favourite race (save, of course, for our TACH races) for the reasons I’ll try and explain below.



First, like most of the best races, it’s run by a local running club and focused on the run itself. It’s an interesting course comprising three separate loops finishing back at the village. It starts with three very hilly muddy miles, followed by a tour of the village and up onto the Cotswold escarpment before finishing with a flatter dash around the local quarry and Golden Valley nature reserve to the finish. So the route is great, tick.

Next, are the people... Unusually for a local event, the residents of Doynton seem to be out in force. The normally sleepy village is buzzing with spectators cheering on the 450 muddy, sweaty trail runners. Not only are the runners and

the spectators having a good time, everyone involved seems to be too. It’s just one of those events where everyone has a grin on their face and words of encouragement from a “don’t worry you’re nearly there” at the first corner to “can I offer you some cake” when you’ve half a mile from home. A nice touch are the signs along the way, embracing the South West vernacular (you can guess the kind of thing “my lover, gurt lush...”) and the names of each of the marshals displayed before you reach their checkpoint.



TACH was well represented at Doynton this year: Jack Blanchard, Pete Robertson, Kate Milsom (sporting TACH colours for the first time), Jane Bennett, Andy Grant and me. Jack, Pete and I all managed top 10 positions but despite that, we were pipped to the team prize by Bristol and West on the combined time, or as Pete deftly put it, “we was robbed!”. Oh, and I was 1st V40 and Pete 1st V50 and presented with some great trophies which included a sample of the famed mud (look closely at the picture above, bottom right!).



he certainly won them around. All in all, a great way to spend a Sunday morning in February. OK, it's not a 100 mile ultra but it showcases the things I love about trail running; fantastic countryside, a challenging run and brilliant people... and a good dose of mud!

So, what's the TACH connection? Well Kate's granny lives in the village and does a mean Sunday lunch which she had the pleasure of refuelling on a short stroll from the finishing line. And Jack's uncle devised the race and was race director for many years! Apparently, the locals took some persuading that having a trail race on their doorstep was a good idea but, as mentioned earlier,



Imber Ultra Marathon

Thanks to some encouragement from Andy Simmons, a clutch of TACHers entered this year's Imber Ultra, a 33-mile trail run which starts and finishes in Westbury. Everyone from TACH who entered managed not only to finish the course, but also pick up some brilliant times as well, pretty well clearing out the organiser's race trophies. TACH earned both the women's and the men's fastest running club team prize. Úna Miles beat the women's record on the course and came 4th place overall. Jenny Crouch was second woman home. Tom Farman bagged 1st male v40 and Jack Blanchard managed to get 2nd place overall in an exciting sprint finish.





Enertor Insoles review Andy Grant



Enertor cushioned running Insoles, £36.99 a pair (but with the possibility of a 10% discount at time of writing). Tested for 105 miles so far.

These have been popping up in my targeted adverts for a long time now and to be honest at first, I was not convinced. Usain Bolt looms large on all the ads, ok - one of the greatest track runners of all time but not a man who strikes me as a mile muncher who needs a pair of comfy cushioned inner soles. My way of thinking was that if you could make a better

innersole just by using some fancy foam, the likes of Nike/Salomon etc with their big research and development budgets would have already done it.

Still, I have always been getting trouble with my duff plates of meat, so I was intrigued enough to have a look at the independent reviews. Turns out the reviews are all very good, they seem to last about 500 miles and lots of runners are now on their second or third pair, so I took a chance and bought myself a pair.

Out of the box they are quite firm and not as thick as I expected. The sizing is pretty spot on and I didn't have to trim them to fit into my size 10 Inov8 X-talons. The insoles are not a particularly sculptured shape but despite this they seem to enhance the fit and arch support of my shoes. Not being that thick they don't take up much room, don't seem to alter the shoes drop at all and didn't make my shoes too tight a fit.

So how are they to run in? Well if you expect lovely soft comfy cushioning, these are not for you, if anything they felt harder than the standard insoles they had replaced. Still, as my first run with them progressed, I started to notice a tiny little bit of extra bounce in my step and running road sections also became much easier on my feet. On the rocky down hills, I could no longer feel harshness of the rocks through the soles of my shoes. Obviously the longer you run the more you appreciate the protection these insoles are giving you.

So will I be buying these again? well yes, they won't make your trainers super comfy, what they will do is protect your feet from some of the shock of running on harder surfaces. This comes into its own when wearing hard soled, spikey winter shoes for grip, then going on runs where you encounter slippery winter mud, road sections and rock descents (Mendips anyone?).





Sadly, adding more cushioning to shoes does deprive them of some of the benefits for your feet of running in more minimalist running shoes. Maybe the trick would be to use your shoes' insoles for shorter runs, then save these insoles for the longer runs where your feet would really benefit from the extra protection and save them from a right hammering. Also, I have only tested these insoles in one model of shoe. These shoes are made with minimal cushioning - I would imagine that the more cushioned the actual shoe then the less of a benefit they will be. I will try them in other more cushioned shoes once the summer comes and let you know how I get on.

For a product advertised on Facebook by a celebrity, I have been pleasantly surprised with these insoles. I would recommend them to anyone whose feet would benefit from a bit more cushioning/protection from their shoes.

Do you have a product recommendation you'd like to share with your fellow TACHers?

Perhaps you have a favourite recipe for some delicious running food when you're out for a long run?

Or you have an interesting story to tell, or idea you want to explore with others?

Why not write about it for Rough Running News!

Next edition copy deadline is **20 June 2023**.

Please send your articles, photos or anything else you want to see included to comms@tach.club

Thanks 😊



Ironwood 10k 2023

Luke Merrett

Having done the Ironwood course solo a few times, along with covering the same ground with TACH on a few occasions, it felt great to finally take part in Nailsea Running Club's event on the big day.

The turnout was cracking with plenty of running clubs represented (notably a huge gathering of Southville Running Club folks all cheering each other on).

It was bright with clear skies, yet chilly enough that the jacket went on and off multiple times before the whistle blew (opted for arm warmers and some thin gloves in the end).



I learned the hard way that the best place to be at the start of Ironwood is right at the front, even if that's not where you intend to stay. The reason? Traffic jams!!

It's the narrow single track up into the woods that makes passing folks tricky, and it gets even harder when you reach the rope climb.

Thankfully after the first section of woods it opens out into fields, a road climb, and some wider tracks where you can vie for position (I promise I am not that competitive, just wanted to really go for it on the day 🤪).

The woods were rough and muddy in places which made for a fun, technical course. Confidence (and a lack of self-preservation instinct) over gnarly trails was a big plus as runner after runner passed me baby-stepping down slippery tracks.

After coming out of the woods it's a long stony road for a nice sprint finish past plenty of lovely spectators that came out for the race.

Thank you to Emily for the TACH group photo!





TACH Kit

New to TACH? Want to look the part representing TACH when you run the Cotswold Way Relay or any other events? Or perhaps you're keen to collect the full range of TACH kit, to get you through every season and even promote TACH at work with your TACH mug? Here's what's on offer. You can order any of these from Emma Pemberton, our friendly kitmeister, by emailing kit@tach.club. Or you can ask her when you next see her to arrange your purchase. Emma also organises a bulk order of TACH hoodies from time to time which come in a very attractive range of colours and styles for only approximately £20. If you want to be notified next time a hoodie order is happening, please do let Emma know.



The classic T - £18



Summer Vest Top - £16



Long sleeved t-shirt - £19



Buff - £5



TACH mug - £5





Forthcoming races organised by local running clubs

TACH relies heavily on other local running clubs to make our races a success. A lot of promotion of TACH races happens through word of mouth, and running clubs are an essential source of positive recommendations and tips on great races to take part in locally. So while we encourage other local running clubs to spread word of our upcoming races, your friendly RRN editors thought it would be a good idea also to promote upcoming off-road races organised by our neighbouring running clubs. If you know of other off-road races coming up through the year which are organised by local running clubs that we haven't listed here, please do let us know via comms@tach.club and we'll aim to include them in the next edition of RRN.

2023/24

- | | |
|------------|--|
| 9 April | Hanham Horror, organised by the Bitton Road Runners (9k)
https://www.bittonroadrunners.co.uk/events/horror.aspx |
| 13 May | Marlborough Downs Challenge, organised by Marlborough Running Club (20/33 miles) http://www.marlboroughrunningclub.org.uk/races/marlborough-downs-challenge |
| 5 June | Blaise Blazer, organised by Westbury Harriers (4 miles)
https://westburyharriers.co.uk/events/blaise-blazer/ |
| 1 July | Cotswold Way Relay, organised by Team Bath Athletic Club (~10 miles)
https://cotswoldwayrelay.co.uk |
| 6 July | Tintern Trot, organised by Chepstow Harriers (5.5 miles)
https://sites.google.com/site/chepstowharriersrunningclub/open-races/tintern-trot |
| October | Nightingale Nightmare, organised by Southville Running Club (10k) |
| October | Mendip Muddle, organised by Weston Athletic Club (20k) |
| October | Herepath Half, organised by Taunton Running Club (13.7 miles) |
| 5 Nov | Over the Hills, organised by Avon Valley Runners |
| 12 Nov | Sodbury Slog, organised by Bitton Road Runners (10 miles)
https://www.sodburyslog.co.uk |
| 14 Jan '24 | Riverbank Rollick, organised by Thornbury Running Club (9.6 miles)
https://www.thornburyrunningclub.co.uk/trc-races/riverbank-rollick/ |

**2024 dates tbc**

February	Doynton Hard Half Marathon, organised by Emersons Green Running Club (21.1k)
February	Ironwood Challenge, organised by Nailsea Running Club (10k)
March	The Big Cheese, organised by Cheddar Running Club (15 miles)
March	Imber Ultra, organised by Avon Valley Runners (33 miles)
April	Offa's Orror, organised by Chepstow Harriers (10/20k)

Dates TBC

Tyntesfield 10k, organised by Nailsea Running Club (10k)
 Festival 'Beer and Banger' 10k, organised by Nailsea Running Club (10k)

TACH race calendar
<https://tach.club/#races>

29 April	Butcombe Trail Ultra
8 June	Rowberrow Romp
July (tbc)	Purdown Pursuit
October (tbc)	Keynsham Dandy

TACH Championship points, 31 March 2023
George Hancu, TACH Captain

The TACH Championship recognises TACH members who lead runs, help at events, and write articles for Rough Running News. There will be spot prizes given out quarterly to four different members (i.e. the same person can't win more than one quarterly prize) and obviously the big prize, given out on the Twelfth Night awards and party evening, for the most points in a year. The points system is as follows:

- 1 point for leading an open or a pod run;
- 2 points for first time leading a run;
- 1 point for volunteering to help at a TACH event (marshalling, course setting, etc);
- 2 points for writing a Rough Running News article.

2023 Championship points for Q1	TACH members
4	Fran Pratt wins a spot prize for 2023 Q1
3	Jonny Riley, Nick Richard, Tom Hunt, Tricia Allen
2	Andy Grant, Antony Clark, Jane Bennett, Jim Plunkett-Cole, Luke Taylor, Terry Rogers, Tom Farman, Tom Moriarty
1	Andy Fagg, Carolyn Dent, Claire Harrison, Dave Bignell, Dave Roy, Emily Griffiths, George Miller, Jack Blanchard, Jarek Turif, Natasha Breen, Pete Robertson



Leading a TACH run

Everyone is encouraged to “do their bit” and to lead runs. It's great fun introducing people to your favourite run (and pub). If you need more information, chat to the runmeisters Emily and Tom (runmeister@tach.club) or some recent run leaders in the pub, or have a look at the guide for leading runs (https://tach.club/files/tach_lead_attend_runs_Sep22.pdf).

Liftsharing groups

TACH has several liftsharing groups across Bristol to help us all to get to our club runs in a more sociable, decongesting way. Current liftsharing groups are in the following areas:

- South Bristol
- North Bristol
- East Bristol
- Long Ashton
- Cliftonwood, Clifton and Hotwells

If you'd like to join any of these liftshare groups, please do ask around when you're next on a run to find someone who belongs to one of these groups, so you can be invited to join the relevant WhatsApp group. If you'd like to set up a group in an area not listed, or there are enough people to form a smaller sub-group, please do take the initiative – these groups are all self-managing. You can contact comms@tach.club if you want to promote a new liftsharing group through our regular weekly emails, which can then also be added to this list for the next edition of Rough Running News.

Next edition of Rough Running News

We're going to aim for four editions a year, with the next one out in July. Copy deadline is 20 June 2023 – please send your articles to comms@tach.club – many thanks.

Know your committee

Club Captain: George Hancu - captain@tach.club

Chair: Nick Rickard - chair@tach.club

Secretary: Hannah Tracey - secretary@tach.club

Treasurer: Jonny Riley - treasurer@tach.club

Webmeister: Tom Hunt - website@tach.club

Race Committee Chair: Fran Pratt - paces@tach.club

Social Secretary: Emma Turner - social@tach.club

Membership Secretary: Martin Cott - membership@tach.club

Run Meisters: Tom Farman and Emily Griffiths - runmeister@tach.club

Kit Meister: Emma Pemberton - kit@tach.club

Rough Running News Editors and Commsmeisters: Tricia Allen and Luke Merrett - comms@tach.club