



# ROUGH RUNNING NEWS

## July 2024

### Letter from the Chair

At a recent TACH Committee meeting we discussed the ethos of TACH. It's really hard to explain something to someone else when it's become so deeply engrained that it's become tacit knowledge. We bring together an eclectic mix of trail runners with old and new faces and boundless energy to create something genuinely incredible.



The support that you give to each other and to the wider trail running community is exceptional. As TACH members you, like your predecessors, continue to represent the club, its heritage, and its future brilliantly. You're remarkable.

I'm very proud to be part of a club with a good male / female ratio (over 40% of our membership and 50% of our Committee are female) and we span a wide age range. Building on our solid foundation, your TACH Committee believes there is more we can do to better represent the wider community of Bristol and ensure we are inclusive, and we'd love you to be part of this.

**Nick**  
**TACH Chair**

### Editors' Note



Sarah

Welcome to Rough Running News for summer 2024. Helen King has been in TACH since 2010 and you can read her running backstory – and more. We talk about some recent changes to the website to reflect TACH's aspirations to be an inclusive trail running club. And there are firsthand reports from a range of events to awe and inspire you. Along with some top tips (who knew you could re-sole a trail running shoe?) and news of upcoming TACH events, we hope there's something in here for everyone.



Tricia

We always welcome any contribution, so if you'd like to share some thoughts with fellow TACH members, why not send us something for the next edition? Do let us know also if you have any suggestions for how we can improve TACH communications – speak to us on a run, or email [comms@tach.com](mailto:comms@tach.com)



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Do you have a product recommendation to share with fellow TACHers?

Perhaps you have a favourite recipe for some delicious running food?

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 **31 October 2024**

Please send your articles, photos or anything else you want to see included to

[comms@tach.club](mailto:comms@tach.club)

Thank you 😊



## Meet a TACHer

### Helen King

#### How did you first discover TACH and when did you join?

The Google search in April 2010 that transformed my life (for the better)! My first run was led by Chris Bloor from the Crown in West Harptree, there were about seven of us. The TACH website said that it'd be about six miles, I was reasonably comfortable with that but wouldn't have gone if it was any longer. Turned out to be about eight miles because Chris got lost, lucky the website hadn't said that! That evening he told me about the Green Man Challenge. The longest I'd run before was a road half marathon so I couldn't imagine doing 46 miles off-road. Three years later, through the power of TACH, I happily ran it on New Year's Eve 2013.



#### What led you to take up trail running?

Not a short story, I'm afraid! I grew up in Guernsey in the Channel Islands. We used to go camping in France for our holidays because that was the cheapest option. My Granny lived in Bristol (Horfield) so that and one visit to London was pretty much all I knew about England, so I had a bit of a skewed view. When I was 17, I did a Silver Duke of Edinburgh expedition in the Peak District and was totally blown away by the countryside - why did no one ever tell me about this?! So I got into hiking, went to Manchester and Liverpool universities, joined their hiking clubs, hiked the Pennine Way and generally fell in love with the hills.

When I was 22, I had a bicycle accident which left me with some kind of back thing that meant I would get a slipped disc every 10 months or so, I couldn't run for more than a few hundred metres but was OK playing rugby - so I did this for a few years in Southampton and Plymouth where my job had taken me. In my late 20s I discovered the power of chiropractic and that my sacro-iliac joint was out of line, it got fixed and gradually over the next few years I was able to run more and more. In 2001, I met my ex when he was training for the London Marathon and he inspired me to get into road running properly and I did my first race, the Great North Run, later that year. In 2007, we moved out to North Virginia and I met a lovely Brit, Jo Short, who was into ultras. She introduced me to the wonders of trail running (which is relatively tame in the States as it's all in parks, no public rights of way through fields). This was awesome! It brought me back to my love of hill-walking but at a faster pace, so you can see more and not have to carry so much! When I moved back to the UK and to Bristol I wanted to get to know people locally, so did a Google search for a trail running club and the rest is history.

#### What's your favourite distance and type of terrain?

Currently, anything up to about 15 miles. I love single track paths through forests or down mountains.

#### What's your favourite bit of running kit, and why?

My '[Rush](#)' running pack that I bought in Chamonix last year at the UTMB exhibition where I also met the bag's Japanese designer. It's super-comfy and has every feature I need.

#### What work do you do?

I'm Professor and Director of Learning Innovation Development & Skills at Bath Spa



University.

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

Two audio books (the second was cited in the first): *Ultra-Processed People: why do we all eat stuff that isn't food... and why can't we stop?* by Chris van Tulleken; and *Burn: the misunderstood science of metabolism* by Herman Pontzer. Both have had a big positive and calming impact on my approach to food and eating.

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

Somewhere warm with mountains, and sea to cool off in afterwards. I love running in the mountains, and I love swimming in the sea.

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

Keep practising! It takes time to get used to running on uneven terrain but if you keep at it, your brain will adapt.

**What's your favourite thing about TACH?**

The supportive, encouraging, inspirational, amazing, lovely people!

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

Any route that involves my favourite hill: Kelston Round Hill. I first went up it on my second or third run with TACH so I associate it with a fabulous feeling of community and happiness, as well as the fabulous views.

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

1. Hill (down) (oh yeah, so much fun!)
2. Sunsets (I was fortunate to grow up on a west coast with gorgeous sunsets over the sea)
3. Bluebells (Spring is here!)
4. Cider (obviously)
5. Mud (well you have to with TACH)
6. Marshalling (always happy to help fellow runners)
7. Sunrises (I love sunrises but not the early alarm)
8. Hills (up) (you've got to put up with the up if you want the down)
9. Cows (I generally like cows, particularly Guernseys, but I'm not a fan of cow mud)
10. Nettles (the TACH tingle!)
11. Races (I enjoy the opportunity to run somewhere new but hate the nerves before the start)
12. Gels (they're OK but I don't really use them much now)
13. 5am alarm (I like my bed too much but on the rare occasions I do get up early, I never regret it)
14. Getting lost (never fun)
15. Black toenails (I've never had one)
16. Ticks (I've only ever had one, after two days in long grass doing to The Highlander mountain marathon in 2014; apparently [they don't particularly like my blood type](#))





## Rough Running Reflections

### Aspiring to be an inclusive running club by Sarah Smith

If you have visited the TACH website recently, you may have noticed some changes. Inspired by recent committee discussions (and the Abingdon marathon website), we decided to talk explicitly about inclusivity and the ways in which TACH aspires to be an inclusive running club.

We used to describe ourselves on our website as a diverse bunch. We are diverse in many ways, but someone coming for the first time to one of our social runs and noting a lack of ethnic diversity might feel that this is a hollow claim.

Saying instead that we aspire to be an “inclusive running club where everyone feels encouraged and is given the confidence to run trails” feels much more authentic. As a club, we can, and do, take positive steps to make ourselves more inclusive – it’s part of the ethos of the club that Nick talks about.

Trying to be (more) inclusive is really important – trail running has so many positives (fitness, mental health and social benefits) but not everyone feels that they can be part of it. Women, ethnic minorities and lower-income groups are under-represented and may be put off by a lack of confidence, not feeling like they belong and/or financial barriers.

Welcoming new people on runs and sheep-dogging help to make everyone feel included on the social runs. Having super-friendly marshals at all races and no cut-off times for races like the Rowberrow Romp and Purdown Pursuit also make a big difference – especially for female runners who can feel less confident. We know these things matter because people coming to TACH events often comment really positively on these aspects of our club.

We would like to do more, particularly to reduce any financial barriers to trail running. We know that the club membership fee is low and this helps, but we could go further. For the Butcombe, we partnered with IntoUltra to offer free places to people who otherwise couldn’t afford to take part and we will do this again in future races. They’re a great organisation to work with; they’re also looking to make trail running a more inclusive place.

We hope you like the changes to the website. If you haven’t already, please take a look. And if you have any suggestions for how we can continue to make TACH a welcoming and inclusive club, then please let the committee know.



## Race and Event Reviews

### A Bob Graham Round in 23h26

By Jonny Riley

The Bob Graham Round is a fantastic mountain adventure in The Lake District, to repeat the 24-hour fell record achieved by Bob Graham on 13 June 1932. He ascended 42 peaks and returned to Keswick in 23 hours and 39 minutes, using a route of 66 miles with 27,000 feet of elevation. His record has been beaten, but as it is just possible for normal people with training and support, his Round has become a famous and popular endurance challenge, with 2,818 registered completions by 2023. Walk the ups, run the downs. Repeat x 42. Don't stop!

#### Preparation

Jeremy Hutchinson and I both wanted to attempt the Round, but we knew it would be difficult from Bristol. To join the 24-hour club, you have to be witnessed on each summit so we would need a lot of pacers. We booked a hostel room nine months in advance and we recruited Andy and Cathy as road crew, then nine fantastic support runners including six from TACH. I managed to get up onto the route seven times, during two trips to The Lakes, and I trained hard, with 90km of running per week over the preceding six months, building up to 3000m of weekly elevation.



#### Leg 1

We started at exactly 18:30 and George did a great job keeping up, so I was only five minutes behind my 23h schedule on the third summit. The rocky descent from Blencathra was tricky as it was getting dark, but Dave Bignell was waiting for us halfway down, so I could push ahead down to the road.

#### Leg 2

Eight minutes for a change of clothes, then Dave Roy took over to lead me up Clough Head at 22:33, both knowing the weather would deteriorate. It got properly dark, then started raining as we entered the cloud near the first summit at 23:25, only one minute behind schedule. Dave was doing a great job navigating in front, but I couldn't keep up, and he would disappear into the mist ahead of me. I was not eating enough, and we started losing time. At half past midnight I started imagining I would stop at Wasdale. I think my body wanted to stop, I was getting cold in the rain, and I struggled to eat a small piece of malt loaf. But we carried on. I put on a hat and gloves at Helvellyn, and we got down Dollywagon, which was steep and difficult in the dark. I dropped my bag for the Fairfield out-and-back, where lots of runners went past us and we met Jeremy coming down just ahead of us on the summit, then we dived down to the road at Dunmail.



### Leg 3

It was a bit chaotic at the changeover: boxes and people, no space, cars filling the layby. Dave had ordered ahead for a pot noodle and a cup of tea which were perfect, and we left at 3:30. Now 23 minutes behind schedule but they didn't tell me. Jenny started with me up Steel Fell as it was getting light. We were with a large group from Sheffield who knew the way. She gave me a gel. 90g of carbohydrate, too much. I wanted my rice pudding but somehow my food was still in the van. I had decided I didn't like any of my food, so I didn't mind - I don't even like wraps! But I knew I had to eat. At Rossett Pike I learnt I was now 50 minutes behind schedule, so I started trying, and I pushed ahead up Bowfell, with the cloud lifting and clearing ahead of us. The group from Sheffield seemed to think I was on track for 23h30. Not too late! Now I had a reference point on the mountain. I just had to stay near them. Our WhatsApp supporters were awake now, and people were encouraging us over the rocks. Up to Scafell, they gave me a pork pie, then down towards Wasdale. Dave saw a message saying that Jeremy had fallen, he couldn't eat properly, and he was going to stop. I was disappointed for him, and more determined to finish.

### Leg 4

Load the mule. Jack took everything: 4 litres of water, his bag, my bum-bag, and we pushed on up. He made me eat, and after an hour he told me I sounded normal - apparently, I was slurring my words slightly when we started. I had to catch the group ahead. We did it. We were slightly faster than them, but they kept up with us because they didn't hesitate, they just ran. I would have missed the summit of Steeple but they saw us and told us to go back. Lawrence appeared, having raced up from Wasdale, and I started gaining back time, now only 38 minutes behind the 23h schedule, and I knew I had a buffer of 60 minutes. Just keep going. Great Gable at 14:03, that's a great mountain! Good weather now, high clouds, cool on the tops. Jack shared photos of each summit with people following at home, and we got down to Honister Pass for pasta and two coffees.

### Leg 5

Zac led, and strangely Jasmin Paris was walking down Dalehead with a small group. She wished us well. There was a lot of support on the route, even in the night, and it felt like we were part of a big event. We ran all the way up the penultimate mountain then round to summit 42 where Sharron was waiting for us. She showed us the "local routes" down, so we moved quickly. Change of shoes. Lots of smiles now, and Jenny started with us, then George. 2km to go. Keswick at last! Up past the market that was being packed away. "Touch the door!". 23 hours and 26 minutes. A free beer, and all my supporters who made it possible. What an amazing day out!

Who's next?





## Snowdon Skyrace By Andrew Marchment

So here I was standing in a wet Welsh field surrounded by 150 'Skyrunners', preparing to take on the most challenging race of my life. Ahead of me was 38 kilometres and 3,300 metres of climbing, summiting Yr Wyddfa twice with multiple sections of grade one scrambling. To say I was nervous would be a massive understatement.



A countdown from ten and we were away through clouds of red smoke, setting off up the Snowdon Ranger path. The Ranger path is something of a warm-up, a fairly straightforward 900m climb up to the summit of Yr Wyddfa with no real technical sections. My pace at the bottom was probably a little high with the excitement of the race start, however I settled into a good rhythm reaching the summit in 1h15. From here on in, the race really started with a traverse around the south side of the Snowdon horseshoe taking in Y Lliwedd, our first bit of technical scrambling. The overnight rain and morning mist left the rocks very slippery, making for a nerve-wracking descent, however I did manage to occasionally lift my eyes from the treacherous rocks to appreciate the stunning expansive vistas of the Eryri National Park and the towering peaks this race would take me over.



A brief pause at Checkpoint 1 on the shores of Llyn Llydaw for water and suncream and I was off along the smooth flat Miners Path to Pen Y Pass, possibly the only section of easy running on the entire course. Rumbblings in my guts called for a pitstop to use the facilities at Pen Y Pass; this unfortunate stop cost me time and dropped me near the back of the pack. I was now into the eastern loop of the course which I had covered in a recce, but my confidence soon faded as I realised my body just didn't want to perform up the

Glyderau. The bottom of the climb has a few flatter sections. While these had been lovely respites from the steeps during my recce, recent rain had made them boggy, and they really sapped energy from the legs. As the climb went on, the runners up the hill pulled further ahead and the last couple behind caught and passed me. This was a huge low point, I was only on the second climb of four and really struggling, heavy legs and light head both conspiring to slow me down. I couldn't see myself leaving Checkpoint 2, let alone finishing the race, but I pushed on, dragging myself up the climb and onto the plateau.

I followed the orange flags across the eerie misty rock field that is the Glyderau plateau, reaching the sign sending us out and down Y Gribbin Ridge. Only that was where the flags stopped. The first section of Grade One scramble and there was no guidance. This is where I formed the alliance which basically saved my race. I had chatted to Lesleyann as I passed her on the Y Lliwed descent, and she had given me plenty of encouragement as she passed me back on the climb up the Glyderau. I found her at the top of Y Gribbin in something of a panic, not the most confident on the technical sections, and seeing no flags, she wasn't sure how to proceed. Thankfully I'd recced this section and together we picked a route down the exposed rock and found the path leading down to Checkpoint 2 at Llyn Ogwen.





We reached Checkpoint 2 with nearly an hour to spare on cutoff, but Leslyann had done her research and knew we'd need every spare minute as the two hours allocated to climb Tryfan and descend to Checkpoint 3 was impossible for normal runners. The navigation challenges had forced me to slow down and recover. I still wasn't feeling great, but had fuelled up, refilled my water and was going to see what I had left in the tank.

Tryfan North Ridge is 600m of intensely steep scrambling. It's almost all "hands and feet". There are not many truly exposed and scary sections, but small mistakes could easily result in injury, so a careful and steady approach was warranted. I did the whole climb with Leslyann, we were working together well, encouraging each other and route spotting. Having cleared the summit, and realising how tight the time was, I had to abandon my alliance and push on, as hard as I could. The descent to Checkpoint 3 at Pen Y Gwyrd has three sections, steep scrambling down 200m from Tryfan summit, a flattish section over a saddle, then dropping the remaining 500m in a runnable, but technical, descent. It starts gently across spongy bogs, before steepening into a mix of mud and big round rocks crossing numerous small streams. On clearing the saddle, you can see the hotel at the checkpoint, and with time slipping away I threw caution to the wind. Thankfully, while there were plenty of slips and close calls, I made it down without incident, arriving at Checkpoint 3 with seven minutes to spare.

With three mountains down and one to go, a finish was now looking possible, there was just the small matter of one more ascent: the infamous Crib Goch ridge.

Or not.

I was far from top form, the wind was picking up, mist now draped across the peaks and most importantly I thought I was the last runner on course. I knew this event would push my limits, but I had promised myself I wouldn't take chances on that treacherous knife-edge, notorious for injuries and deaths, so while the course markers turned up the nose of the ridge, I stayed on the Pyg track. A hard but safe hike with plenty of encouragement from late afternoon walkers got me to Bwlch Glass and the start of the last descent.

As with Checkpoint 3, the finish is clearly visible for quite a bit of the descent, but this time there was no rushing, just plodding, one painful footstep after the other. And then finally, after just under 11 hours in the mountains, I crossed the finish line to be immediately knocked on my ass by a very excited Nacho dog.

While my easier route up the Pyg track meant I passed a fair few runners as they battled along Crib Goch above me, I was given a time penalty which dropped me back to dead last.

Someone has to be last finisher, and I couldn't be happier that it was me.





## Fellsman - A gruelling but enjoyable race By Luke Taylor

Let me start by saying that this race report may seem a bit garbled but, while some people remember every detail of an event like the Fellsman, for me my memory of it is like a dream - I only remember snippets (good and bad).

The Fellsman originally started as a walking event in 1962. It is a high-level traverse of the Yorkshire Dales, from Ingleton to Threshfield, covering more than 60 miles and 11,000 feet of climb over very hard rugged moorland, much of it without defined footpaths.

The event is well organised by Keighley Scout Service Network and run entirely by volunteers, many from scouting. In some ways, it has the same feel as the Butcombe Trail Ultra, where everyone - participants, organisers, those helping on the day, and supporters - come together to make for a very special event.

As the weather in the Dales can be very unpredictable, the event has a very stringent and comprehensive kit list, including five (!) long sleeved tops. Race headquarters is at Upper Wharfedale School in Threshfield (the race finish). I arrived on Friday night, registered, had my kit checked, dinner, then an early night, bedding down in the school sports hall. Up early Saturday morning to get the coach to Ingleton in good time for the 08:30am start. My only race strategy was to go out quite hard (for me) knowing that, as the night wore on, my body would begin to rebel against doing anything other than sleep and I would slow a lot.

Straight from the start, there are the three biggest peaks - Ingleborough, Wharfedale, and Gragareth - altogether adding up to about half of the overall climb in just the first 20km. It was after Gragareth, going toward Great Coum, that I saw a woman up to her thighs in a bog requiring some help to get out! The weather during the day was glorious - sunny and cool, with a little breeze. The catering at the aid stations was extensive, although some of the food, like sausage rolls and hot dogs, is a bit more targeted toward walkers than those who run. Some of the aid stations had their own theme, such as characters from Alice in Wonderland.





My race was going well. I was able to eat some real food at the aid stations (which I sometimes struggle with) and then had a sports drink with me to keep me going until the next aid station. Along the way, I got chatting with a guy who was walking quite easily at my shuffle run pace. I commented how I could really do with his long legs. It did leave me thinking that perhaps I ought to train a bit more for fast walking.

At about 9:20pm, it was dark enough that I needed my head torch. Soon afterward, the wind picked up and a mist rolled in on a very cold and strengthening wind. I wish then that I had put on another one of my five long-sleeved tops (!) at the last aid station - I was really feeling the cold. With the now poor visibility restricting the range of my head torch beam, I felt somewhat detached from everything beyond the patch of bright light in front of me. It was then, not long after Buckden Pike, while running over a long section of large, square slabs of rock, that a small field mouse scampered onto the slab in front of me, seemed to do a little dance, then exited stage left. I'm still not absolutely sure it happened, but it's in my memory, so perhaps it did.

Now only managing to take in tea and sports drink, I was beginning to tire. So, after a particularly gruelling section of boggy moorland, it was great to be met with the banging music at 'Party Rash' checkpoint at Park Rash. After 'Party Rash' there was just Great Whernside, and then the long descent to Grassington and through to Threshfield and the finish.



The Fellsman embodies all I like about ultra events - beautiful location, challenging, great camaraderie, and a feeling of adventure. So I would thoroughly recommend the Fellsman. It is a gruelling course - very much requiring a strategy of 'relentless forward progress', but at the same time I felt well supported through my own adventure both by other participants and of course the superb volunteers at the checkpoints and aid stations.

I just hope it doesn't get taken over by UTMB.



## Brecon Cardiff Ultra By Dave Braidley

Back in 2017, I was looking for an event over 40 miles for early the next winter that was both relatively flat and not too far from home. The format for the Brecon Cardiff ultra is to visit the finish at Nantgarw (just north of Cardiff) on the Saturday beforehand to register, have your race kit checked, and return there very early on the Sunday morning and take a ride in their coaches to the start line in Brecon.

The route itself is easy to follow from the theatre in the centre of Brecon along the canal towpath for five miles to Talybont, then gently uphill for five miles on an old railway line to the route high point at the col between the Talybont and Pontsticill reservoirs. A pleasant descent to the second reservoir and a fire road trail winds through the trees into Pontsticill village and the roadway across the top of the reservoir dam itself. After a short section of road, the route rejoins the Taff valley cycle path which is generally tarmac or hard packed and runs through to the finish, taking in the towns of Merthyr Tydfil, Aberfan, Abercynon and Pontypridd. Drop bags are allowed, and taken to the checkpoint in Merthyr to allow you a change of shoes, extra snacks, etc.

The intention was to run with my older son Jamie, and I entered us both ready for our adventure. Travelodge Caerphilly provided accommodation the night before and an early bedtime. As this is an end-Jan / early-Feb event, the weather can be 'variable', but not for us as it rained from start to finish - colder at the mountain end and much soggy by the end, but I can say we did enjoy our day out and felt pleased with the effort. As always, running near the back but plenty of time to chat and have a laugh, as well as eat a full portion from the checkpoint buffets.

The following year, my younger son Peter was enticed into entering for his first long run. On the Friday with a week to go, I put in an extra effort training run, pushing myself along in the dark. When I got back home, I had a call from Peter (living in student digs in Cardiff) to ask what time I was coming over the next day. Whoops! I had the dates wrong, and the run really was that same weekend. It's not such a good idea to replace the taper with a 15-mile leg busting hill session. Oh well, at least the weather was not going to be as wet, as the temperatures were that much colder and this time it was snowing.

Peter eagerly pulled away on the climb up to the col, but then started to slow down and I caught up again. He really was plastered white, looking chilled, but having helped him put on a fleece top and his cagoule, the warmth began to return and we carried on southwards. One last memory was his determination to sprint near to the finish to ensure a faster time than his brother (we were already about half an hour up by then, I just forgot to say so).

This autumn I was recommending the Brecon-Cardiff to a friend at work for a straightforward ultra and noticed on their website that in parallel to the 'classic' event they were running the inaugural 'extreme' version, along the tops rather than the valley. Unable to resist, I signed up immediately. From the start the route goes due south up Pen y Fan, Cribyn, Fan y Big, checkpoint at Neuadd reservoir then over to the ridge on the other side along and down into the Pontsticill checkpoint, the route switching to the hills on the opposite side of the valley after each checkpoint. After Merthyr you cross the ridge to Aberdare/Cynon valley, and the far ridge from there too.



I like to get out to recce the route before the event and downloaded the .gpx file and set off running sections after work. It soon became clear the new route had been planned from an OS map and some of the marked 'paths' were long since overgrown, and some of the digital waypoints were well off too (like at the end of a cul de sac). Having deciphered these errors during a recce, I would avoid any stress on race day of trying to work a way through the undergrowth. Fortunately, with about three weeks to go, the .gpx file was amended and all was now corrected. The changes included the deviation across to the far side of the Cynon valley, and to avoid the route becoming too long, the end was straightened. It did mean the final hill was omitted altogether, and the summit bypassed on the one beforehand, but the newer route with the Cynon valley is a better version.

On the day I was pleased to meet George at the start, and we were soon underway. 7 degrees in Brecon (so about -2 on the summit then lower again due to windchill) and wind from the south-west and rain. Gales on the summits and rain turned into soft hail bullets, all quite dramatic. I'm glad I had some decent studded trainers for the descent as I saw others sliding and pirouetting out of control. On the 4km bog of Bwlch Gwyn, I only went in above the knee once, but the rest of the time it was ankle deep and I emerged with quite cold feet by the end of this section. I met with a couple of runners from London, one of whom had depth tested the bog to his armpits. The run alongside the river in the Tal Fechan gorge is a particularly pretty section before arrival into Merthyr. A change of shoes at the college checkpoint and a good feed set me up for the second half, through the forest roads and trails of the lower end of the hills, and the weather improved to an occasional drizzle. Darkness comes early in the winter, so it was headtorch on for the last section, and of course another boggy section to flush your trainers before the finish.

In summary, it was an excellent run if you like that sort of thing. Afterwards George said 'it was a difficult day out, I've definitely underestimated it.' And my comment was 'if you look for a challenge, you can never be disappointed when you get one.' I came home around twenty minutes after George, not that anyone is really counting when you are at the back, as long as you are within the time cuts and make it back in one piece with a smile. As a guide, it takes a couple of hours longer than the winter Green Man, those hills and bogs adding the extra challenge over 47 miles and 2,700 metres. For those of you interested, [entries](#) for 2025 are open now, and next year it is a couple of weeks after the Arc... and avoids the UTMB price tag.





## Seville Marathon, 18 February 2024 By Jonny Riley

I know this is called Rough Running News, but as we are **Town and Country Harriers**, I am going to write a race review of a road marathon, because in towns we do have to run on roads, and I am finding the time targets you can have with road running motivate me to train. Seville was a lovely city for a few days of winter sun with a marathon at the end to look forward to. The weather in Seville is warm already in February, the tapas restaurants are good value, the city centre buildings are beautiful, and there are interesting things to see within walking distance (although we probably did a bit too much - 30,000 steps counted in one day!). We had great weather on race day: it was 9°C at 8:30 when we started and increased to 15°C during the race, then it was 20°C all afternoon.

The organisers provide a pasta party at the race expo centre, where everyone has to collect their race numbers. It was fun, but don't go at 12:30 ;-). They feed 2,000 runners, but we were there when it opened, and there was nobody there, not much atmosphere! Some of the course is on the outskirts of the city, but I didn't mind. It was lovely to be running in warm sunshine in Spain after training all winter in UK. For the first 25km I was mainly trying to avoid being knocked over by the big group running with the pacers, and for the last 10km I was just concentrating on holding my pace. I remember that it does go around the impressive Plaza de España which is fun, and the last bit goes through narrower shopping streets and down past the cathedral.



It was a bit "jostly" because I chose to run in a group with a pacer. There are 12,000 runners, and there were four pacers doing my target time, but three of the four pacers' balloons were either burst or released within a few kilometres, so there were about 150 runners all grouped behind one pacer, whose balloon also failed to survive an impact with the half-way inflatable. I left them at 25km and it was suddenly much easier to run, especially at water stations when people were darting left and right, you had to concentrate. I would definitely recommend it as a winter road marathon: it's fast, and you can have a fun holiday. Just keep away from the people running behind the blue balloons!





## Upcoming TACH Runs and Events

### **Summer Camping Weekend on the Mendips 19-21 July with a Grand Day Out adventure on Saturday 20 July**

The TACH social event for this summer is a camping weekend over 19-21 July, with a 12-13 mile run on Saturday 20 July, starting at 9am from the car park of the Crown Inn in Churchill BS25 5PP. We will aim to be back at the pub by approximately 12.30pm in time for lunch. Food is served until 2.30pm.

If you want to make a weekend of it, why not camp nearby with fellow TACHers? The Mendip Activity Centre has a spacious and well-equipped campsite - Mendip Activity Centre, Lyncombe Drive, Churchill BS25 5PQ. Please visit the website to book a camping pitch if you would like to stay and camp over the weekend (note minimum of two-night stay). <http://www.mendibasecamp.com>

### **Snowdonia (Eryri) Weekend Away, 13 – 15 September**

A weekend of running in Snowdonia (Eryri) National Park staying in a bunkhouse near Llanberis. Either construct your own adventure or run the Welsh 3000s - 31 miles and 13,073 ft elevation over two days. Cost is £45. For more details, visit [here](#). Although bookings are now closed, if you are interested in joining, you can sign up to the waiting list. You don't need to pay anything at this point and if anyone drops out, we'll be able to let you know so you can sign up. For any questions, please email [races@tach.club](mailto:races@tach.club).

### **Mini Backyard Ultra, Saturday 21 September Blaise Castle Estate, 27A Kings Weston Road, Henbury, Bristol BS10 7QT**

Why not try a [Mini Backyard Ultra](#) to celebrate the Autumn equinox? You can start and finish whenever you like and run as many laps as you like. There will be 12 laps in total, each of 4.167 miles, which will be a total of 50 miles. The first lap starts at 7am, three minutes after sunrise, in the middle of the field in front of the cafe. The last marshalled lap starts at 6pm, to finish before sunset. Laps start on the hour, every hour, in front of the cafe. Please feel free to join us whenever is convenient. Eight marshals would be welcome to manage the aid station (buying food from Aldi), announce the start of each lap, and cook barbecue lunch at 12:45pm. The cafe will also be open from 9am to 4pm for coffee and cake! The chargeable car park is open from 7:30am - 8:15pm. Toilets are open from 9am to 5pm.

Please sign up on the TACH spreadsheet if you want to join in and/or volunteer. Numbers are limited to 42 runners. TACH members only please, as TACH is paying for food. **Please bring a camping chair and trail snacks.** Dogs are welcome.



**Schedule:**

- 07:00 - Start
- 09:45 - Cake will be served, buy a coffee if possible
- 12:45 - Barbecue lunch
- 15:45 - Afternoon tea with little triangle sandwiches, buy a cup of tea
- 18:45 - Marshals finish

**TACH rules:**

- People can start and finish whenever you like, and do as many laps as you like
- To avoid conflict with the Parkrun:
  - Loop 3 at 9am will be with the Parkrun: finish it then run on until 4.2 miles / 6.7km
- Winner / results
  - Lap completions will be recorded until 7pm. Marshals will stop at 7pm but the park remains open, and people may continue without marshals. This is a social, so everybody is a winner, but if you do 12 loops you have run 50 miles. **Well done!**

**Standard rules:**

- The course is a loop of exactly 6.7056 km
- Starting corral
  - Measures to fit entire starting field
  - Corral stays the same size throughout the event
  - Participants must be in the starting corral at the bell
- Starts
  - Each loop starts precisely 1 hour after the last
  - Warning is given 3, 2, and 1 minutes prior to the start
  - All participants must start at the bell (no late starts)
- Loops
  - Participants may not leave the course until each loop is completed
  - No personal aid during a loop (common aid stations are allowed)
  - Each loop must be completed within an hour to be counted





## TACH Top Tips

### Ever thought about getting your running shoes re-soled? By Terry Rogers

I think this is a question many people may start asking as things go on, whether it be 'they don't make that shoe anymore', 'they were my favourite trail shoe' or 'they've changed the grip on that shoe and I don't like it'.

Well I had this situation and I've hung onto my shoes for a while, after club captain George telling me he had his hokas re-soled. I was curious - to be honest, I just pictured it like when I use to glue my school shoes back together and then falling back apart about a week later. So after struggling to find a pair of shoes that I have been really comfortable in, I decided to give this a go. I emailed the shop first to check it was possible. They were more than happy to help so I set about deciding which sole to go for - 3mm, 5mm or 8mm lugs. This I liked instantly - finally I found some soles for my deep muddy winter runs (which you all love:)). I went for the 5mm lugs as this was a better option for a year-round trail running shoe.

I was nervous as to what I was going to get back. The shop had a good website instantly telling me there was a delay on all orders. This did not bother me as I was in no rush. Two weeks later and they arrived back, so I quickly opened them to see, instantly getting a smell of fresh rubber. I had a big grin on my face at this point. That weekend I took them over to the Black Mountains and was pleasantly delighted, my feet feeling secure with every stride and turn I took, whether it be up or downhill. I was becoming more confident in running again and noticing as the confidence grew, I was becoming faster and more positive when it came to technical trails.

If your shoes are in good order on the uppers, then this may be for you. Feel free to look them up: [keycobblers.co.uk/](http://keycobblers.co.uk/)



## TACH Discounts

As a member of TACH, you're entitled to 10% off at the following shops. Simply mention the club when making your purchase in store.

### Up and Running - Moti - Easy Runner - Ellis Brigham

Also, **Charlotte Arter** is offering 10% off sports massage. Bsc (Hons) Sport Conditioning, Rehabilitation and Massage; SPS Diploma in Sports Massage (Level 4); Great Britain athlete.

30-minute massage treatment is reduced from £30 to £27

60-minute massage treatment is reduced from £50 to £45

07555 273016 [charlottearter@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:charlottearter@hotmail.co.uk)



**TACH Kit**

New to TACH? Want to look the part representing TACH when you run your next event? 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 Kit Meister, by emailing [kit@tach.club](mailto: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**





## Race Calendar

### 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 the word about our upcoming races, we also want to promote upcoming off-road races organised by our neighbouring running clubs to reciprocate. 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](mailto:comms@tach.club) and we'll aim to include them in the next edition of Rough Running News – thank you.

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|--------|--|
| 27 Oct | Mendip Muddle, organised by Weston Athletic Club (20k)<br><a href="https://westonac.co.uk">https://westonac.co.uk</a><br>Nightingale Nightmare, organised by Southville Running Club (10k) |
| 3 Nov  | Herepath Half, organised by Taunton Running Club (13.7 miles)<br><a href="https://www.herepathhalf.org/#">https://www.herepathhalf.org/#</a>   |
| 3 Nov  | Over the Hills, organised by Avon Valley Runners (12km)<br><a href="https://www.avonvalleyrunners.org.uk/avr-open-races#oth">https://www.avonvalleyrunners.org.uk/avr-open-races#oth</a>   |
| 10 Nov | Sodbury Slog, organised by Bitton Road Runners (10 miles)<br><a href="https://www.bittonroadrunners.co.uk/default.aspx">https://www.bittonroadrunners.co.uk/default.aspx</a>               |
| 17 Nov | Bath Hilly Half, organised by Team Bath Athletic Club (13.1 miles)<br><a href="https://bathhillyhalf.org">https://bathhillyhalf.org</a>  |
| 24 Nov | Brent Knoll race, organised by Burnham-on-Sea Harriers (10k)<br><a href="https://www.facebook.com/events/1434888810742000">https://www.facebook.com/events/1434888810742000</a>            |

### dates and events tbc

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| January  | Riverbank Rollick, organised by Thornbury Running Club (9.6 miles)   |
| February | Doynton Hard Half Marathon, organised by Emersons Green Running Club<br>Dursley Dozen, organised by Dursley Running Club (12 miles)<br>Ironwood Challenge, organised by Nailsea Running Club (10k) |
| March    | Imber Ultra, organised by Avon Valley Runners (33 miles)<br>The Big Cheese, organised by Cheddar Running Club (15 miles)<br>Hanham Horror, organised by Bitton Road Runners (9k)                   |
| June     | Bradley Stoke 10k, organised by Sole Sisters North Bristol   |

### TACH race calendar for 2024/25

- |               |                      |
|---------------|----------------------|
| 18 July       | Purdown Pursuit      |
| 5 September   | Rowberrow Romp (tbc) |
| 20 October    | Keynsham Dandy (tbc) |
| 26 April 2025 | Butcombe Trail Ultra |



## TACH Championship Points

### Compiled by 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 a 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

### Well done to Sarah Smith and David Giles!

Q1 2024 TACH Championship points	TACH members
5	<b>Sarah Smith</b>
3	Tom Hunt, Emila Turif, Richard Breakspear, Natasha Breen, Nick Rickard, Jenny Crouch, Paweł Baranowski
2	Antony Clark, Graham Sleightholme, Terry Rogers, Tricia Allen, Gareth Lewis, Andy Grant
1	Jarek Turif, Rob Richard, Jane Bennett, Sharon Jones, Phil Boler, Andy Simmons, Martin Cott, Fran Pratt, Emily Griffiths, Colin Johnson, Hannah Tracey, Jamie Smith, Laura Heape, Claire Harrison

Q2 2024 TACH Championship points	TACH members
3	<b>David Giles</b> , Tricia Allen, Andy Fagg, Terry Rogers, Jonathan Riley
2	Tom Farman, Emily Griffiths, Tom Hunt, Nick Rickard, Sophie Watts, Emma Turner, Jamie Smith, George Hancu, Debbie Farman, Dan Kirby, Dave Bignell, Antony Clark, Tilly Shaw, Cathy Fagg, Ruth Pitchers
1	Fran Pratt, Chris Smart, Rob Richard, Sharon Jones, Sarah Smith, Jarek Turif, Emila Turif, Paweł Baranowski Helen King, Dave Roy, Lawrence Pitman, Pat Thoyts, Emma Pemberton, Phil Boler, Claire Harrison, Martin Cott, Jonathan Gledson, Michelle Claydon, Bevan Dickerson, Andrew Marchment, Sam Edwards, Andy Grant, Matt Claydon, Natasha Breen, Jeremy Hutchinson



## General Club Information

### 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](mailto:runmeister@tach.club)) or some recent run leaders in the pub, or have a look at the guide on <https://tach.club> for leading runs.

### 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](mailto: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

Copy deadline is **31 October 2024** – please send your articles to [comms@tach.club](mailto:comms@tach.club) – many thanks.

### Know your committee

**Club Captain:** George Hancu - [captain@tach.club](mailto:captain@tach.club)

**Chair:** Nick Rickard - [chair@tach.club](mailto:chair@tach.club)

**Secretary:** Hannah Tracey - [secretary@tach.club](mailto:secretary@tach.club)

**Treasurer:** Jonny Riley - [treasurer@tach.club](mailto:treasurer@tach.club)

**Webmeister:** Tom Hunt - [website@tach.club](mailto:website@tach.club)

**Race Committee Chair:** Fran Pratt - [races@tach.club](mailto:races@tach.club)

**Social Secretary:** Emma Turner - [social@tach.club](mailto:social@tach.club)

**Membership Secretary:** Martin Cott - [membership@tach.club](mailto:membership@tach.club)

**Run Meisters:** Tom Farman and Emily Griffiths - [runmeister@tach.club](mailto:runmeister@tach.club)

**Kit Meister:** Emma Pemberton - [kit@tach.club](mailto:kit@tach.club)

**Rough Running News Editors/ Commsmeisters:** Tricia Allen and Sarah Smith - [comms@tach.club](mailto:comms@tach.club)