

Stride & Tested

Denmead Striders

December 2019

Ending the year on a high...I hope

Clare Welch

Wow where did that year go? It only seemed like yesterday that I was frequenting with the Akeds after a day at the Pantomime and then drunkenly signing up to the Portsmouth Coastal Ultra as part of next years challenge. Now here I am just less than a week away from it!

Back last year it seemed so distant and in all honesty I didn't even really give it any thought about the challenge that lied ahead. I was too busy watching everyone compete and achieve in the spring marathons, Witness Mr Welch going through what was probably his toughest mental battle to date with his rather lengthily Race to the Tower (which did not go quite as planned) and also witnessing Kirsty & Martin achieve nothing short of awesome in their Ironmen challenge in beautiful Bolton (Interesting place at 5am in the morning I must say)

However when all these crazy challenges seemed to pass by I soon realised it was my turn to get prepped for what will no doubt be my toughest challenge to date.

The 16 week plan was set with the help of Gary Mac (well pinched off Michael via Gary!) and me and my partner in crime Lisa filled it out meticulously working it round races, social events and other variances of cross training, ensuring we kept everything as strong as it could be and to prevent any kind of injury.

It seems so long ago that Lisa and I started this journey, the evenings were still light and warm. Now it's getting colder, darker and damper yet we are still plugging away getting ready for the big day.

We have made sure that we mixed up our routes to keep us interested. We have ran parts of the route in both directions to give us an idea of the terrain, incorporated a run to Cross Country - as we are still committed to the mighty Striders and even banged out a sneaky lapped marathon as part of our training (never ever did I think that would be in our makeup a year ago!)

This is definitely the most focused I have been on a training plan and I have to say it has been thoroughly enjoyable. The biggest part of it has been having a training partner to experience it with. It somehow makes getting out that door a whole lot easier, especially when you have committed to that other person. We have been able to keep each other going when one of us is struggling, lost all inhibitions when being round each other (quickly learnt that long distances you just have to "go with it"). We have talked and talked and talked and much to probably peoples disbelief we have also had moments of silence and reflection on what is around the corner. Just having someone by your side even in silence is somehow comforting for that mental battle you frequently go through.

So here it is, we are on the taper, we can do no more. What ever happens on the day will happen. We cannot influence the weather, we cannot judge how we will be on the day. All I know is that I have enjoyed and embraced every part of the experience and will do my best to do that for 32 miles that lie ahead.

Lastly I (and I am sure Lisa) would like to say a massive thank you to each and everyone of you that have offered advice, support and words of encouragement along the way, it really does help when you know you have a massive support network behind you. Hopefully we do you proud and can report back in the next addition of how the Potty Twins got on - no doubt there will be some amusing stories that come from it so watch this space!"

Race dates – February & March 2020

February 2020

Ryde 10m (HRRL)	2 nd
Portsmouth Coastal Half	2 nd
Chichester 10k	2 nd
Alice Holt XCcountry	9 th
Bramley 20/10	16 th
Winchester 10k	23 rd

March 2020

Mercer Surrey Half	8 th
Lamer Tree Marathon	8 th
Fleet Half	15 th
Eastleigh 10k	22 nd
QE Spring Half & Marathon	29 th

October & November Well done to:

Name	Race	Time
Catherine Arnold	Gosport Half	01:44:32
Hannah Curtis	Great South Run	01:11:39
Michael Harrison	Great South Run	01:04:45
Tillie Johnson	Great South Run	01:11:19
Tillie Johnson	Gosport Half	01:38:03
Del King	Hayling 10M	01:17:28
Bekki Leaves	Hayling 10M	01:21:03
Martin Parfitt	Great South	01:06:17
Jenny Parks	Gosport Half	01:55:17
Catie Pettit	Goodwood 10k	00:52:52
Suzanne Richardson	Great South	01:14:35
Jeffery Streeter	Hayling 10M	01:21:35
Neil Williams	Great South Run	00:59:10
Rob Wilson	Great South Run	01:00:11

What a great night with yet some more Striders Antics. We hope you enjoyed the festivities and the entertainment on the dancefloor.

Thank you for everyone that brought along raffle prizes and came along to help us celebrate and let our hair down.

If anyone has suggestions for a new venue next year please let myself or Terry know

NEW WEBSITE

Beavering away in the background Graham Clarke has been putting together a new Denmead Striders Website. We have changed over to a package that we find easier to work with due to current knowledge and taken the opportunity to listen and act on some feedback from recent years.

This is as much your website as it is ours but as always with everything there are different opinions. We do and will try to take on board and address. Once this goes live please feel free to suggest anything you think could do with tweaking and we will endeavor to look into these for you.

Race Report – Marathon Eryri Roland Hill

If runners were to characterise themselves the way cyclists do, I wouldn't call myself a sprinter but a climber. I like hills. Most of my long Sunday runs start with a climb of Beacon Hill. I can see Old Winchester Hill from my lounge window, and I know that from my front door to the top is exactly three miles. I like hills, I'm good at hills, or at least I used to think so.

The Marathon Eryri is now in its 37th year. It has a reputation for being one of the toughest but most popular and iconic UK marathons. The course is brutal, 838m of climbing that the course profile translates to an equivalent flat distance of over 29 miles.

The first couple of miles of the race was flat or even a gentle downhill. The road surface was good, and I was soon hitting a decent pace. The first climb kicked in at two miles and went on for a further two (and a bit) to Pen-y-Pas. A crowd with cowbells had gathered at the summit, applauding the runners as we embarked on a fast, steep descent the other side. Life was good even when the road quickly turned to trail, and I started to get overtaken by the many mountain goats in the field.

After two miles of off-road downhill, the route regained the tarmac - and a flatter profile - before the half-way point at Beddgelert. Cries of 'Da iawn' (well done) urged us on and I crossed the halfway point alongside a couple of quick runners from Cardiff. I was glad

of the company until conversation moved to the punishing climbs ahead, especially the one at 22 miles - these guys had seen videos of people cry-running as they tackled the ascent. Cry-running? I had no idea that was even a thing.

I'd decided to run on feel, whilst keeping an eye on my heart rate, and then emptying everything I had in the hope of conquering the final climb. Mile 21 came and went, and I felt relatively comfortable as I turned the corner to the final ascent at Waunfawr to Bwlch y Groes (1,200 feet). The climb hits you immediately and all I could think of was that Mike Tyson quote "everyone has a plan until they get punched in the mouth". It went on. And on. The fell runners were in their element, whilst many of us slowed to a painful walk. One guy had even started running backwards to alleviate the pain in his calves. At the lunar summit, a water-station manned by marshals dressed in Alice in Wonderland costumes made me fear I was hallucinating but as I neared the top my mood lifted, and I started to think about a rapid drop to the finish.

That Mike Tyson quote... this race... I realised that my planned quick descent would be anything but. The previous week's rain had turned the off-road track into a toboggan run and it was only as the trail eventually returned to tarmac

that I quickened up. As I approached the finish line, I glimpsed at the clock and was surprised to see that I had just sneaked in under 3 hours 20 minutes. What was I hoping for? After half-way, just to avoid cry-running, so success of sorts. The Marathon Eryri is a tough, beautiful event that should be on everyone's bucket list, even if it has caused irreparable damage to my running relationship with hills.

Striders Photos

Cross Country or dancing like Carlton from Fresh Prince?



Night Running



Hayling 10



In the wars
Gary McCawley



Getting to know you, getting to know one another....

This month's insight is from someone that we all know. It's only the number 1 runner himself Julian Manning AKA Ju Ju

Q & A with Julian Manning

What made you join the Striders?

I had belonged to Clanfield Joggers for four years (was my village club) a friend who was well into running suggested I joined the striders in order to improve, so I gave it a go. That was in 2000.

What inspired you to start running?

I suddenly realised I had some talent after winning the 1500 metres at school 4 years in a row, so I thought perhaps I could be quite good at it :-). I did my first race aged 16 (I lied on the form), it was the Portsmouth Half Marathon in 1991 and I've been loving it ever since.

What's your favourite distance and why?

10 miles, as it's long enough not to attract fast youngsters from the track and not too far that it involves hours of distance training.

Cross country or road?

Cross country - it's more of a challenge and more fun in bad conditions!

Summer/winter training?

Winter. More of a buzz when you come in from a cold wet night

Favourite club session?

800 reps. Not too fast to blow your lungs away and not too long to wear your legs out

Any club inspirations and why?

All those involved in running the club and keeping the social side going because we wouldn't have such a great club without them. On the running side it would be too individuals who unfortunately run for the club - Steve Bishop for winning so many races and the Hampshire league and Nick Baker for being the hardest training partner ever.

Any pre run/race superstitions or prep?

No superstitions, I find it's best to do up your laces

Favourite medal?

I haven't got one, but I do like something a bit different, we used to have glasses or mugs and I still use them all regularly, some go back years.

