



CUMBERLAND ATHLETIC CLUB NEWSLETTER

August 2023

Hello everyone,

Please accept my apologies for another late newsletter. My excuse is, again, the VAT return, which has a nasty habit of coming around every three months, and of course I leave it until the last minute to send to the accountant. The problem is, I also leave it until the last minute to compile the newsletter. Since it is unlikely I will ever learn, please do expect another late edition of the newsletter in November.

I don't have a marathon to also blame this time, but I have spent a week gallivanting around the UK (Edinburgh and Belfast) to see The Killers. On the Belfast trip I also managed to fit in Queen's parkrun. The friend I was with is doing the parkrun alphabet challenge and having completed Queen's on Saturday, has now done a parkrun starting with every letter of the alphabet except I and J.

I hope this late newsletter finds you well, and I look forward to seeing some of you on Copeland track on Thursday

Best wishes, Bev.

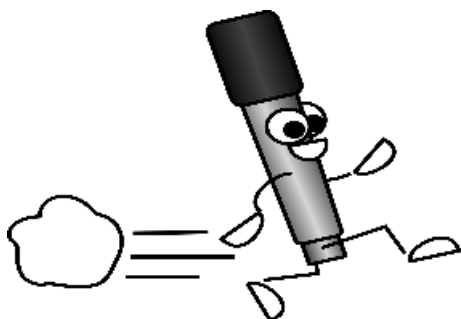
Running joke

Which cake is the fastest runner?

Scone.

Situations vacant!

Our Club band is looking for a lead singer. If you fancy a go, let Gary, Tony, Scott or Dave know.



Championship races coming up

September

3rd – **Loweswater Show** – 4.2k (Multi-terrain)

6th – **Carlisle Castle Series** – 5k (Short)

24th – **Keswick Half Marathon** (Open)

October

1st – **Great Cumbrian Run** – Half (Open)

15th – **Wigton** – 10k (Open)

29th – **Millom Halloween** – 10k (Short)

Running tracks

At the recent World Athletics Championships, Katarina Johnson-Thompson regained her world heptathlon title. Could the secret be the music she listens to whilst training? Here are some tracks she included in a workout mix for the BBC.

Kendrick Lamar – Rich Spirit

Little Simz – I love you, I hate you

Beyonce - Heated

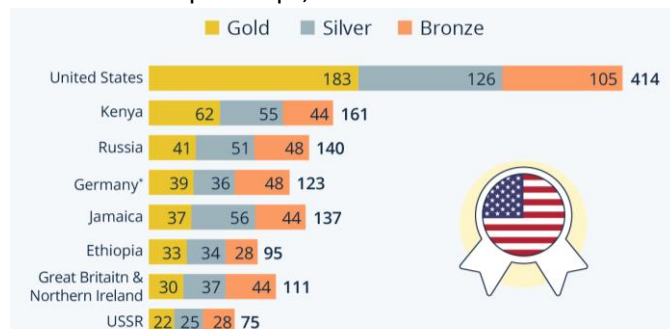
Doja Cat – Get into it (yuh)

La Roux – Bulletproof

To hear the songs and see the full list, visit
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0g6l949>

Running totals

Countries awarded the most medals at the World Athletics Championships, 1983-2022.



* Does not include East Germany and West Germany pre-1990

Cumberland Ace of the Month

Dan Wilson has made two Cumberland ACe nominations this month. Since we didn't have one in July, and given they are both such worthy nominations, we decided we should include both.

Ben Welsh

Ben has shown great progress since getting back into running with Cumberland AC. He trains hard, but always has a smile on his face and is quick to encourage others during sessions. Lambfoot Loop race was a great demonstration of the improvement he has made, knocking 18 mins off his time from last year.



The Duncan Family

Mark (Dad) and Aaron (Son) have been pretty much ever-present at training for months and their progress has been incredible. Both of them have regularly lowered their respective PBs and that doesn't show any sign of stopping yet. Aaron has also bagged podium finishes at recent races. Aaron's elder brother Brandon has also joined the club and put in some equally impressive training showing that speed runs in the family.



The complete amateur's guide to Runner's Knee, by Dan Wilson

Sometime it feels like I'm slowly collecting every muscle injury it's possible to get. This includes the impressive feat of once pulling a muscle by sneezing too hard. The plus side is that I'm also becoming a (completely unqualified) stealth physio, as I've figured out lots of ways to cope with the injuries. The most persistent one that affects me, and many other runners, is the dreaded runner's knee or iliotibial band (ITB) syndrome to give it the official title.

The IT band is a large tendon (or group of tissue) that connects the hip to the outside of the knee. It's generally accepted that runner's knee occurs due to the IT band getting irritated or swollen from rubbing against the lower end of your thigh bone as it joins your knee. Symptoms are typically pain on the outside of the knee that increases gradually during exercise and can cause the knee to collapse.

There is still a lot of uncertainty in the medical world about what exactly causes it and how best to prevent or treat it. I thought it might help to share the experience of what has worked for me in the hope it might help some of you.

- 1) **Strengthening** – As per Shaun's article in last month's newsletter, there are huge benefits to general muscle strengthening. My ITB issues mainly stemmed from weakness in the glutes and particularly the hamstrings. A quick google will bring up lots of recommended exercises with fancy diagrams on how to strengthen those particular muscles. My personal recommendations are clamshells (glutes), deadlifts (hamstrings) and one which is hard to describe concisely in writing so I'd have to explain it.
- 2) **Stretching** – Increasing flexibility with regular targeted stretching, especially pre & post exercise, has also helped. Stretches targeting the glutes and hamstrings gave me the most benefit. It's easy to look-up stretches for these muscles online but there are a few go-to favourites that I'd be happy to share.
- 3) **Release** – The jury is split on whether foam rolling helps with ITB syndrome. It's generally accepted that foam rolling the band won't actually stretch it because it has incredible tensile strength. But a lot of people (me included) get benefits from foam rolling the area as it helps release the muscles around it. I've also had great benefit from trigger point release of the hip flexor TFL muscle. It's achieved by lying on your side with a small ball in the hollow just below the hip bone, there are lots of videos online showing how to do it. It hurts like hell but I can't argue with the results.
- 4) **Taping** – Using kinesiology tape is literally a sticking plaster rather than a cure, but it's a useful part of the tool kit. It takes some load off the ITB tendon and particularly (for me) reduces the irritation where it connects to the knee joint. I use tape as a preventative measure for marathon distance. The tape doesn't always survive the whole race, but it delays onset of the issue sufficiently to complete the distance without major damage.

If anybody would like any more details I'm always happy to talk things through.

Shoe and kit code for SportShoes.com, a message from Susan Cain

For anyone wanting a new pair of shoes or piece of kit, please get in touch with me at susandavidcain@yahoo.co.uk and I will give you the SportsShoes code, which gives 10% off all orders over £50 on their whole range and free standard shipping, worth £4.99. I get the code at the beginning of each month, so be prepared, and ask for it before you spot the bargain.



Maryport Smugglers' route summer run – Tuesday 8th August, by Shaun Cavanagh

Bring your own contraband

There's no getting away from it, we've had some lucky weather breaks for our summer runs in what has been the most enigmatic of seasons. And it turned out fair again, when a bunch of CAC types gathered to retrace the steps of legionaries, vagabonds and retired golfers.

The final summer run of the year followed the same basic off-road principle as those before it, with the slight deviation being that some road travel was required to link the two main elements. Beginning in the golf club car park, a run brief included much persuasion that there really wasn't any serious uphill running to be done. Well, there was a bit, but as we discovered, the

elevation was undertaken over a lengthy stretch of lonning, which featured the historic route taken by the aforementioned vagabonds speeding by customs and excise at Whitehaven and Workington.

This being the shortest of the 4 summer runs, heavy emphasis was placed on the rapid girls and boys making use of any opportunity to lead off and double back. There was less scope for that on the initial leg of Hadrian's cycle route (an approximately half mile stretch of smooth tarmac), and it was great to see the whole group keeping an eye out for potential cyclists and walkers whilst the rest mustered back together. Once on the golf course (legitimately), a big phalanx of keen people took an instruction literally, and doubled right the way back up a fairway hill. Kudos!

The next section was slightly bumpy, being that we crossed what appears to be an old-style water meadow. Thankfully devoid of water and mud, the going was good to firm for a pre-surge canter to the lonning. Upon reaching the field boundary, there followed a half mile stretch of gently elevating track, offering a traverse to the road at any effort each runner pleased. We re-gathered at a gate for a reiteration of the care needed on the next section. This included a steep road descent, past the lovely Cross-Cannonby church, until arriving at Cross-Cannonby Carr nature reserve. After a quick look for Keith hiding in the undergrowth, our final section gave the speedy people opportunity for a couple of burn ups on the return run along Hadrian's cycleway. Reaching the road was our planned finish and, in a non-doubling-back circuit, gave us a grand total distance of just 3.5 miles.

And yet, even upon completion of the loop, it appears one mention of a Strava segment does queer things to erstwhile exhausted limbs. The second the road was crossed, a long line of desperate sprinters surged into the near distance. There must be a load of idioms to go with this phenomenon: show a dog a rabbit etc etc. Whatever takes your fancy on a summer run; the main thing is we all had fun.

Happy Running – Shaun Cavanagh



Slag Bank Slog Summer Handicap – Tuesday 15th August, by Shaun Cavanagh

In a sport where each of us has experienced both highs and lows of performance, there is similar variance in the level of motivation felt at given points in time; this may or may not be related to the former. But on an evening where the conditions shone down surprisingly pleasantly, what was in no doubt was the commitment shown by all present.

Of course, this is a prelude to acknowledging the stoicism demonstrated by our amazing handicapper, Susan, who despite suffering a nasty running accident, made sure the all the handicapping tables were delivered on time. This 'show must go on' fortitude was shared by David; as, despite no small amount of worry, he turned up to lead the registration process alongside Keith and Sheila.

The event ran fairly smoothly after that, assuming such benign words can be attached to an out and back route up and over the Wukin'ton Fell. There's a lot in a name and, correspondingly, there's no denying the slog of an effort involved in tackling a mightily impressive piece of industrial waste. Where we have previously employed a circuitous route (undertaken twice), prior recce runs revealed this to be too risky, due to highly eroded footpaths. And so, following a pre-run safety brief, the runners were let loose according to their pre-determined handicap slots.

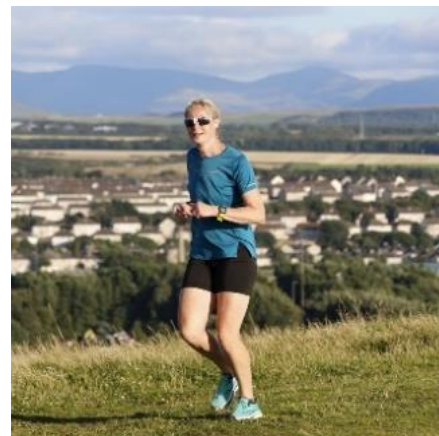


First off was Craig D, making his return to running, and then Nicola and Lucy. Lucy was running non-competitively, prior to racing at Latrigg the day after; but her declared easy pace lasted for as long as it took her to get to the hill! Meanwhile, it seemed Nicola had registered both her plan to run and her determination not to be passed by anyone after pulling Craig back in. There is no photographic evidence, but rest assured her eyes were bulging on the run in:



You Shall Not Pass

Of the rest; it was a genuine pleasure seeing all those tortured faces returning from whence they began (well, for those of us marshalling). But, thanks to more alchemy than Gandalf could conjure, Susan's handicapping ensured the marshals had their own bit of discomfort, where little more than 3 mins covered the first and final finishers. This is all the more impressive given the fact that no adjustment is available for those that favour hill running, as compared to the fast 5k upon which the handicapping is based.



Of course, the main point about holding such events, whether watching or doing, is that everyone has fun and a jolly good get together. Hopefully that objective was achieved, in circumstances that make you feel proud of the club you're in, and the people that make it.



The scores on the doors were impressive enough; but as for the commitment; that was something else!

Position	Name	Time	Handicap	Running Time
1.	<i>Lucy Stobbert (Not competing)</i>	<i>Not Timed</i>	<i>(3mins)</i>	<i>16mins 36 secs</i>
1.	Nicola Cowan	21min 49secs	3min	18mins 49secs
2.	Mark Duncan	21mins 56secs	7mins	14mins 56secs
3.	Paul Graham	21mins 57secs	10mins	11mins 57secs
4.	Gareth Cavanagh	21mins 58secs	8mins 30secs	13mins 28secs
5.	Aaron Duncan	21mins 59secs	9mins 30secs	12mins 59secs
6.	Craig Ducan	22mins 01sec	Scratch	22mins 01 sec
7.	Jaimie Banks	22mins 12secs	6mins 30secs	15mins 42 secs
8.	Ryan Stoddart	22mins 18secs	9mins	13mins 18secs
9.	Pete Milligan	22mins20secs	8mins 30secs	13mins 50secs
10.	Nathan Holt	22mins 28secs	7mins	15mins 28secs
11.	Kevin Wallace	22mins 31secs	9mins 30secs	13mins 31secs
12.	Billy Stobbert	22mins 44secs	7mins	15mins 44secs
13.	Stuart Pyne	22mins 46secs	5mins 30secs	17mins 16secs
14.	Ian McDougall	22mins 48secs	7mins	15mins 48secs
15.	Ian Wilson	22mins 50secs	8mins 30secs	14mins 20secs
16.	Andrew Kelly	23mins 00secs	5mins	18mins 00secs
17.	Mike Sandelands	23mins 01sec	7mins	16mins 01secs
18.	Scott Liddell	23mins 09secs	7mins	16mins 09secs
19.	Gary Palmer	23mins 11secs	4mins	19mins 11secs
20.	Dave Bowness	23mins 33secs	7mins 30secs	16mins 03secs
21.	Ben Welsh	23mins 39secs	6mins 30secs	17mins 09secs
22.	Peter Telford	23mins 45secs	7mins 30secs	16mins 15secs
23.	Stella Atherton	23mins 52secs	5mins 30secs	18mins 22secs
24.	Martyn Minchella	24secs 13secs	7mins 30secs	16mins 43secs
25.	Sarah Minchella	24mins 55secs	5mins 30secs	19mins 25secs

A huge well done to all those taking part and of course to the event winners:

1st Female – Nicola Cowan

1st Male – Mark Duncan

Final Finisher – Sarah Minchella

Role Call – Event Heroes:

Brian – Photographer-in-chief and gleeful observer at the top of the hill

Craig – Club Chairman, doing chairmanship things, like handing out wine and stuff

David – Star man and resting from his usual peace-making duties ('cos Tony was AWOL)

Gill – Marshal lady and additional the-camera-never-lies person

Keith – Chilled out timer, X-Files aficionado, but secretly missing Tony's abuse

Shaun – Standing back watcher person, still glowing from an easy recce (unlike them –)

Sheila – Recorder, setter of invigilator standards, and mentor to the governess on The Chase

Stephen – Marshal man, very outdoors type, but no match for the scary, feral kids

Susan – Handicapping legend (Get well soon)

Tony – Missing in action on the West coast line – But he'll be back, Keith, just like Arnie.

Tracey – Marshal lady, strategic side-stepper of some feral nippers with axes, and "I'll be ok 'cos Stephen can take the first blow" person

Happy Running All – Shaun Cavanagh

Alexandra Parkrun review, by Stuart Buchanan

So, there we were, my two sisters with hubbies plus me off to Manchester to see the probable washed out day 4 of the 4th test between England and Australia. I decided that as it's likely we'll see no cricket due to the wretched weather, I may as well plan to do a Parkrun in Manchester. After careful consideration I opted for Alexandra Parkrun, in South Manchester. Two miles from the hotel so a nice warm up before the start. Got up in plenty of time for my three pre-run toilet visits and headed out for the start at 8.30 in the pouring rain. I was guided to the start by the nice lady on Google maps, mostly alongside a dual carriageway, past the Heineken brewery, the whiff of which I can only compare to a pair of shorts that had been worn for a marathon and then left in the conservatory for 2 weeks to fester! (Info from a friend!) Anyway, there I was at the start, and the "Shaun pretender" asked (with his megaphone!) "ANY TOURISTS?" Up went my hand, "WORKINGTON!" Simultaneously another guy shouted, "MILTON KEYNES!" Megaphone man then half-heartedly muttered, "Yeah Workington and Milton Keynes that'll do." Not a cheer. Not so much as a ripple of applause! So off we went around a quite pleasant, pancake flat route, consisting of two identical long loops, and two short loops adding up to the conventional 5K. It was entirely in a proper park and the marshals were fairly pleasant considering they volunteered to stand out in the wet. All in all, it was quite a nice Parkrun, plenty of parking in neighbouring streets. It was ok but not in Workington's league! God bless Mr Cavanagh and all he shouts at! Well at least I still had the run back to enjoy: 2 miles back to the hotel, in the rain and another chance to fill my lungs with the Heineken pong!



An article about the importance of balance, shared by Craig Kershaw

Craig recently came across this item from a 2019 edition of Athletics Weekly when he was searching through some old files on his computer and thought it would make a very interesting read in the newsletter.

Five facts about balance

Your body's ability to balance is among the most important – yet often overlooked – aspects of training. In groundbreaking research being led by exercise scientists at Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU), physiologists are beginning to understand how and why it is essential we maintain and improve our powers of equilibrium.

Here we uncover some of the surprising facts that underpin your ability to stay upright:

YOUR BRAIN – NOT YOUR MUSCLES – CONTROLS BALANCE

It's widely assumed that poorer powers of balance as we age are down to the loss in muscle mass and strength that occurs with age. But the brain plays a more important role.

In our twenties and thirties, we each have about 70,000 specialised nerve cells – motor neurons – in the lower part of the spinal cord that connect with our leg muscles to control balance and movement.

By the age of 75, 40 per cent of these motor neurons have been lost, resulting in lower levels of co-ordination and balance in people with all levels of physical fitness.

"It's as much a part of ageing as greying hair," says Jamie McPhee, professor of musculoskeletal physiology at MMU. "And there's no evidence at all that staying fit even as a top level masters athlete will prevent the decline."

HARD TRAINING WON'T PREVENT BALANCE LOSSES

In MMU research funded by the European Union and the UK Medical Research Council (MRC) and conducted with members of the British Masters Athletics Federation, McPhee and his team have identified a simple exercise as the most important in balance preservation.

They showed that young adults – even those who are not very athletic – can easily stand on one leg, eyes closed, for 30 seconds. By the time the average person is 70 years old they manage only four to five seconds doing the same test. In theory, the masters' athletes who participated in the studies, some of whom were training for up to 14 hours a week, should have managed more than the general population of their peers, their superior muscle strength perhaps expected to provide a stronger base. But that was not the case.

Even with well-trained masters' athletes, they found that those in their seventies could hold the position only for around seven seconds, which is not significantly better than average.

"It is appealing to think that regular exercise and training might prevent the death of motor neurons during ageing. Unfortunately, we found no evidence to support this idea," McPhee says. "All older athletes (endurance and sprinters alike) showed signs of a similar degree of motor neuron loss."

YOU SHOULD START BALANCE TRAINING NOW

According to the MMU findings, the only way to hold on to balance and prevent falls is to practice balance-specific training.

Encouragingly, while the loss of motor neurons that control balance is irreversible, the master athletes studied by McPhee and his colleagues appeared better able to "rescue" muscles that had lost their nerve connection.

“This rescue is realised by the sprouting of nearby, healthy nerves, that can establish a new connection between the muscle and nerve,” McPhee says. “And athletes can also learn to better control the nerves that remain by practising new balance and co-ordination exercises.”

Starting balance training as early as possible – in your forties if not sooner – provides the best protection.

“We recommend you include it into your warm-up and cool-down programme,” McPhee says.

TRY STANDING ON ONE LEG EVERY DAY

Balance is needed in every aspect of sports performance, from spatial awareness (being aware of your body’s position in relation to what’s around you) to proprioception (the body’s sense of movement and position).

It aids jumping and prevents falls since our ability to stay upright is down to the brain knowing the precise position of the body, even when our eyes are closed.

“The brain knows what’s stable and what’s not,” McPhee says. “One of the simplest and most effective balance training exercises is to stand on one leg, eyes closed, every day. It sounds simple – until you try it.

“Once you can do the eyes closed single leg stand for several seconds, you need to challenge yourself more,” McPhee says.

“Try moving your centre of mass by swaying on one leg with eyes closed and then try tying your shoelaces on one leg.”

BALANCE AFFECTS LONG-TERM HEALTH

It is not just your times and distances that can suffer as balance diminishes. Your general health can take a downturn, too.

A study of people in their fifties by the UK’s Medical Research Council showed that those who could stand on one leg for 10 seconds with their eyes closed were the most likely to be fit and well over the next 13 years.

If they managed only two seconds, they were three times as likely to die before the age of 66.

Another study published in the American Heart Association’s journal *Stroke* by a team from the Centre for Genomic Medicine at Kyoto University School of Medicine in Japan asked 841 women and 546 men with an average age of 67 to stand on one leg for as long as they could.

They also had the health of their brain vessels evaluated using MRI scans.

The maximum time anyone managed the one-leg stand was 60 seconds, but those who wobbled before 20 seconds were found to have small blood vessel damage, which indicates “an increased risk for brain disease and cognitive decline,” the researchers said.

Workington Cricket Club is a non-profit club. They open each Saturday for tea and coffee after ParkRun. They have also been the venue for our summer BBQ, Boxing Day run, Christmas handicap, summer effort training sessions and the Learn2Run. A great venue to consider if you have an event coming up.

**Workington Cricket Club**
Function Room Ground and Facilities
Available to hire
Great venue for family celebrations, birthdays
weddings parties, retirements, also funeral wakes,
Presentation nights, Charity nights etc.
Centrally located with full kitchen facilities if required.
Telephone our Facility Manager
07732 741296