

# Women's Running

April 2017

*"Running is the constant that helps remind me who I am"*

- Meet cover star Olivia, page 10

## OUTRUN YOUR DEMONS

HOW YOU CAN HARNESS YOUR  
EMOTIONS TO RUN FASTER

### STRENGTH MADE SIMPLE

YOUR 15-MINUTE  
HOME WORKOUT

### BAG YOUR BEST MARATHON TIME

### 6 BEAUTIFUL BRITISH MOUNTAIN RACES



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SHOE FOR YOU!**

**30 RUNNING  
SHOES, TRIED  
AND TESTED**

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MEALS TO  
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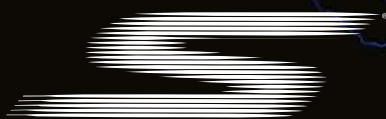
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# Contents

APRIL 2017 ISSUE # 87



40

## OUTRUN YOUR DEMONS

How you can harness emotions to run faster!

15

## STRENGTH MADE SIMPLE

Your 15-minute home workout

30

## BAG YOUR BEST MARATHON TIME

Aiming for a PB? Find part two of your plan here!

80

## 6 BEAUTIFUL BRITISH MOUNTAIN RACES

Find adventure on your doorstep

49

## BUY THE RIGHT SHOE FOR YOU!

30 running shoes, tried and tested

72

## FRESH FUEL

3 stunning recipes to try today

86

## TAME YOUR LONG RUNS

Top tips to master high mileage

## FORWARDS



## 10 "RUNNING IS THE CONSTANT THAT HELPS REMIND ME WHO I AM"

Meet our cover star, TV and radio presenter, model and fashion and fitness blogger Olivia Cox

## 12 HEALTH NEWS

The latest health and fitness facts at your fingertips

## 14 FOOD NEWS

A quick digest of recent nutrition news

## 15 BODY BLAST

Take one piece of equipment and 15 minutes and build your running body!

## 16 RUNNING TECH

The newest gadgets and apps, tested for you

## 17 KIT BAG

Add some variety to your training with this must-have kit mix

## 18 KEEP RUNNING, MUMMY!

Claire Chamberlain takes a very long run down memory lane

## 19 MY PB

How Jacqueline Higgins smashed her half-marathon PB

## 20 TOKEN BLOKE

Damian Hall gets a behind-the-scenes view of the Spine Race

## 22 INSPIRATION

Meet amazing Melanie Sturman, who's run hundreds of events – and even set up a couple of them, too!

## ON THE COVER

Model: Olivia Cox  
Photo: Eddie Macdonald  
Make-up: Bea Burton  
Hair: Jack at Neville Hair & Beauty  
Tan: Fake Bake at Secret Spa  
Kit: Top: lululemon; crop top: lululemon; capri pants: lululemon; shoes: ASICS  
Nails: Nails Inc



# Contents

APRIL 2017 ISSUE # 87

## FEATURES

### 36 GAME PLAN

Racing this spring? Make sure you have a foolproof strategy in place...

### 44 MEDAL MANIA

Women share their prized race bling

### 68 WORKOUT

Learn a simple stretching routine to ease stiffness and beat injuries



## TRAIL ZONE



### 78 TRAIL ESSENTIALS

The best kit for running off-road

### 80 RACE ON BRITAIN'S MOUNTAINS

Six races for mountain lovers - even those with a fear of sheer drops...

*Love  
our  
mag?*

**SUBSCRIBE  
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YOUR FIRST  
THREE  
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JUST £1!**

— page 28 —

## PERSONAL BEST

### 86 TAME YOUR LONG RUNS

Christina Macdonald gets the expert view on tackling high mileage

### 88 BIG MARATHON CHALLENGE

Our fearsome foursome are getting stuck into their spring training

## GO!

### 93 THIS MONTH'S RACING

Where to race and spectate in April

### 94 GREAT EDINBURGH WINTER RUN

Hannah Ebelthite enjoys an explosive 5K round an extinct volcano

### 96 CRUK LONDON WINTER RUN

Elle Linton takes to the streets of the capital for a fun, fundraising race



## REGULARS

### 06 EDITOR'S NOTE

"You don't need much to run, but one thing you do need before you start is a good pair of shoes"

### 07 MEET THE TEAM

The runners, trainers and testers who've brought you this issue

### 26 LETTERS

Your chance to have your say about women's running

### 27 YOUR RUNS

We asked you to show us your favourite runs - and you didn't disappoint!

### 98 THE CHALLENGE

Every month, the WR team sets you a different challenge. Find it here...



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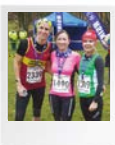
# Welcome!

APRIL 2017 ISSUE # 87

## WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO THIS MONTH



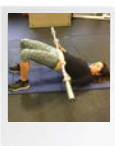
"Blackdown Beast, 16 lovely muddy miles with my running buddies Jane and Trish." – Jackie



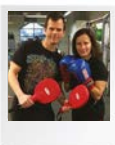
"The Chilly Hilly 10K was heaven, sliding about in the mud and just about conquering the hills!" – Tina



"Friday workout with the girls. Nothing better than a 25-minute workout during lunch." – Cristina



"This month I've been to see a physio and he's got me in the gym and using weights to build up my leg strength and I'm really getting into it!" – Jenny



"I've been doing less running and more boxing fitness these past few months to increase my fitness for short bursts of running and also to strengthen my core." – Christina



## IF THE SHOE FITS...

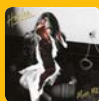
Running is a really easy sport to get into. Unlike many activities, you don't need to be in a club (although it helps!) and you don't need much in the way of equipment (although, again, it helps!). But the one thing you do need is a good pair of running shoes. I've been wearing running shoes for 18 years and testing them for what seems a lifetime. When I meet people who want to start running, I'm

often asked, "Which trainers should I buy?" If only there was an easy answer to this! There is no one pair of shoes that will suit everyone. If you're a new runner, you need to visit a running store (or podiatrist) to have a fitting – it's as simple as that. But there are ways to get an idea of what's out there and to learn about the different styles of shoe you can buy. This issue, you'll find our first Women's Running Shoe Guide (page 49), which is intended to be a starting point for new runners, or a buying guide for women who already know which kind of shoes suit them. The right running shoes will help you to run free from injury, and with comfort and confidence.

The WR team will be out running strong (and probably in new shoes!) on 8 March for our brand new International Women's Day Virtual Run. To find out more and to join us, visit [womensrunninguk.co.uk](http://womensrunninguk.co.uk).

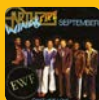
## MUSIC & MOVEMENT

What we're running and recovering to this month



**Tina Chantrey**

"Harlea's 'Miss Me' as it's a bit grungy but also a bit trippy – it just sets you up for taking on the rain!"



**Jenny Bozon**

"September' by Earth, Wind & Fire is the 'happy' song I listen to on the tube on the way to the gym to get me in the mood!"



**Lizzie Hufton**

"I've needed a kick up the backside to work out this month and PJ Harvey '50ft Queenie' is a hell of a kick to get me going!"

FOLLOW ME ON TWITTER @LIZZIEWRMAG

*Lizzie*

**Elizabeth Hufton** \_Editor

## EDITOR'S CHOICE

We've got a packed issue for you this month – if you're short on time, don't miss these essential features!



### Motion and emotion

PAGE 40

How thrashing out your emotional pain on the road could help your mind and your running



### Runner's high

PAGE 80

Ready for a new thrill? Try racing on some of Britain's beautiful hills and mountains this year





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#### AWARD-WINNING MAGAZINE

FRONT COVER OF THE YEAR (CONSUMER)

(PPA INDEPENDENT PUBLISHER AWARDS 2016)

SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN OF THE YEAR

(PPA DIGITAL AWARDS 2016)



CONSUMER MEDIA BRAND OF THE YEAR  
(PPA INDEPENDENT PUBLISHER AWARDS 2015)



# Meet the team

## THE WOMEN'S RUNNING TEAM HAS A WEALTH OF KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE TO HELP YOU GET THE MOST FROM YOUR RUNNING



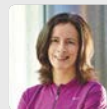
#### LIZ HUFTON

Lizzie has been running since her student days in Liverpool in 1999, and has been writing about health and fitness for 13 years. She's run nine marathons and has dabbled in triathlon, too.



#### JENNIFER BOZON

Jenny is a runner, a foodie and a country girl at heart. She enjoys nothing more than getting muddy in her trainers, and loves that running allows her to appreciate the great outdoors while living in a hectic city.



#### CHRISTINA MACDONALD

Chris is an experienced health and fitness journalist, a Level 3 personal trainer and running group leader. She is author of *Run Yourself Fit*. Follow her @writefitchriss.



#### TINA CHANTREY

Tina is happiest running off-road and up a hill. She's worked as a health journalist for over 20 years. She is a running coach, a mum of three girls, and writes about her running at shewhodaesruns.com.



#### LISA JACKSON

Lisa is a clinical hypnotherapist (quiet-medicine.co.uk) and author of *Your Pace or Mine?*, *Running Made Easy* and *Adore Yourself Slim*. Last spring, she joined the 100 Marathon Club.



#### ANNE-MARIE LATEGAN

Anne-Marie has a BSc (Hons) in Human Movement Science & Rehabilitation. She has completed eight ultramarathons and trains clients at Ignite in London (ignitept.co.uk).



#### JULIET MCGRATTAN

Juliet is a GP and keen runner. She's been running for six years and has taken part in many races, including the Beauty and the Beast, the Cross Bay Half Marathon and the London Marathon.



#### CLAIRE CHAMBERLAIN

The former deputy editor of *Women's Running* has returned as a columnist. She's mum to Jacob, 4, and Seren, 2, and blogs at keeprunningmummy.wordpress.com.



#### DAMIAN HALL

Our columnist and token bloke Damian is a dad of two, a fitness and outdoors writer with 15 years' experience and a mad-keen ultra-runner. Last summer, he achieved a top-20 UTMB finish.



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**Personal trainer and fitness blogger Elle Linton has reported on the CRUK London Winter Run for us this issue (page 96). Find out more about her at keepsimpelle.com.**

#### WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO START BLOGGING AND WORKING IN FITNESS?

Around the time of London 2012 was one of the best times to be working in health and fitness. I'd just begun work as a studio instructor alongside my office job and got the opportunity to be involved in a lot

## SPOTLIGHT ON... ELLE LINTON

of events related to fitness. I wanted an outlet to share all the exciting goings on I'd been involved in so started a blog. As for working in fitness, that just kinda happened; I always loved sport and science in school so I combined them at uni. When I started a full-time job, I was inspired by a colleague to take up running.

#### YOU'RE NOT JUST A RUNNER, ARE YOU...?

When it comes to sweating, I will try anything at least once! I learned to swim a couple of years ago aged 30 so that I could take on my first ever triathlon. I also enjoy cycling, weights, Pilates, yoga... There just doesn't seem to be enough days in a week for me to do everything I love!

#### WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE PLACE TO TRAIN?

I love getting outdoors as much as possible because, a few years ago, I was that person who avoided doing anything outdoors especially if it was cold. I love running in central London, along the north or south bank of the river Thames. It makes me fall in love with the city all over again.



# forward

HEALTH | FOOD | CLINIC | WORKOUT | TECH | INSPIRATION

## 10 "I TRAIN WHEN I'M HAPPY AND I TRAIN WHEN I'M SAD"

Meet our multi-talented cover star Olivia Cox as she gets stuck into training for the Sierra Leone Marathon

## 12 HEALTH NEWS

The latest fitness and health news for you

## 14 FOOD NEWS

Nutrition know-how at your fingertips

## 15 BODY BLAST

One simple piece of equipment and four moves to get you strong

## 16 RUNNING TECH

The latest fitness gadgets and apps, reviewed for you

## 17 KIT BAG

Mix up your disciplines with this gorgeous kit

## 18 KEEP RUNNING, MUMMY!

Claire Chamberlain is taking a long, long run down memory lane

## 19 MY PB

How Jacqueline Higgins smashed her half-marathon PB

## 20 TOKEN BLOKE

Damian Hall reports on runners with real backbone at the Spine Race

## 22 INSPIRATION

Meet Mel Sturman, who's run hundreds of races – and founded a couple, too!

“RUNNING  
IS THE  
CONSTANT  
THAT HELPS  
REMINDE ME  
WHO I AM”

Ex-Army, radio and TV presenter Olivia Cox is preparing for her second marathon – in Sierra Leone

PHOTO: EDDIE MACDONALD









"I HONESTLY DON'T  
KNOW WHAT I'D  
DO IF I COULDN'T  
WORK OUT"

Hoody: Uniqlo; leggings: Ellesse at  
JD Sports; crop top: Ellesse at JD  
Sports; shoes: ASICS

**F** or cover star Olivia Cox, fitness has always been a big part of her life. At one time it was an essential aspect of her career in the British Military. Now it's the rock that keeps her stable, while working in the chaotic world of the media.

If you've not already come across Olivia before, perhaps presenting at London Fashion Week or fronting a campaign for Bobbi Brown, you probably wouldn't be surprised to discover she's a TV and radio presenter, fashion, fitness and beauty blogger and is currently filming her debut film role. Yes, she's flippin' gorgeous, charismatic and makes running look more glamorous than a night at the Oscars.

You'd be more surprised, though, to discover she's served as an officer in the British Military, run a three-hour-40-minute marathon and couldn't be more elated by the prospect of running 26.2 miles in desperately humid conditions this May

at the Street Child Sierra Leone Marathon. This lady is a certainly tough one and not one to shy away from a challenge.

Joining the military upon leaving school, fitness has always been – and remains – a huge part of Olivia's life. "I was 18 when I was told by a colonel at my school careers evening that if I joined I'd get paid to go skiing (I love skiing!)," she explains. "As soon as I started telling people I was applying to join the Army, I got laughed at and told I was too small, blonde and girly to get in. I'm super competitive, so that was it – I had to pass. I did, and I ended up at Sandhurst [Royal Military Academy]."

Olivia started running before joining the Army, but really found a love for it once stationed in Germany. "There's something so inspiring about having the Osnabrück forest on your backdoor," she says. "One of the big challenges upon leaving the Army was finding ways of fitting running and fitness into my life when it was no longer a regimented part of my day. But it's just a case of planning a little more carefully."

While her time training at Sandhurst and serving as an officer tested and developed her physical strength, mentally and emotionally she believes it was an invaluable learning experience. "Training at Sandhurst was one of the hardest things I've ever done," says Olivia. "But it's also an incredible grounder. I remember looking





across the mess hall at Prince Harry, sitting on his own, with crazy-short hair, thinking, 'You all right mate?' That's the thing about being an Army officer – one minute you're wet, tired, hungry and secretly hating life. Next you're getting silver service, black-tie dinners in the mess. It's a very peculiar existence. Although training was tough, I have no regrets about joining the military. Men and women I served with were inspirational and the most driven people I've ever met. When I left Sandhurst, my parents said I'd changed. I couldn't immediately see it, but, as time goes on, I've noticed how much more confident and pragmatic I am."

Her down-to-earth demeanour was apparent upon first meeting Olivia – as was her degree of self-drive. After a quick cup of tea and a chat before our photoshoot, it soon became clear she's perfected the art of spinning plates. Not only does she have her own breakfast show on Fm1Fm radio and a weekly radio show on Hoxton Radio, she keeps busy blogging, presenting regularly on TV, anchoring a new adventure travel show on Sky and launching her first jewellery collection – oh, yes, and she has marathon training to do too. She tells us she likes being busy, though, as she trots back to the van for another costume change.

Olivia's career took an enormous change at the age of 22. Obtaining a degree in history from the University of Exeter, while serving part-time in the reserves, she decided to leave the Army and begin a media career as a style and beauty writer, soon becoming a well-established name in the field. "I enjoyed the challenge of a career U-turn," she says. "Going from wearing green kit with mud on my face to getting chauffeured around London with people looking after me has been a huge culture shift. But I think my background is what keeps me grounded and is to thank for where I am now."

For Olivia, maintaining her fitness – and continuing to run – as she transitioned from life on the barracks to in front of the camera has also played a role in keeping her grounded and true to herself. "In an industry of such highs and lows, plus huge uncertainty, running is the constant that helps remind me who I am," she explains. Like most, she also finds running a crucial outlet in managing her emotions. "Running is my release. I train when I'm happy and I train when I'm sad," she says.

This was never more true than in 2012, when Olivia ran her first marathon, the London Marathon, in memory of an ex-boyfriend who'd been tragically killed in Afghanistan the previous year. "Dave and I had always planned to run a marathon together, so I really felt like I was running for him," she says. "I finished in 3hrs 40mins which was a time I'm sure he'd have been proud of."

Keen to run a second marathon, Olivia signed up to this year's Street Child Sierra Leone Marathon – a race whereby funds are used to help some of the world's poorest children access education. While she anticipates that "re-visiting the head-space [she] was in for the 2012 marathon will be difficult" psychologically, she is keen to re-experience the marathon, while raising money for a cause she feels passionate about. "The Sierra Leone marathon is unique, in that all participants are running for the same cause, which lends a sense of camaraderie I miss from my Army days. We get to visit the people we are fundraising for, which I think will be a hugely rewarding experience. I love a challenge and am obscenely competitive. I can't think of a better way to push myself than running in extreme heat and humidity, thousands of miles from home!"

#### FIND OUT MORE

THE STREET CHILD  
SIERRA LEONE  
MARATHON IS ON 28 MAY  
THIS YEAR. TO SIGN UP  
AND FIND OUT MORE VISIT  
SIERRALEONEMARATHON.  
COM

That said, she recognises that the challenge will be no mean feat and is throwing all she has into her training. And, given her jam-packed schedule, has had to trial new innovative ways to fit in sessions. "My travel diary this year is really hectic, so I've downloaded a new fitness app called Vent Up," she explains. "It's basically like the fitness version of Uber, and gets a PT to you within two hours, whether you're at home or not. It's perfect for when I'm travelling for filming work with long hours and busy days. Since the middle of last year, I've been training with a PT at Duo Chelsea. Each week I do two sessions with Kristy, and make up my remaining three sessions with boxing at BXR and running outside."

While she did admit to us that, given that obstacles "like heat, humidity and jet lag will keep things interesting", and that she's "just hoping to finish", during out morning together Olivia never once gives the impression she might have bitten off more than she can chew. The erstwhile Army officer is not one to be defeated.

Indeed she's grateful she has the opportunity – and the choice – to be able to train for such events. "I have the hugest respect for active people whose ability to train is taken away from them through illness, disability or misfortune," she says. "I honestly don't know what I'd do if I couldn't work out."

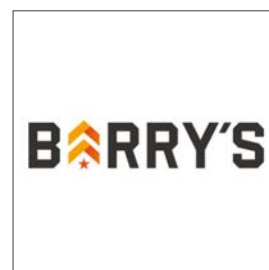
## MY RUNNING LOVES

Olivia talks fuel, apps and skincare



#### THE APP: VENT UP

In a new place, I don't always have time to find a gym or map a running route. Vent Up saves so much time and hassle.



#### THE SESSION:

##### BARRY'S BOOTCAMP

I mix HIIT resistance training with running. I train at Duo Chelsea, Barry's or box at BXR.



#### THE FUEL:

I eat six small meals a day and, since going gluten-free, I'm no longer afraid of carbs. I always have MyProtein after training.



#### THE SKINCARE:

I use Sukin Super Greens (Holland & Barrett), an organic, vegan skincare range that's packed with superfoods.



## COLIC CURE

Controversial research carried out in Sweden has found that acupuncture may reduce crying in babies with colic. In the study of 147 babies, aged two to eight weeks, babies were randomly assigned to three treatment groups. Crying was reduced by around 40 minutes a day in babies allocated to the acupuncture groups.



## MIDDLE-AGED WOMEN VICTIMS OF EATING DISORDERS

Eating disorders are commonly associated with young women but a new survey has revealed that middle-aged women

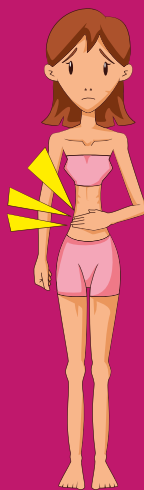
in the UK are also at risk. Published in the journal *BMC Medicine*, the study found that 15% of middle-aged women had experienced an eating disorder at some point in their lifetime and, over the last year, 3.6% had developed a disorder.

The cross-sectional analysis, which used data from an existing longitudinal study, investigated the prevalence of the disorder and also the childhood, parenting and personality risk factors associated with the onset of an eating disorder. A sample of 9,233 women (with an average age of 48 years) completed a version of the Eating Disorders Diagnostic Schedule. Those who screened positive were interviewed to assess presence, frequency and duration of behaviours associated with eating disorders, and were asked to relate any changes in their eating behaviours with major life events.

Anorexia nervosa was the most common lifetime disorder (3.6%), and childhood events, including sexual abuse, death of a carer and parental divorce, were associated with the onset of eating disorders. If you think you may be affected, contact your GP or find support through [b-eat.co.uk](http://b-eat.co.uk).



**I AM STRUGGLING WITH INTENSE UTERINE CRAMPS THAT ARE DESTROYING MY RACES. I'VE HAD SCANS THAT REVEAL LITTLE. HOW CAN I SOLVE THIS?**



I'm sorry you've been having so many problems and not found any answers, it must be frustrating! Pelvic pains are hard to diagnose and there isn't always an answer. Finding ways to minimise the pain is sometimes the only solution. When it comes to conditions like endometriosis, there is a dearth of evidence and so many unknowns in terms of the relationship with exercise. It's interesting that (in your full letter) you say when you were taking the pill you had no problems, suggesting a hormonal cause for the pain. Re-starting that could be an option to discuss with your GP. You have unresolved, recurrent, pelvic pain with suspected endometriosis so it would be reasonable to seek a referral to a gynaecologist for an opinion.

SEND YOUR QUESTIONS FOR GP AND RUNNER DR JULIET MCGRATTAN TO: [EDITORIAL@WILDBUNCHMEDIA.CO.UK](mailto:EDITORIAL@WILDBUNCHMEDIA.CO.UK)

## EXERCISE YOURSELF HAPPY!

A study from Central YMCA has found that those who lead more active lifestyles have a better overall state of wellbeing. Research found that in those participants who were more physically active, wellbeing scores increased by 13%, whereas in those who were less active, scores depleted by up to 19%.



More miles = more smiles

87.08

THE PERCENTAGE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE AVERAGE HALF-MARATHON TIME FOR A FEMALE AMATEUR RUNNER AND THE CURRENT FEMALE WORLD RECORD, HELD BY ELITE ATHLETE FLORENCE KIPLAGAT.

SOURCE: SHADESTATION.CO.UK

WORDS: JENNIFER BOZON. IMAGES: ISTOCKPHOTO.COM

## Q&amp;A

**I HAVE REALLY TIGHT CALVES PRETTY MUCH ALL THE TIME. THEY'RE VERY PRONE TO CRAMP, ESPECIALLY IN THE EVENING AFTER A RUN. I'VE TRIED EVERYTHING! I DON'T RUN PARTICULARLY LONG DISTANCES – NORMALLY BETWEEN 5–10K PER RUN. ANY ADVICE WOULD BE MUCH APPRECIATED!**



You've done and tried all the right things for simple leg cramps (drinking more, taking on more salt, stretching and foam rollers). The fact that your calves are tight all the time and made worse by running suggests that the problem may be in your biomechanics – the way your body holds itself and moves. I think you would really benefit from an assessment by a sports physiotherapist. Often the problem is not in the calves themselves but elsewhere in the lower or upper legs, feet, hips, pelvis or even spine. It would be sensible to address this problem because tight calves can sometimes be a precursor to other conditions such as Achilles tendonitis or plantar fasciitis, both of which will need time out from running. A physiotherapist will be able to advise you on specific exercises to do and hopefully stave off any future problems.

SEND YOUR QUESTIONS FOR GP AND RUNNER  
DR JULIET MCGRATTAN TO: EDITORIAL@  
WILDBUNCHMEDIA.CO.UK



Get up, stand up:  
leaving your desk  
could slow ageing

## ON YOUR FEET!

Women who sit for 10 hours or more a day have faster-ageing cells than those who exercise every day, new research has found. In a sample of 1,500 women, aged 64 to 95, researchers from institutions including the University of California and San Diego State University looked at telomeres – chromosome-protecting caps at the end of DNA strands. Telomeres naturally shorten with age and are also shortened by lifestyle factors such as stress, smoking and obesity. The study, which was published in the *American Journal of Epidemiology*, measured information over one week, during which time women wore an accelerometer, a device that measures movement. They found that, among those women who did less than 40 minutes of physical activity a day, those who sat longest had shorter telomeres, making them biologically eight years older than their more active counterparts.

However, sitting time did not seem linked to telomere length for women who did at least 30 minutes of physical activity a day – the national recommended guideline. Although the study has limitations, sitting for long periods has already been linked to obesity, some forms of cancer, and type II diabetes, so getting up and moving more can only be a good thing.

## STRESS LESS

A Lancet study has identified a potential way of determining how stress is linked to heart attack risk. The study of 300 people found that those who had the highest stress levels had the highest levels of amygdala activity – the area of the brain that processes emotions such as fear – and also inflammation in their blood and arteries, and researchers believe these findings are linked.



Brain drain: lose the  
stress to reduce your  
heart-attack risk

ONE IN 10



THE NUMBER  
OF PEOPLE  
WHO HAVE HAD  
TO LEAVE A  
JOB BECAUSE  
OF A MENTAL  
HEALTH ISSUE.

SOURCE:  
TOTALJOBS.COM





## "CLEAN EATING" TURNED DIRTY

A BBC documentary, *Clean Eating - The Dirty Truth*, has aired, investigating the latest diet craze – clean eating – causing a backlash against the trend on social media. It looks at how science has been overlooked in the claims made by the “influencers” that advocate such diets, looking specifically at the Alkaline Diet and its creator Robert O Young.



## SPICE LOVERS, REJOICE!

Hot red chilli peppers could give more than your curry a kick – potentially your life expectancy, too! A study, carried out by University of Vermont College of Medicine researchers, found that people who reported eating red hot chilli peppers between the 1980s and 90s had around a 13 per cent reduced risk of premature death compared to those who didn't eat them.

# SHEFFIELD



**THE CHEAPEST CITY OUT OF THE UK'S TOP 20 TO PICK UP YOUR FIVE PORTIONS OF FRUIT AND VEG A DAY, AT JUST £6.05 FOR YOUR ESSENTIAL FIVE!**

SOURCE: MYVOUCHERCODES.CO.UK



## BURNED TOAST POSES CANCER RISK

The Food Standards Agency's (FSA) 'Go for Gold' campaign is warning people about the cancer risks of eating burned toast, oven-roasted potatoes and other cooked starchy foods. When roasted, fried or grilled for too long at high temperatures, the chemical compound acrylamide is formed in these foods, which can cause cancer in rodents. The World Health Organization says acrylamide is “probably carcinogenic to humans”. The FSA recommends aiming for a golden yellow colour or lighter when frying, baking, toasting or roasting starchy foods. However, Cancer Research UK's Emma Shields says the link is not clear and consistent in humans. “To be safe, reduce exposure by following a normal healthy, balanced diet – which includes eating fewer high-calorie foods, like crisps, chips and biscuits, which are the major sources of acrylamide,” she says.

## CHIN-CHIN!

Researchers at the University of Oxford have found that moderate alcohol consumption with friends could be linked to improved wellbeing. The study, published in the journal *Adaptive Human Behaviour and Physiology*, found that people who have a ‘local’ they visit regularly tend to feel more socially engaged and contented, while also being more likely to trust other local community members.



WORDS: JENNIFER BOZON. IMAGE: ISTOCKPHOTO.COM

# TIED UP!

THESE RESISTANCE-BAND BASED EXERCISES WORK THE MUSCLES RIGHT AROUND YOUR THIGH, HELPING TO KEEP YOUR LEGS STRONG AND INJURY-FREE. STRONG LEGS MEAN MORE POWER AND LESS FATIGUE WHEN YOU RUN.

WORDS: JENNIFER BOZON ILLUSTRATIONS: BEN FOXALL

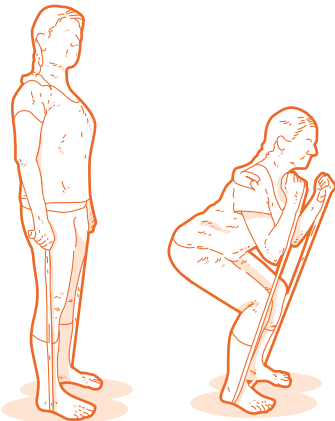
## Preparation

Run on the spot for one minute to warm up, then do 20 reps of each exercise. The circuit takes about six minutes (with the first minute as running on the spot). Start with two circuits and build up to three.

## SQUATS

**Works the front thighs (quadriceps) and bottom muscles (glutes), helping to keep your knees strong and add power to your running (especially up hills!).**

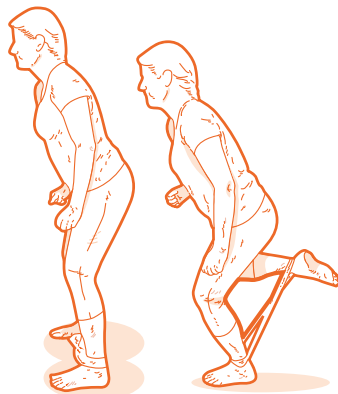
- Stand on the band with your feet hip-width apart, tummy in and back straight. Hold one end of the band in each hand.
- Breathing in, push your bottom out and down into a squat with your weight going into your heels. At the same time, do a bicep curl with the band, pulling the band up with both hands.
- Breathe out, straighten your legs and squeeze your bum to return to starting position. Ensure knees are relaxed at the top and do not 'lock'.
- Repeat slowly for 20 reps.



## HAMSTRING CURL

**Hamstrings (back thighs) are an often-underused muscle group, especially if you sit at a desk for a living. Curls help balance strength between the front (quadriceps) and the back of the thighs (hamstrings), reducing injury risk and adding power to your stride.**

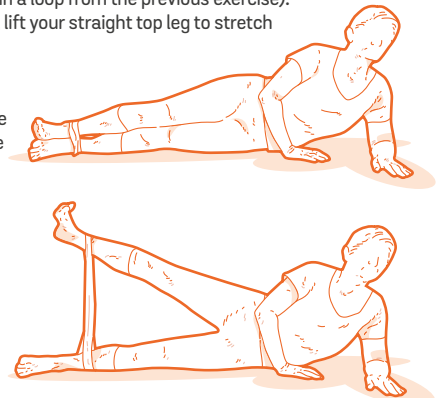
- Start with your feet hip-width apart with the band tied in a flat loop around your ankles. Tie the band into a small bow so it is easy to untie. If the band keeps slipping, wear longish socks to help hold it in place.
- Keep your heels pushing away from each other as you bring one heel to the side butt cheek, on the same side, in a standing hamstring curl.
- Return your foot to the floor, keeping your feet hip-width apart.
- Alternate this movement. Keep your feet wide to prevent the band moving around.
- Do 20 reps on each side at least three times per week.



## OUTER THIGH RAISES

**Strengthens the outside of the thighs (abductors /TFL) and hips (gluteus medius) to help reduce injury in these areas. Running off-road, it is easy for your foot to land unevenly, and strengthening the outside of your legs is very important.**

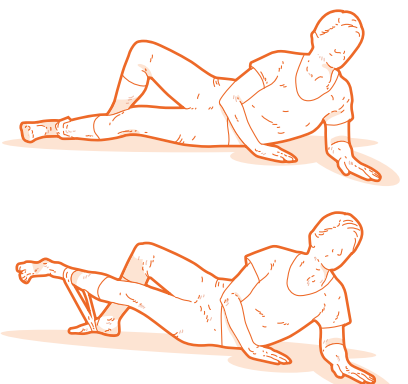
- Start lying on your side in a straight line. Put the band in a loop around the ankles (you can keep it in a loop from the previous exercise).
- With your heel flexed, lift your straight top leg to stretch the band, as high as is comfortable.
- Make sure the top foot stays parallel to the ground, to work into the outer thigh and hip.
- Keep your foot flexed and lower to start.
- Repeat slowly for 20 reps on each side.



## INNER THIGH RAISES

**Focusing on the inner thigh muscles (adductors), this exercise strengthens the groin and inner knee, helping avoid injury in these areas, especially if you're running on uneven terrain.**

- Start lying on your side, and put both feet inside the band. Take your top foot to hold down the band behind your lower leg.
- With your ankle inside the band, lift your straight leg with the heel flexed, while keeping the band anchored at the back with the other foot.
- Make sure the lifted foot stays parallel to the ground to work into the inner thigh and inner knee.
- Breathe in and return to the starting position, but keep the straight leg off the ground for the full 20 reps.
- Do 20 reps on each side.



## Meet the PT

Tracy Griffen is an Edinburgh-based personal trainer. She runs a private fitness studio in Leith and specialises in putting together exercise and nutrition programmes for very busy individuals.

For more information, visit: [getfitandenjoyit.com](http://getfitandenjoyit.com) or follow Tracy on Twitter @tracygriffen.



# RUNNING TECH

A DEDICATED SPACE FOR A TECH

## Samsung Gear Fit2

£149, [samsung.com](http://samsung.com)

Activity trackers used to be little more than pedometers on a strap. Fine for reforming couch potatoes to record a walk to the shop for a tin of Campbell's, less so for data-lusting runner geeks. Yet this water-resistant Samsung Gear Fit2 represents a new breed of smart-tracker.

The curved, super-AMOLED, 216x432mm-resolution screen is simply amazing. It's bright, eye-catching, colourful, intuitive and highly customisable – with desirable and fun watchfaces and even fonts. The elastomer strap is purr-invokingly comfortable and the unit is delightfully light, too.

There's substance to go with the style. Features include heart-rate measurement, GPS, Spotify compatibility (when your smartphone is in range), wifi connectivity, 4GB of music storage and you can listen to it via wireless headphones – without your phone.

Accuracy is surprisingly close to the benchmark Suunto Ambit3 Peak. So much data is available on the screen that you don't really need an app – a good job as it's a little threadbare.

The battery life of four-and-a-bit days with light use isn't so impressive and the surprising lack of iOS compatibility is another black mark. But this tracker can do things much pricier sportswatches can't – and it bypasses the smartphone. All for a competitive price, too.



## Garmin Vivosmart HR+

£169.99, [garmin.com](http://garmin.com)

Garmin's waterproof premium tracker offers heart-rate measurement, GPS, smart notifications and a touchscreen. The move bar is natty. Instead of alerts, the bar builds up so you can act on it pre-emptively. The virtual pacer is neat too, with a continuous view of how you're doing against a target pace. It's rugged, durable and, though the screen seems small and dull, it's easy to read in sunlight. It feels chunky, though, and there's little aesthetic pretension towards wine-bar acceptability.



## Polk BOOM Swimmer Duo

£49.99, [polkaudio.com](http://polkaudio.com)

We reviewed the Polk BOOM recently and its sibling is the Swimmer Duo, a larger and more robust Bluetooth speaker. It's fist-sized, waterproof, dirt-proof and shock-proof, with a detachable bendy tail that can be twisted around hooks, rails or bike handlebars, while a suction option works well on standard surfaces. At 180g it's just too big and heavy for running. However, it's perfect for strength and stretching sessions, or blasting out *Eye Of The Tiger* when race marshalling.



## RunGo

Free, [rungoapp.com](http://rungoapp.com)

You know that mate with the slightly annoying habit of planning running routes and loading them onto her or his watch? Your mate has turned into this app. You simply plot a route and it talks you through it as you run. It's also pre-loaded with route options, such as the London Marathon and unofficial local ones too, and you can download them to your phone to save on data. It's really useful. And probably less annoying than your annoying mate.



# CROSS PURPOSES

MIX UP YOUR ROUTINE, AND BECOME A CROSS-TRAINING QUEEN, TO START BUILDING SUMMER SPEED NOW

COMPILED BY TINA CHANTREY



## 1/BAM Enduro Leggings

A brand new print for spring (well, it's nearly here!). These BAM Enduro tights are extra stretchy, with a very deep comfort waistband that won't irritate. They feel like a second skin; we think you'll love training hard in them, or just chilling.

£45, [bambooclothing.co.uk](http://bambooclothing.co.uk)

## 2/Triumph Triaction Hybrid Lite

This is the bra you need when your sport demands maximum support but you want your bra to be flexible and light. It has thick, padded straps to ensure maximum comfort (which can be crossed for certain workouts) and a range of colour options to coordinate with your outfit of choice. Available up to DD cup.

£42, [uk.triumph.com](http://uk.triumph.com)

## 3/ON Cloudflow

Need a race shoe? Something lightweight and flexible for the gym? The Cloudflow is a new generation of ON shoes that are versatile enough to try in a variety of sports. The 'pods' beneath your feet propel you higher, faster, further. The dazzling colourways make your feet sparkle as you take the road to exercise heaven.

£120, [on-running.com](http://on-running.com)



## 4/ZAAZEE Amy Hoodie

The perfect mid-layer to keep you warm before, during or after your workout. You'll not only relax into the super soft and stretchy luxury fabric, but the understated style will make you feel like a power princess! Go smash your targets!

£55, [zaazee.co.uk](http://zaazee.co.uk)

## 5/Celafen Muscle And Joint Rub

If cross-training is leaving you achy, gently rub in Celafen to painful joints and muscles. Within minutes you'll feel the benefits, as it repels the inflammatory chemicals responsible for pain and stiffness.

£9.95, [skinshop.co.uk](http://skinshop.co.uk)

## 6/Up&Go Breakfast Drinks

For those times when you have seconds to get your kit on and leave the house, these drinks will give you a pre-training boost. Packed with all the protein, calcium and fibre of your typical bowl of cereal and milk, your early morning routine just got a lot easier!

£1.79, [upandgo.co.uk](http://upandgo.co.uk)

## 7/Naobay Oxygenating Cream Moisturiser

Whether you are exposing your skin to harsh cold climates or stuffy indoor gyms, you can protect your complexion with this blend of rosehip and sweet almond oils to reinforce your skin's hydrolipidic film.

£32.95, [lookfantastic.com](http://lookfantastic.com)



## 8/Ashmei Ultimate Softshell Jacket

Beautifully made, this is your top-end performance wear and a jacket you will rely on all year round, on the road, your bike or if you take to the mountains. There are so many technical details to ensure your protection from the elements, but at the top of the list are the rear Merino panel and front wind-protection panels. You'll feel invincible in this stylish outer layer.

£225, [ashmei.com](http://ashmei.com)

## 9/Manduka Go Play Mat Sling

As your running develops, a weekly Pilates, yoga or stretch class becomes essential. This mat sling has the added accessibility of a decent sized external storage pocket for your phone, valuables and other essentials.

£26, [manduka.com](http://manduka.com)

## 10/Manduka Align Yoga Strap

All runners need to practise stretching, to look after our muscles and prevent injuries. Make yourself a cup of tea and let your body unfold, and your muscles relax then elongate, with the aid of this sturdy natural cotton stretch strap. Namaste.

£16, [manduka.com/eu](http://manduka.com/eu)



# JOGGING THE MEMORY

Running mum Claire Chamberlain is getting stuck into her marathon schedule... and all those old 26.2-mile training memories are flooding back

**W**hen it comes to both childbirth and marathon training, I appear to have uncovered a striking similarity. Obviously when it comes down to the nitty gritty, the two are nothing alike (one involves growing an actual person and then pushing this FULLY GROWN human out of your lady bits, while the other involves running a very long way). And while I wouldn't dare suggest the two are equal in the pain stakes (30 hours of labour; enough said), both smart a bit.

But here is where the two experiences are alike: for some weird, crazy reason, your brain *forgets*. The hours of pain, exhaustion and fear are simply *wiped out* - \*puff\* - in a cloud of smoke. I mean, how? HOW do you just *FORGET* something like that?

This is why, when faced with the prospect of cuddling a newborn these days, my uterus shows an overly keen interest, when really, after what it's been through, it should be trying to evacuate my body by any means possible before hurling itself off the nearest available cliff.

OK, so I realise it's down to the endorphins, euphoria and sheer relief of holding your newborn in your arms/ crossing that marathon finish line that creates the memory fog, but still, I hadn't realised just how much my brain had erased the hard slog it took to get there... on both counts.

Because this is where I am at the moment with the marathon training: the hard slog bit. The freezing mornings bit. The biting rain bit. The hurty legs bit. That conveniently 'forgotten' bit.

These are the bits that make you want to skip a training session and just sit down with a nice cuppa and play superheroes with the kids all day.

But then, I remember my reason. And I keep going.

This year, the Virgin Money London Marathon is asking



There's more to this mummy!



Claire's chosen charity, War Child, is working with 2,500 vulnerable children in CAR


all participants to share their #ReasonToRun. The reasons I have heard so far are varied and heartfelt: they encompass everything from PB-chasing to mega fundraising. They are inspiring, humbling, heartbreaking and empowering, and they encapsulate everything the Virgin Money London Marathon is about.


So I thought I'd share my reason: I'm running for my children, to show them there's more to their mummy than a person who is on hand 24/7 to wipe their faces/noses/bums; to show them that, with dedication and effort, anything they want to achieve in life is entirely possible.

I'm also running for War Child. War Child protects vulnerable children whose lives have been torn apart by conflict. They work with child refugees from Syria, but they also fight for the rights of children who have been all but forgotten; children who have been caught up in previous conflicts that are no longer newsworthy.

War Child has not forgotten them. The charity works tirelessly in areas including the Central African Republic (CAR), helping to rehabilitate and reintegrate former child soldiers - those who were abducted as war ravaged their villages, or those who joined voluntarily in the absence of care after their families had been killed. War Child is currently working with around 2,500 children in CAR, who are emerging from life as a child soldier. They help them return to some semblance of normality after experiencing such trauma to find a new family where their own has been destroyed, and provide them with resources to establish a new livelihood.

So yes, there are days when I don't feel like running; there are days when I moan about the rain and the cold. And then I remember my #ReasonToRun, and I tell myself to stop dicking around and just get out the door.

If you're running London this spring (or any other event, in fact) and would like to join me in helping War Child support these forgotten children, visit [warchild.org.uk/get-involved](http://warchild.org.uk/get-involved) and contact its brilliant fundraising team. You can also let me know your #ReasonToRun at [Facebook.com/KeepRunningMummy](https://www.facebook.com/KeepRunningMummy)... I'd love to hear it! 



**LIKE WHAT YOU'VE READ?**

CLAIRE IS A WRITER, RUNNER, BLOGGER AND MUMMY. READ MORE AT [KEEPRUNNINGMUMMY.COM](http://KEEPRUNNINGMUMMY.COM), LIKE HER AT [FACEBOOK.COM/KEEPRUNNINGMUMMY](https://www.facebook.com/KeepRunningMummy) OR SUPPORT HER AT [VIRGINMONEYGIVING.COM](http://VIRGINMONEYGIVING.COM) / [KEEPRUNNINGMUMMY](http://KEEPRUNNINGMUMMY.COM)

# "I KNEW I WAS GETTING STRONGER WITH EACH TRAINING SESSION"

**The runner** Jacqueline Higgins

**Day job** Finance officer, Salford University

**The result** Running a half-marathon PB of 1:54:47 – just two weeks after running her first ever half



Jacqueline has lost 7kg while training

## QUICK Q&A

**Inspiration to start running?**  
I ran on behalf of a friend who had leukaemia.

**Favourite place to run?**  
Hollingworth Lake, Littleborough, where I live.

**Go-to pre-run meal?**  
Weetabix and toast in the morning and an energy drink before the run. The day before I have a main meal including the required amount of carbs.

Jacqueline Higgins, 52, from Littleborough, has made fast progress with her running since starting out eight months ago. She went from “doing the odd parkrun” to running two half-marathons, the Manchester Half Marathon and the Bradford City Runs Half Marathon, in 14 days – the latter being only her second half-marathon, where she managed to knock two minutes and 10 seconds off her time. And on a much hillier course, encompassing an extra 533ft of elevation! Training for her first half-marathon was a turning point for Jacqueline. She began to take her fitness more seriously and made big changes to her diet. At the Bradford City Runs Half the results certainly showed. Jacqueline not only nabbed a PB, but finished third in her age category. “All the hard work in training had paid off,” she said. “I felt like I was on top of the world.”

## CONSISTENCY AND CONFIDENCE

After completing the Manchester Half Marathon 14 days before, I decided to enter the Bradford race. I got a buzz from the first half-marathon. I was confident knowing that I could complete this one because of the amount of training I had done. My sessions didn't change. But I knew I was getting stronger with each training session. I continued to run four times per week, running at different speeds, and I cross-trained. I worked hard, starting off with a slow pace and slowly increasing the pace to the point [where], when I finished, I was exhausted. For me it was not about training to be faster. I feel long-distance running is more about pacing and, as you train, your running becomes stronger.

## HARD HILLS

There was a huge difference between the two half-marathons. The Manchester Half Marathon route is fairly flat and doesn't repeat itself, whereas the Bradford City Runs Half Marathon was a loop circuit of four miles and very hilly in places. Running in my local area, which is very hilly [helped] and [also] that I entered a 10K hilly run [which] did provide me with extra strength. The 10K had a few long demanding hills where I had to really push myself.

## REST AND RECOVERY

On my rest days I completely rested my body, letting the aches and pains disappear. At night I always made sure I had at least eight to nine hours' sleep. If I felt that



I had not recovered fully I would rest another day. It is very important to learn how your body recovers.

## DIET OVERHAUL

My diet changed after I decided to run the half-marathon. I knew nothing about healthy eating (well not to the degree I do now.) My partner helped me, introducing me to fish, meat, carbs, how to feed my muscles after training and even [the importance of] feeding myself regularly. I'm not a big eater so having to eat even when not hungry has helped me immensely. I lost a lot of body fat in the first few months. My weight was 65kg [and] now I am running at 58kg, which suits my style of running. Losing weight played a vital role.

## TRAINING BUDDY

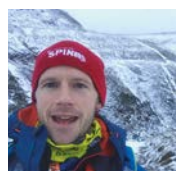
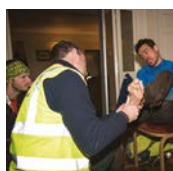
My lifestyle has changed since I became a serious runner and, luckily for me, my partner has the same desires. We're both competitive in our individual sports. My sleeping habits have changed and I don't find myself drinking alcohol, aside from the odd red wine. You have to make sacrifices if you want to achieve your goals. *W*

SHARE YOUR PB STORY! SEND DETAILS AND PHOTOS TO  
[JENNIFER.BOZON@WILDBUNCHMEDIA.CO.UK](mailto:JENNIFER.BOZON@WILDBUNCHMEDIA.CO.UK)





Encompassing 268 miles of arduous trails, support from others is key to making it to the Spine's finish



## BACK AT THE SPINE RACE

Our annoyingly cheerful ultrarunner Damian Hall has his heart stolen once again by this epic ultra

I spent a tiring but wonderful week in the Pennines recently, at the Spine Race. It calls itself "Britain's most brutal race" and I've never heard anyone disagree. The Spine is a 268-mile footrace along the Pennine Way, England's oldest and toughest National Trail, in winter. It's a single-stage race, meaning the clock is always ticking, so sleep is a luxury runners can barely afford. It's dark for 16 hours of every 24. The mountainous and boggy terrain saps energy. The weather could do anything and everything, and usually does. Broken bones (there were at least three broken ribs this year), hypothermia and trench foot are not uncommon. Water bottles freeze. Hallucinations abound. Less than half the field usually finishes the race. Worse still, in 2015, one fatigued runner ran into a cow's backside.

The Spine Race has had a hold over me ever since I first heard of it back in 2011. I'd recently written the official guidebook for the Pennine Way, which took me about 16 days to walk. The idea of running it in winter was batsh\*t crazy. Only three people finished the first race. Then a handful more the next year. I was on the start line the third

### ABOUT DAMIAN

JOURNALIST AND MIDLIFE-CRISIS ULTRA RUNNER DAMIAN HALL IS HAPPIEST WHEN RUNNING LONG DISTANCES IN LUMPY PLACES. HE'S AN AMBASSADOR FOR ALL-TERRAIN RUNNING BRAND INOV-8 AND HIS NEW BOOK, *A YEAR ON THE RUN (AURUM)*, IS OUT NOW. YOU'LL FIND MORE OF THIS SORT OF HOGWASH AT @DAMO\_HALL



year, for just my fifth ultramarathon. I simply couldn't resist. The brilliant lunacy of the concept tugged at my soul.

With a lot of help and kindness from others, somehow I made it to the end, at the small Scottish Borders town of Kirk Yetholm. Physically it hurt like hell. Mentally and emotionally it allowed me to explore new depths (which is a fancy way of saying, yes, I cried a bit). As soon as entries opened for the following year, I signed up again. Both times I wanted an adventure and I got it.

I wasn't running the Spine Race this time, I was doing something far more knackering. I was the race's media manager. The role initially involved doing as much social media as possible, getting a professional-seeming press release out every night, and appearing as an expert commentator in Summit Fever Media's excellent daily videos (see the event's Facebook page). You know, a bit like Mark Lawrenson.

It was exciting being in the Spine bubble again. You have almost no time or thoughts for anything outside the race for a whole week. On the previous year's race, when someone announced the death of David Bowie, a tired official responded with, "Oh heck. Which race number is David Bowie?"

It was fascinating seeing the race from the other side of the fence. There were about 260 runners (over three races) and around 80 volunteers and staff – at times all spread over some 150 miles. It's a huge moving jigsaw. The amount of people in the running community who'll give up their time to support events and runners never ceases to amaze me. But here, some were donating a week of their time, to work in a checkpoint kitchen, washing up and cooking endless meals. Those people are just amazing.

I was also touched by how much the race staff cared about the Spinners. Regardless of whether they were runners themselves, race personnel were following the live trackers avidly. They were really excited about front-runners arriving at checkpoints, rushing around fussing like it was the in-laws visiting. Medics who had sorted out runners' manky feet – and it was usually the feet this year – felt that extra investment in getting them to the finish.

Locals too turned out in force along the route, for a bit of a run, and to offer snacks and teas. There's even an increasingly legendary farm north of Hadrian's Wall where Spinners are invited into a barn to sit on a sofa for sausage sandwiches – for which payment is refused.

This year, there were more women entrants than ever before and more finishers (five), with the phenomenal Carol Morgan breaking the course record by a stunning 43 hours. The finish line in Kirk Yetholm was a wonderfully emotional and celebratory place to be. Especially when the last few runners, the most heroic of the lot, came in. We were celebrating their achievements, but also wider themes of human endeavour, determination and kindness.

I'd much rather finish off this column with some witty one-liner. But I can't avoid making the cheesy but true statement that working on the Spine Race reminded me of what an amazing thing the running community is. Even if it does have more than its fair share of brilliant loons. *WZ*



Sunday 21 May



**ESSAR**

**CHESTER 2017  
HALF MARATHON**



 Chester Marathon

 @chestermarathon

[chesterhalfmarathon.co.uk](http://chesterhalfmarathon.co.uk)

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# "RUNNING HAS TAUGHT ME NOT TO GIVE UP"

Not only has she founded a parkrun and a marathon but she's run over 180 marathons, three 10-in-10 marathon events and a 100-miler – despite having a serious knee disorder. Lisa Jackson meets Melanie Sturman...



Inspired by the 2012 Olympics, Melanie founded Thetford parkrun

"I was most definitely not born to run," says Melanie Sturman, 46, from Thetford in Norfolk. "I don't find running easy, but hey, who does? I have a congenital knee disorder where my kneecap does not sit correctly so it rubs on the bone and, because it's out of alignment, I don't have a natural running gait. As a result, when I started running in 2011, it was difficult and I couldn't even run a mile. Being overweight didn't help, but I was determined to succeed so I taught myself to slowly jog for five minutes and walk for one minute. It took me three months to work up to walk/running 15 miles.

"The reason I took up running was because I'd been inspired by Paula Radcliffe when she broke the world marathon record. I thought back then that one day I'd like to have a go at running 26.2 miles and so, in 2011, I entered the London Marathon. My time of 6hrs 3mins wasn't as quick as I'd hoped because, leading up to it, I'd had a fever but I enjoyed it so much that six months



Picking up the 100-mile bling!

later I did the Liverpool Marathon and knocked 45 minutes off my time.

## MULTIPLE MARATHONS

"From then on I was unstoppable: the next year I completed six marathons, upped that to 27 in 2013 and then did 52 marathons in a year in both 2014 and 2015. I ran my 100th marathon in February



Melanie was awarded for her 'Outstanding Contribution to Sport'

2015 and I've now done 182 marathons, including eight ultras.

"Due to my knee disorder, most runs are painful but I have learned to live with it and I now tape my knee to pull my kneecap off the bone beneath it to stop the bone being worn away even further. Last year my orthopaedic consultant said the damage was done during childhood and that I can continue to run as

long as I can. Massage and taping my knee are just two things I do now to keep myself injury free. I also know when not to run: I'm aware of when my body needs a rest or when I'm in danger of getting injured. I strongly believe bodies need time to heal and will therefore only do two short runs in between each marathon.



Out in all weathers:  
volunteering with  
friends at parkrun

### GOING THE DISTANCE

"My first ultra was a 30-miler and I've since done seven more, the longest being a 100-mile event in 2016. It was held in July and the heat was so intense that I feared I was going to overhydrate and risk kidney problems. I drank fluids and ate small amounts of food after each of the 27 laps I did and, at 65 miles, I changed my kit and had my blisters treated. I finished with a dream time (for me) of 24hrs 22mins.

### FANCY DRESS AND TWITTER

"People often ask me what my favourite event has been and I have to say it's the Great Barrow Challenge, which involves doing 10 marathons in 10 days. When I did it the first time in 2014 I was inexperienced and plagued by blisters but, when I came around the corner on day 10, and saw dozens of fellow parkrunners waiting to cheer me across the finish line, it was an incredibly emotional experience. The second edition took place during a heatwave and I had to battle the risk of dehydration and sunstroke.

On the 10th day I started feeling confused but did manage to finish. By the time I did it for the third time I'd become proficient in the art of Twitter and so sent out daily tweets to report on my progress. To help make it fun, I wore a different fancy dress outfit each day. The 2016 event was plagued by terrific thunderstorms so, even though it was held in the height of summer, a lot of it was completed on flooded tracks with calf-high puddles. This year I'm going to do it again - after all, as the only woman who's completed it three times, I have a record to defend!

### PAYING IT FORWARD

"The London 2012 Olympics inspired me to set up Thetford parkrun: I'd spent so much of my running life training alone and wanted a safe environment where people of all ages and abilities could take up running. Four years after starting we now have almost 3,000 people registered and up to 200 runners turning up each week which is incredibly rewarding.

"My other baby is the Thetford Icenii Marathon ([marafunevents.co.uk](http://marafunevents.co.uk)). When I ran my 100th marathon in 2015, I not only celebrated with cake, as is the tradition, but decided to organise a marathon, too. I wanted to create an event to encourage more local people to start running and, of course, to put my lovely town on the marathon map. It was wonderful seeing this event treble in size in its second year.

### RUNNING FOR FUN

"The secret for me is to keep enjoying running and not to pressure myself to try to get PBs all the time - I don't want running to become a chore. I have an incredibly stressful job as a specialist nurse and running is my stress relief. My future goals would be to beat my current marathon PB of 4hrs 20mins, to break 24 hours in a 100-miler and to run my 200th marathon this year on 8 July, day 10 of the Great Barrow Challenge. Oh, and I'll be 50 in 2020 and by then I'd like to have run 300 marathons.

"Running has definitely changed my life. It's given me the confidence to cope with challenging situations and I've learned not to give up on things when they get tough or painful. In 2011, I was a size 16 and now I'm a size 12 and have lost one-and-a-half stone. I've met so many amazing individuals on this journey, from Olympians to celebrities - they once inspired me and now I feel I can inspire others, too."



Making running  
accessible for all in  
Thetford



Take part in two events  
and you'll earn two  
gorgeous medals!



# BAG YOUR SPOT AND YOUR BLING!

Ready to kick-start your 2017 running? Then get your entry in for our fun, friendly Women's Running Race Series today – and grab yourself a brilliant discounted rate. This year, we're adding a one-mile event, in addition to our 5K and 10K races. And we've got brand new – and brilliantly blingy – race medals for all three races. No matter what distance you choose, you can expect a stunning course and venue, fabulous sponsors, friendly marshals and, most importantly, a varied, vibrant and welcoming field of female runners at all 12 of our events.

We've teamed up with some amazing charities (see below) if you'd like to run for a good cause, too, and you can expect a welcoming event village with a laid-back festival atmosphere at every race. We kick off in Cardiff's beautiful Bute Park on 21 May and, with venues all over the UK, from Maidstone to Glasgow, you're sure to find a race near you! Visit [womensrunninguk.co.uk/raceseries/](http://womensrunninguk.co.uk/raceseries/) today to enter the 10K for just £23, the 5K for £20 and the one-mile race for £6. The closing date for discounted entries varies for each location, but hurry – discounted entry for our Cardiff race closes on 26 February! Head to our website for more details.

## NSPCC

### NSPCC

Official National Charity Partner

Abuse ruins childhood, but it can be prevented. That's why we're here. We help children who've been abused to rebuild their lives, we protect children at risk, and we find the best ways of preventing child abuse from ever happening. Join us for your Women's Running Race Series event in 2017 and help us fight for every childhood. For more information, email [running@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:running@nspcc.org.uk) or call 0203 772 9720.

[NSPCC.ORG.UK](http://NSPCC.ORG.UK)



### SAKA

Official Water Partner

Naturally balanced in mineral content and with an 8.2 pH alkaline level, Saka is ideal for helping to maintain an active lifestyle and general wellbeing. Saka is all about promoting an active lifestyle, encouraging family and wellbeing and engaging with local communities. We like to build relationships and, through the support of local and national charities, teams, and organisations who also share this philosophy, we are able to invest back into the community.

[SAKAWATER.COM](http://SAKAWATER.COM)



### ROOTS COLLECTIVE

Official Health Blend Partner

Roots Collective has revolutionised snack time by launching the UK's first range of whole vegetable blends. Every bottle contains fewer than 127 calories and there is a power-packed quarter kilo of pure vegetables in every one as a minimum and no added fruit juice. They are a radical, new fridge essential to "quench your hunger". Not only for drinking from the bottle, they can be enjoyed as sauce or a soup, frozen as a nutrient-dense ice pop or topped with herbs and nuts as part of a superfood bowl.

[ROOTSCollective.CO.UK](http://ROOTSCollective.CO.UK)



**CLAIRE HOUSE**  
Official Regional Partner - Liverpool

Claire House is the local children's hospice for Liverpool, Wirral and beyond, and creates memories that last a lifetime for families going through the toughest of times. Help us to help families smile again when life couldn't get any tougher. Contact us on [events@clairehouse.org.uk](mailto:events@clairehouse.org.uk).

[CLAIRE-HOUSE.ORG.UK](http://CLAIRE-HOUSE.ORG.UK)



### CHILDREN'S HOSPICE SOUTH WEST

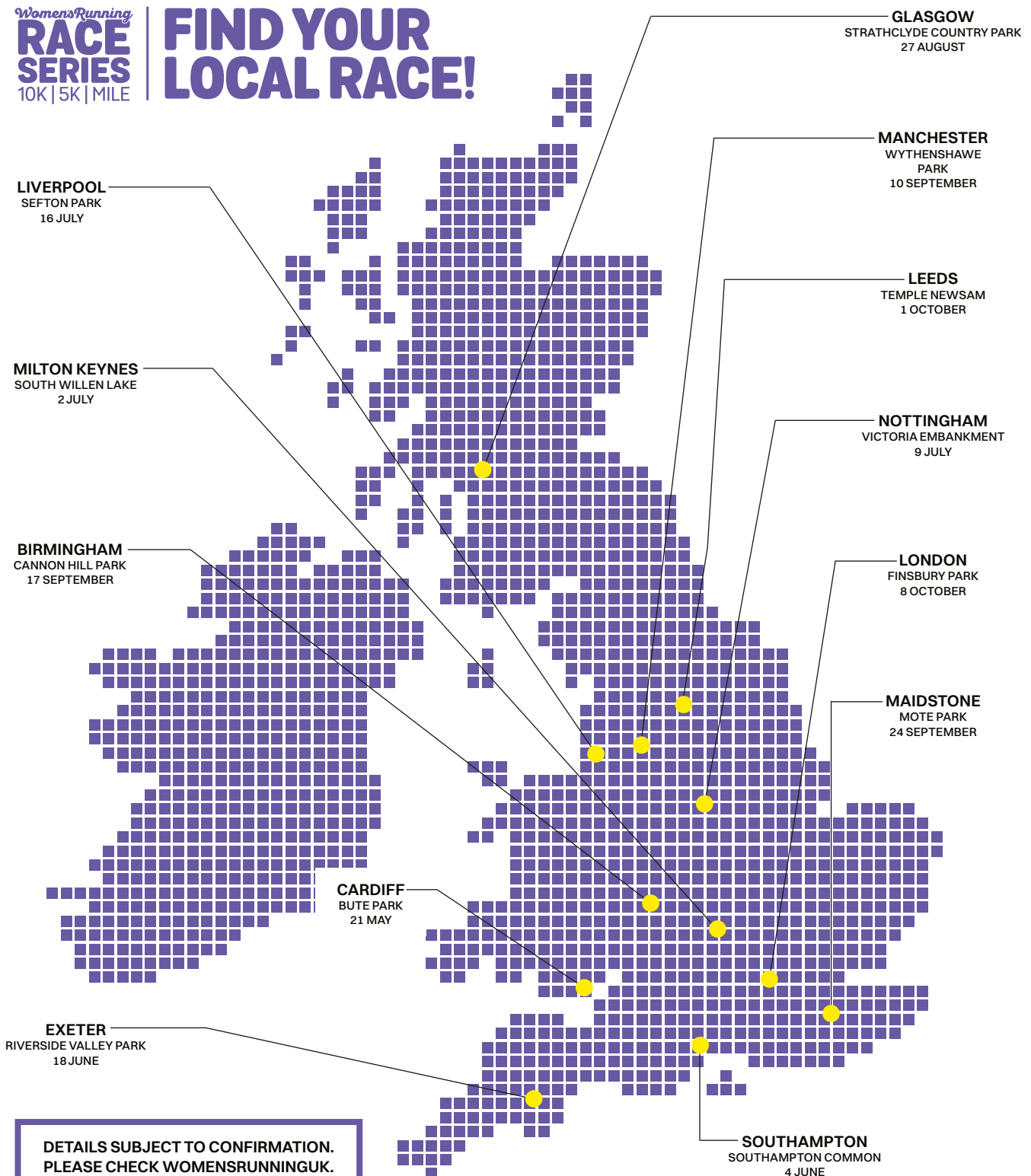
Official Regional Partner - Exeter

CHSW cares for children who are not expected to live into adulthood by creating treasure chests of precious memories. The care we offer is wide ranging; respite, emergency, palliative and end-of-life care. From initial diagnosis, to bereavement and beyond, we are there for as long as the family needs us.

[CHSW.ORG.UK](http://CHSW.ORG.UK)

WomensRunning  
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SERIES**  
10K | 5K | MILE

# FIND YOUR LOCAL RACE!



DETAILS SUBJECT TO CONFIRMATION.  
PLEASE CHECK [WOMENSRUNNINGUK.CO.UK/RACESERIES/](http://WOMENSRUNNINGUK.CO.UK/RACESERIES/)



## STAR LETTER JUST DO IT

I've been a subscriber to your magazine for some time, but really only dabbled in the shallowest end of the running pool, usually persevering for a few weeks before giving up because I "wasn't good enough."

I've tried couch to 5K programmes but always felt like I had to be able to do 5K in 30 minutes to call myself a runner which, at over 15 stone, is impossible for me. But in September, something in me just decided that I should just do what I felt comfortable with and enjoyed, so I started running at my own pace – so what if it takes me 45 minutes to run 5K? At least I'm moving!

I still felt far too self-conscious to run outdoors, so, apart from a couple of very early morning runs (when no one else is around), most of my running has been on a treadmill. Then I signed up for a half-marathon and suddenly thought, 'I really need to know how well, or badly, I run.' So today I did my first parkrun. I actually ran outside, where lots of other people could see me, including 201 other runners, who I felt sure would all be better runners than me.

With a 5K PB on a treadmill of 37mins 56secs, I was expecting a time of at least 40 minutes. I finished in a time of 36mins 31secs. THIRTY-SIX AND A HALF MINUTES! I know that, compared to many, this is slow but for this 'fat old bird', it is a real achievement. I really do finally feel like a 'proper runner.'

ELAINE EMERTON, BY EMAIL

*It's brilliant to hear you've taken up running and found confidence in your abilities. No matter what size, shape or speed you are, running is inclusive for everyone and you are absolutely right to see yourself as a 'proper runner' – you are! Keep smashing those PBs!*

## BEAN COOKING

I can't thank you enough for the vegetarian recipes published in the last edition of your wonderful magazine. Thank you also for introducing me to the brilliant Anita Bean. I have been a veggie for 30 years and a runner for eight years. My diet has never been that great and, since having kids, it's gradually got worse. The recipes you featured looked lovely and fairly simple to make so I immediately ordered Anita's book online. All of the recipes are straightforward, fairly quick to prepare, don't involve lots of expensive ingredients and, most importantly, are so tasty! Anita has reignited my passion for cooking and I'm finally making the effort with my diet. As an active mum who loves to exercise, I am really noticing how much better I am performing and how much healthier I feel in myself.

KAREN WEST, BY EMAIL

*We couldn't agree more about Anita's recipes – they're so simple, healthy and tasty. We're pleased they've inspired you to focus on eating healthier, too. Happy cooking!*

## CORRECTION NEEDED

I've been running for three years and always find the advice in *Women's Running* helpful, although as time has gone on and I've gained experience as a runner, I have started to find some of the training plans and advice a bit too basic for me.

So I was really pleased to see detailed marathon training plans in your March issue, including a sub-3:30 plan for women like me who want to run a bit faster. However! I am pretty sure there was a mistake in the plans. The 'Advanced' plan included run/walk sessions while the 'Get Me Round' plan seemed pretty tough for beginners! I've followed my instincts and used the tougher plan, but I wonder if newer runners might not realise and may injure themselves – am I right that something has gone wrong here?

EVE NELSON, BY EMAIL

*Unfortunately you're absolutely right – we labelled the Get Me Round and Advanced plans the wrong way around. We put out some social media posts to this effect but we're glad of the chance to correct this in print, as we know that not everybody uses social media! If you would like to download the correctly titled plans, for free, then head to [womensrunninguk.co.uk/training/spring-marathon-training-plans/](http://womensrunninguk.co.uk/training/spring-marathon-training-plans/). You'll also find part two of the plans on page 30 of this issue – labelled correctly! Our sincere apologies to any readers affected by this mistake.*

## WHAT YOU'RE SAYING ON FACEBOOK ABOUT SWIMMING



*I 'run' in the water to cross train. It's a killer workout with swim gloves and speedo ankle weights. Talk about cardio!*

Kathe Spence Myer

*My legs were so tight from a half-marathon I ran Sunday that I was having a hard time walking, let alone running. I swam the following day and it helped out so much. Everything seemed to stretch out and I feel great now.*

Stephanie Healy Creasman

*I started again in January and my cardio fitness is better than it has been for years, even on only one swim a week. It's great for days when my back is feeling sore. And I'm lucky that my gym has a jacuzzi and sauna right next to the pool.*

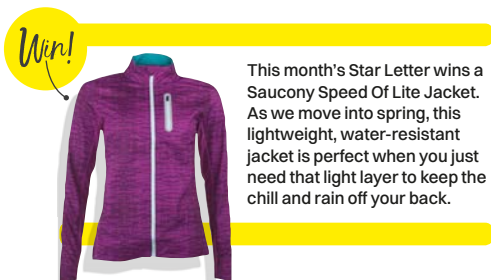
Cathie Battersby

*Apparently swimming is good for 'lazy glutes'...*

Sue Klein

*Yes! I love my swimming sessions.*

Tori Emma Jeffery



This month's Star Letter wins a Saucony Speed Of Lite Jacket. As we move into spring, this lightweight, water-resistant jacket is perfect when you just need that light layer to keep the chill and rain off your back.

## WRITE TO US

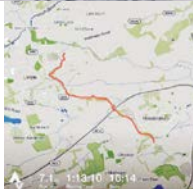
Send your views to: [editorial@wildbunchmedia.co.uk](mailto:editorial@wildbunchmedia.co.uk) or Women's Running, 1st Floor, Gable House, 18-24 Turnham Green Terrace, London W4 1QP  
Letters may be edited

SHARE #YOURRUNS WITH US! TWEET TO @WOMENSRUNNINGUK, TAG ON INSTAGRAM @WOMENSRUNNINGUK OR EMAIL WOMENSRUNNING@WILDBUNCHMEDIA.CO.UK



[outofbreath](#)  
[lizzyoutofbreath](#)

Snow is melting, slob and wet. Just a short run this morning #run #running #runner #instarunners #instarun #instarunner #runplanet



[Lisa Lucchesi @lislucchesi](#)

My first outdoor run in weeks, all the more fun in the rain, hail and wind! #trailrunning #yourruns #newroute #training #happyrunner

[Jen jen\\_loves\\_2\\_run](#)

Gotta love a sprint finish eh @kazjacko always makes me think of you now!! #parkrun #yourruns



[Life in Piret Style laaldjas](#)

Running frenzy with @annesantamaa #sundayrunday #longrun #tegersee #umrundung #laufheldin #laufliebe #jump



[Sue Lissimore @SueatPrettygate](#)

#YourRuns great marathon training run in Colchester, Essex to lovely Rowhedge and back. 12 miles.



[Katie Hainbach x\\_katie\\_rose\\_x](#)

14.10 miles in 2hr15 around the local parks. Here I am in Valentine's Park, Ilford. First time using my new ASICS shoes on a long run and my @high5nutrition energy gel belt.

Ready for a sleep now.

@womensrunninguk

@fullpotentialcoaching

#BigMarathonChallenge

#ASICSFrontRunner #longrun #sundayrun

#sundayrunday #runner #ukrunchat

[Katie Halsall runliftkt](#)

Tomorrow's 10K race kit ready! Braving shorts for the first time this year! My legs have missed the outdoors haha. Also, tomorrow (5th) is my first race of the year and it's my birthday! I'm doing the Blackburn #WinterWarmer10k for the first time... Anyone ever done it?! #runner #run #runlikeagirl #training #10km #runfam #runningcommunity



[Sarah Vaughan @Sarah\\_Vaughan](#)

Hyde Park 10K with Run Through! My 3rd race ever so happy! #YOURRUNS



[Kerry Brown @ukrungle More](#)

@ukrungle @Womensrunninguk our 12 miler today - 10 miles in... #whereirun #myruns #yourruns

[Joanne Fenna jofenna](#)

Roads, woods, fields and LOTS of mud on the way to Mama Bear's house where she fed us piles of toast and cups of sweet, strong builders tea = perfect morning. #running #runner #runnergirl #instarunners #igrunners #trailrunning





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Special subscriber-only message from the editor each month. Each subscriber issue contains exclusive offers and discounts specially selected by the *Women's Running* team. This month subscribers received:

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# GET READY TO RUN!

IN PART TWO OF OUR BIG MARATHON CHALLENGE TRAINING PLANS, WE TAKE YOU RIGHT UP TO RACE DAY

**L**ast issue, we shared part one of your exclusive marathon training plans from our Big Marathon Challenge team coach Richard Coates from Full Potential (fullpotential.co.uk). This issue, we're taking you right up to race day! There are three plans available: complete beginners should go for the Get Me Round Plan, which does exactly what it says on the tin – you'll reach the finish line feeling happy with your effort. Those who are already fit, or who have run a marathon before and want to aim for the 4hrs to 4hrs 30mins bracket, should follow the Intermediate Plan. And faster or more ambitious runners should follow our Advanced Plan, which aims to get you to the finish in 3hrs 30mins or quicker.

Missed part one of the plans? You'll find them in the Training Plans section at womensrunninguk.co.uk, where there's also a full explanation of all the sessions and terms used in these plans. Don't forget to share your training updates on Twitter and Instagram using #BigMarathonChallenge!



\*Perceived effort = where 1 is easy and represents minimum effort and 10 is hard and represents maximum effort

### POST-RACE RECOVERY TRAINING

It's vital that after the exertions of your challenge you give your body the chance to fully recover. Doing some easy walking, swimming and cross-training will aid this process and it's helpful to have a mental break too. Often people return to running too quickly and don't allow their body sufficient time to recover. Depending on how hard your race day was, it could take your body any time from 4-8 weeks to recover fully. Try to get a sports massage during the week following your race, ideally on the Wednesday or Thursday. Find time to stretch too, although gently at first. Enjoy the moment, wear your medal with pride and start looking forward to your next race or challenge.

TYPE OF RUN	PERCEIVED EFFORT LEVEL (1-10)*	HEART RATE RESERVE (%)	HOW IT SHOULD FEEL - "THE TALK TEST"
EASY / RECOVERY RUN	6-6.5	65-70%	You can speak in complete sentences, totally conversational, you're running relaxed, enjoying it and not worrying about the watch
LONG RUN	6.5-7	65-70%	You're in control, running fluidly and very much at a conversational level, but you'll feel slightly flushed with a gradual build-up of muscular fatigue
STEADY EFFORT RUN	7-8	70-80%	You can speak in short sentences but have a slight pause on your breath. This can often be 'no man's land' in training terms if this is all you do
MARATHON PACE	7.5-8	78%	You can speak in short sentences, you have a slight pause on your breath but are not out of breath. You are relaxed and in control
THRESHOLD RUNS / KENYAN HILLS	8-8.5	80-85%	You could speak four or five words if somebody asked you a question. Your breathing is more laboured and you know you're working – we call this 'controlled discomfort'
10K RACE / SPEEDWORK	8.5 plus	85% plus	You can say only two or three words maximum and are out of breath but still know that you could do more if you had to

# THE GET ME ROUND PLAN

USE THIS PLAN IF YOU'RE NEW TO MARATHON RUNNING, TO ENSURE YOU ENJOY THE DAY

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
WEEK 7	REST	30mins easy effort run, 30mins strength and conditioning + stretch	5mins brisk walk, 5mins easy run, 6 x 3mins at threshold effort with a 90sec brisk walk between intervals, 5mins easy run, 5mins brisk walk cool-down + stretch	REST	35mins steady effort run over undulating terrain if possible + stretch	REST	150mins long run + stretch, split 4mins running, 1min walking
WEEK 8	REST	30mins easy effort cross-training, 30mins strength and conditioning + stretch	5mins brisk walk, 5mins easy run, 5 x 4mins at threshold effort with a 90sec brisk walk between intervals, 5mins easy run, 5mins brisk walk cool-down + stretch	REST	40mins steady effort run over undulating terrain if possible + stretch	REST	165mins long run + stretch, split 4mins running, 1min walking
WEEK 9	REST	40mins easy effort run + stretch	30mins easy effort cross-training, 30mins strength and conditioning + stretch	5mins brisk walk, 5mins easy run, 5 x 5mins at threshold effort with a 90sec brisk walk between intervals, 5mins easy run, 5mins brisk walk cool-down + stretch	REST	30mins easy effort run, 30mins strength and conditioning + stretch	180mins long run + stretch, split 4mins running, 1min walking
WEEK 10	REST	20mins easy effort run, 20mins strength and conditioning + stretch	45mins steady effort run over undulating terrain if possible + stretch	REST	5mins brisk walk, 5mins easy run, 5 x 5mins at threshold effort with a 90sec brisk walk between sets, 5mins easy run, 5mins brisk walk cool-down	REST	120mins long run + stretch, split 4mins running, 1 minute walking
WEEK 11	REST	30mins easy effort cross-training, 30mins strength and conditioning + stretch	5mins brisk walk, 5mins easy run, 5 x 5mins at threshold effort with a 60sec brisk walk between sets, 5mins easy run, 5mins brisk walk cool-down + stretch	45mins easy effort cross-training + stretch	25mins easy effort run, 20mins strength and conditioning + stretch	REST	60mins long run + stretch, split 4mins running, 1 minute walking
WEEK 12	REST	5mins brisk walk, 5mins easy run, 3 x 3mins at threshold effort with a 60sec brisk walk between sets, 5mins easy run, 5mins brisk walk cool-down + stretch	REST	20mins easy effort run + stretch	REST	15mins easy effort run + stretch. Plan, prepare, relax and look forward to tomorrow's race	<b>Marathon race day</b>





# THE INTERMEDIATE PLAN

AIMING FOR 4HRS TO 4HRS 30MINS IN YOUR MARATHON? TRY THIS PLAN TO STEP UP

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
WEEK 7	REST	15mins easy effort cross training, 30mins strength and conditioning + stretch	10mins warm-up, 3 x 10mins at threshold effort with 90secs jog recovery between efforts, 10mins cool-down + stretch	30mins easy effort cross training, 30mins strength and conditioning + stretch	10mins warm-up, 5 x 3mins at 90% effort with 90secs easy effort jog recovery between efforts, 10mins cool-down + stretch	REST	150mins run – 75mins easy effort, 65mins at your target marathon pace, 10mins easy effort cool-down + stretch
WEEK 8	REST	15mins warm-up, 15mins threshold effort, 15mins cool-down + stretch	REST	30mins easy effort run + stretch	REST	20mins easy effort run + stretch	<b>Half Marathon Race</b>
WEEK 9	REST	40mins recovery run + stretch	10mins warm-up, 3 x 10mins at threshold effort with 90secs jog recovery between efforts, 10mins cool-down + stretch	REST	10mins warm-up, 5 x 3mins at 90% effort with 90secs easy effort jog recovery between efforts, 10mins cool-down + stretch	REST	180mins run – 80mins easy effort, 90mins at your target marathon pace, 10mins easy effort cool-down + stretch
WEEK 10	REST	45mins easy effort run + stretch	10mins warm-up, 3 x 12mins at threshold effort with 90secs jog recovery between efforts, 10mins cool-down + stretch	30mins easy effort cross training, 30mins strength and conditioning + stretch	REST	30mins recovery run + stretch	120mins run – 15mins easy effort, 90mins at your target marathon pace, 15mins easy effort cool-down + stretch
WEEK 11	REST	10mins warm-up, 5 x 5mins at threshold effort with 60secs jog recovery between efforts, 10mins cool-down + stretch	30mins easy effort cross training + stretch	10mins warm-up, 12mins at threshold, 2mins easy jog recovery, 4 x 2mins at 90 % effort with a 60secs easy effort jog recovery between efforts, 10mins cool-down + stretch	REST	30mins recovery run + stretch	70mins run – 10mins easy effort, 50mins at your target marathon pace, 10mins easy effort cool-down + stretch
WEEK 12	REST	10mins warm-up, 3 x 5mins at threshold effort with 90secs jog recovery between efforts, 10mins cool-down + stretch	REST	30mins easy effort run + stretch	REST	20mins easy effort run + stretch. Plan, prepare, relax and look forward to tomorrow	<b>Marathon race day</b>



# THE ADVANCED PLAN

DESIGNED FOR AMBITIOUS RUNNERS, THIS PLAN SHOULD SEE YOU BREAK THE 3HRS 30MINS BARRIER

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
WEEK 7	45mins easy effort cross-training + stretch	10mins warm-up, 3 x 15mins at threshold with 90secs jog recovery between efforts, 10mins cool-down + stretch	30mins recovery run, 30mins strength and conditioning + stretch	REST	10mins warm-up, 2 x (3 x 1 km at 90% effort with 90sec easy effort jog recovery between intervals) and 3min jog recovery between sets, 10mins cool-down + stretch	REST	150mins run – 75mins easy effort, 65mins at your target marathon pace, 10mins easy effort cool-down + stretch
WEEK 8	REST	10mins warm-up, 3 x 15mins at threshold with 90secs jog recovery between efforts, 10mins cool-down + stretch	45mins easy effort cross-training + stretch	REST	10mins warm-up, 2 x (3 x 1 km at 90% effort with a 60sec recovery between intervals) and 3min easy effort jog recovery between sets, 10mins cool-down + stretch	30mins recovery run + stretch	165mins run – 65mins easy effort, 90mins at your target marathon pace, 10mins easy effort cool-down + stretch
WEEK 9	REST	45mins easy effort run + stretch	10mins warm-up, 25mins at threshold effort, 10mins cool-down + stretch	15mins easy effort cross-training, 30mins strength and conditioning + stretch	REST	30mins easy effort run + stretch	180mins run – 80mins easy effort, 90mins at your target marathon pace, 10mins easy effort cool-down + stretch
WEEK 10	REST	45mins easy effort run + stretch	10mins warm-up, 10mins at threshold effort, 4 x 1km at 90% effort, 10mins at threshold effort with 90secs easy effort jog recovery between efforts, 10mins cool-down + stretch	30mins recovery run, 30mins strength and conditioning + stretch	REST	30mins easy effort run + stretch	120mins run – 15mins easy effort, 90mins at your target marathon pace, 15mins easy effort cool-down + stretch
WEEK 11	REST	40mins easy effort run + stretch	10mins warm-up, 3 x 12mins at threshold with 90secs jog recovery between efforts, 10mins cool-down + stretch	30mins recovery run, 30mins strength and conditioning + stretch	REST	30mins easy effort run + stretch	70mins run – 10mins easy effort, 50mins at your target marathon pace, 10mins easy effort cool-down + stretch
WEEK 12	REST	10mins warm-up, 3 x 5mins at threshold effort with 60secs easy effort jog recovery between efforts, 10mins cool-down + stretch	REST	30mins easy effort run + stretch	REST	20mins easy effort run + stretch. Plan, prepare, relax and look forward to tomorrow	<b>Marathon race day</b>





# YOUR BODY IS DESIGNED TO MOVE

## SOLGAR SHARES ITS TOP TIPS FOR HEALTHY BONES AND JOINTS

**E**xperiencing joint discomfort? You're not alone. One in three adults are seeking support for healthy joints<sup>1</sup>. Age and genetics are key factors for joint health. However, there are many things that we can do to improve our joint health...

### TAKE PART IN WEIGHT-BEARING EXERCISE

Weight-bearing exercise helps to increase bone density, however this does not mean you have to go to the gym and push weights. Exercise such as walking, skipping, hopping and jumping all contribute to bone density.

### EAT FOODS RICH IN CALCIUM, MAGNESIUM AND VITAMIN K2

We all know that calcium-rich foods are good for bone health, however cheeses such as Gouda, Brie and Edam are also a source of vitamin K2 which can help to support the correct utilisation of calcium, so that it is taken to the bones where you need it and not deposited in the arteries where it can be harmful. Pumpkin, sesame and sunflower seeds are a good source of magnesium, which supports bone health and may also be helpful for muscle cramping.

### STAY SUPPLE

Even if you have strong bones, if your joints and muscles are not supple this is going to impact your mobility as they work in unison. Yoga and Pilates are great ways to maintain flexibility and you don't need to join a class. There are plenty of free videos online you can follow in the comfort of your own home and just a small amount of time invested each day can make a huge difference.

### OBTAIN SAFE SUN EXPOSURE

Not only is vitamin D (the sunshine vitamin) required for the absorption of calcium, it also supports muscle strength and may be helpful in the fight against inflammation. Unprotected exposure to the sun for 10–20 minutes around midday, in the spring and summer months

(ensuring you do not burn), helps to keep our levels topped up. However in the autumn and winter, sun exposure does not produce enough vitamin D and therefore the UK government recommends that we all take a supplement to maintain adequate levels.

### AVOID SITTING FOR TOO LONG

Sitting has been described as “the new smoking” yet we are spending more time sitting than ever before which can cause joint and muscle pain. If your job involves sitting for long periods, set an alarm on your phone to remind yourself to take breaks and have a walk around – or better still use an adjustable standing desk.

### GET ENOUGH REST AND SLEEP

While exercise is supportive for joint and bone health, it's important to make sure that we don't overdo it as this can lead to damage and injuries, so make sure you have rest days. It's also vital that we get enough sleep to ensure that our muscles, joints and bones can repair and grow back stronger. Aim for at least seven hours a night.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Visit [solgar.co.uk/move](http://solgar.co.uk/move) to view Solgar's full range of natural health products, especially designed to help support your mobility and flexibility, and for the maintenance of healthy joints and bones.

[SOLGAR.CO.UK/MOVE](http://SOLGAR.CO.UK/MOVE)

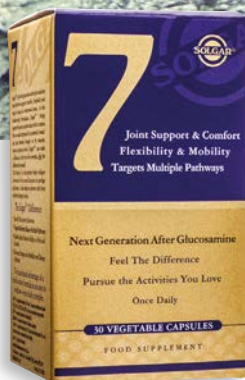
REFERENCES: 1. Anthony D Woolf (Arthritis Research UK). The Bone and Joint Decade: working together to make musculoskeletal conditions a public health priority. Topical Reviews Summer 2012; Series 6 (no.12). [www.arthritisresearchuk.org/health-professionals-and-students/reports/topical-reviews/topical-reviews-summer-2012.aspx](http://www.arthritisresearchuk.org/health-professionals-and-students/reports/topical-reviews/topical-reviews-summer-2012.aspx). 2. As well as compounds naturally present in cartilage, Solgar® 7 and Collagen Hyaluronic Acid Complex also provide vitamin C which contributes to normal collagen formation for the normal function of cartilage. The vitamin C in these products, as part of a healthy balanced diet and lifestyle, helps collagen formation for the normal function of cartilage and bones. It also helps to protect cells from oxidative damage (stress). 3. Calcium, magnesium, vitamin D3 and K2 contribute to the maintenance of normal bones. 4. Compared to standard Curcumin extract. Food supplements should not be used instead of a varied balanced diet or a healthy lifestyle. Solgar® is a registered trademark.

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# GAME PLAN

IF YOU WANT TO HAVE THE BEST POSSIBLE RACE EXPERIENCE, IT'S IMPORTANT TO HAVE A FAILSAFE STRATEGY FOR THE WEEKS, DAYS AND HOURS LEADING UP TO YOUR EVENT. HERE'S HOW TO GET IT RIGHT.

WORDS: CHRISTINA MACDONALD



**W**hether you're about to enter your first race or you've completed a number of events in the past, having a tried-and-tested race-day strategy and a sound approach to nutrition will stand you in good stead. Planning ahead will give you a much better chance of getting a personal best, or simply having a more enjoyable race experience if you're not aiming for a time. Being prepared is key to alleviating stress too. "A lot of being prepared comes down to the logistics of the day," says running coach George Anderson ([runningbygeorge.com](http://runningbygeorge.com)). "Know what time the race starts and where it is. Are you able to travel there from home? There are factors that determine your general approach that will have an impact on what you're able to do and obviously some of the decisions you to have to make. The more out of your normal environment you are, the more care and attention you need to pay to your race-day routine."

### CONSIDER YOUR GOAL

"What experience do you want on race day?" asks Anderson. "If you're racing for a personal best then give yourself every possible advantage on the day. Consider what time to get up, what you're going to have for breakfast, what time you'll be eating and all the day's logistics. Know what time you need to leave your home or hotel and what time you need to be at the race, in order to avoid pre-race stresses."

### TAKE CONTROL

You can't always control what happens on race day, but you can work out timings in advance to alleviate nerves. "Control the controllables," says Shaun Dixon, professional fitness coach and ambassador for Iffley Road ([iffleyroad.com](http://iffleyroad.com)). "It doesn't matter how experienced you are – racing is mentally challenging. To reduce pre-race nerves, have a tested plan, from the timing of your breakfast to the length of your

warm-up. This allows you to focus on getting the most out of yourself in the race. Don't waste energy worrying about little things!"

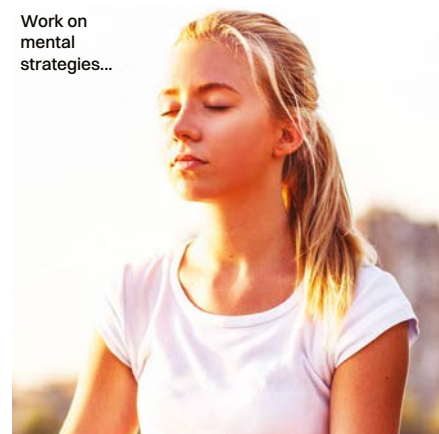
### INCREASE CARBS BUT DON'T OVERDO IT

"Two to three days before the race, some runners increase carbohydrates in their diet," says Dr Ieva Alaunyte, a registered nutritionist in Sport & Exercise Nutrition and Senior Nutrition Scientist at Lucozade Sport ([lucozadesport.com](http://lucozadesport.com)). "This increases muscle glycogen stores which can be used as energy during a race. It doesn't give you licence to eat anything and everything! Think starchy foods like pasta, rice, potatoes, toast."

### WORK ON A MENTAL STRATEGY

It's natural to be nervous but using the power of the mind will help boost your confidence. "Race visualisation has been proven to boost performance," says Dixon. "Thinking through possible race scenarios and how you would react can help. Write down a few pitfalls and

Work on  
mental  
strategies...



methods of dealing with them. Visualise feeling relaxed, smooth and confident as you cruise around the course."

### CHOOSE FOODS CAREFULLY

"Close to the race, don't experiment with new foods or products, as it may add stress on the gut," says Alaunyte. "Certain foods may irritate your stomach and gut more than others. Foods high in dietary fibre (black beans, peas, broccoli, Brussels sprouts), fat, protein and certain sugars, such as fructose."

### HAVE A RACE-DAY CHECKLIST

"There are a few things I always include in my race bag," says Dixon. "A handful of safety pins, a pre- and post-run snack and a



Don't experiment  
with new foods or  
products you're not  
used to on race day



All right, let's see how long it takes me to drink all this bottle...

plentiful supply of warm, dry clothes. After the race, your body temperature will drop quickly so it's vitally important for your recovery to have some dry clothes to change into and something to eat."

#### TIME YOUR BREAKFAST WELL

"Eat a carbohydrate-rich breakfast three to four hours before the race to ensure the food is digested and you don't feel full at the start of your race," says Alaunyte. "Porridge with banana, eggs on toast or breakfast cereal with milk are all excellent choices."

#### DON'T DRINK TOO MUCH WATER

"It's important to stay hydrated but don't overdo it," says Alaunyte. "Listening to your own thirst is a great way of learning your body's needs. Monitoring your hydration level using a pee chart is an easy way to achieve optimum hydration. A light straw colour usually indicates you're on the right track when it comes to your hydration. Keep hydrated throughout the day (before a race) by drinking 1.5- 2 litres of water."


#### KNOW YOUR HYDRATION STRATEGY

Before the race: start hydrating with a glass or two of water two to four hours beforehand. "You can top up with a few sips of water (125-250ml) an hour leading up to your race," says Alaunyte.

During the race: drink to thirst. "For most runners this means drinking little and often, around 400-800 ml per hour," says Alaunyte. "You lose sodium in sweat so replacing electrolytes and energy in the form of carbohydrates may be important for races of an hour or more."

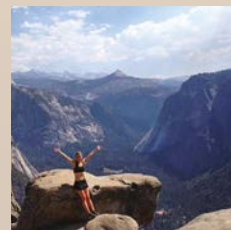
After the race: rehydrate and replenish what you've lost. "Drink around two glasses (500ml) of fluid for every pound of weight you've lost in sweat," says Alaunyte. "A sports drink that provides carbohydrates, salt and fluid can be part of your recovery strategy. A small portion of 15-20g of protein (a bar is a good example) is all you need for muscle recovery."

#### KEEP RACING TO GAIN EXPERIENCE

If you're aiming for a personal best, it's hard to know when to put your foot down and when to ease back. Experience is the best way to work this out. "That's the fun of racing," says Anderson. "The objective of training is to give yourself the right stimulus so you adapt, evolve and get fitter and faster. With racing, it comes down to experience and knowing what sort of shape you're in. If you're doing 1:53 for a half-marathon and you're training for a marathon, it's a pretty good indication you're on to run one around four or four and-a-half hours. So trying to target 3:30 might not be happening!" 

## OUR RACE-DAY PLANS

Three women share the strategies that work for them



### "I ALWAYS HAVE A PLAYLIST"

"I have no alcohol for a week before a race, or a month before a marathon. I increase carbohydrate for three days beforehand. For dinner I have wholewheat pasta, tomatoes, spinach, carrots and broccoli. I have the same breakfast and always have a marathon playlist."

BETH SKELTON, 26, EVENTS & PARTNERSHIPS MANAGER, LONDON



### "ALWAYS TRY AND POO BEFORE A RACE!"

"I have a fail-safe breakfast of toast or bagel with nut butter and a banana, plus tea or coffee. My top tip is to always try and poo before a race. If you don't things can get quite uncomfortable! Usually a hot drink helps speed things along."

CHARLIE WATSON, 28, DIETETICS STUDENT AND BLOGGER (THERUNNERBEANS.COM), HENLEY



### "I EAT WELL AND DON'T DRINK ALCOHOL"

"I cut out alcohol and junk food, eat more fruit, vegetables, nuts and water. I make sure all my kit and bag is ready a few days before and research any logistics. My breakfast is always plain bagels with banana, honey and green tea."

INDIA KANG, 43, RELATIONSHIP COACH, SOLIHULL

# MORE THAN A RACE MORE THAN A FESTIVAL

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The Salomon Trail Races at Keswick Mountain Festival will once again offer a mixture of wide-open trails, steady and tough ascents, single tracks through woodland and open valleys to inspire and challenge you.

With four distances to choose from, the organisers have ensured they offer a race for trail runners of all abilities. Lace up your trail shoes and choose from a 5K, 10K, 25K or an Ultra 50K.

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## FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS



You won't want to miss the Keswick Mountain Festival – it's the ultimate trail running weekend – but you will also find a party atmosphere that the whole family will love. So make sure you get a weekend ticket, pack your tent and you can look forward to...

- **Live music:** From KT Tunstall, Cast, the Peatbog Faeries and more to be announced soon...
- **Food & drink:** Gourmet delights to keep you fuelled though all that running and partying
- **A packed activity programme:** Including hikes, water and climbing activities
- **Sporting events:** You can run, swim and cycle – or do all three with a triathlon!
- **Expert talks:** From inspirational adventurers

For a full list of events and to book online now, visit [keswickmountainfestival.co.uk/the-festival/](http://keswickmountainfestival.co.uk/the-festival/).



# EMOTIONS RUNNING HIGH

RUNNING HAS A STRONG INTERPLAY WITH OUR EMOTIONS. IT CAN HELP US MANAGE TRAUMATIC EVENTS OR NEGATIVE FEELINGS WHICH, IN TURN, COULD ACTUALLY IMPROVE OUR RUNNING, TOO.

WORDS: CHRISTINA MACDONALD

**M**ost of us know that running can improve our mood and mindset and help us cope with stress. At some point in our lives, we might use it to help manage our emotions. When stressful or traumatic situations arise, the temptation is often to go out for a run to clear our heads and feel better. It works for many runners. I recently used the focus of training for a half-marathon to cope with the loss of my mother and found that having a training plan to follow was a welcome distraction from grieving. While it's still important to grieve, running is a convenient and reliable hobby to fall back on when you need to calm your mind and think clearly, and perhaps even overcome a nasty shock. "If something traumatic has happened, going for a run can be a really good opportunity to break things down," says Philip Clarke, a Lecturer of Psychology at the University of Derby. "A run can be a really good opportunity to make sense of situations in your head. It also means you may run further. If you're focusing on a situation, it can take away the feeling of perceived exertion. You may find you're able to perform a little bit better or run a little bit longer because your mind is occupied."

A few studies seem to support the benefits of exercise on managing emotional trauma. Some of the first evidence of the beneficial effects came from a 12-week study in 2015, published in the *Journal of Psychiatric Research*. The study combined a 12-week exercise programme for those suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), with the usual care programme for PTSD. Results showed that adding exercise into the treatment resulted in reduced PTSD and depressive symptoms and improved sleep quality.

Another study revealed that trauma or unpleasant emotions could be harnessed to improve performance or fitness. A 2015 study called "Adversity and Superior Olympic Performance", published in Nottingham Trent University's Open Access Institutional Research Repository, interviewed 10 Olympic gold medallists. All had experienced trauma, including repeated non-selection, significant sporting failure, serious injury and political unrest, as well as the death of a family member. All of them believed that the traumatic experiences they had endured positively influenced their subsequent performance in sport by increasing motivation.

## FEELING EMPOWERED

Running can certainly be a good source of empowerment in challenging situations. Not long ago, while trawling through a social media forum, a simple post from one female runner caught my attention. "I ran to the letterbox to post my divorce paperwork. I ran faster than usual and it felt great!" A simple statement about the therapeutic effects of running, but then it got me thinking... can we use our emotions in those situations to actually improve as runners? Can our emotions drive us to run well, rather than plod along half-heartedly when we're feeling relaxed? It seems they can.

Clarke believes that emotional issues and the impact they have on our brain and thinking can be a powerful motivator. "First of all, any exercise releases endorphins," he says. "You feel a lot happier for it. At the end of the day, it's a happy drug. But emotion can also lead you to do incredible things. I'm sure you hear the stories of a mother whose child is under a car and they get this massive strength to lift the car. That comes from an emotive drive. It can lead to you being very reactive and can be very powerful."

Clarke knows first-hand about the therapeutic benefits of running. "About



**CAN OUR  
EMOTIONS  
DRIVE US TO  
RUN WELL?**



five years ago, my mother was diagnosed with brain cancer," he says. "I wanted to do something to help me cope with the situation and raise money. So I ran the length of Ireland for charity. I went from never having run 5K, to running 16 marathons, in about five months. I averaged about 33 miles a day. Running was my crutch. It helped me cope."

### BEING IN CONTROL

Life coaches often say we can't control what happens to us but we can control how we react to situations. For many of us, running can give us back a much-needed sense of control to help us manage stress. "A lot of emotions come from uncontrollable things like stress at work, relationships and family illness," says Clarke. "You often have no control over some of those things, whereas your body and your running can be a real

**"EMOTIONAL  
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MOTIVATOR"**

source of control because you're in charge. It's up to you whether you go out and do 5K or 10K or if you stop. That's something you have complete control over and that's why people use it."

But can running help us make sense of our problems? It certainly feels that way. "There is a fantastic quote from an ancient philosopher, Lao-Tse, which beautifully captures the potential of exercise in helping to overcome life's difficulties," says Dr Tracey Devonport, a sport and exercise psychologist at the University of Wolverhampton. "The quote is: 'It is as

though she/he listened and such listening enfolds us in a silence in which, at last, we begin to hear what we are meant to be'. Exercising on our own provides us with space to think and to process what is going on in our lives. Or if we run with others, they can be our sounding board, to simply listen, perhaps offer advice or a different perspective."

### HEARTBREAK SOLUTION?

Some people run to help them overcome relationship difficulties, including break-ups. But can running help heal heartbreak? It can

definitely help us develop a more positive perspective. "The causes and consequences of heartbreak are varied," says Devonport. "As heartbreak results from thoughts and perceptions, it is unlikely that exercise on its own can heal heartbreak. Exercise can contribute to recovery, though. It can do so by providing a social activity, an activity we can enjoy, that develops our self-worth [and] increases confidence, something we have control over doing. Something that is flexible in terms of what, when and how [we do it]." Clarke is keen to emphasise how his emotional state worked for him on a





personal level. He would never have decided to run the length of Ireland if his mum hadn't been ill, or had the mental strength to complete such a challenge. "It was one of those things where I have never experienced such motivation and drive before and that was because of the emotional situation I was in," he says. "In those really tough moments while I was running, I could have given up and stopped, and it wasn't just the fact that I was doing it for charity that kept me going. It was that emotional connection that helped me get through it. Without that, I don't think I would have been able to do it."

© ISTOCKPHOTO.COM



## "GETTING FITTER AFTER LOSING MY DAD WAS UNINTENTIONAL BUT IT HAPPENED"

"I lost my dad at the age of 25 and found running helped me to manage my emotions. I signed up to a half-marathon and I used to use my training time to think about him. Sometimes I'd cry, sometimes I'd laugh, but it felt far more constructive than lying in bed crying. I ran before Dad died but it was more of a hobby and I'd only run about 5K. Afterwards, I decided to sign up to a half-marathon. I felt frustrated because when he was ill there was very little I could do but, with running, it felt like I was in control. Getting fitter was unintentional, but it happened. While I was running my emotions were strong. It was time out for me to digest that Dad wasn't here anymore."

JENNY MCNICHOLAS (ON THE RIGHT), PRESS OFFICER, 26, DERBY



## "RUNNING HELPED ME REGAIN CONTROL OF MY LIFE"

"I took up running to distract me from a horrible job and now am able to run a half-marathon, and have lost just over a dress size. When I first began running, I was often in tears because work was getting me down and I felt out of control. I wanted to be in control of my body and running gave me that. Pounding the pavements had a bigger impact on me mentally than physically. All I could think about was work and the moment I laced up my trainers and set a new distance goal all I thought about was hitting that goal. Afterwards I felt calmer and happier. Running long distances helped my self-confidence grow in all aspects of life. Five years ago I wasn't able to run for 10 minutes, now I can run a half-marathon."

LEKHA MOHANLAL, COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER, 26, WEST LONDON



## "I'M SURPRISED AT HOW FIT I'VE BECOME"

"I took up running four years ago after a miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy and subsequently finding out I couldn't have any more children (I have one daughter). Taking up running not only helped me get in shape after becoming a mum, it helped me cope with the difficult emotions I was experiencing. Joining a running club and becoming a regular at parkrun has also helped me make new friends and given me something to focus on. Since then, I've run two marathons, lost a stone in weight and have discovered I'm reasonably quick for my age. This year I'm running the Virgin Money London Marathon to raise money for the Miscarriage Association for the second time."

JANET MURRAY, DIRECTOR, 42, GRAVESEND





# MY BEST BIT OF BLING

IT DON'T MEAN A THING IF IT AIN'T GOT THAT BLING!  
10 WOMEN SHOW US THEIR FAVOURITE MEDALS  
AND SHARE WHY THEY'RE SO SPECIAL

WORDS: LISA JACKSON



## My first time

"This may not be my blingiest medal, but it's very special as it marks the start of my marathon journey, when I discovered that I'm made of sterner stuff than I knew. I had been a full-time carer for my mum who had dementia and I ran the 2004 Loch Ness Marathon to stick two

fingers up at this devastating disease. Little did I know that, 12 miles into the marathon, my ITB would seize up completely, forcing me to choose between pulling out or walk/staggering the remaining 14 miles, a distance I'd never even walked before. I walked, and so began my crusade to raise awareness about dementia. I've now completed 110 marathons and raised £50,000 for Alzheimer's Research UK."

SUSIE HEWER, 59, FROM EWHURST GREEN, EAST SUSSEX



## My second time

"I love this medal from the second time I ran the Brighton Marathon. I felt elated having got through the horrible bit by the old power station in Shoreham. The previous year I could have done

with more power during that particular stretch myself! The medal made all those early morning training sessions and long runs on a Sunday seem worth the sacrifice, and I beat my 2014 time by 21 minutes, which was an utterly incredible feeling."

ALISON HOSKING, 45, FROM SUFFOLK



## My 100th time

"This medal is my favourite as it's from Rachel's Ranscombe where I did my 100th marathon. The journey to 100 helped me cope with my bipolar and anxiety disorder, and it brought

the most caring, wonderful people into my life, many of whom have become friends. Before, I would never have left my house, let alone speak to anyone. So the support I've had from the whole multi-marathon community and my running partner Donald the cat, has truly saved my life. Donald is a stray who's adopted me. I have no idea whom he belongs to. One day he just decided he'd come running with me like a dog would, and now he waits every day for me and he does about half a mile. We've now been training together for a couple of years."

EMINE ISMAIL, 51, FROM LONDON





### Everlasting pride

"How can you not love this medal from the Fowlmead 50 that proves you ran 50 miles in less than 12 hours? This ended up being my best race of 2016 and reinforced the fact that if I stick to my TrainAsONE training plan I can run great distances without having to exhaust myself with excessive mileage. Despite being a zillion laps of a cyclo-park (OK, 25), it wasn't as boring as I'd expected and, as the medal says, I achieved 'everlasting pride'. I'm hoping to repeat this feat in 2017 and maybe go a little bit faster."

KAT MILLER, 41, FROM NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE



### A birthday treat

"The medal I received at the Verona Marathon holds the most special memories for me as the race was part of a surprise November birthday treat for me. Ancient villages with children cheering and handing out oranges made this event very memorable and the Italian people were wonderfully welcoming - although the cobbles weren't! I ran side by side with my partner Stuart, even holding hands like Romeo and Juliet when crossing the finish line in the shadow of the Roman amphitheatre."

KIM FREEMAN, 40, FROM NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

### When I fell in love

"I adore the amazing medal I got the second time I ran the Paris Marathon - it's really heavy and has part of the marathon route engraved on it. Aside from how glamorous the medal is, this race meant a lot to me as it was when I fell in love with marathon running. The previous year I didn't even see the Eiffel Tower as I was concentrating so intently on the road immediately ahead of me, but that year I relaxed and took time to enjoy the spectacular views along the way. I also experienced incredible camaraderie mid-race as a random runner who saw me struggling offered me some water. That really touched me."

VALERIE BLOOMFIELD, 44, FROM RAYLEIGH, ESSEX





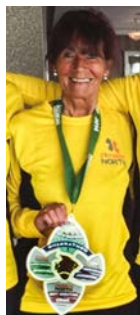
## BEST BLING



### My smallest

"My favourite medal is my smallest. To get a Comrades Marathon medal you need to run about 56 miles in the South African heat on a relentlessly hilly course and finish within a strict time limit of 12 hours. There are five hills that are tough enough to have names and countless others that would be called 'Cardiac Hill' or similar if they were part of any other race. The course is beautiful, though, and has a fabulous stadium finish. It's the hardest, most amazing race I've ever run and it doesn't matter that the medal is like a bottle cap on a ribbon. My first Comrades gave me my best medal and I've returned for another every year since."

REBECCA PARRY, 45, FROM LEICESTER



### For the journey

"Medals to me are not about winning but more about the journey - the physical and mental efforts involved in chasing your dreams. Each one tells a different story and whenever I pick one up I relive that experience. My most cherished medal is the one I got after the Quadrathlon Challenge, where I ran four

marathons in four days in beautiful Donegal. It epitomised the true spirit of distance running. The grit, determination and stamina required to complete this awesome event over such rugged terrain changed my view on my ability to go beyond my limits."

COLLETTE O'HAGAN, 67, FROM DUNDALK IN IRELAND

### My biggest

"Having run 119 marathons and ultras in 2016, I accumulated quite a collection of medals! Among my favourites has to be the huge Phoenix Firebird medal, which measures 320mm x 160mm, is 5mm thick and weighs nearly a kilogram. Only 35 runners have ever earned this medal, 10 of whom were female. The Firebird series consists of four marathons run along the River Thames throughout the year, hosted by the fab Rik Vercoe at Phoenix Running, who claims it's the biggest medal in the world. You get given a smaller Phoenix medal at the end of the first three marathons and then, after you've completed your fourth, you're awarded the mega-medal to hang them all on."

ELAINE DEAN, 54, FROM SWINDON



### A complete one-off

"This is one of my favourite medals because, as it was a one-off event to celebrate the marriage of some lovely running friends, Greg and Janet, I know there won't ever be another like it! The run was organised by the fab Saxons, Vikings and Normans events company and featured laps of the beautiful but hilly Ashdown Forest, the inspiration for Winnie the Pooh. It was a challenge event, meaning you could do as many laps as you wished. I set out with a marathon in mind, but loved the route so much that I decided to sneak in a baby ultra, making the medal even more special. It was a gorgeous sunny day and fun all the way round with plenty of chat - plus fizz and wedding cake at the aid station!"

LISA HALE, 37, FROM FARNBOROUGH IN HAMPSHIRE







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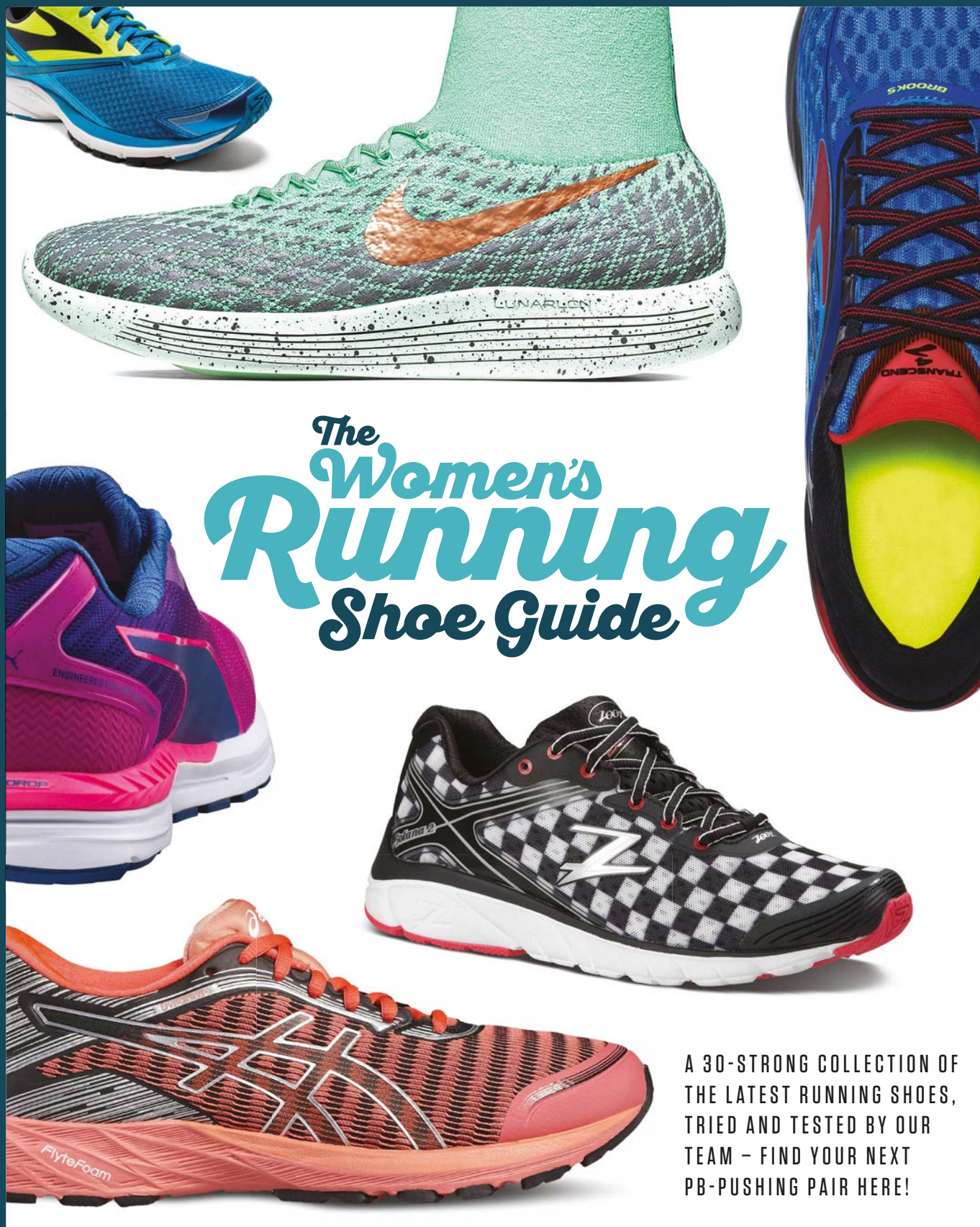
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# The Women's Running Shoe Guide

A 30-STRONG COLLECTION OF THE LATEST RUNNING SHOES, TRIED AND TESTED BY OUR TEAM – FIND YOUR NEXT PB-PUSHING PAIR HERE!



# PICKING THE RIGHT SHOES

FOLLOW THESE SIMPLE STEPS TO ENSURE YOUR CHOSEN SHOE IS RIGHT FOR YOU

## DETERMINE YOUR RUNNING STYLE

This is best done by having your gait analysed at a specialist running store. A gait analysis will tell you your level of pronation (how much your foot rolls inwards when you run), whether you land on your heel, mid, or forefoot, and pinpoint any areas that may be affecting your efficiency.

## DECIDE WHAT CATEGORY OF SHOE YOU NEED

Once you've determined your running style, you'll know whether you need a stability, neutral, or minimal option. If you overpronate, you may need some stability to protect your foot from rolling excessively inwards. A basic level of pronation is best suited to a neutral trainer with enough

cushioning to absorb impact, while runners who land on their mid or forefoot are generally more suited to minimal footwear with less cushioning.

## GET THE RIGHT FIT

Shoe sizes vary from brand to brand, so bear in mind you may need half a size bigger or smaller than you usually get. Aim for a thumbnail's length of

space in the toe box and ensure the shoe feels snug, but at the same time, not restrictive.

## RUN IN THE SHOE!

You can't expect to choose the right pair of running shoes if all you do is stand up in them. Most specialist running stores will have a treadmill so you can get a true idea of whether the shoe is right for you.

### HEEL COUNTER

Plastic or fibreboard piece in the heel that helps to keep the heel centred over the midsole. Watch out for heel tabs being too high as these can rub against the Achilles.



### MIDSOLE

Cushions the foot and plays a key role in controlling excess foot motion. The midsole is located between the upper and the outsole and is attached to both.



## JARGON BUSTER

WHAT DO ALL THOSE TECHNICAL SHOE TERMS ACTUALLY MEAN?

### DUAL DENSITY MIDSOLE

A midsole (the shock-absorbing foam layer between the insole and the outsole) that is made up of two types of foam – one of a different density or stiffness to the other.

### EVA FOAM

Cushioning made from hundreds of thousands of foam cells containing air or gas. On impact, the gas is released. When the foot lifts, the gas is sucked back in

### FLEX GROOVES

Horizontal grooves in the outsole forefoot, allowing the shoe to bend naturally with foot. Deep flex grooves mean more forefoot flexion but less shock absorption.

### HEEL-TOE DROP/OFFSET

Difference in millimetres between the height of the heel and the forefoot. Zero-drop means the heel and ball of your foot will be exactly the same height off the ground.

### TPU

Thermoplastic urethane is a flexible plastic that can be used in a shoe's midsole to provide more stability for the runner.



## ADIDAS ULTRABOOST

£129.95, adidas.com

NEUTRAL

**THEY SAY:** This striking shoe is all about cushioning and the distinctive glove-like upper. Responsive boost cushioning is designed to give you great energy return, so you're springing forward on every stride, while the Primeknit upper "adapts to the shape of your foot through the gait cycle."

**OUR TESTERS SAY:** Although initially wary of the shoe's unusual look, our tester was won over by the springy midsole, which "seemed to encourage a light, efficient running style." The cage around the midfoot makes your feet feel really secure, although the super-stretchy upper then feels roomy around the forefoot in contrast, which our tester found strange. Traction is excellent and the shoe feels light and fast.

**GOOD FOR:** Efficient runners looking for a glove-like fit and extra midfoot security.



The supportive cage around the midfoot improves fit and security

The Stretchweb rubber outsole flexes under your feet for a springy feel

## ADIDAS ULTRABOOST ST W

£129.95, adidas.com

SUPPORT

The Fitcounter heel counter allows "optimal movement of the Achilles"

At 272g, it's slightly heavier than the neutral UltraBOOST



**THEY SAY:** Built around the same core concepts as the UltraBOOST, this version is designed for runners who need a bit more stability. It features the same boost midsole and Primeknit upper, but the midfoot band is more closely tied in to the foot. The Torsion System between the heel and forefoot gives a more stable ride.

**OUR TESTERS SAY:** This shoe really impressed our tester with its super-comfortable feel from the very first outing, and its glove-like fit. Although it doesn't look like a heavyweight support shoe, our overpronating tester found it more than ample, saying, "It felt very supportive, especially under the arch of my foot." The shoe's understated looks also went down well.

**GOOD FOR:** Runners with mild to moderate overpronation looking for a slipper-like shoe



### MEET THE TESTER: GILL DAVIS, 51, CONGLETON

**How long have you been running?** Two years. **Why did you start in the first place?** I had joined a bootcamp in order to lose weight in preparation for being 50. I met a great bunch of people and, as running was part of the session, I began to slowly improve. Eventually I went along to a parkrun near my house and I now run every week.

**What's your favourite kind of run?** I've done a few mud runs and really like them - lots of fun! **Do you have a favourite shoe?** Years ago in my twenties I had Reebok boots which I loved. When I was diagnosed with plantar fasciitis I bought some Brooks shoes which are really good but the adidas UltraBOOST I tested are the most comfortable I have worn for a long time.

## ADIDAS ULTRABOOST X

£129.95, adidas.com

NEUTRAL

**THEY SAY:** This brand new addition to the UltraBOOST range has been designed using a special system that measures the precise movements of the female foot through the gait cycle. An Adaptive Arch has been introduced, with the Primeknit upper wrapping under the midfoot, and the heel counter is narrower to give better support for the female foot.

**OUR TESTERS SAY:** The full-length boost cushioning gives noticeable energy return, the wrap-around upper provides a brilliant fit, and grip from the outsole is impressive. That unusual floating arch "felt very different but suited me perfectly". Our tester said she "couldn't quite believe how much they made [her] feel like [she] was gliding".

**GOOD FOR:** Light, neutral runners who want a truly female-specific fit and brilliant energy return.



## ASICS DYNAFLYTE

£130, asics.com

NEUTRAL



**THEY SAY:** The Dynaflyte showcases ASICS' premium FlyteFoam midsole foam, which is 50% lighter than the standard. GEL cushioning in the rearfoot gives extra impact protection, while the no-sew upper is designed for complete comfort and breathability.

**OUR TESTERS SAY:** This really is a light shoe for one that's so cushioned, and our testers loved the plush, smooth ride - they don't deaden your stride as some very cushioned shoes can do. One tester found the forefoot narrow and restrictive, although others found the fit true to size and had no problems. Testers also said the shoes feel like "they propel you forward" and they even feel stable enough for a mild overpronator to enjoy.

**GOOD FOR:** Runners looking for maximum cushioning in a very light, responsive package.



### MEET THE TESTER: CRISTINA SLATTERY LOPEZ, 25, LONDON

**How long have you been running?** About two years now.  
**Why did you start in the first place?** I have always been in to the gym, but I wanted to get away from being inside the dark, sweaty gyms. Running has helped me to switch off from the world, de-stress and have time for myself.  
**What's your favourite kind of run?** I'm very

much a morning person. I love waking up super early no matter where I am in the world, when everyone is still sleeping and enjoy the scenery.  
**Do you have a favourite training route?** Yes, I do a 5K run along the Southbank, [past] the London Eye, Big Ben and down by Tate Modern. Although it is central London and very touristy, it is beautiful!



## ASICS GEL KAYANO 23

£145, [asics.com](http://asics.com)



**THEY SAY:** The latest version of this flagship stability shoe features an external heel counter and dense midsole foam on the inside of the foot for control of overpronation. GEL pads in the rear and forefoot add extra cushioning while the introduction of FlyteFoam lowers weight. This update also has gender-specific cushioning.

**OUR TESTERS SAY:** The Kayano 23 was a revelation for some of our testers who found it springier and plusher than their usual stability shoes. The looks also went down a storm (there are different options but our team tried the diva pink/coral version shown). Two of our three testers suggested going up half a size as they found the fit a bit snug. Overall, though, this is a stable shoe you can trust and the update makes it more comfy than ever.

**GOOD FOR:** Moderate to severe overpronators who want a plusher, more forgiving run from their shoes.



FluidFit technology, with this stretch-mesh upper, offers a soft, snug fit

Gender-specific cushioning in the midsole helps give a bouncy ride



Air mesh fabric in the upper keeps your feet fresh and dry

The redesigned heel gives support without compromising your gait

## BROOKS LAUNCH 4

£90, [brooksrunning.com/en\\_gb](http://brooksrunning.com/en_gb)



**THEY SAY:** This ultra-light, neutral shoe has been updated to make it feel even faster. It has a section of rebounding rubber in the forefoot and the heel section has been redesigned to "let your neutral stride shine." Brooks' DNA midsole cushioning gives impact protection while the split crash-pad on the heel helps give a smooth heel-to-toe transition.

**OUR TESTER SAY:** The Launch 4 was described by our tester as "fairly firm but in a good, supportive way." The light weight was a win (it's just 213g, among the lightest in this category), as was the bold colour scheme. Our tester found the fit a bit short compared with the same sized shoes from other brands, but otherwise fit was good, with the high ankle and heel area feeling secure.

**GOOD FOR:** Neutral runners who want a really light and responsive shoe; would work as a race shoe.



### MEET THE TESTER: SARAH GARDINER, 44, STUBBINGTON GREEN ROAD RUNNERS

**How long have you been running?** 15 years.  
**Why did you start in the first place?** I saw the London Marathon on TV, I was 29 and thought I could do that next year... I was unfit, overweight and had no idea about running. I completed the London Marathon 2003 in 4hrs 29mins and have since continued to run and am now approaching my 20th marathon.

**What's your weekly training routine at the moment?** About 40-50 miles. I am a coach and am working a lot with people towards their first marathons in the spring. I lead three groups a week too. My own training suffers a bit due to my time spent outside, but it is so rewarding to see and be part of the achievements of those reaching their goals with running.

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## BROOKS RAVENNA 8

£115, [brooksrunning.com/en\\_gb](http://brooksrunning.com/en_gb)

### SUPPORT

**THEY SAY:** The streamlined update of the Ravenna is designed to offer better cushioning, from blown rubber in the forefoot, and a smoother ride, thanks to the midfoot transition zone and segmented crashpad. Stability comes from a diagonal rollbar and the 'saddle' tying into the laces gives rearfoot and midfoot security.

**OUR TESTERS SAY:** This is a lovely light stability shoe. The try-on feel is plush with soft padding around the heel. Fit is snug round the ankle and midfoot. The stability features in the midsole give a noticeable improvement but aren't intrusive. What really impressed our tester was the great road feel and energy return from the springy cushioning. The lacing and padded tongue also take pressure off the bony top part of the foot.

**GOOD FOR:** Mild to moderate overpronators looking for a fast-feeling shoe with great ground feel.



## BROOKS TRANSCEND 4

£140, [brooksrunning.com/en\\_gb](http://brooksrunning.com/en_gb)

### SUPPORT



**THEY SAY:** Brooks say the Transcend 4 "provides an all-over approach to support that guides your whole body - hips, knees, ankles and feet - into its natural alignment." Guide rails in the midsole and an external heel counter add security while Super DNA foam adds adaptable cushioning.

**OUR TESTER SAY:** This shoe went down really well with our tester, who loved both the great level of support right through the shoe and the plush cushioning. Fit was also appreciated, with a wider-than-average forefoot which suited our tester's feet, while the plush inner of the shoe makes it a pleasure to run in from the first time you try it on. Its upper is nice and breathable and the bright colour scheme also won our testers over.

**GOOD FOR:** Moderate overpronators looking for a high-end, plush and well-cushioned shoe.



### MEET THE TESTER: MEL SEDDON, 37, FAREHAM CRUSADERS

**How long have you been running?** I have been running for well over 10 years. Three years ago I joined my local running club, Fareham Crusaders, and since then I have started running much more frequently.

**Why did you start in the first place?**

My first race was a 5k Race for Life, which I wanted to do to raise money for Cancer

Research UK. I absolutely loved the race atmosphere and soon became hooked!

**What are your running goals for this year?**

I would absolutely love a marathon PB but my main goal is to continue loving running.

**What are your favourite running shoes?** Brooks Adrenaline GTS have been my all-time favourite shoe so I tend to stick to them!

## INOV8 ROADTALON 240

£100, inov-8.com

NEUTRAL

**THEY SAY:** The ROADTALON 240 is designed to be light, flexible and fast-feeling. The Powerflow midsole “delivers 10% more shock absorption and 15% better energy return than standard midsoles”. The Adapterweb cradle around the upper adapts to your foot in motion while the Dynamic Fascia Band improves energy return.

**OUR TESTERS SAY:** This came across as a really light, low shoe that's great if you like to feel the road beneath your feet. Our tester found the upper really breathable and quite roomy for her wide feet. Grip and traction are great from the outsole, even in really wet conditions. Although our tester found the cushioning bouncy, there's no concession to support and our tester felt you need a naturally efficient gait to really benefit from them.

**GOOD FOR:** Light, efficient runners who like to go out in any weather and keep their grip on the road.



## MIZUNO WAVE ENIGMA 6

£135, mizuno.eu

NEUTRAL



**THEY SAY:** The Enigma is a pure cushioning shoe for high-mileage runners, with Mizuno's U4icX midsole material and a full-length U-shaped Wave plate absorbing shock from the road. The DynamotionFit upper gives an adaptive fit with more room in the forefoot.

**OUR TESTERS SAY:** This shoe came across as a “serious running shoe” to our tester, who really appreciated the supportive cushioning and secure fit. She commented that the fit felt narrower than her usual shoes, but this wasn't a problem. Support from the lacing system and snug, high heel area was noticeable, although the Enigma never feels restrictive. It's also a flexible and smooth running shoe despite the high level of cushioning on offer.

**GOOD FOR:** Runners who want the highest level of firm cushioning with a good fit.



### MEET THE TESTER: REBECCA DIMBLEBEE, 36, FAREHAM CRUSADERS

**How long have you been running?** Two-and-a-half years.

**Why did you start in the first place?** I entered a Tough Mudder and then joined a running club to get my running miles up.

**Do you have a favourite training route?** I love my local 10K, the Stubbington 10K, because the distance is perfect for me and the support

is fantastic. The route is along road and has two small hills. It runs through country villages, along a road that crosses farmers fields and then out on to the seafront where you catch a glimpse of the Isle of Wight across the water. **What are your running goals for this year?** To complete the London Marathon in April and a half-Ironman distance triathlon in September.



## MIZUNO WAVE INSPIRE 13

£120, mizuno.eu

### SUPPORT

**THEY SAY:** The Wave Inspire is a moderate support shoe that offers “the perfect mix of support and softness [that] creates a durable everyday trainer with an ultra-smooth ride”. It has U4ic midsole foam for conditioning and support comes from a fan-shaped Wave in the midsole.

**OUR TESTERS SAY:** The comfort and support of the Inspire was noticeable for our tester from the first moment she tried them on. Fit is snug in the heel and midfoot, while the toebox is roomy so there's no discomfort on long runs. Our tester did feel the shoe needed a bit of breaking in thanks to its firm cushioning, but a few runs did the trick. Grip was great, even in wet weather. The structure and support of the shoe worked well and padding “is in the areas it's needed most”.

**GOOD FOR:** Moderate overpronators who need firm cushioning and structure throughout their shoes.



## MIZUNO WAVE RIDER 20

£120, mizuno.eu

### NEUTRAL



**THEY SAY:** Mizuno's lighter, faster neutral shoe doesn't scrimp on cushioning. Featuring its U4icX and U4ic compounds, and with a concave-convex wave, it's designed to offer great cushioning but in a responsive, springy package. There's also blown rubber in the forefoot for extra softness, while the DynamotionFit construction gives a snug fit.

**OUR TESTERS SAY:** The firm, springy cushioning of this shoe was a hit with our runners, who found it lived up to its billing as a fast-running shoe. They had differing opinions on the fit. One found it perfect – narrow in the heel and midfoot but more accommodating in the forefoot – while another found they weren't wide enough to accommodate her orthotics. The light weight makes for an easy-to-run-in shoe for neutral gaits.

**GOOD FOR:** Neutral runners who want a fast-feeling shoe with a snug rearfoot and midfoot fit.



### MEET THE TESTER: LARA EVANS, STUBBINGTON GREEN RUNNERS

**How did you start running?** I have always done some running, from track running as a teenager for Portsmouth Athletics Club, to casual keep-fit running in my twenties and thirties. **What's your favourite kind of running?** In the last few years, I have enjoyed being more competitive and taking part in cross country runs for my club and being more focused on

times for 5K and 10K and trying to beat my PBs. As a working mum, it all has to fit round family and work. Luckily, my daughter and son like athletics so I do a session with them and try to do some parkruns with them. My husband is also into running (he took it up in the last two years) so that helps and adds some friendly competition.

## NEW BALANCE FRESH FOAM 1080 V7

£115, [newbalance.co.uk](http://newbalance.co.uk)

NEUTRAL

**THEY SAY:** The latest version of the 1080 has improved Fresh Foam in the midsole for extra cushioning and comfort. New Balance says it's "designed using data gathered from athletes who run at an average pace", and has data-designed grooves in the outsole for flexibility, while the upper is shaped to give your feet room to move.

**OUR TESTERS SAY:** The look and initial feel of the 1080 went down well with our tester, who found it well cushioned and roomy - in fact, a little too roomy around the heel. The Ortholite sockliner gives a great try-on feel. Over longer efforts, our tester found it a bit too supportive. Although the sole looks high under the heel, it doesn't feel it (the shoe has a claimed 8mm heel-toe drop) and over short runs the shoe was nicely cushioned.

**GOOD FOR:** Runners looking for uncomplicated, generous cushioning and a roomy fit.



## NEW BALANCE FRESH FOAM BOROCAY V3

£100, [newbalance.co.uk](http://newbalance.co.uk)

NEUTRAL

**THEY SAY:** The light and low Fresh Foam Borocay is a cushioned shoe designed for runners who want to feel the road and run a bit faster. The midsole and outsole have been tweaked to improve heel-to-toe transition and the upper has been redesigned to hug the foot.

**OUR TESTERS SAY:** First impressions of this shoe were great for our tester, who loved the subtle, pale colour scheme. The plush cushioning took some getting used to but, after a couple of runs, our tester said that "running in these is a joy." The ride is as promised: well cushioned, but lightweight, responsive and fast feeling. The only slight downside was that the tongue rubbed the top of the feet slightly.

**GOOD FOR:** Fast runners looking for a light but plush shoe for everyday training.



### MEET THE TESTER: MARIE MCDONALD, 43, STUBBINGTON GREEN RUNNERS

How long have you been running? I have always been a runner since I was a child. Why did you start? Just loved to run, and have always kept it up from school, but I have got more into my running and increased my mileage since joining Stubbington Green Runners, which was about four years ago. What's your favourite kind of run? I would say

that running off-road is best, you get to enjoy the lovely countryside, there is no pressure for a time and it is generally more social and friendly. What's your weekly training routine at the moment? I am desperately trying to get into my marathon training plan for London having had a hip flexor injury. I am slowly recovering and am starting to get my mileage going again.



## NEW BALANCE FRESH FOAM VONGO

£110, [newbalance.co.uk](http://newbalance.co.uk)

### SUPPORT

**THEY SAY:** The first support shoe in New Balance's Fresh Foam range offers a stripped down, data-driven model to give plenty of cushioning in a smooth, stable ride. The one-piece midsole and midfoot wrap bring stability while the 4mm drop and Fresh Foam cushioning keep it feeling light, fast and plush.

**OUR TESTERS SAY:** The soft, supportive cushioning of the Vongo went down really well with our tester, who said it made for a really smooth run. The shoe scored well on looks, too, with the bright colour combination proving a winner. Fit was snug through the midfoot and forefoot, although there was some slipping at the heel and this, combined with the low backs, led to some rubbing on runs. The shoes feel nice and light and the toe box was well ventilated.

**GOOD FOR:** Mild to moderate overpronators who want a shoe that feels low but plush.



The shoe's bootie construction gives a snug, soft fit



## NEW BALANCE VAZEE PACE V2

£100, [newbalance.co.uk](http://newbalance.co.uk)



**THEY SAY:** The second version of the Vazee Pace has been updated to give "an even faster feel" and the new two-tone mesh adds support as well as style. Blown rubber has been added to the REVlite midsole to add durability and improve energy return and the no-sew forefoot upper is designed to let your feet move freely and naturally.

**OUR TESTERS SAY:** Our tester loved these straight out of the box - from the colour (bright but not too "girly") to the immediate fit. They felt snug around the heel and midfoot, while the roomy forefoot was appreciated for the feeling of freedom on the run. Our tester initially thought she'd find them too minimal, but said, "I loved how lightweight they were and how much movement I got in my feet while still feeling supported."

**GOOD FOR:** Neutral runners looking for a fast, natural-feeling shoe for shorter runs.



### MEET THE TESTER: ALISON BELL, 30, NEW ELTHAM JOGGERS/KENT CANI-X

**How long have you been running?** I have been running for around five to seven years but only two years properly and on a regular basis. **Why did you start in the first place?** I started running with my mum to raise money for Cancer Research. We did Race for Life. She would walk and I would run the 5K route and then run back to her and walk the last part. Marathon running

is addictive and I have done five of them now with more planned this year. **What's your favourite kind of run?** Any run with my dog Sully. We run off road so the muddier the better. He loves running and I run so much faster with him. His favourite distance is 5K and he likes to sprint the whole way with me trailing along behind!

## NEW BALANCE VAZEE PRISM V2

£95, [newbalance.co.uk](http://newbalance.co.uk)

### SUPPORT

**THEY SAY:** The Prizm offers support to mild or moderate overpronators, with a medial post on the inside of the midsole, and an updated midfoot wrap, to help provide support on the run. The REVlite midsole foam gives a fast, responsive feel and – like other New Balance shoes on test – it has a bootie construction for a snug, comfy fit.

**OUR TESTERS SAY:** The fit of the Vazee Prizm worked well for our tester, who said they were snug around the heel and midfoot but more generous around the toes. Although she found the back of the shoe lower than usual, this didn't cause any problems. The support was really good, with our tester especially impressed with the stability under the arches of her feet. She found the cushioning a little firm compared with her usual shoes.

**GOOD FOR:** Mild to moderate overpronators who want good support and sound cushioning.



The midfoot wrap adds an extra touch of stability to the Prizm

The REVlite midsole foam gives light, responsive cushioning

The three-layer upper adds a bit of stability to this lightweight shoe



The flexible rubber outsole gives great grip and road feel

## NEW BALANCE VAZEE RUSH V2

£85, [newbalance.co.uk](http://newbalance.co.uk)

### MINI MALLET

**THEY SAY:** New Balance says the second version of the Vazee Rush “delivers everything you need and nothing you don't”. It has Rapid Rebound cushioning, a bootie construction for a good fit and a three-layer upper to add a bit of support. The light weight and flexible rubber outsole help give a great feel for the ground and a fast feel.

**OUR TESTERS SAY:** The look was an instant win for our tester (who tried a black version) and the try-on feel was good too – “like having a hug on my feet; they were soft, comfy and so light I could hardly feel they were there.” The seam-free upper was really comfortable and breathable and our midfoot-striking runner felt they worked well with her gait. They're not the plushiest shoe we tested but the cushioning and fast feel is great for shorter runs.

**GOOD FOR:** Midfoot strikers looking for a stripped-down, snug-fitting and fast-feeling shoe.



### MEET THE TESTER: MEL BOUND, 43, THIS MUM RUNS

**How long have you been running?** 33 years.  
**Why did you start in the first place?** I was a chronic asthmatic and our GP told my parents I needed to do lots of sport. The first stop was the local athletics club.  
**What's your favourite kind of run?** Long, muddy runs through the woods or along coastal paths.  
**What are your running goals for this year?**

After running the UTMB route last year (a major personal challenge), it has inspired me to seek out runs that are more about the experience or adventure than the finish time. As well as running the Women Can Marathon, I have entered several off-road 10Ks and half-marathons, a night run and a 24-hour ultra in August.



## NIKE AIR ZOOM STRUCTURE 20

£100, [nike.com](http://nike.com)

### SUPPORT

**THEY SAY:** The latest version of the Air Zoom Structure has a wider base for better stability and improved cushioning. Dynamic Support technology – layers of shaped foam of different softness – helps give a stable landing. Extra support comes from Dynamic Fit in the upper around the midfoot and Flywire cables locked in to the laces.

**OUR TESTERS SAY:** This was our tester's first run in Nike shoes and she loved them. The look scored highly and the soft feel of the inner, and initial fit, was really good, too. The mixture of support and cushioning worked well, and our tester said the shoe was "supportive by its nature and it doesn't disappoint when running." The midfoot feels as secure as it looks while the upper over the toe box is roomy and flexible, so there's no rubbing.

**GOOD FOR:** Heel-striking overpronators who want subtle support and bouncy cushioning.



## NIKE LUNAREPIC FLYKNIT SHIELD

£155, [nike.com](http://nike.com)

### NEUTRAL

The water-repellent upper is perfect for winter or spring running



**THEY SAY:** This is a weather-proof version of the distinctive LunarEpic Flyknit shoe, with its sock-like Flyknit upper. It has a water-repellent coating, and the outsole is also updated to help give better grip in poor weather, with a new traction pattern. The Lunarlon midsole has lasered cuts on the sides that collapse on impact helping give a smooth heel-to-toe transition.

**OUR TESTERS SAY:** Already a fan of the Flyknit fabric, our tester was pleased to try this high-rise, winterised version and found it didn't disappoint when running on wet grass. Cushioning is bouncy and light but low-key – it gives a natural-feeling run rather than a pillowy or stable ride. The Flyknit upper has a really high-quality, snug and durable feel to it.

**GOOD FOR:** Naturally efficient runners who want a little extra protection from the elements.



### MEET THE TESTER: PAULA WILLIAMS, 35, FAREHAM CRUSADERS

**How long have you been running?** Two-and-a-half years.

**Why did you start?** I wanted to raise money for Macmillan in memory of my parents.

**What's your favourite kind of run?** A trail one with beautiful views, no real plan and no limits on time. The hillier the better!

**Do you have a favourite training route?** My

favourite runs are in the local country park, along the South Downs Way and up Butser Hill. I don't know why it's called a hill because it's a mini mountain but the views are spectacular.

**What are your running goals for this year?** My main focus is getting my best time possible at Brighton Marathon and then completing my first Ultra in July.

## ON CLOUDFLOW

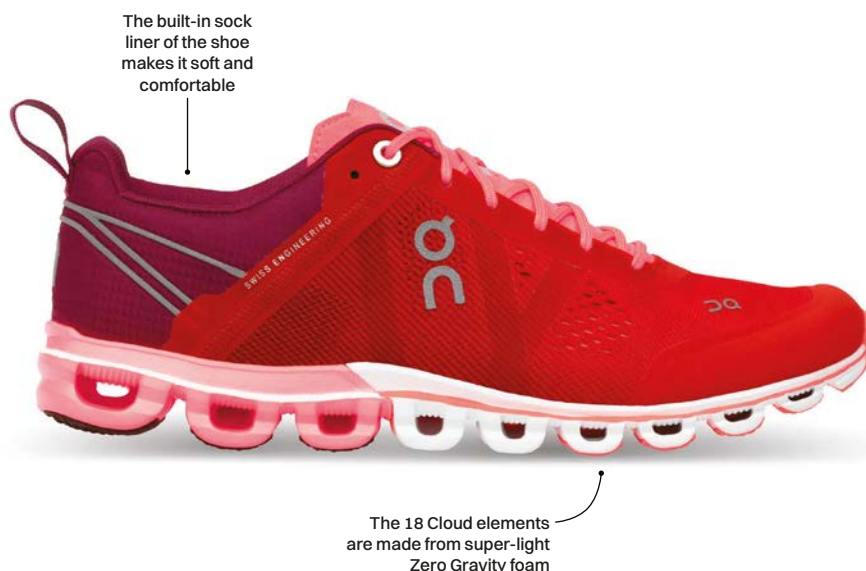
£120, on-running.com

NEUTRAL

**THEY SAY:** With the latest version of its unique CloudTec sole, Cloudflow is designed for fast runners looking for a responsive, cushioned ride. Eighteen Cloud units, made from Zero Gravity foam, cushion the ride, while the Cloudflow speedboard in the midsole promotes the natural rolling of the foot and is intended to boost take-off.

**OUR TESTER SAY:** The bright, bold look of the shoe was a hit with our tester (who said it "suits my personality"). Fit was perfect and they are instantly comfortable and very light. On the run, they're nimble and springy, and our tester also said they felt stable underfoot. The laces drew positive comments - the unusual thin laces of the Cloudflow didn't come undone once. The only downside our tester found was a lack of strong grip on wet roads.

**GOOD FOR:** Neutral runners who want a light shoe that will double up for racing duties.



The external, asymmetrical heel counter adds security



## PUMA SPEED 600 IGNITE 2

£90, puma.co.uk / intersport.co.uk

NEUTRAL

**THEY SAY:** Three new technologies help give the Speed 600 Ignite 2 an edge: the dual-layer Ignite midsole is designed to give longer-lasting cushioning and energy return; Everfit+ wraps the foot and holds it secure; and a decoupled heel and a groove in the outsole help slow pronation. This is a female-specific shoe, with a mesh upper designed to ease pressure on the bunion area, a female-specific shape and an asymmetrical heel counter to give additional support.

**OUR TESTERS SAY:** The fit of this shoe was just right; a good length with plenty of space for the toes, and a low back. Our tester liked the look (in a darker colour than the one shown). On the run, it felt really flexible - in fact, our tester felt it had a bit too much give and at times felt unsupportive as a result.

**GOOD FOR:** Efficient runners who like flexibility, soft cushioning and a form-fitting shape.



### MEET THE TESTER: GERALDINE PERRIER, 41, FAREHAM (ORIGINALLY MAURITIUS)

How long have you been running? A long time. I started when I was eight so, almost 34 years! Why did you start? I have always loved running. My dad always said I ran before I walked. I took it seriously when I started beating the boys in junior school who nicknamed me 'The Rocket'. Do you have a favourite training route? Running through Titchfield Haven, up on the cliffs to

Solent Breezes holiday park, following the coastal path to Warsash. A perfect mixture of off-road and coastal trails with beautiful views. What are your running goals this year? I would like to get back to my normal running pace. In December, blood clots were found in my collar bone. I had three procedures and one surgery but, after seven weeks, I started running again.



## SAUCONY FREEDOM ISO

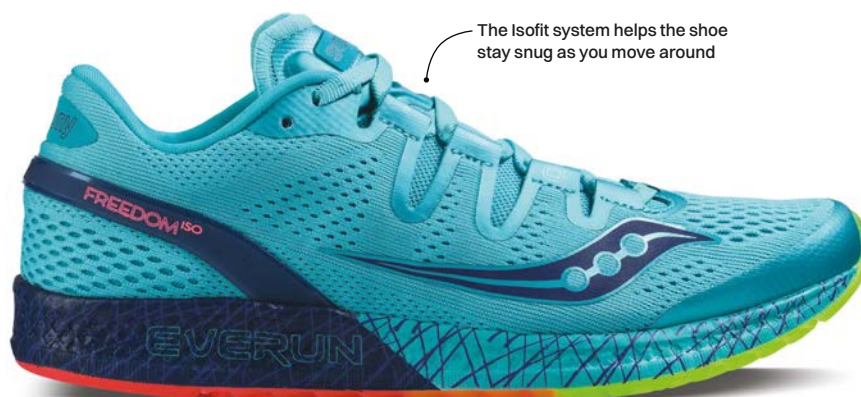
£140, [saucony.co.uk](http://saucony.co.uk)

NEUTRAL

**THEY SAY:** The USP of the Freedom is that it features the first full-length Everun midsole, using Saucony's proprietary foam right down the shoe for better cushioning and energy return. The stretch mesh upper of the shoe helps give a light, breathable, but close-fitting shape and the Isofit system (an inner sleeve and floating support cage) adapts to the runner's foot in motion.

**OUR TESTERS SAY:** The features designed to help the Freedom fit perfectly really seem to work, with our tester commenting that the shoes "fit like a glove and seemed to mould to the shape of [her] feet." They were soft and bouncy to run in from day one, with no breaking in period, and there were no niggling areas rubbing on the foot or digging in as runs went on.

**GOOD FOR:** Runners with no stability needs, who just want a plush and adaptable ride.



The Isofit system helps the shoe stay snug as you move around

The Freedom is the first model to feature a full-length Everun sole unit

## SAUCONY GUIDE 10

£115, [saucony.co.uk](http://saucony.co.uk)

SUPPORT

**THEY SAY:** This update to one of Saucony's key support styles uses an Everun topsole to improve energy return and bump up cushioning. The outsole has also been updated, with a redesigned Tri-flex sole to give better ground contact and increase flexibility in the forefoot.

**OUR TESTERS SAY:** The tester for this shoe was already a committed Saucony Guide fan and was suitably impressed with this update. The changes to the midsole and upper were noticeable, and our tester praised the well-cushioned, flexible and "pleasantly lightweight" feel. None of the support of previous versions had been lost, but there was an extra spring to the cushioning which made the shoes feel faster. Our tester recommended going up half a size to get a good fit.

**GOOD FOR:** Heel-strikers and moderate overpronators who want a springy and flexible ride.



Extra support comes from Flexfilm overlays on the upper of the shoe

The updated Tri-flex outsole gives better ground contact



### MEET THE TESTER: ALISON CORCORAN, 47, BACK ON TRACK, PORTSMOUTH

**How long have you been running?** On and off for 10 years.

**Why did you start in the first place?** To get fit after having children.

**Do you have a favourite kind of run or race?** Great South Run 10 miles.

**Do you have a favourite training route?** Running along Southsea with the amazing

views across the Solent so the Great South Run encompasses this.

**What's your weekly training like?** Monday: run club - 5K plus; midweek: run 5 miles; Saturday: parkrun (5K); and long run on a Saturday, 13-15 miles.

**What are your running goals for the year?** To complete my first marathon injury free.

## SAUCONY HURRICANE ISO 3

£135, [saucony.co.uk](http://saucony.co.uk)

### SUPPORT

**THEY SAY:** Like the Guide, the Hurricane stability shoe has been updated with Everun cushioning to give a bouncy feel so you get greater output from every stride. It also features the Isofit system and Tri-flex outsole, plus an engineered mesh upper to allow the foot to move while providing a secure fit. A new Everun Landing Zone under the heel helps with energy return, too.

**OUR TESTERS SAY:** The Hurricane tester had run in previous, much older versions, and found the shoe much changed since then. Although still supportive, the shoe now felt incredibly plush, with a really soft and padded inner. The stretch upper gives a secure and comfy fit while the lacing system offers a bit of extra support. The ride is really bouncy for a support shoe, which makes a nice change.

**GOOD FOR:** Heel-striking, moderate overpronators who want a plusher ride, without losing stability.



The stretchy mesh upper gives a soft, forgiving fit

Everun in the heel gives better energy return as soon as you land

## SAUCONY TRIUMPH ISO 3

£135, [saucony.co.uk](http://saucony.co.uk)

NEUTRAL



The outsole now offers greater ground contact and flexibility

**THEY SAY:** Saucony's popular pure cushioning shoe, the Triumph, has had the same tech tweaks as the other ISO shoes we've tested here. It has Everun in the midsole and under the heel for better bounceback, the Isofit system in the upper and midfoot, and the more flexible Tri-flex outsole.

**OUR TESTERS SAY:** None of the new technology in this shoe went unnoticed by our tester, who thought the shoes looked gorgeous, and felt pretty amazing, too. The fit was true to size, soft and snug, and our tester commented on the effectiveness of the Isofit system, which she said gave a "sock-like feeling", and adapted to her feet as she ran. They're really well cushioned and feel light for the depth of padding they offer.

**GOOD FOR:** Neutral runners, especially heel-strikers, looking for an extra hit of cushioning.



### MEET THE TESTER: CLAIRE CHAMBERLAIN, 36, KENT

**How long have you been running?** For 11 years. **Why did you start?** I started with a 5K, to raise money for a charity close to my heart. It was the fundraising element that kickstarted my running, but once I'd crossed the finish line of that first race, I was well and truly hooked! **What's your favourite kind of run?** I'm training for the London Marathon, and I'm getting into

my long runs – good for headspace and proving to myself I'm getting stronger all the time. **Do you have a favourite race?** It has to be the London Marathon. I've done it once in 2009, and I can't wait to take part again this year! **Do you have an all-time favourite shoe?** I've always loved Saucony... my first ever pair of running shoes was a pair of Saucony Guide!



## SKECHERS GORUN FORZA 2

£109, [skechers.com](http://skechers.com)

SUPPORT

**THEY SAY:** The Forza 2 is a responsive and light stability shoe. Support comes from a heel counter and inner support strap, as well as printed synthetic overlays. The two-part outsole helps smooth transition from heel to toe while running and is designed to add durability and the one-piece mesh upper keeps your feet cool as well as improving the fit of the shoe.

**OUR TESTERS SAY:** Some of our testers found these came up a bit long, an issue we've encountered before in Skechers, so try before you buy. Apart from that, feedback was positive, with testers loving the bouncy cushioning ("it felt as if I was running on pillows - I could barely feel the pavement," said one). They also appreciated the support under the arch.

**GOOD FOR:** Mild overpronators looking for a light and really springy shoe.



## SKECHERS GORUN 5

£97, [skechers.com](http://skechers.com)

NEUTRAL

**THEY SAY:** The fifth version of the GoRun keeps the fast feel, soft cushioning and efficiency-encouraging features of previous models. Lightweight 5GEN cushioning in the sole is intended to give a responsive ride, while the GOKnit upper is breathable but secure. The parametric web outside is designed to give great traction on a range of running surfaces.

**OUR TESTERS SAY:** The GoRun 5 split our testers, with one who is used to more built-up cushioning shoes finding them a bit too firm and low, while another said they were her new favourites. The tester who found they suited her really liked the light weight, the stripped-down feel and the slipper-like fit of the upper, and both like little touches like the pull-on tab on the back of the shoe.

**GOOD FOR:** Neutral, fast, naturally efficient runners who don't need bags of pillowy cushioning.



### MEET THE TESTER: ANGELINA MANZANO, 37, STEYNING, WEST SUSSEX

**How long have you been running?** Two years. **Why did you start in the first place?** Mostly for work - but also I gave up my gym membership and prefer to do exercise at home or with local independent fitness instructors. So running is a good cheap option - and endorphin boosting too when you can run by the sea. **Do you have a favourite training route?** The

coastal path between Lancing and Shoreham-by-Sea is my go-to training ground. Sea air, beautiful views and flat as a pancake. **What are your running goals for this year?** I'd like to get faster - I'm slow but steady so I don't feel like I'm growing in running strength - even though it's a major improvement from where I was a couple of years ago.

## UNDER ARMOUR CHARGED BANDIT 2

£80, [underarmour.co.uk](http://underarmour.co.uk)



**THEY SAY:** This shoe is both mildly supportive and well cushioned, so straddles two of our categories. Fit is important in the Bandit 2: from the stretchy, breathable upper to the Micro G footbed that takes the shape of your foot, and the seamless internal heel cup for a secure run. An external heel counter gives extra support and a two-piece Charged Cushioning midsole adds stability and comfort. Deep grooves in the outsole add flexibility.

**OUR TESTERS SAY:** The look and light weight of this shoe was a hit with our testers. On the run, they really appreciated the security and stability in the rearfoot and under the arch, while the generous toe box meant they never felt restricted out on the road. Flexibility felt good and they're well cushioned, too.

**GOOD FOR:** Mild overpronators or heavier neutral runners, who want to feel secure in the rearfoot.



The tongue is connected to the upper for comfort and a better fit

The midsole is firmer below the heel and softer beneath the forefoot

Inside the shoe, seamless and Dri-Lex fabrics aim to give extra comfort



Carbon rubber in key spots on the outsole add traction and durability

## ZOOT SOLANA 2

£90, [zootsports.com](http://zootsports.com)

**THEY SAY:** The light, flexible Solana 2 has been upgraded with new carbon-rubber areas on the outsole, placed to give better grip and durability without adding weight. The BareFit internal liner and internal support cage give some support in the upper, while maintaining breathability. ZVA midsole foam is designed to give fast, responsive cushioning.

**OUR TESTERS SAY:** Zoot was a new brand for our tester, a forefoot striker who was impressed with her first taste of the brand. The grippy outsole came in for particular praise, and the snug fit and soft inner meant there were no areas of irritation on longer runs. The look is pretty bold but went down well with our tester. The shoes felt light and easy to run in.

**GOOD FOR:** Efficient, neutral runners looking for a grippy, fast-feeling shoe.



### JANE BOZON, 55, CONGLETON

**How long have you been running?** Three years.  
**Why did you start in the first place?** My daughter persuaded me to give it a go because she is so passionate about running.  
**What's your favourite kind of run?** Sunday morning 5K with my friend.  
**Do you have a favourite training route?** The local mere is my favourite spot where I can time

myself every week.

**What's your weekly training routine at the moment?** 5K once or twice a week.

**What are your running goals for this year?** The Women's Running 10K race at Wythenshawe. **Of all the running shoes you've owned, do you have a favourite (and if so which is it)?** Nike Dual Fusion.



# THE ESSENTIAL STRETCH ROUTINE

BEEN SLACK WITH YOUR STRETCHING? FITNESS EDITOR ANNE-MARIE LATEGAN SHOWS YOU HOW IT'S DONE

## INNER THIGHS

### Muscles used

Inner thighs (adductors)

### Why do it?

Your inner thighs help with lateral stability while you run. When they get tight, that can lead to knee, hip or back pain.

### Technique

- Stand with your feet twice your hip-width apart
- Bend one knee until you start to feel the stretch on the inner thigh of your straight leg
- Hold the position for 30 seconds before changing over to the other side

### Watch points

Don't bounce your stretches. Hold the position and stretch more as the tension eases off.



## CALVES

### Muscles used

Calves (gastrocnemius, soleus)

### Why do it?

Your calf muscles work very hard when you run, especially during hill and sprint sessions. Good calf flexibility will also improve your ankle mobility.

### Technique

- Stand with the ball of your foot on a weight or leg of an office chair with your toes pointing forwards
- Ensure that your heel stays on the floor
- Step forwards with your other leg
- Repeat the move twice more: one set with your toes turned inwards and a second set with your toes turned outwards.
- Hold each of the three positions for 30 seconds before changing over to the other side

### Watch points

Push your hips forwards to increase the stretch in your calf muscle.



## LOWER BACK

### Muscles used

Back, side muscles (erector spinae, obliques)

### Why do it?

Keeping your back supple will help prevent running injuries.

### Technique

- Lie on your back with your knees and hips at right angles and your arms sideways
- Roll your knees over to one side
- Hold the position for 30 seconds before changing over to the other side

### Watch points

Aim to keep your shoulders and knees on the floor.



## SETS & REPS

Incorporate your stretches into your routine on a daily basis to ensure that you improve your flexibility. It's important to hold your stretches for between 20 and 60 seconds to improve your flexibility. Holding them for 10 seconds or less will improve your mobility and range of motion but the effect will not be long lasting.

## HAMSTRINGS

### Muscles used

Back thighs (hamstrings)

### Why do it?

Tight hamstrings can lead to injuries in your ankles, knees, hips and back, so keep them supple to stay injury free.

### Technique

- Lie on your back on the floor
- Keep one leg flat on the floor
- Extend the other leg up to the ceiling
- Grab hold of your leg with both hands and gently pull it towards you
- Hold the position for 30 seconds before changing over to the other side

### Watch points

Don't bounce your stretches. Hold the position and stretch more as the tension eases off.





## PIRIFORMIS

### Muscles used

Deep hip muscle (piriformis)

### Why do it?

Runners frequently struggle with tightness in their hip and groin area. By regularly stretching it, you can prevent injuries and improve your running technique.

### Technique

- Sit on the floor with your left leg bent in front of your body and your right leg extending backwards
- Lean forwards with your upper body and lower your head towards the floor
- Walk your arms out in front of you
- Hold the position for 30 seconds before changing over to the other side.

### Watch points

Ensure that you keep your hips level. The tightest muscles will stretch the most so where you feel the stretch might be different on the left and right side.



## COBRA

### Muscles used

Stomach and back (rectus abdominis, erector spinae)

### Why do it?

This is a great exercise to improve your posture.

### Technique

- Lie on your stomach on the floor
- Place your hands next to your shoulders
- Slowly straighten your arms and lift your head and shoulders off the floor
- Keep your hips on the floor
- Straighten your arms only to the point where you start to feel your hips lifting up off the floor

### Watch points

If you feel a pinch in your lower back, bend your arms slightly to prevent you from lifting too high and over arching your back.



## QUADRICEPS

### Muscles used

Front thighs (quadriceps)

### Why do it?

Tightness in your quads can cause your kneecap to be pushed down on the thigh-bone or it can pull the kneecap out of alignment. Both will cause damage to your knee in the long run.

### Technique

- Lie on your side on the floor
- Grab hold of your ankle
- Pull your heel towards your bottom
- Hold the position for 30 seconds before changing over to the other side

### Watch points

To increase the stretch, pull your knee further backwards.



### WORDS:

Anne-Marie Lategan

### PHOTOS:

Joseph Branston/Future Studios

### MODEL:

Charlotte Robertson

### CLOTHING:

Crop top: Dragonfly; Vest: Zakti; 3/4 leggings: Marks and Spencer

## CHILD POSE

### Muscles used

Back, shoulders (erector spinae, deltoids)

### Why do it?

This is a great exercise to help you to release the tension in your back and shoulders.

### Technique

- Kneel on the floor and sit backwards onto your heels
- Bend forwards from your waist
- Aim to put your forehead on the floor
- Reach forwards with your arms
- Hold the position for 30 seconds

### Watch points

Don't worry if you can't get your head on the floor. The more you stretch, the more flexibility you'll gain.

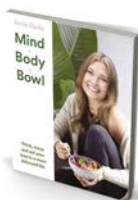




Use Annie Clarke's gorgeous recipes,

packed with fresh produce,

to get a fresh take on winter fuelling



*Mind Body Bowl* by Annie Clarke is published by HarperThorsons, £16.99. Photography by Philippa Langley

## BUTTERNUT SQUASH AND KALE CURRY

**I originally made this recipe when I was asked by a charity to produce an autumnal dish using seasonal ingredients. Since then it's been a favourite, and one I often make when I'm entertaining friends. The recipe includes a curry paste, which I use a lot at home, so it's a go-to staple to have if you like experimenting with curries. I sometimes serve this with brown rice, but it's great without and I usually find it filling enough on its own.**

### Ingredients (serves 4)

- 200g short-grain brown rice
- 200g creamed coconut
- 1 butternut squash
- 1 lemongrass stalk
- 400g tin chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- juice of 1 lemon
- 100g kale, tough stalks removed
- chilli flakes, to taste

### For the paste

- 1 shallot, chopped
- 3cm fresh ginger, peeled and chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, chopped
- juice of 1 lime
- 2 tsp ground turmeric
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- ¼ tsp grated nutmeg
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp ground cardamom
- 4 tbsp tamari
- ½ tbsp ground black pepper

### Method

- Cook the rice according to the packet instructions. Make sure the water doesn't completely evaporate.
- Next, make the curry paste. Place the paste ingredients in a blender and whizz until a paste forms.
- Chop the creamed coconut and dissolve in 800ml boiling water to make coconut milk. Peel the butternut squash and cut into bite-sized chunks.
- Add the paste to a large pan over a low heat and cook for three minutes, making sure it doesn't burn. Then add the coconut milk and stir thoroughly, bringing it to a boil. Add the squash and lemongrass and cover. Turn the heat down and simmer for 10 minutes. Add the chickpeas and simmer for another 20 minutes.
- Remove the lid from the saucepan and add the lemon juice. Next, add the kale, allowing it to wilt for five minutes. Once the squash is soft, it is ready to serve. Remove the lemongrass stalk and discard, and then add a sprinkle of chilli flakes.

**Nutrition** (per serving) Energy: 657kcal. Protein: 14.5g. Carbs: 65.3g. Sugars: 9.3g. Fat: 38.5g.

rishe

One

Edition





## MUSHROOM QUINOA BURGER WITH BLACK BEAN SAUCE

When people hear that I don't eat meat, they often ask, "But don't you ever just want a juicy burger?" For me, the honest answer is never. I can appreciate the look of a good burger, but I have never once thought about eating one. It just wouldn't do it for me. That said, I do enjoy veggie 'burgers' – you can blend so many different ingredients for a delicious alternative.

This burger is best served on a bed of sautéed spinach, and you can add a side of spiralized sweet potato and some lightly toasted bread for a healthy spin on the traditional burger and chips comfort-food combo.

### Ingredients (serves 4)

- 150g quinoa
- 1 tsp brown rice miso paste
- 1 red onion, chopped
- 2 tbsp olive oil, plus extra for frying
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 150g mushrooms, finely chopped
- 50g buckwheat or brown rice flour
- 1 heaped tsp paprika
- 2 tsp apple cider vinegar
- salt and pepper

### For the black bean sauce

- 400g tin black beans, drained and rinsed
- 2 tsp tomato puree
- 4 tbsp brown rice vinegar
- 1 tbsp maple syrup
- 2 tsp tamari

### Method

- Start by cooking the quinoa in boiling water according to the instructions on the packet – usually one part quinoa to three parts water is about right. Add the miso paste and stir well. Keep an eye on the quinoa as it absorbs the water, making sure it doesn't dry out too quickly. It takes 12–15 minutes to cook so, in the meantime, prepare the veg.
- Add the onion to a frying pan with the two tablespoons of olive oil and then add the garlic. Fry over a medium heat, stirring regularly to prevent it from burning. Add the mushrooms as the onion turns translucent. Fry for five minutes or until the mushrooms have become golden brown.
- Once the quinoa is cooked, drain off any excess water and put it in a large mixing bowl with the onion and mushrooms. Mix in the flour, paprika and apple cider vinegar, mixing well, and seasoning with salt and pepper. Set this to one side to cool.
- Place all the ingredients for the black bean sauce in a food processor with 75ml water and mix until it makes a smooth, thick sauce. Then transfer it to a saucepan to heat through.
- In your frying pan, heat a glug of olive oil for shallow frying over a medium heat. Take a large handful of the quinoa burger mix and squash it firmly between your hands – it can help if your hands are slightly wet. Put it into the pan and press down firmly with a spatula. Repeat three more times so that you have four large burgers, or until you have used up all the mixture.
- When the burgers begin to brown on one side, after four minutes, flip them over, pressing them down again. Once the burgers have browned on both sides, about seven minutes in total, they are ready. Pour over the black bean sauce to serve.

**Nutrition** (per serving): Energy: 383kcal. Protein: 16.4g. Carbs: 49.6g. Sugars: 9g. Fat: 11.1g.





## HEMP PROTEIN BARS

These bars are a real staple, perfect for an active day to give you a little protein hit. You can buy hemp powder online and it works really well in this recipe, in which the dates and tahini give the perfect amount of sweet and saltiness. The almonds provide extra protein, too, filling you up in between meals and helping your body to recover from workouts or generally busy days.

### Ingredients (makes 12 small bars)

- 200g almonds
- 200g Medjool dates (it's good to have a few extra in case the mixture is a little bit crumbly)
- 1 tbsp tahini
- 60g hemp protein powder

### Method

- Whizz the almonds in a food processor until they have broken down into tiny pieces, stopping before the mixture forms a flour.
- If the dates don't feel soft and sticky, you can soak them in boiling water for a few minutes to help them hold the mixture together. Add the dates to the food processor with the tahini and protein powder, and blend to make a thick and slightly sticky mixture.
- While everything is blending, line a shallow 20x30cm baking tray with cling film. Empty the mixture onto the tray and use a spatula to pack the mixture tightly to make sure it is well stuck together and not crumbly.
- Use a sharp knife to cut the mixture into 12 equal bars. If you have packed the mixture well enough, they should cut easily without falling apart at all. (Alternatively, you can roll them into balls if you prefer.)
- Place the bars in the fridge to set for 20 minutes. I like to then wrap them in baking parchment to stop them from sticking together and then I store them in a plastic box in the fridge for up to one week.

**Nutrition** (per bar): Energy: 171kcal.  
Protein: 6.3g. Carbs: 12.8g. Sugars: 12.2g.  
Fat: 10.6g.







## BORED OF THE SAME OLD RACES?

Find something different with Racebook, the new fully-interactive online race listing from Wild Bunch Media, publishers of *Men's Running* and *Women's Running*. Racebook features the best events with images, video content, location maps and as much detail as anyone interested in running a race will ever need to know – from 5K to ultramarathons.



**RACEBOOKUK.CO.UK**





# TRAIL ZONE

• THE UK'S ONLY MONTHLY TRAIL RUNNING MAGAZINE



78

## TRAIL ESSENTIALS

Feel confident on the trails with these stylish essentials

80

Six mountain races you have to get a piece of!



YOU'LL NEVER BE UNDER-PREPARED  
WITH OUR SELECTION OF ESSENTIAL  
KIT FOR ENJOYING THE TRAILS  
WORDS: TINA CHANTREY

READY TO RUN FREE



**USA Pro Little Mix Cropped Hoody**

£9.50, [usapro.co.uk](http://usapro.co.uk)  
Unbeatable value for a cute, simple hoody that you can throw on until you've warmed up; the ribbed crew neck and cuffs will keep the chill out. Once you're warm, you can easily wrap this around your waist without it feeling heavy. Whatever is on your schedule, it's a perfect lightweight layer.



**USA Pro Little Mix Panel Tights**

£22, [usapro.co.uk](http://usapro.co.uk)  
These tights are all-rounders; whether you're at a gym class, dance class, yoga, or out on the trails, the flat-lock seams and wide, elasticated waistband ensure a comfortable fit. With simple printed panels for a distinctive style.



**Salomon XA Enduro**

£130, [ellis-brigham.com](http://ellis-brigham.com)  
You'll love the integrated stretch mesh gaiter that stops debris entering this shoe. The Wet Traction Contagrip sole gives superior grip, even on the most challenging terrain and in the wet. It feels stable and secure around the heel and in the midfoot, allowing you to focus on unleashing your speed.



**Back On Track Calf Brace**

£27, [backontrack-uk.co.uk](http://backontrack-uk.co.uk)  
If you suffer from calf issues, try this brace: it's easy to pull on (and will warm and soothe your muscles) and doesn't feel restrictive. It's made from Welltext ceramic-infused material, which reflects your body heat back into your muscles, using heat therapy to help heal injuries and reduce the risk of strain/injury.





**Ilu Dream Spin Leggings**  
£45, [ilufitwear.com](http://ilufitwear.com)

The distinguishing feature of these chic leggings is the high-rise, foldable waistband that sits oh-so-snugly against your tummy (and gives amazing support!). Ilu has cleverly contrasted the colours and lines to create a flattering hourglass shape and inserted calf-height mesh, front and back, to stop you overheating.



**Runningskirt Print Skirt**

From £40, [prettyfit.uk](http://prettyfit.uk)

Looking for ultimate comfort? Have you ever tried a Runningskirt? With attached briefs you will be as relaxed as you could hope; the skirt sits on your hips (with a deep elasticated waistband for supreme comfort) and the spandex blend means it will stretch to your needs. There's a pocket each side for your gels and as far as cute factor goes this print is stunning!



**Olbas Bath**

£3.99, [olbas.co.uk](http://olbas.co.uk)

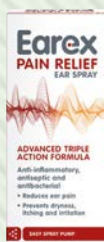
Full of cold? Blocked up? Stuffy? Shivery? Having a hot bath, with the soothing Olbas vapours will help you relax. Just let the steam help your congestion drift away, while the natural oils ease your tired, aching muscles. If your kids are full of cold they'll love this too!



**Wiley's Finest Peak EPA Fish Oil**

£25.99 for 60 capsules, [yourhealthy.co.uk](http://yourhealthy.co.uk)

Boost your fitness regime and help promote muscle recovery with this fish oil that's four times stronger than regular fish oil and contains both EPA and DHA. It will also promote strong cardiovascular health and maintain a healthy immune system.



**Earex Pain Relief Ear Spray**

£9.99, [earex.co.uk](http://earex.co.uk)

This spray has a triple action formula providing first aid for common ear problems. The blend of natural plant ingredients provides anti-inflammatory, antiseptic and antibacterial benefits, helping to reduce pain caused by ear infections, swimmer's ear or pain brought on by running in cold climates.



**Gore One Lady GTX Shakedry Jacket**

£230, [goreapparel.co.uk](http://goreapparel.co.uk)

This highly sophisticated, futuristic ultra-lightweight jacket features breathable Gore-Tex plus SHAKEDRY technology, meaning the jacket can go from soaking wet to dry in just a couple of shakes. Teamed up with Gore's distinctive understated matte-black style, you will be miles ahead of your closest competitor.



**inov-8 AT/C Capri**

£35, [inov-8.com](http://inov-8.com)

These new, versatile capris are ideal for both running and the gym. Gorgeous super-soft fabric and a flat waistband means comfort for all body types, plus a rear pocket to house your phone and other essentials.



**Root7 Corkcicle Canteen**

£20, [root7.com](http://root7.com)

Its triple-insulated stainless steel casing means this canteen can keep your drinks cold for 25 hours or hot for 12 hours; we are talking about some serious, and stylish, storage! So whether it's hot soup at the end of your long run or a coffee, make sure you pack your canteen!



# BEAUTY & THE BEASTS

You don't have to have a screw loose to run in the mountains. Here are six of Britain's best mountain races, from beginner-friendly to seriously epic

WORDS DAMIAN HALL



© IAN CORLESS.COM

## BERGHAUS DRAGON'S BACK RACE

22-26 May

[berghausdragonsbackrace.com](http://berghausdragonsbackrace.com)

Fear factor 6/5

The Dragon's Back is the biggest and baddest of all the UK's mountain races. Five days, 300 kilometres, from the top to (almost) the bottom of Wales, along its jagged spine. The route includes 16,000m of ascent and, as it's unmarked, navigation skills are key (though GPS units are allowed). The first race in 1992 was deemed so tough it didn't happen again until 2013.

"I loved the concept. To run the length of a country, passing only through wild terrain, is unique to this race," says GB

ultra-trail runner and doctor Beth Pascall, who finished fourth overall and second lady in 2015.

Indeed, despite its gruelling nature, women have done very well in the Dragon's Back, with Helene Whitaker (née Diamantides) the joint winner of the first race, while Jasmin Paris placed second overall in the 2015 race (comfortably beating this male writer).

"I love the variety of terrain, the remoteness, the views, the unpredictable weather and the wildlife," says Pascall, "excluding ticks and midges, of course."

The Dragon's Back returns for its fourth iteration this May.



## WELSH 1000M PEAKS RACE

3 June

[welsh1000m.org](http://welsh1000m.org)

Fear factor 5/5

The full Welsh 1000m Peaks Race starts at the seaside village of Abergwyngregyn and climbs and climbs and climbs a bit more over its 21 miles, to take in all five of Wales' 1000m-high peaks, finishing at the top of the highest of them all, Snowdon. It's about the toughest fell race there is and nav skills are expected. There are shorter versions however, such as the seven-mile Short Fell Race and a relay option.

"The Welsh 1000m Peaks Race is ace," says GB ultra-trail runner Lizzie Wraith, who's raced it several times. "You get to halfway and you're already totally f\*\*ked. And you invariably get totally disoriented and lost in the clag on the Glyders. But get to the top of Snowdon and all the blood, sweat and tears are totally worth it. Then, with legs like jelly, you realise you still have to get down..."

© WELSH 1000M PEAKS RACE





## WANSFELL 10KM TRAIL RACE

24 September

[mountainrun.co.uk/races/wansfell-10k-trail-race](http://mountainrun.co.uk/races/wansfell-10k-trail-race)

Fear factor 2/5

This new trail race is the perfect combination of fell running and trail running. The terrain is indubitably Lakeland fells. But the course is fully marked and marshalled. It starts with a lung-torching, lactic-acid overdose, mad-dash from Ambleside (Lake District), up Wansfell Pike. There, you get a rest of sorts as the terrain levels out briefly, before a tough climb up Wansfell proper (a Wainwright). The first descent takes you back towards Wansfell Pike on an alternative route; then comes “one of the best descents in the Lakes”, before some beautiful woodland you’ll be far too knackered to really appreciate. Before following the route of the Lakeland 100/50 ultramarathon back to the start.

As it’s part of Ambleside’s Festival of the Fells, there’s plenty for the family to do – a great way to sneak your race in, while they’re happily occupied. Last year none other than fell-running legend Joss Naylor was at the start line.

TRAIL ZONE



## KESWICK MOUNTAIN FESTIVAL TRAIL RACES

10-11 June

[keswickmountainfestival.co.uk](http://keswickmountainfestival.co.uk)

Fear factor 1-3/5

And now for something a little less pant-wetting. “The KMF weekend race series is perfect for trail runners – experienced or not – with a passion for being in the outdoors,” says race director and elite mountain runner Charlie Sproson. There are four race-distance options, from 5K to 50K via 10K and 25K, all on well-marked trails, a mixture of wide-open paths, steady ascents, singletrack through woods, open valleys, hidden valleys, mountain vistas, bluebell woodland trails, and fast lowland running. “There’s even a traditional Lakeland boat launch to the start of the 10K,” says Sproson. “And music – including KT Tunstall and Cast – over night at Crow Park and so many things for the family to do while you’re running.” Indeed, the popular festival includes reams of outdoor activities, films, speakers, camping and much else besides.



## SALOMON RING OF STEALL SKYRACE

16 September

[skylinescotland.com/ring-of-steall-skyrace/](http://skylinescotland.com/ring-of-steall-skyrace/)

Fear factor 4/5

The only UK Skyrace more infamous than Lakes Sky Ultra is the Glen Coe Skyline, part of the international Skyrunner Extreme Series. It's a thoroughly demanding race and not for first-timers. But luckily it, too, has a little sister, the Ring of Steall. The 29K/2,500m race traces a classic ridge-walking route, with spectacular views of Ben Nevis from the Mamores and short sections of easy scrambling.

It still claims to be "uncompromising mountain running", with ridges, steep ascents, traverses and descents on technical and challenging terrain, including the Devil's Ridge, "a thrilling and airy traverse" with a yawning drop below. So it's not for the faint-hearted (if you're undecided, there are several videos to watch on the race website).

For a much shorter but almost as hurty option, try the vertical kilometre, or VK race. It's the length of a parkrun, but with 1,000m of ascent, it's all uphill and your calf muscles will let you know about it. A hugely popular event on the continent.



© IAN CORLESS.COM

## SCAFELL SKY RACE

16 July

[lakesskyultra.uk/scafell-sky-race-40km-2700m/](http://lakesskyultra.uk/scafell-sky-race-40km-2700m/)

Fear factor 4/5



What is skyrunning?

In a nutshell, it's a combination of running and mountaineering. That doesn't mean you have to carry a lot of rope and frostbite is mandatory. Rather, it'll take you to the top of a mountain, and if

there's a bit of gnarly ridge to go along rather than a nice easy path, it'll take you along the former.

The little sister of the fearsome Lakes Sky Ultra (56K), the new Scafell Sky Race (40K) is entry-level Skyrunning and the race promises technical terrain (i.e. you'll need to watch where you put your feet). "If you're looking to get yourself into the UK's Skyrunning scene, this little puppy has it all," says race director Charlie Sproson. A linear course from Seathwaite to Ambleside takes in "some of the best singletrack trails the Lake District has to offer, while summiting Scafell Pike along the way. At 2,700m in ascent, it's not a bad jaunt over the central Lakeland fells." *WR*

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## 86

### FOR THE LONG HAUL

Get in the right headspace to smash your long runs

## 88

### BIG MARATHON CHALLENGE

From treadmill to track, the team have been hard at work





Mental preparation and attitude is hugely important when tackling long runs, as well as knowing how to pace yourself and listening to your body

WORDS: CHRISTINA MACDONALD

**I**f you're training for a long race this spring, such as a marathon, by now you may be over the 10-mile mark or running for over two hours. At this point, it's easy to feel daunted. Distance running can be a lonely pursuit and there's also the risk of self-doubt creeping in and that negative voice in your head that pipes up when you're feeling tired, unhelpfully telling you to stop.

Developing the right mindset during long runs and using various tactics will help you keep going when you feel tired, or when self-doubt creeps in. Here's how to manage your mind during those long runs and keep boredom and self-doubt at bay...

### **1. KNOW YOUR MOTIVATION**

"Ask yourself: 'What's the reason behind you doing this run?'" suggests Philip Clarke, a Lecturer of Psychology at the University of Derby. "If you're doing a long run and you get to a point where you want to stop, you're going to have that internal battle. Get into a rhythm. Not many people have that ability to keep putting one foot in front of the other and keep going. Get that strong reason for why you're doing what you're doing and know that you made the decision to do it and it's something you want to achieve. Use the emotion associated with that thought. It will drive you through."

### **2. DON'T SET OFF TOO FAST**

You're going to be running for a long time, so take it easy and listen to your body. Running at a sensible, sustainable pace is important to train the right energy system to get you fit for race day. You want to be training the aerobic system during a long run, which is the energy system that fuels endurance running. So it needs to be targeted during training. The pace should feel comfortable and you should be able to talk fairly easily if you have someone running with you.

### **3. FOCUS ON YOUR RACE-DAY GOAL**

Running coach George Anderson ([runningbygeorge.com](http://runningbygeorge.com)) is currently training for ultra-marathon Endure 24. "I spent a recent long run thinking about what I want to get out of my ultra-marathon experience," he says. "For me, ultra running is 20% physical and 80% mental."

### **4. WORK ON YOUR MENTAL MUSCLE**

"Think of your brain as a muscle," says Clarke. "Like any muscle, to develop it

you're going to have to work on it. Be mindful of what works for you and what doesn't. It's about understanding what you say to yourself and the impact it has on you mentally, as well as restructuring your doubts into something more effective."

## 5. BELIEVE IN YOUR STRATEGY

The best mental strategy for staying motivated during long runs is one you believe in. Positive mantras can work well for some people. *WR* regular Lisa Jackson, who has completed 107 marathons, uses the mantra: "I am fit, I am strong, I can run this marathon." "If you believe they can work they can," says Clarke. "If you use them and don't believe them, they're not going to work. Not if you don't have that conviction. If on the other hand you have got a strong belief that something is going to work, then the brain is an incredibly powerful tool."

## 6. DON'T THINK TOO FAR AHEAD

When you know you're going to be running for a long time, it's easy to worry at the start about how you might be feeling in 10, 15 or even 20 miles. Focus on being in the moment. "Being out there by yourself and knowing there's an hour or more left to run can be a big challenge for some people," says Anderson. "I try to focus on my body, my breathing, on relaxing, and being aware of the world around me at that point. Mantras such as 'relax' or 'have patience' work really well for me and I stop worrying about what's to come."

## 7. BANISH NEGATIVE SELF-TALK

When I ran the Brighton Marathon, a negative inner voice crept in at mile nine, when I was tackling a hill. "I'm hot and I hate hills" repeatedly ran through my head. The more I heard it the more fatigued I became. Fortunately, I noticed the link between negative talk and my fatigue, so I told myself to shut up! I then started a new sentence in my head: "You've done the training. You can do this." My energy levels improved and I had a great race experience. Acknowledge that negative self-talk is creeping in, stop it and replace it with something positive.

"The body will achieve what the mind believes," says ultra runner Martin Kelly, an ambassador for Herbalife ([herbalife.co.uk](http://herbalife.co.uk)). "Being able to acknowledge there will be tough times, accept them and know you will come through them enables you to achieve your goal."

## 8. ENTER SHORTER RACES AS PART OF YOUR TRAINING

"Shorter races can be used as a means of completing your long run," says Professor John Brewer, Head of School of Sport, Health and Applied Science (SHAS) at St Mary's University ([stmarys.ac.uk](http://stmarys.ac.uk)). "Many runners will enter half-marathons and 20-mile races and simply use them as training runs rather than races. The other runners, the marshals and the crowds will make it much easier than running on your own."

## 9. MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Try a different, more scenic route, so that you constantly have interesting things to see, like nature and animals. "Choose a different route to one you are familiar with," says Brewer. "Focus on the external environment or planning things not related to running."

## 10. 'CHUNK' YOUR RUN

This is a tactic that has worked very well for distance runner and Olympic gold medallist Jo Pavey, who breaks her long runs and marathons into small chunks. "I use mini

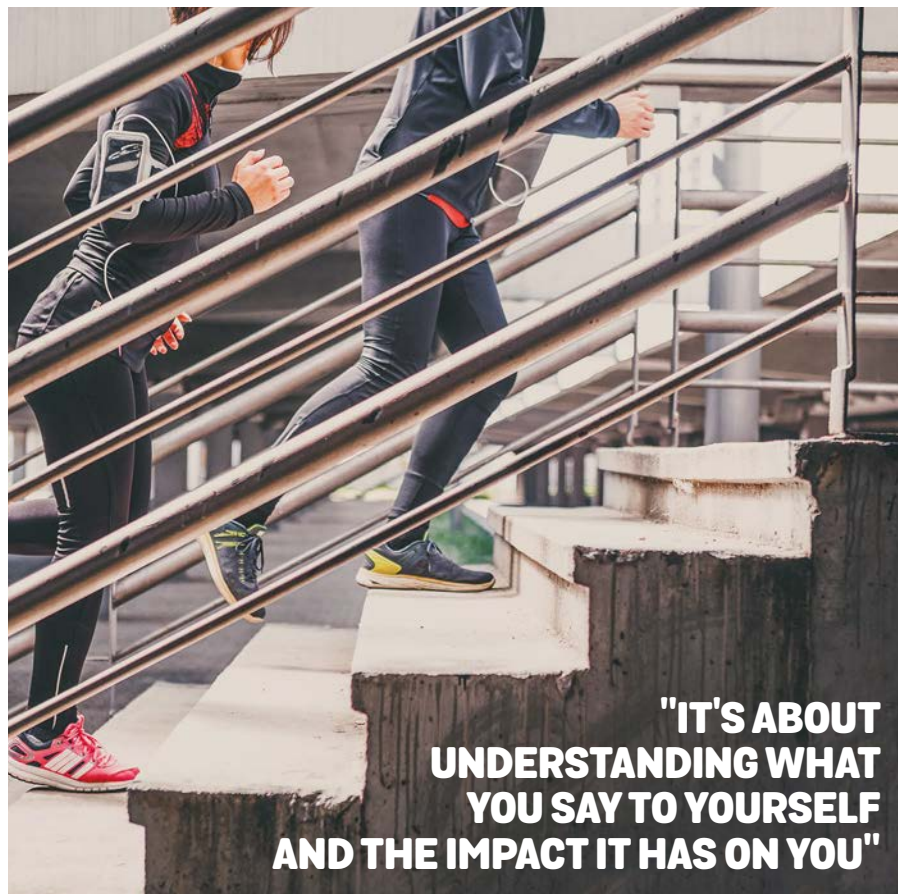
goals, and focus on my breathing and the rhythm of my legs." Mentally tick each section off in your head, one at a time.

## 11. USE YOUR LONG RUN TO PLAN YOUR RACE-DAY STRATEGY

"Runs of two hours or more are often with a specific goal in mind, such as a half or full marathon, so use them to plan your race-day strategy," says Brewer. "Visualise the finish and the completion of your goal. You can try alternating 'zoning in' – thinking about how your body is feeling and responding to the run – with 'zoning out'."

## 12. GIVE YOURSELF SOME CREDIT!

"Remind yourself of the good it is doing you in terms of both performance and health," says Brewer. "By completing the run you will be part of just a small minority of the population capable of doing so. Remind yourself how great you will feel when you have finished, and how bad you will feel if you quit before the end. But, of course, if you feel pain from an injury, listen to your body and stop if necessary."



**"IT'S ABOUT UNDERSTANDING WHAT YOU SAY TO YOURSELF AND THE IMPACT IT HAS ON YOU"**



# BACK TO THE CLASSROOM

**BIG**  
MARATHON  
CHALLENGE

The ladies have been brushing up on their nutrition know-how this month courtesy of HIGH5 and Solgar

PHOTOS: EDDIE MACDONALD



It's been another month of learnings for the Big Marathon Challenge team – particularly on the nutrition front. The four runners took a trip to *Women's Running* HQ for a seminar on nutrition, fuelling, health and joint care, courtesy of team partners HIGH5 and Solgar. And they've been busy absorbing – and experimenting with – all of this new information ever since.

As the team begin to up their mileage, Raph Deinhart from HIGH5 gave the ladies a rundown of how to use sports nutrition products properly in training – the products to take, when to take them and the volume needed. He then spoke to

the ladies about pre-run and post-run nutrition which, for some the team, was a big eye opener. Katie, for example, discovered just how important it is to take on protein after a run and Leah learned the benefits of planning her meals around her runs to get the most out of training.

The team then heard from Paul Chamberlain from Solgar, and they learned about the importance of getting the right micronutrients into their diet to benefit not only their joints but their overall health. One-to-one chats with Paul afterwards helped to identify individual needs so Solgar can give the women the right support.

As we all know, it isn't always as simple as absorbing the new information and implementing it straight away and the team has been busy trialing new tweaks to their diets.

Of course, drinking delicious recovery shakes and whipping up carb-heavy meals is just a small part of the team's work this month and, in terms of their physical training, they haven't taken their feet off the gas. The mileage is gradually stepping up and, with it, the natural physical and emotional hurdles that are part and parcel of marathon training. We caught up with them, and coach Richard, to see how it's going.



## LEAH McDANIEL

Age 28

From Wrexham, north Wales

**Big Marathon Challenge** To rediscover her sense of self, following the sudden death of her husband in 2014, and to raise money for Save the Children

**Day job** Mum to Bowen, two-and-a-half years old

### How is your training going?

I feel like such a broken record saying this, but it's been hit and miss! I have a couple of old stress fractures in my spine and they flared up a couple of weeks ago, it was awful. I could barely move for a few days. Luckily, with Richard's advice and the help of a good chiropractor, it's much better now.

**When you joined the Big Marathon Challenge, you said you wanted to do it to help rediscover yourself. Do you feel as though the process is helping you to do that?**

Oh goodness, yes. It's been such a test for me; a test of discipline and self belief. I have had so many little setbacks with injuries and Bowen being under the weather and, a year ago, I would have gotten so down about it and probably given up. I'm learning that I am so much more capable than I give myself credit for. When you go through grief and loss you have no choice but to be resilient, and I'm slowly discovering that I can use my experience and turn it into something positive. It's been such a long time since I've

felt in control of my situation, and at peace with where I'm at in life, and this is giving me the tools to feel that way about my health and wellbeing, and that's actually quite empowering.

**What were the most interesting things you learned from meeting Raph from HIGH5 and Paul from Solgar?**

It was great to learn [from Raph] how to get the best out of your nutrition pre- and post-run, but also what to take on during the race – I'm completely clueless when it comes to that kind of thing. Paul from Solgar was a big help, too; I have a history of stress fractures and I'm allergic to ibuprofen, so he gave me some really good advice about what to take to support my bone strength. Also the Solgar 7, which is an anti-inflammatory, has been incredible for me and has really helped.

**How do you think you could improve your nutrition when you're in marathon training?**

One of the toughest things for me actually has been the timing of when and what to eat. Because I don't have a set schedule and I only run when I can, it means that my meal times are often what's convenient. I could really benefit from planning in advance and making sure that I make nutrition just as an important part of the journey.

**What are you enjoying most about training at the moment?**

The support has been incredible. I've had

some amazing conversations with people about what the challenge means to me, and also about their own challenges. It seems to have opened the door for people to ask me about running, about my charity, about being a single mum, about grief – and that's been so important for me.

### THE COACH'S VIEW

Leah had an argument with a parkrun and fell over and hurt her ankle. She's OK, she's still training, she's getting out and doing the sessions. All the girls are determined but Leah especially has this determination to just get it done. She is a bit nervous about the volume going up. We're trying to build her up gradually, doing more each week; it's such a challenge when she's got to look after the little one. Leah is a fine example to other mums – I'm not saying all mums can do this, but even if you can do 15 or 20 minutes, that's better than nothing. Just having a break from your kids, venting some tension and then coming back and feeling better and mentally stronger.

## MEET THE EXPERTS



### COACH

**Richard Coates, Full Potential**

Richard has been running since his teens and has completed over 30 marathons and ultras. He's a UKA Level 2 running coach, so the team's training is in safe hands.

[fullpotential.co.uk](http://fullpotential.co.uk)



### KIT

**Michael Moore, ASICS**

Michael is a technical representative with a deep knowledge of running apparel. He'll help the team to get the most from their shoes and kit.

[asics.co.uk](http://asics.co.uk)



### SUPPLEMENTS

**Paul Chamberlain, Solgar**

Paul is Nutrition and Education Director for Solgar UK. He has an MSc in Sport and Exercise

Nutrition. A keen runner himself, Paul has over 20 years of experience in the nutrition and natural health sector.

[solgar.co.uk](http://solgar.co.uk)



### NUTRITION

**Raphael Deinhardt, HIGH5**

A former elite-level cyclist, Raphael is HIGH5's technical and marketing coordinator. He'll be

providing expert advice on pre-, mid- and post-exercise nutrition.

[highfive.co.uk](http://highfive.co.uk)



## KATIE HAINBACH

Age 29

From Essex (originally Dublin)

**Big Marathon Challenge** To run her first marathon to raise £2,000 for the Stroke Association and awareness of how running can help mental health

**Day job** Musician and teacher



Twitter: @katiehainbach

### How's your training going?

It's been tough while I was on tour with work. I've been on tour before and done my running but, in the past, I haven't had a big event looming so close, so I could be more flexible. This time I wanted to stick to my schedule as much as I could.

### How are you coping with the longer runs?

Most of them have been OK and I've coped better than I thought I would. I had a wobble on my long run [last Sunday]. It was 135 minutes and I had to do the first half at a steady pace and the second half at a faster pace. It was only in the last 10 minutes of the faster pace that I started to notice it, which I guess makes sense, but I was coming to the end of a cold and feeling sorry for myself and I ended up getting to the half-marathon point and having a bit of a cry. My boyfriend was with me and he was like, 'What's up?' and I said, 'I have to do the same again!'

### How has your marathon training been impacted by touring?

When you're touring, you're working really funny hours, and you're doing a lot of driving or travelling. And you're also living out of a suitcase and in hotel rooms,

which is really difficult. So it's hard because when you're running from home you know your routes, so I know if I have to do an hour interval session I know exactly where I need to go, whereas when you're in different cities you have to figure it out in a lot of detail otherwise you'll get completely lost.

### What were the key things you took away from meeting Raph from HIGH5 and Paul from Solgar?

Meeting Raph was really useful because we had been sent gels and nutrition products and it was helpful to hear how we should use them. So I've been able to incorporate the use of gels in my long runs more from the advice we had, taking them at shorter intervals, and I've noticed the difference. Also, I didn't realise how short the timescale is with getting protein into your body after a heavy session, so I got in from my long run the other day and I was like, 'Right, we need protein, quick!' I've been using the Solgar products we've been given and noticed the difference in my joints, especially with the increased mileage – my joints have been more supple, less painful. I talked to Paul [and Raph] about iron so I'm going to go and get an iron test [based on their advice].

### How do you think you could improve your nutrition for the marathon?

I need to be more aware of trying to get more protein in. I don't eat meat, so I have to make sure I'm eating enough pulses and getting enough protein in my meals. I'm also just trying to improve my nutrition before I go out on runs.

### What are you enjoying most about training?

I'm enjoying seeing the improvements. A few months ago, to think that on a Sunday I'd be able to run 14 or 15 miles, that would have been really crazy for me and now it's happening.

### THE COACH'S VIEW

Katie ran a 10K PB this month. It's a good confidence boost for her. She's been incredibly dedicated about training while on tour but being on her feet for nine or 10 hours a day and then training hasn't been easy. In one session she just felt exhausted, got a bit upset, and stopped. She did the right thing. It's not a case of wimping out – listen to your body.



Follow the team's progress on Twitter using **#BigMarathonChallenge** – and don't forget you'll find part two of your own marathon plan starting on page 30!

## ALICE DOGGRELL

Age 37

From Bristol

**Big Marathon Challenge** To break 3hrs 30mins in London

**Day job** Knitwear designer

### How has your training gone for the last few weeks?

It was going OK, I was feeling strong, getting through the sessions well and my legs were recovering between sessions without too much complaint but I had a bit of an unexplained dip in performance last week which was a bit worrying. I seem to be back on target this week, though, so hopefully I can put that dip behind me.

### Your volume is finally set to increase – how are you feeling about it?

I'm feeling a little nervous. Richard doesn't have us running to distance and pace which I was previously used to but, instead, to time and effort. I am now just moving up to two-and-a-half hours, which will shake out at around the 16-mile mark, I think. This was the longest I ran in the build up to my first marathon (using a plan that spread out the mileage throughout the week) so I am curious as to where we are going to go from here.

### You've also had your first taste of marathon-pace training from Richard – how was that?

I've had two sessions with marathon pace in now, the first wasn't so great coming in my 'dip' week, but the more recent one was more promising. It was tough, and I'm not sure how I'm going to be able to sustain it for three-and-a-half hours but hopefully the more I do of it, the easier it will feel.

### What were the most interesting things you learned from meeting Raph from HIGH5 and Paul from Solgar?

Raph and Paul were great. I definitely learned that there is more I can be doing with my everyday nutrition, which can help improve my performance and recovery between sessions, in addition to using Solgar's products. Paul's comments about how the stress hormone cortisol affects performance were particularly



Twitter: @fakoriginal

interesting and I'll definitely be trying to reduce my stress levels in the run-up to the marathon.

#### How do you think you could improve your nutrition when you're in marathon training?

I've started tracking more of what I eat, and have already changed my breakfast to make it more protein heavy on Paul's advice. As a vegetarian, it can sometimes be tough getting the right balance of everything (which is where Solgar's supplements are a great help), but by tracking what I am eating, I'm hoping to be able to keep the right mix to support my body.

#### What are you finding toughest about your marathon prep at the moment?

Mentally I had a big wobble when I performed under par at a recent 5K race, which was followed up with some harder-than-expected training sessions. It seemed like I was going backwards, which dented my confidence.

#### And what are you enjoying the most?

I'm really enjoying taking parkrun slowly. It means I am surrounded by different people to when I am trying to blast my way around and I get to cheer on everyone else.

#### THE COACH'S VIEW

Alice ran a 5K recently, which she didn't run so well, but it wasn't a target race. What she said [to me afterwards], which I agree with, is, "I'm not training for 5K, I'm training for a marathon." She's been training very well on longer runs and threshold blocks, it's that top-end speed which has dropped a little bit, which is not a problem because we're in the depths of quite hard training at the moment. She's still getting on great. She's running over undulating terrain which is good, it will make her strong. She's working hard - she's very diligent and consistent.

## CLAIRE PRICE

Age 55

From Whitchurch, near Aylesbury, Bucks

**Big Marathon Challenge** To get off her pace plateau and get her marathon time under four hours, while raising money for Wheel Power, a local charity

**Day jobs** Practice manager for a physiotherapy centre and works evenings in Waitrose



Twitter: @ClairePrice2017

#### How is your training going?

Training has gone well, apart from time constraints. Intervals have been done on the treadmill for the last two weeks. It made me realise how much I love running outside. The only good thing was that you can set the pace and just run so it seems to take less effort. I can easily drift into my comfort zone on a threshold run if I don't give it my all. Hills are another thing. Last week's hill [session] was great and I thought I had finally turned a corner but, having looked at the stats, I just don't think I am running them correctly. I can't get the hang of running down hills, they feel more like a recovery set than maintaining the pace. I have got the next week's training schedules and hills have gone, thank goodness.

#### You had trouble with your foot - how is that?

It's a weird one, it still hurts on a daily basis but does not stop me running and actually seems to improve with running. I am applying ice after running and this seems to work. Putting on a new pair of shoes was a slight worry but the new shoes I got

from ASICS, Gel Kayano 23, have been so comfortable and are definitely my favourites.

#### You've also mentioned feeling light-headed after a couple of sessions. Have you thought of a way to tackle that?

Snacking just before a training session on a banana or flapjack if it is an evening training session. I don't have a problem on my long runs - they are normally run in the morning, so [I have] a bowl of muesli, two slices of wholemeal toast and a cup of tea.


#### What were the most interesting things you learnt from meeting Raph from HIGH5 and Paul from Solgar?

Raph gave us some good advice on how and when to take gels in both training and on race day. I definitely did not use them enough last year and have already put into practice some of the advice given. Paul opened my eyes to the importance of taking vitamins and supplements. Luckily I haven't got any joint problems but I don't want to tempt fate and have taken their advice to take Solgar 7 to support my joints.

#### What are you finding toughest about your marathon prep at the moment?

Can I say everything? Time planning, tiredness, nutrition - but these just need a bit of concentration on my part.

#### And what are you enjoying the most?

Long runs. With the training schedule Richard has given me, these have been steady effort so slower than marathon pace. In the past, I have just run everything at marathon pace and there has been no variation in my training. By working at a faster pace for intervals, I am hoping to reap the benefits. 

#### THE COACH'S VIEW

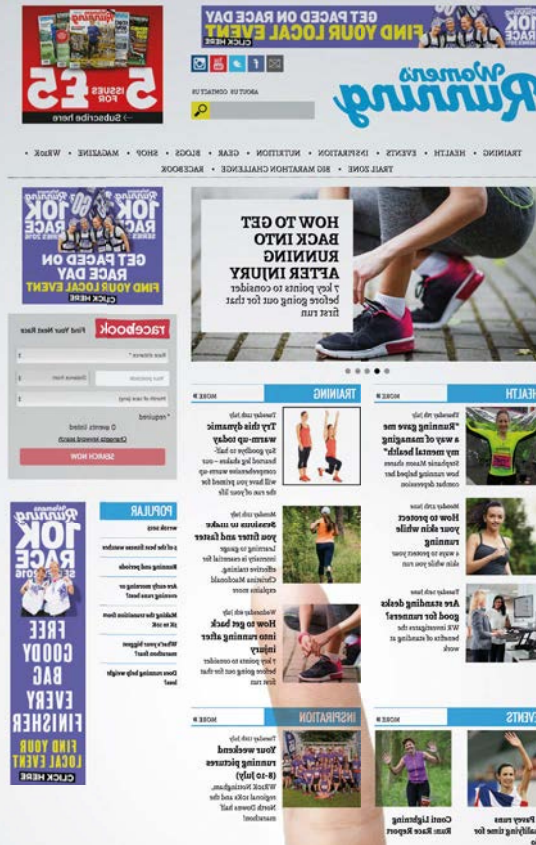
Claire's running well. Her threshold work's coming along really well, she did intervals on Tuesday and her splits are impressive. She's getting the volume up and we're putting more effort into the longer runs for all of the team. It's a bit of a boring phase in a sense, but Claire's finding things OK. She's keen to do more!





# STAY IN TOUCH

Don't wait another month to get your *Women's Running* fix! Visit our website at [womensrunninguk.co.uk](http://womensrunninguk.co.uk) for loads more tips to keep you fit, healthy and motivated



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ANY SPEED

ANY DISTANCE

ANYWHERE

START RACING!

## RACE REPORTS

TURN OVER FOR OUR REGULAR RACE REPORTS SECTION

### GREAT EDINBURGH WINTER RUN

Hannah Ebelthite heads to Scotland's bonny capital for a short, sharp race, p94

### CANCER RESEARCH UK LONDON WINTER RUN

Thousands of runners braved the cold for a polar bear hug, p96



© MATTJALEXANDER.COM

## RACE HIGHLIGHTS: APRIL

### 5K

#### Supernova 5K • London • 1 April

Get ready to shine for this evening event – literally! Wear fluoro clothing to make the most of this dazzling race around Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. The organisers will give you a headlamp to wear and take home.

[SUPERNOVARUN.COM/EVENTS/OLYMPIC-PARK](http://SUPERNOVARUN.COM/EVENTS/OLYMPIC-PARK)

### 10K

#### The Glenlivet 10K • Inverness • 9 April

This race claims to be the most beautiful in Scotland, and we're not arguing. Set in the Cairngorms National Park, and based at the stunning Glenlivet distillery, runners of all abilities can really get into the spirit of this road race.

[CHSS.ORG.UK/SUPPORTUS/FUNDBRAISE-FOR-US/EVENTS/GLENLIVET-10K](http://CHSS.ORG.UK/SUPPORTUS/FUNDBRAISE-FOR-US/EVENTS/GLENLIVET-10K)

### Half

#### ABP Southampton Half • Southampton • 23 April

This fairly flat route is ideal for any first-timers and great for PB-hunters, too. Roads will be closed so runners can enjoy a unique ascent up the Itchen Bridge for spectacular views over the river and out towards the Isle of Wight.

[ABPSOUTHAMPTONHALF.CO.UK](http://ABPSOUTHAMPTONHALF.CO.UK)

### Marathon/longer

#### Newcastle Way Marathon • Newcastle • 15 April

If you're looking for hills, stiles, mud, nettles, landmarks, country parks and woods – the Newcastle Way Marathon has them in abundance! You'll need to be able to navigate if you want to take on this challenge, and after you cross that finish line you can pull yourself a pint from Joules Brewery.

[GOLD-EVENTS.CO.UK/NEWCASTLE-WAY-MARATHON-2017](http://GOLD-EVENTS.CO.UK/NEWCASTLE-WAY-MARATHON-2017)

### Something different

#### The Connemarathon • Galway, Ireland • 23 April

For a taste of Ireland, sign up for this superb event with dramatic scenery, a beautiful course and a good dose of Irish charm. It's no wonder runners and walkers come from all over the world to take part. Choose from three race distances: half-marathon, marathon and ultramarathon.

[CONNEMARATHON.COM](http://CONNEMARATHON.COM)

WATCH THIS!

CAN'T RACE THIS MONTH? NO TIME TO TRAIN? GET A TASTE OF THE ATMOSPHERE AT...

#### Brighton Marathon • Brighton • 9 April

It's fully booked up – but that's no reason to miss the party. Head to Brighton for the marathon weekend to take in the sea air and enjoy all the fun of the fair. Expect a huge event village and fantastic spectator support.

[brightonmarathonweekend.co.uk](http://brightonmarathonweekend.co.uk)

#### Virgin Money London Marathon • London • 23 April

It's the UK running event of the year – so make sure you watch the London Marathon. Be one of thousands lining the capital's street or enjoy it from the comfort of your own sofa, where you'll see impressive elite performances and the best of the mass race.

[virginmoneylondonmarathon.com/en-gb](http://virginmoneylondonmarathon.com/en-gb)

GET YOUR ENTRIES IN FOR THESE POPULAR RACES

#### ASICS GREATER MANCHESTER MARATHON • 2 APRIL

After a big-city marathon? If you missed out on London, try this. There'll be great entertainment, outstanding crowd support and a great finish at the iconic Emirates Old Trafford ground.

[GREATERMANCHESTERMARATHON.COM](http://GREATERMANCHESTERMARATHON.COM)

#### WILLIAMS BMW ROCHE DALE HALF AND 10K • 8 OCTOBER

Entries are open for the 2017 running of this popular event, which tours the historic town and surrounding countryside. Book your place before 31 March to catch the early-bird entry fee.

[ROCHE DALE.GOV.UK/HALE](http://ROCHE DALE.GOV.UK/HALE)





## GREAT SCOT

### HANNAH EBELTHITE TAKES ON THE SIMPLY HEALTH GREAT EDINBURGH WINTER 5K, ON A SURPRISINGLY SPRING-LIKE DAY

**T**he last time I visited Edinburgh and climbed Arthur's Seat, it was about 15 years ago and I was a confirmed non-runner – and smoker. I puffed my way up and stared in wonder at the fell runners who flitted past me. It was bad enough walking up a steep hill – why would you run up it? Little did I know I'd one day relish the chance.

Saturday 7 January marked the 12<sup>th</sup> year of the Great Edinburgh Winter Run – a 5K race that starts and finishes in Holyrood Royal Park. It's somewhat of a running festival, with the 5K event followed by a 2.5K Junior Great Winter Run and various local and international cross-country races, with Sir Mo Farah and recent 5K record breaker Laura Muir among the athletes.

The Great Run series, founded by former Olympic long-distance runner Brendan Foster in 1981, includes the

famous Great North Run (the world's largest half-marathon) as well as 32 other events each year. This year, the organisation has partnered with healthcare company Simply Health, a company that gives 10 per cent of its profits to charity. Its main beneficiary is Revitalise – a small but remarkable organisation that offers respite holidays for the disabled and their carers – and it's good to know some of your entry fee is going to such a good cause.

This is a large event with a local feel. There was a real community spirit, smiles all round. For many, it was probably their first foray back into exercise for 2017 and what a great way to start. The hat, thermal gloves, jacket and Buff I'd packed as a soft Londoner heading to Scotland stayed in my bag, as it was a gloomy but balmy 9°C – so much for a 'winter' run.

A record number of runners – 3,013 –

toed the start line and followed the route around Queen's Drive, a traffic-free road. It circles the bottom of Arthur's Seat, which is an ancient volcano, 215m above sea level. Much to the relief of many runners who were looking up in awe, you don't actually climb the mountain itself (that's left for the hardy cross-country runners, later on). But that's not to say it's flat!

There's a steady incline (and a little groaning) for the first 1.5 to 2K. But if you're well warmed up and don't race off, it's very manageable – and made more so by a bagpipe player appearing at the 1K marker. By the top of the hill you can hear another piper in the distance, hinting that 2K isn't far off. It's a nifty signal and a lovely touch from the race organisers.

From there you follow the path around the edge of the mountain, taking in all the views along the way – hill to your right,

sprawling Edinburgh opening out on your left. Even on a foggy day, the sights are still spectacular and it's tempting to slow up and look at the views. From 2K on, it's either flat or downhill so I wouldn't describe it as a tough race overall. If anything, the downhills are hardest – my quads complained for days afterwards.

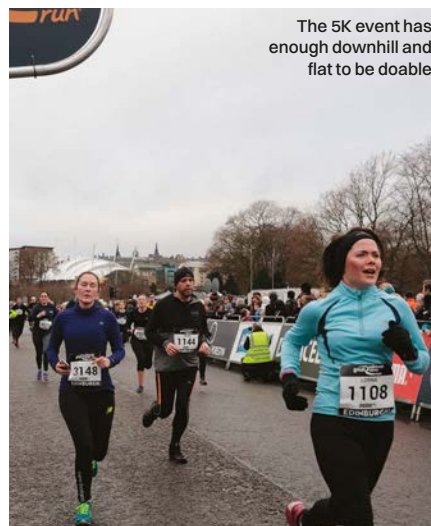
The finish was a veritable gift-fest: water, banana, medal, yoghurt, and goody bag containing a cool long-sleeved cotton t-shirt. Organisation was very good, marshals (and pipers) cheery and every runner made to feel special. There was no congestion thanks to the waved start.

A new Great Run initiative for 2017 was introduced at this race, too. As well as your finishing time, you're given a 'Great For You' score. This is something Great Run has come up with by crunching all the numbers from four years' worth of Great North Run results. It's a bit like the age-graded WAVA score you get at some races (and parkrun), but based only around Great Run events you take part in, and with a few more variables. So, even though you ran a slower time than women's race winner Laura Shaughnessy (17:19) or first man Richard Mair (16:16), your Great For You score could be higher. It's a good leveler and a new way to compete with people you might not run alongside – or with yourself across different events in the series.

The verdict? A fun race in a beautiful, friendly city and I left determined to return – perhaps for the 10-mile Great Edinburgh Run in April. Or maybe I'll join those hardy fell runners (and skip the ciggies). *WJR*

## JOIN IN THE FUN

TO SIGN UP TO THE REMINDER SERVICE TO ENTER THE 2018 SIMPLY HEALTH GREAT EDINBURGH WINTER RUN, VISIT [GREATRUN.ORG/GREAT-WINTER-RUN](http://GREATRUN.ORG/GREAT-WINTER-RUN).



The 5K event has enough downhill and flat to be doable



Hannah basks in balmy weather and post-race glory

## WE RACED IT!



"I started running about seven months ago and since then have lost four stone! Today I was aiming for under 29 minutes and got under

27 so I'm very pleased. It's a great run and I loved the fact they have pipers at every kilometre."

Jeni Wright, 38, Edinburgh



"I ran this race last year when I started a health kick. I ran 11 races last year and over that time I dropped six stone in weight, so I had to come

back and see if I'd improved (I think I did). It was lovely weather today, the scenery is beautiful and there's a great atmosphere."

Ann Burnett, 37, South Lanarkshire



"A brilliant way to experience my first time in the city. The atmosphere was fantastic and I really enjoyed the route

around Arthur's Seat. The ascent was challenging, but worth it for the views."

Lucy Edwards, 32, Essex.

Read Lucy's blog at [paddlepedalpace.co.uk](http://paddlepedalpace.co.uk)



# WINTER WONDERLAND

ELLE LINTON JOINED THOUSANDS OF RUNNERS TO RECLAIM THE ROADS OF LONDON IN AID OF CANCER RESEARCH UK

**S**ince the moment I crossed the finish line in February 2016, I eagerly awaited the date for the return of the Cancer Research UK London Winter Run for 2017. And that date was Sunday 5 February. The annual 10K run returned for its third year, boasting a record 16,500 runners on the start line.

With start times ranging between 9am and 10:30am, it felt like we were granted a lie-in for this Sunday morning race. Arriving at Leicester Square underground station at 9:30am, the race village was just a 10-minute stroll away, and on that walk we got to see the first wave set off for the morning. The baggage tents were easy to find and the queues were minimal; having had a dilemma fitting everything into the blue bags, we were ushered to a specific bag-drop queue for oversized bags, which thankfully had no queue whatsoever. There were plenty of Portaloos available with little or no queues too – quite the rarity at popular city races such as this one.

From the bag drop, we made our way to the start line, weaving through the crowds to get as near to the front as we possibly could. Just as we got to the starting arch, located on Trafalgar Square under the shadow of Nelson's Column, the gun went and that was it, we were off!

With a rolling start and each wave being filled with runners of different paces, it was hard to gauge my starting pace based on those around me. I'd set my TomTom to keep me between 5:25 and 5:45mins per kilometre pace, as I was aiming for a sub 60-minute finish in this event and it seemed I had plenty of room to get into my stride to start with. The route took us straight onto the Strand and into Aldwych, before heading up towards Holborn Underground station and back again.

It was at this point that we ran into the Penguin Party; one of the many quirky gimmicks put in place for the event by the organisers, Human Race. Add to this a



Now hailed the capital's largest 10K, the bustling course is packed with atmosphere

pack of high-fiving snow wolves, various bands, choirs and plenty of spectators on the course, it's hard not to have a good time – even if your legs are giving out! With so many families on the sidelines, it felt like this race was a real family day out for everyone.

Taking a couple of swift turns, we were past Chancery Lane and heading towards the heart of the City where the single water station was located in the courtyard of Guildhall – London's ancient town hall. Having set off way above my intended pace, I took a few seconds to take on some water before getting back into my stride.

The next section of the route seems like a lot of turning; the route was a little narrower on these sections too, and I noticed that my pace dropped each time that a turn

had to be taken. Around this point, I began to question how flat the course really was; as races go, the course was flat but there were some noticeable steady inclines which would cause me to run a little slower. I therefore ensured I used every downhill portion of the course to pick up a little pace and make the time up.

The course took us just under St Paul's Cathedral before we made a u-turn to head back along the other side of the cathedral, alongside runners on the course heading in the other direction, following in our footsteps. It was the perfect chance to look out for friends on the course and get that extra little boost to keep going!

We were ticking off all the kilometre markers on the route now, passing the 7K



mark, heading for 8K, back towards the Strand via Fetter Lane. The final 2K followed side by side along part of our starting route: straight, flat and lined with enough supporters to keep our spirits up.

My usual race prep rarely includes studying the course, and this time was no different. I'd convinced myself that the finish line was a lot further away than it was so, when we rounded the corner from the Strand onto Whitehall to see the finish-line arch, I mustered all the energy I had left to run as fast as I could till the end. Running under the arch, listening to the compère welcoming in all the runners, I felt a sense of relief knowing that I'd made it within my goal time.

Within moments, friends received text messages congratulating them on

finishing, along with their finishing times (I'm yet to receive mine!). We caught our breath as we walked through the finishers' funnel to collect our well-earned medals, complimentary chocolate from Lindor, chilled Vita Coco coconut water, water and Polar Bear hugs / selfies, before what felt like the coldest and longest walk back to the bag drop in history!

According to my GPS, the course came up as a little over 10K and it seems I'm not alone there. However, that may be down to dodging and weaving around other runners in order to hit my new PB with an official time of 57mins 3secs.

Just like last year, I'm already excited for this race to come back to the streets of London in 2018. It's not often we runners get to claim the roads of central London just for ourselves. *WJR*

#### JOIN IN THE FUN

THE CANCER RESEARCH UK LONDON WINTER RUN WILL BE RETURNING ON SUNDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2018. PRE-REGISTER AT [LONDONWINTERUN.CO.UK/LONDON/EVENT-INFO/PRE-REGISTER-2018/](http://LONDONWINTERUN.CO.UK/LONDON/EVENT-INFO/PRE-REGISTER-2018/).

## WE RACED IT!



Julie Creffield, 38, Stratford, London

"Loved it, third time I've done it, I got a PB which was fantastic and it was just a really great atmosphere."



Irene O'Keith, 47, Bishops Stortford

"The race was excellent, really well run and really good fun. I did it in 58 minutes so I'm really pleased."



Liza Vallance, 38, Walthamstow

"I felt really strong, I got a PB on the course, I felt really consistent and it's just lovely to have such a nice atmosphere to train for the marathon in."



# THE CHALLENGE

NO 12

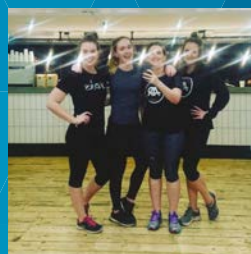
## TRY A NEW SESSION

Every month the *Women's Running* team challenges you to complete a different running task and show us the evidence. This month, we asked you to step out of your comfort zone and mix up your training with a new session.



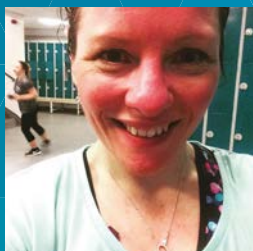
**running.amy**

Tried an interval session for the first time this morning using the @womensrunninguk intermediate #marathon #training plan. I haven't entered any races but thought it would be a good way to focus my #running a bit.



**jessruns2015**

Feeling great after run, yoga and HIIT session with @adidaswomen @adidasuk, when you're busy with work and life it's hard to try and fit in all the cross-training work which we all know makes us a better runner so great to do it all in one sitting #heretocreate #run #runner



**runbunnyrun77**

45 mins HIIT and I'm still smiling. The PT is trying to kill me! Don't tell him I quite enjoyed it #wrchallenge #hiit #mywwjourney



**yviejohnson**

#OffasDyke training, now a weekly event. It makes me giggle with incredulity that I've just managed to do it, to get back out and to keep going.



**Helen Hayton**

Trans Pennine Trail. I've run other parts of the trail before but we ran a different section from Wortley to Oxspring and back.

## NEXT MONTH

### The Challenge - Do a celebratory run!

We challenge you to go for a run - and celebrate something that means something to you. Perhaps it's a person that's inspired you or a recent achievement - go out there, reflect and celebrate. The W/R team will be running on 8 March to celebrate the strength of women in our International Women's Day Virtual Run. If you fancy joining us, sign up and find out more at [womensrunninguk.co.uk](http://womensrunninguk.co.uk).

SEND YOUR #WRCHALLENGE EVIDENCE VIA:



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