

ROUGH RUNNING NEWS
(BEAR HUNTING EDITION)



T . A . C . H .
(TOWN AND COUNTRY HARRIERS)

Also see: www.tach.org.uk

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THURSDAY RUN-LIST: INTO THE LIGHT

ALL RUNS START 7 for 7-10
(Don't abandon your torch too soon!)

| WHEN? | WHERE? | WHY? |
|--------------------------------|--|--|
| Feb 22nd | Black Horse, Clapton in Gordano ST473739 | One of the best pubs around. Another crocks brisk alternative available. |
| Mar 1st | White Horse, Hambrook ST645620 | A horse of a different colour. Good route along the River Frome and Bradley Brook. |
| Mar 8th | Old Barn, Wraxall (behind Wraxall House Hotel) ST484715 | We tried the Battle Axes and found it wanting. |
| Mar 15th | The Hare on the Hill, Dove Street, Kingsdown ST587742 | Our headquarters and the first route in my Forest path book |
| Mar 22nd | George and Dragon, Pensford ST ST620638 | An assault on Maes Knoll, which Libby and I tried out on Christmas Day |
| Mar 29th | George and Dragon, Felton ST521656 | The other one: the original home of the Dundry Thunder Run |
| Apr 5th | The Lion, Church Lane, Clifton Wood ST575726 | 'It oozes class, as do the clientele.' Guardian May, 2006. We'll probably do a championship/handicap race. |
| Apr 12th | The White Lion, Westbury ST571775 | A new route from the original headquarters of Westbury Harriers. |
| Apr 19th | The Golden Lion, Wrington ST471628 | Recommended by Pete Ellis, for a bit of the Wrington Woodland Run and a bit of the Two Rivers Way |
| Apr 26th | The Wrington Woodland Run, The Lord Nelson, Cleeve, A370 ST456656 | The first of our Summer Pub Series |
| May 3rd | The Ship, Temple St., Keynsham (straight on from High St.) ST655682 | Probably the river run from a good pub we haven't visited lately |
| May 10th | The Salutation, Ham ST680983 | It usually involves a riverside bit, a wet muddy bit and a glorious finish through the deer park |
| May 17th | The Queen's Head, Silver Street, Chew Magna ST578633 | Good Pub: good running, but hard to find. Park at village car park behind the Pelican and walk through churchyard if lost |
| May 24th | The Burrington Blaster from the Inn at Burrington Coombe ST477590 | The second in our Summer Pub Series |
| May 31st | The Rose of Denmark, 6, Dowry Place, Hotwells (The Pink One) ST569725 | By special request from Don Juan. I notice it serves Deuchar's IPA and Thatchers |
| Jun 7th | The Black Horse, Clapton in Gordano ST473739 | Joe Green 's Trail Race to raise money for MS Therapy Centre on our old Hill Climb course. |

WE'RE GOING ON A BEAR HUNT

When I went with Libby and our granddaughter, Jana, to see 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt' at the Bristol Old Vic Studio in January, I had no idea that we were going on a TACH outing.

I was, of course, familiar with some of the work of the author, Michael Rosen, but I had never come across this particular book, which had been dramatised by the theatre company for children who were too young for their main Christmas production, 'The Three Musketeers'.

It turned out to be a near perfect dramatisation of a typical TACH run.

Those of you with children of the right age will probably know that it is the story of a father of four young children, who takes them on a splendidly unsuitable adventure in the countryside in search of an imaginary bear. They go 'Swishy swashy!' through the long grass, 'Splash splosh!' through a deep cold river, 'Squelch squerch!' through thick oozy mud, 'Stumble trip!' through a big dark forest and 'Hooo woo!' through a swirling whirling snowstorm. Arriving at the beach, they go 'Tiptoe! Tiptoe!' through a narrow gloomy cave where they encounter a real bear which chases them back through the cave, the snowstorm, the forest, the mud, the river and the swishy swashy grass to their holiday home where they bolt the door and pile up together under a huge pink duvet in bed.

The connection with TACH activities was made all the clearer by the fact that the story was acted out by adults in bowler hats and dungarees who brought the action to life by means of music, dance, brown paint and buckets of water. They obviously recognised me as a fellow mudlark, because they selected my nose to daub with brown paint in the 'Squelch squerch!' scene.

So, if you are ever struggling to explain exactly what it is that we do on a Thursday night, you could do a lot worse than show your interlocutor a copy of 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt' by Michael Rosen, with superb watercolour illustrations by Helen Oxenbury. It is, unfortunately, too late to see the play, and you would probably feel silly watching it without a suitable child to accompany you!

Revisiting this piece on the Saturday between our training run from the Old Lock and Weir and our visit to the Prom Run at Weston-super-Mare, it seemed particularly relevant. Four of us had turned out at Hanham Mills: John McD, me and new members Matt Addis and Steve Hanna. Libby stayed at home because she could not bear the thought of us having to wait for her in the cold. Consequently, the other three had to wait for me! Matt is getting quicker all the time, and the only time I managed to catch up with him was because his glasses had shaken apart racing through the mud and puddles alongside the River Avon (Splash splosh!) on the final run in. Matt had been a bit worried that I was not going to use the River Avon Trail, when we stepped out along the ring road; but this was only a ploy to find the muddy route along Ironmould Lane (Squelch squerch!), through the Brislington Trading Estate (Hooo woo!) and along the Brislington Brook (Stumble trip!) to the bridge over the Avon. It is amazing how much mud you can find in the suburbs of Bristol! Back at the pub, we enjoyed good beer and cider and an intellectual conversation about the relative merits of Rubens, Renoir, Botticelli and Beryl Cooke in relation to the barmaid.

The Weston trip is a plot by Libby, Sue and Bill Charnock to add a veneer of respectability to proceedings.

I have always held that varied terrain and sucking mud is good for the joints, but there is a long list of TACH members on the injured list at the moment: Alli Burr, Pete Brown, Mark Wilkins, Andy Pearce and Mike Bastow have all had their problems, but I have comforted myself with the thought that they must have been road running in secret. However, no such story will explain Pete Kennedy's twisted ankle on Blackdown (Stumble trip!) on the run from the Crown at Churchill. Nevertheless, it is remarkable how seldom such accidents occur on our runs.

Sue, ever mindful of our frail health, has introduced a Chartered Physiotherapist to Town and Country Harriers. She has supplied us with the following information, which may be of interest to our walking wounded.

Jemma Mack MCSP, graduated from Southampton University in 1997, worked in the NHS in Bournemouth until 2000 before moving to London. From 2000-2006 she was based in the West End and then the City predominantly treating sports injuries, back and

neck pain, upper and lower limb problems including work related problems and pre and post operative conditions.

One of Jemma's special interests is in running analysis including the assessment of lower limb and foot biomechanics. She has a wealth of experience in helping to prepare people for marathons and other running events, appreciating the importance of good core stability, biomechanics and trainers (!) for improved performance.

In May 2006 Jemma moved to Bristol to start 'the physio place'. Currently based in Next Generation Clubs Ltd, Greystoke Avenue, Westbury-on-Trym, BS10 6AZ, Jemma is offering all Town and Country Harriers a reduced rate of £30 for 30 minute assessment and treatments. For appointments please call Next Generation's reception on 0117 9597140. If you have any questions or would like to speak to a physio please either call 07984203698 or email jemma@thephysioplac.co.uk. Please advise Jemma of your membership to the Town and Country Harriers at your first treatment session for reduced rate.



Those who still enjoy the efficient use of their limbs may be more interested in Peter de Boer's latest version of the TACH Championship.

TACHOGRAPH



The 2007 Championship for the Town and Country Harriers

Marshalling

| Race | Race |
|------|------|
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

Total Points (10 points each race) _____

Club races

Did you win your category? (40 points) Were you a runner up in your category? (20 pts)

| Race 1 | | Race 2 | |
|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|
| Winner | Y/N | Winner | Y/N |
| Runner up | Y/N | Runner up | Y/N |

Total Points _____

GRAND TOTAL for 2007 _____

I really must resume my old practice of keeping a record of who turns up for training runs!

John McDonough is likely to be as a strong contender for this year’s championship as he was for last. He certainly outpaces the rest with his production of race reports. Here are a couple; the first from last November.

.....and far away

Well it’s not, actually. Over The Hills is run from Bradford -on - Avon; it just seems that way as you navigate your way through its streets.

Having entered yonks ago all I received was a manuscript street map of the town with the Tithe Barn marked on. The legend was not helpful; major roads, minor roads and footpaths are all the same width.

The Avon Valley Runners website is not much help in this respect as all it tells you is that the race is full, not what you are supposed to receive in the pack (you can no longer access the entry form) nor even what time the race is.

I have a 2 hour window blocked out in my PDA from 10am onwards, so set off at 8.45 and after being led up various blind alleys and garden paths by the map arrive at the venue at 9.45 to find little old ladies setting up a cake stall. They tell me the race starts at 11 and the race HQ is across the way (it transpires to be the changing rooms) which are completely empty so I head back to my car to kill half an hour.

I return and am directed to the race organiser. It seems I should have received a race number but there was a bit of a cock up. No need to spell my name as she has remembered it from the entry form. She looks up my number (582) and allocates me a new number (787). Would it not be easier for me simply to take a blank and put 582 on it? Apparently not!

I spot Pat Winstone at the start talking to a friend. I wander over for a chat and we are approached by a photographer who wants to capture the 3 of us for posterity. Why? Because we all have different coloured shirts. Pat and I grin wryly at each other, as he is wearing the green and white version of the TACH strip and I the green and yellow. Standing in a line is not good enough; we have to perform contortions as if we were limbering up. For anyone reading who might be a Bath Chronicle reader, please can you write to the editor to inform him that St Vitus' dance is not a necessary consequence of, nor prelude to, running a race.

I have a quick chat to Jim Plunkett- Cole and then we are hushed for a minute's silence in memory of a departed member of Avon Valley Runners. Unfortunately the race director thumbs his bullhorn button too early by mistake and we have to start again.

It is a glorious sunny day with the leaves turning as we set off alongside the river. I have been warned that there are a number of stiles in the first section so go off quickly. I realise how quickly when I pass the 1 mile marker in under 4 minutes (should it possibly be 1k?) But more importantly I am still within 50 yards of Jim, so knock it off a bit. I go backwards in the field over the next mile or so until I find my level; but never slowed down enough for my breathing to be less than ragged.

The course is a mixture of towpath, tarmac, field and woods; the dappled shade in the woods (Stumble trip!) is particularly delightful. The hills as such are runnable slopes rather than fell type plodders and at 12K, the course is excellent for fast even paced work. I even managed to overtake a couple of guys in the last half mile, although one was so affronted he sneaked up behind me on the grassy (Swishy swashy!) finish and nipped in front of me into the funnel.

It was a wonderful way to spend an autumn morning before heading home for a roast dinner and several bottles of wine.

Official race results

Jim Plunkett – Cole 48 mins

John MacDonald 56 mins

Pat Winstone 58 mins

Don Juan

Nice and easy does it...

Sunday January 14 (I wouldn't have got away with it a month later) dawns as a

beautiful crisp winter's day. It is an early start as I am flogging across country to Pewsey, or more precisely Milton Lilbourne for the Rough 'n' Tumble 10 (that's miles, not clicks). I load bikes onto the rack, not for me but for the family to get about a bit whilst I am strutting my stuff. I am a bit stiff as the day before Ant and I went out for a mountain bike ride and it was only half way round an 18.5 mile course that I remembered I had a tough race the next day, hence the advice to myself above.

Arriving at the village we are directed to park on a verge (the farmer's field allocated is full) and once I get the bikes off I face a schlep of about half a mile to the start at the village hall. It is cold enough to keep fleece and hat on, and on arrival at the hall there is a long queue for the Portaloos which I circumvent in typical TACH fashion by going behind a marquee for a pee (Squelch squerch!). It didn't impress the old dear who was storing runners' bags and noticed me through the side window of the marquee, but then again, she shouldn't have been looking. I bet she can't remember my face anyway...

Clocking the field I see a few TRA vests so reckon it must be a decent race; indeed, they have a board by the hall door which advertises the fact that it was one of Runner's World top 10 races as voted by the readership. It looks to be a decent turnout as well - about 500 I reckon and I know it was full well before the day. The course profile looks interesting too with 3 decent climbs in the first 6 miles.

We assemble in the road for the start and what turns out to be the best pre - race briefing I have heard. There is a Garmin being give away in a prize draw of the runners who entered, and the speaker makes telling points in a humorous way - 'Those of you wearing road shoes.....good luck. I see last year's winner wearing number 1 - no pressure there then! And indeed there wasn't; good old Vito won by a country mile - 2.5 minutes ahead of the 2nd placed runner - I look down at the no 5 on my chest and quickly realise that the system is fallible.

Then we are off down the road out of the village and heading for the hills. After about half a mile this peters out and becomes a track and starts to climb steadily in a zigzag up the hill. I am following my own advice (experience has taught me the value of only doing this) and climbing steadily - hanging on rather than digging in as it were and whilst we are on a track some people are already struggling for grip. We top out on a ridge and already wonderful views of a broad green undulating panorama are laid out through a full 360 degrees. With the fresh morning air cleansing my lungs and no haze marring that beautiful English countryside vista I have one of those 'does it get better than this?' running moments before knuckling down to the business in hand of getting an overtake or two in before the end of the ridge.

Looking down the field is starting to spread nicely after the climb which is as well as we are into narrow tracks between fence and thorn bush with a decent amount of mud (Squelch squerch!) and making a steady ascent to top out on climb 2. There then follows an ace section of roller coaster before we plunge into a gully between two fields. Emerging into a field we see climb 3 ahead; the ridge climbs left to right across our vision but it is a couple of hundred feet above and we are going up the side. It is an ascent worthy of a fell race but I seem to be the only one adopting hands on knees as a method of tackling it. It pays dividends as I gain another 5 places on the way up. Half

a mile along the ridge and we are coming down a cracking steep descent. I launch down with a new found confidence (thank you Lancashire Sports Repairs for resoling my shoes with a fell shoe sole with conical studs). I even offer advice to a woman attempting this tussocky (Swishy swashy!), greasy mud descent in road shoes ('Zigzag!') for which she appears grateful.

There is then a long flat stretch but unfortunately this is no easier as it is round a field so the going is heavy and my ride of the previous day is starting to tell on me. We then hit the best part of the race - the track drops into a gully and suddenly the fields are 10' above our heads either side. The way is narrow with thorn bushes or saplings either side (and projecting overhead!) with no room to overtake, and mud or water underfoot. For the best part of a half a mile you are caught in a roller coaster descending fast with runners tight in front and behind so inevitably it speeds up, giving split seconds to deal with the hazards above, below and to either side (Stumble trip!) before you shoot out the end. After this I am buzzing with adrenaline but with my legs shot, wishing I had the strength to go back and do it again.

I manage to hang on and lose no places in the final slog to the line, but am unable to find the strength to overtake the ungainly runner I had followed round. At the hall, equilibrium is restored with a cup of tea and cake. On reflection, I cannot praise this race enough as a TACH type race; I will try and flag it up early next year so people can get their entries in!

Don Juan

Past and Future – Thank you and Good Luck

A big **thank you** to Jan for organising – yet again – a very successful and enjoyable TACH 12th Night Dinner – see our web site for photos.

Thanks to everyone (marshals, organisers, friends and families) for getting the racing season off to such a good start at the Burrington Combe-Over. I would definitely agree with Sue that it makes me feel proud to belong to a club like TACH.

Good Luck to everyone in the club in future races and particularly our three lucky London Marathon club entry runners – Antony Clark, Pete Kennedy and Patrick Winstone.

Good Luck for our Summer Pub Series (flyer enclosed) but please remember that its success relies on lots of helpers and we do ask that if you plan to run, you provide an alternative marshal. Thanks.



Tip toe! Tip toe!

Several Tachers are heading off to Seaton on the eleventh of March to run in the ultimate TACH challenge – namely the Grizzly. For those of you unacquainted with this event – it is a combination of all the various kinds of terrain encountered on a typical TACH training night with the addition of considerable quantities of shingle. It is usually about twenty miles long – the route varies each year. John McD is particularly keen to do well this year because he has had problems with the race in the past, which he attributes to inadequate preparation. He seems to be on target this year because he and Antony Clark arrived at Crook’s Peak first and third at the end of Bill Charnock’s little jaunt from Backwell. We shall be examining the results with interest!

Competition from Bill’s Grizzly training left Matt and me the only pair to reccie the leg of the Community Forest Path from Hambrook to the Avon Riding Centre. This is not the most wonderful stretch of the path, running as it does through Bradley Stoke, Patchway and Aztec West, but even this stretch is mostly green, with two woods, two brooks, a couple of lakes and, on the day, plenty of mud (Squelch squerch!). Nevertheless, it was a relief to emerge into the countryside to the west of the M5. Access to the back of the Riding Centre looks a tad dodgy, so we may have to reconsider the finish. This is supposed to be the shortest leg, but it didn’t feel that way!

We have only one set of route descriptions left to check out: leg one from The Blaise Estate car park to Dundry on Sunday 18th February. If you want to join us, meet at the car park beside Dundry Down at 10-40 for a lift to the start.

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|--|--|--------------------------|---|
| RACES YET TO COME (a trawl through the Weston AC site - It is well worth a further look!) | | | |
| 25 th Feb | Quantock Fell Race An alternative to the Terminator) | ST154411 at 12 noon (£2) | 7.5 mile Fell race. Navigation required |

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Mar 4 th | Butleigh MT (not the Gloucester 20) | 11am | 2 nd in the Somerset Series |
| Mar 11 th | Hogweed Hilly Half (if you are not doing the Grizzly) | 10-30 Horton Village Hall | Goes past John Seager's house |
| Mar 18 th | Ironwood Challenge | 11am Long Ashton Sports Hall | |
| Mar 25 th | Cleevevold 14 | 10-30 Postlip Tithe Barn past Cleeve Common near Cheltenham | A testing MT course with a lot of climb |
| April 1st | Community Forest Path Relay | First stage at 7am | We're looking for at least 2 teams of 4 |
| Apr 8 th | Hanham Horror | 11am Vicarage Road Playing Field, Hanham | Through the woods along the River Avon |
| Apr 22 nd | Pensford 10K (if you are not doing the Marathon) | 1pm Pensford Village Hall | A road race with a horrible hill in the middle |
| Apr 26th (Thursday) | Wrington Woodland Run | 7-15 at the Lord Nelson, Cleeve on the A370 | TACH members can enter if they have supplied a marshal |
| Apr 29 th | Offa's Orror (the Horton Bull Run is another possibility) | 10-30 at the Anchor Inn, Tintern | Ferocious MT |
| May 6 th | Neolithic Marathon (if you want to go a little bit further than the Burrington Rock of Ages Run!) | Check website for details | A multi-terrain marathon across the tank tracks |
| May 13 th | Frenchay 10K | 11am UWE Glenside Campus, Blackberry Hill (used to be a mental hospital) | This was about the first race I ever did. Route goes through Oldbury Court Estate |
| May 20 th | Keynsham 10K | 11am Cadbury's Somerdale. | Quite hilly |
| May 24th (Thursday) | Burrington Blaster | 7-15 from the Burrington Inn | TACH members can enter if they have supplied a marshal |
| May 27 th | Magic Roundabout 10K or the Crocodile 8 | At Hay on Wye or Hereford | Either might be worth a look |