

ROUGH RUNNING NEWS

(GREEN MAN EDITION)



T. A. C. H.

(TOWN AND COUNTRY HARRIERS)

See also: www.tach.org.uk

and www.gaveller.wordpress.com

and www.closetothecountryside.co.uk

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Spring 2008

THURSDAY RUN-LIST: SPRING

ALL RUNS START at 7pm (with 10 minutes leeway for latecomers)

Looking forward to the Summer

WHEN?	WHERE?	WHY?
Feb 7 th	The Cotham Porter Stores Cotham Rd. South Dfc 1M ST585739	Another cider pub by popular demand. GMC There is an established shortcut.
Feb 14 th	The Ring O'Bells Hinton Blewitt Dfc 10M ST594569	A Dan Blewitt special from another classic pub in the country (GBG)
Feb 21 st	Backwell Village Club turn left before the George Dfc 6M ST497691	By invitation from Bill Charnock. Good running up the hill and good beer and cider on tap.
Feb 28 th	The Old Fox, Inner, Down, Old Down Dfc 9M ST617873	Another classic pub, this time up north. GBG watch out for the Black Rat
Mar 6 th	The Victoria, Chock Lane, Westbury Dfc 3M ST574774	GBG, GMC – Sometimes better to use village car park and walk to the pub
Mar 13 th	Langley Arms, Emerson's Green Dfc 5M ST 667773	GMC – It used to be smoky, but it isn't now. Butcombe and Gem reputed to be on tap.
Mar 20 th	Rising Sun, Pensford Dfc 6 M ST618637	GMC – Just to make a change from the George and Dragon. Also better parking.
Mar 27 th	The Bung Inn, (Turn left after the airport) Dfc 7M ST513640	The Lulsgate Pentangle – (see www.closetothecountryside.co.uk 'free CTTC routes')
Apr 3 rd	The Old Tavern, Blackberry Hill, Stapleton Dfc 3M ST625761	GBG brew pub – a similar route to the Duchess from the Masons
Apr 10 th	The Angel , Long Ashton Dfc 3M ST553710	GMC through Ashton Court
Apr 17 th	Queen's Head, Silver Street, Chew Magna Dfc 6M ST578633	GMC - the chunk from North Wick to Pensford, with a return on 2 Rivers Way
Apr 24 th	TACH RACE from the Lord Nelson at Cleeve Dfc 7M ST456656	Wrighton Woodland Run
May 1 st	Bridge Inn, Shortwood Dfc 5M ST674760	GMC - The Shortwood Short (See free CTTC routes) (also cider)
SAT May 3 rd	From the Arnolfini (10:30am) to Horfield Common (4pm)	Bristol Jack in the Green Parade. For details see: http://home.freeuk.com/bristoljack
SUN May 4 th	From the Blaise car park at about 7am	Green Man Challenge Relay v Hogweed Trotters
May 8 th	Beaufort Arms, Hawkesbury Upton Dfc 15M ST778869	GBG + a taste of the Cotswolds + a visit to Hogweed country
May 15 th ***	Merchants' Arms, Hotwells Dfc 1M ST572725	GBG (Bath Ales) run will go across the river ***
May 22 nd	TACH RACE from the Dundry Inn Dfc 4M ST557668	Dundry Thunder Run (Killer Edition)
May 29 th	White Hart, Cold Ashton Dfc 8M ST749729	Another taste of the Cotswolds
Dfc = Distance from Centre (IE Neptune's Statue) GBG = Good Beer Guide Entry GMC = Green Man Challenge section included in route *** see editorial		

Editorial

NB the run from the Merchant's Arms on May 15th has been designated a bring a friend run. So, if you have a friend, bring him or her along to this one if no other!

This quarter's run list has been heavily influenced by the Green Man Challenge, which has been on the editorial mind of late. Since the last edition of RRN three more Woodwooses have made the grade, starting with ex-TACH member, Dr Mark Vogan; aka Gyppo to his Fell Running Friends and Thieving Gypsy Bastard to the Hash House Harriers. However, even as he was receiving the Green Man Trophy at the Rose of Denmark, he had already lost his excellent record of 9 hours 49 mins to two other Fell Runners, Pete Darwood of Bishopston and Tim Laney of South Stoke, Bath, who completed in 8 hours 51 mins on the Saturday of the TACH do. (Didn't that turn out to be an excellent party by the way? Well done Mike!)

Meanwhile Hogweed Trotters have been agitating for a date for a Green Man Relay. I have always associated the Green Man with Spring, so I thought we might try for a loose link up with the Bristol Jack in the Green Parade, which this year is on Saturday May 3rd. I could not see a any way to make a direct link, so I have suggested we do it on Sunday 4th May. Any Comments?

Some Hogweeds also suggested they would like to come out training with us, preferably on the Forest Path, so I have put some suitable venues in the 8 weeks leading up to the end of April.

The Lulsgate Pentangle (Mar 27th) is a spin-off from Pete's Long One, which he invented to help us train for the Green Man Challenge. It is a distinct improvement on the 'round the airport' route. PS I've entered it among the free CTTC routes on the Closer to the Countryside website: www.closetothecountryside.co.uk There are quite a bunch of them there now, not all of them long!

The runs after 4th May are looking forward to the Cotswold Way Relay. I am beginning to think of ideas for June, so if there is somewhere you would particularly like us to run from, I'd get them in quickly if I were you!

Ed

PS See back pages for results of Chairman's run list questionnaire.

Running in the Rain

What would the world be, once bereft
Of wet and wildness? Let them be left,
O let them be left, wildness and wet;
Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.

Gerard Manley Hopkins

I rediscovered this piece by Manley Hopkins, because I use the last RRN as a template for the next.

What was I thinking about?

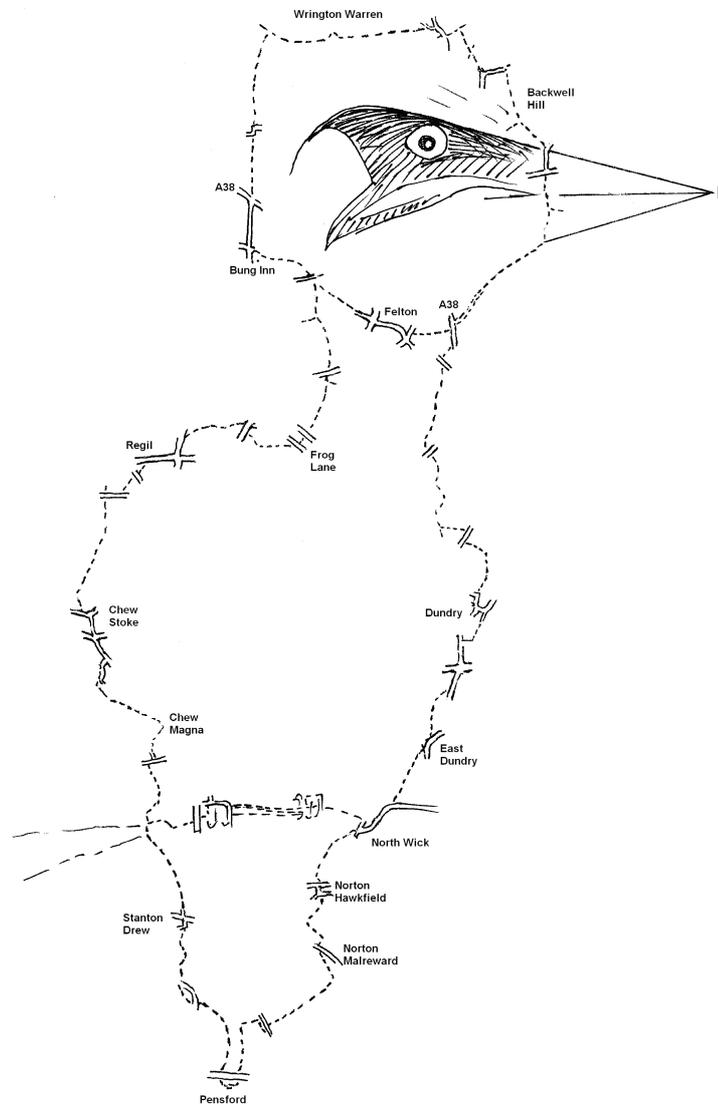
The 20-miler, which Pete de B, Mike Bastow and I did from Eastville Park on Dec 9th should have changed my mind if nothing else did. But now I recall that the rain petered out after ten miles or so, so the return trip along the banks of the Frome was only wet under foot. On the other hand, we did have to miss out the bit from the Winterbourne viaduct, because we were afraid the path would be underwater (it certainly looked as if it was when we passed the bridge). It was really only the bit through St George, down Troopers Hill and along the River Avon when we were getting the water down our necks as well as into our shoes.

I think it probably the continuous soaking of the feet that wears you down, more than the raindrops falling on your head, which can be dealt with by wearing a cap after all! After a twenty mile run, your feet can end up looking like albino prunes, and the continual sliding from side to side in the mud wears out the ankles and makes it feel as though you are going one step backwards for every two you take forwards.

The last run I did with Pete deB was the Two Rivers Way from the Lockkeeper at Keynsham to the Ship at Congresbury. On this occasion, the weather overhead was clear – bright even, but I was soaked up to my knees at the third stile out of Keynsham. (Pete wisely found an alternative route over the fence.) This would be a grand route to do in the summer, perhaps with a picnic half way and a pub crawl round Congresbury at the end, but I remember it chiefly for the conditions underfoot – especially the weird way that water sits at the top of hills as well as in the water meadows.

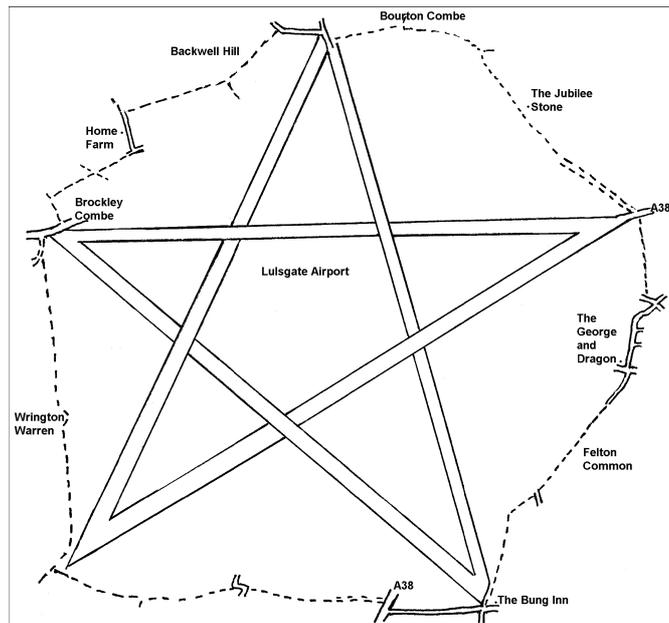
The previous week, I ran the last bit of the Green Man Challenge route with Mike Bastow. It must have gone alright because all I can really remember of it is washing my shoes in an enormous puddle near the Town and Country Motel, where Libby was

meeting us. The other detail we decided was the advisability of starting and finishing at the Dovecote. I know it is not as good as the Angel, but by the time we get there I doubt that we will care, and it avoids a nasty road crossing.

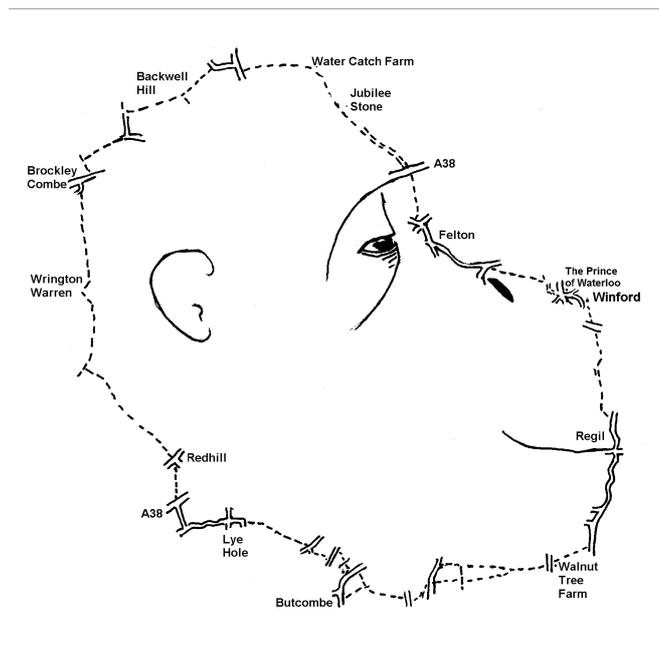


This handsome beast represents **Pete's Long One** – a 24-mile route Pete deB has devised from Dundry, based on a 12.5 mile route that I cobbled together from the Forest path, the 3 Peaks walk, the Two Rivers way and the Samaritans' way Southwest. I cannot recall how hard it was raining when we did it, but I am sure it was raining, at least when we started. I do remember that Pete and I rescued a suicidal lamb that had stuck its head through the wire netting alongside Elwell Lane. For me one of the main advantages of training for the Green Man Challenge is that it got me used to longer runs. This meant that I have discovered a whole group of new runs.

Two are directly inspired by Pete's Long One.



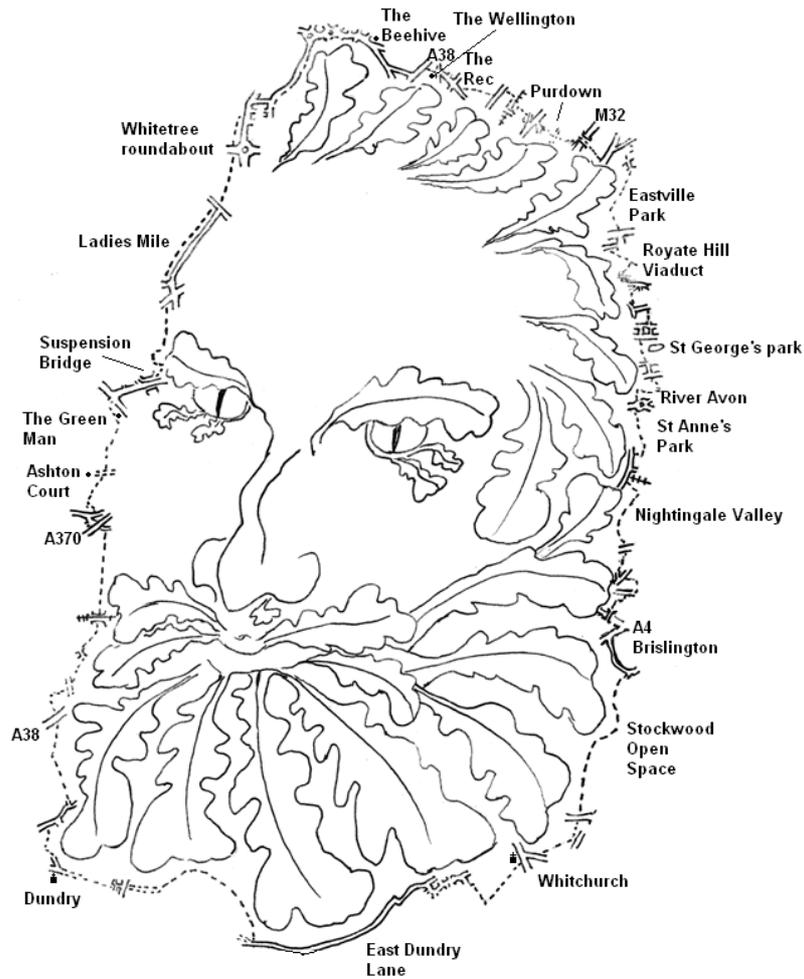
The **Lulsgate Pentangle**, which is the Green Woodpecker's head and an improvement on the Airport run from the Bung Inn



And **Waterloo**, which is 14 miles long.

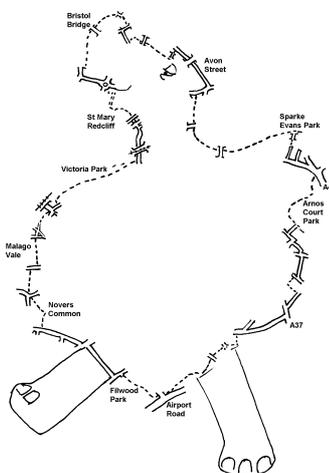
This was based on a reccie for the Two Rivers Way run. It combines a section of Pete's Long One with the middle section of the Two Rivers Way, which I didn't know.

Another route, which came to my notice through training for the Green Man Challenge is **The Green Man Route**, which is loosely based on the Bristol Ramblers' South Bristol Circular.



Isn't he handsome?

This route is about 21.5 miles and starts outside my door, although the route description starts at the Beehive. I think it works really well (except for East Dundry Lane, which sometimes seems like a tip.) Route descriptions for all of these can be found under Free CTTC routes on www.closetothecountryside.co.uk



Rhino Maiden

The one we didn't do from the Apple

Inn Discrimination

The last run list was declared 'the best run list ever' by your committee – based largely on the choice of pubs – but did the hostelrys live up to expectations? Certainly, **the Rose of Denmark** provided just the right atmosphere for our splendid twelfth night do; but writing after our visit to **the Apple** my overall satisfaction is tinged with disappointment. My initial response to the cider barge, coloured by the stench of faeces wafting up from the lower deck, was sh*t-hole. The cider was OK, but nothing special and did little to make up for the inadequate heating on the upper deck and the lack of a decent drink for non-cider-heads.

Some pubs, such as **the Black Horse** in Clapton in Gordano, **the Miners** at Long Ashton, the **Crown at Churchill** and the **Beaufort Arms** off the top of Blackboy Hill always seem to deliver a warm, convivial, relaxing atmosphere after a run, and some, like **the White Horse in Hambrook**, which I have always found to be perfectly fine on any other day of the week, always manage to disappoint on a Thursday. The deficiencies of **the White Horse** are a nuisance as it occupies a prime site on the Community Forest Path. At first, it was the smoke that put us off, but the last time we tried it after the smoking ban, they had run out of acceptable ale, so we went on a wander. **The Hambrook** looks terrible, so we tried **the Crown**, which had no reasonable beer either and the atmosphere was weirdly uncomfortable. There is now a brewery in Hambrook, but they are still stuck for a decent pub. Perhaps we should book into the Chinese restaurant if we return!

Some places, like **Zero Degrees** only work if you have enough of a crowd to dominate the place, in spite of the interesting beer. It was a great spot to wet Isaac's head, but when we went there on Dec 20th, we were only to glad to leave to try out the old Smiles Brewery Tap, which has been revamped by Butcome. The beer there was excellent of course, but I cannot say that I liked the 'modernisation'.

The number of people who turn out always makes a difference of course. We had good evenings at **the Inn on the Green** and **the Cornubia**, although in both places we had to enjoy our real ales in spaces that felt like corridors. On the other hand, no amount of excellent cider, in much better condition than that on the cider barge, could disguise the fact that there were only two people to enjoy it at **the Old Inn at Westerleigh** and **the Coronation in Dean Lane**. I suspect that Westerleigh is in the wrong place for many of us and 27th December is a difficult date for everybody.

Members

All fully paid-up members are now affiliated to UK Athletics and you should have received your official Card etc. **However** It has been a bit of a shambles this year as cards have only just been sent out (rather than last September as promised) and Membership Secs still can't access their club details to add new members and delete old ones! I'm sure it will all get ironed out in the end. Meanwhile, any problems? – let me know and do use your old TACH cards for races if your details haven't arrived. All clubs should accept this as they know all about the problems and are in the same boat as us!

While on the subject of races, it would be nice if we could circulate details of races you are planning to do. So either contact Club Captain Rob or let me know so I can post info on the weekly e-mail.

Happy Running - LB

Social Spot

Well done to our newly elected Social Sec for organising this year's Twelfth Night Dinner – it was a really enjoyable evening. The next social event is a proposed

Summer Barbecue: bring families and friends;

Venue: Ashton Court; provisional date: Sunday 18th May; bring own food, drink and games.

Please contact Mike Bastow with comments.

If you were at the last do, you **might** recall filling in a questionnaire devised by our esteemed Chairman. In case you have forgotten, you confessed to the following

Dirty Secrets: which included **I love wearing lycra!**, **snogging in kissing gates** and **running 25 miles without underwear**. Others confessed to things I had forgotten were dirty habits, such as spitting and clearing nostrils, going to bed with crusty legs and not washing after a run. Another admitted to cutting up more careful runners on muddy, rocky descents, which is just good race tactics. However, **getting a lift in a car** during a race is definitely cheating and what is **chasing dogs** all about, Mike? Apparently other views are possible about going to bed with crusty legs, as is shown by the list of **Targets**, which include the exasperated aim of cleaning up a spouse, who not only does not wash before going to bed, but he also wishes to inaugurate a **TACH streak race** and appears to believe that the Green Man is a form of the Roman god Priapus. More conventional targets involved beating other members of the club in races, running London in under 3 hrs, running silly distances and turning up for more TACH events.

Opinions about **Training Runs** were interesting, but not really surprising. The **Beaufort Arms in Hawkesbury Upton** is an excellent pub, even if the couple who mentioned it have personal motives – so do the pair who put forward **the Victoria in Chock Lane**. It was no surprise either that the **Crown at Churchill** received 2 honourable mentions along with **The Mendips**. The **Bag o'Nails**, was the only town pub mentioned, in spite of agitation in that direction. The bulk of the favourites cluster around the Chew Valley: **The Pony and Trap**, **the Queen's Head** in Chew Magna, the **Georges and Dragons** in Felton and Pensford and **the Miners** in Long Ashton.

There were no surprises with the least favourite either, though it was nice to see that some people liked them all. **The White Horse** in Hambrook is a particular bête noire, and there seems to be a general dislike of the flat area north of Bristol. Tarmac, housing estates and 'chavs' seem to arouse the ire of some members. Others are influenced by personal factors, such as distance from home, getting lost and being dragged along on the Chairman's epic.

Opinions were divided on the subject of **favourite race distances**, with about half favouring 10K; half liked longer distances and one claimed that 45 miles was his favourite, though I don't think he's done it yet!

These preferences were reflected in choices of **Favourite Races**, where three TACH races were mentioned along with the **Westonbirt 10K**. Others favoured greater challenges. Three went for **Man v Horse**, one wanted to **Race the Train**, whilst another went for the **Charmouth Challenge**, and the **LDWA Cotswold Challenge**. Also mentioned were the **OMM**, **Tanky's Trog**, the **Three Shires** and the **Rough and Tumble**, of which I know next to nothing.

However, details of actual deeds by TACH runners are hard to come by, although I have been able to discover that 3 TACH members took part in the **Slaughterford 9** viz: Mike Bastow in 1:12:09, John McD in 1:12:52 and Patrick Winstone in 1:16:04.

Patrick also did the **Riverbank Rollick** in 1:13:38, where Emma Oughton (GWR) was 3rd Vet 40 in 1:13:47. Old TACHer Dave Perkins also ran in Westbury Harriers colours.

But only one person actually wrote an account of his racing experiences:

May Hill Massacre

Chris Smart reports on a new race to us that starts in Huntley on the A40, 7 miles west of Gloucester and a few miles South of Newent.

This was the second running of the May Hill Massacre, an 8.5 mile, multi-terrain race on the edge of the Forest of Dean. I was attracted to it because May Hill was my stomping ground in my youth, but I hadn't been to the top of it for 30 years.

There is a short stretch of road from the start, before the route heads off-road and starts the climb to the top of May Hill (296m). After 250m of ascent, in the next mile or so, much of it through woods, one reaches the top of the hill with the clump of pines, planted to mark Queen Victoria's golden jubilee, which makes it such a recognisable landmark for many miles around. There are good views from the top, but there wasn't much time to re-acquaint myself with them before the start of the descent.

This is where the route makes use of forestry tracks with lots of mud and deep ruts. The course does a big loop through Newent Woods, much of it still on forestry tracks, before climbing half way back up May Hill. The final mile of the course covers the same paths and stretch of road as the first to reach the finish.

There were 413 finishers this year. The race is organised by an individual to raise funds for Cystic Fibrosis but has the support of local running clubs. The organisation can't be faulted and the course is well marshalled. Worth a try next year, maybe?

(I should think so! Ed)

Chris Smart (Woodrose I)

Good luck to Rob and Mike in the London Marathon!

PS check out relevant websites to see how Chris, Mike and Pete deB make out in the Green Man Challenge on Sunday 10th February.