

ROUGH RUNNING NEWS



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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Editorial

Thank you to those who have provided race reports for this edition. Chrissie Kelly has written her first race report about her first off-road race – the excellent Ironwood Challenge. Chris Bloor, otherwise referred to as the Gaveller in these pages, has written about the Hanham Horror and provided us with a bit of culture. The cultural theme is continued in Jonathan's report of the Llanbedr to Blaenafon Fell Race.

Our Club Captain, Rob Hicks has provided us with an update on his successful re-launch of the Club Championship. I can assure you that I did not commission this article just to show how well I am doing in the Championship standings.

A couple of sections of RRN that were new last month have been repeated this month. The inclusion of comments that have been written in the book after each training run is back – if you would like to see your comments in future editions, please make sure that your writing is legible and that you don't leave your comment as anonymous. We also have the race results for all TACH members – remember to let me know of any races you do that are off the local circuit.

You may notice that, compared to the last two issues of RRN, this one is somewhat lacking in photos. So, may I urge you send any race or training run photos taken in the next months to me at chris@chrismart.orangehome.co.uk.

Green Man News

A New Record

On 4th May a new record for completion of the Green Man Challenge was set. Martin Beale, who completed the Challenge last year, joined Martin Indge for his first attempt at the Challenge.

Martin Beale wrote:

Martin Indge and I went round in 7h19m52s. We did exactly the same splits as last year to Hambrook and then took 10 minutes per mile off the record pace for the last three legs. Conditions were pretty much perfect - cool and that drizzle just kept us at the right temperature.

Martin was well impressed with the route - as was I. There were a couple of excellent fields where we were running through the wildflowers - very nice.

The Green Man Trophy was presented to the two Martins in the Green Man pub on Tuesday 12th May by the Gaveller and the pub landlord.



Race Reports

The Ironwood Challenge

(by Chrissie Kelly)

Sunday, 1st March

It was a beautiful sunny day in Long Ashton as I embarked on my first off-road race, having only previously participated in two Bristol half marathons a few years ago.

We set off across the playing field and up a long but gentle incline. After a bit of scurrying around in the woods, the course opened up to amazing views of the surrounding countryside as we ploughed on (pun intended!) across elevated, grassy fields and a slightly more challenging furrowed one. I was able to appreciate the landscape and sunshine at this stage of the race, living in the moment and not planning for the hills to come. Ah, the naivety of the inexperienced race runner.

Lulled into a false sense of security and having nipped round a few participants in the fields, I was dismayed to notice many of them overtaking me back on the hills, where I was forced to slow down to a walk in places on nearly every hill. I hung out for quite a bit of the course with two Bitton Road Runners in their distinctive blue and yellow vests, determined to keep with them and not let them pull away. We to-ed and fro-ed for quite a while, till eventually one of them pulled away in front and I was left following the other at a gentle pace through the woods towards the end.

As we emerged back into the sunny fields, I found new energy to increase my pace a bit, overtake, bumble up the last hill, and enjoy the incline towards the finishing field at which point a helpful marshal told me the next runner was about 100 metres behind me and urged me to keep going. I managed a last minute sprint to the finish to complete my first trail race. The pace was badly-managed by me definitely, but I learnt a lot from taking part and now hill work is regularly scheduled in on my weekly training and I'm learning to embrace those hills! Slowly ...

The Horror! The Horror!

(from the Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad)

(by The Gaveller)

I wasn't going to run in this race (the Hanham Horror, 12th April) – I had even crossed it off the calendar in the kitchen. The problem was a self-inflicted rib injury – picked up on a night run from the Old Fox at Inner Down, Old Down three weeks earlier. I hadn't bothered to have it checked out, because – be they bruised or bent – the medics can do nowt about it. But the rumour mill suggested that I would be out of action for six weeks.

However, a try out at the Lathwayt Arms the previous Thursday suggested that the ribs were getting better and I remembered that the Hanham Horror was supposed to be my first race as a Vet 60. So, the night before the race, I decided to have a go – if only to pick up some points in the Club Championship!

I arrived early enough to make sure that I got an entry and to distribute some leaflets for the Open Spaces Society, which gave me an opportunity to chat.

One of the first people I met was Paul Cann, who hasn't been out with TACH for ages. It turned out that he had been preoccupied with getting married to Jane – CONGRAULATIONS! - and moving into a new house in Long Ashton – they should be out with us soon. Dickie Scallon was also out, with his son who had just come back from a foot injury - Dickie was keen to remind me that he had volunteered to marshal at Wrington. Martin Bird from Nailsea, who has run with us occasionally, was also there.

The regular TACH contingent consisted of Pete Kennedy, Emma Oughton (with Lucien Campbell-Kemp (GWR) in tow – he wants to do the Green Man Challenge), Jonathan Gledson, Chris Smart, John McDonough, Chrissie Kelly and myself. Cathy Fagg was there, but she was running in Nailsea colours, and Sue Low was there too with a crowd of Sole Sisters.

As PK and Emma warmed up round the football pitch, I noticed a number of blokes using the rail around it as a barre to stretch and practice their ballet moves – what is about this race? – John noticed people running like ballerinas last year!

John said that the course had changed and so it had. I thought it a great improvement. An early pinch point had been largely eliminated by starting in the field beyond the sports ground, cutting through a residential area and down Conham Hill to the River Park. This gave the organisers a marshalling headache and gave us an unwelcome stretch of tarmac, but it did mean that it was over a mile and a half before I came to a hold up on the tow path at the bottom of some steps. And I dare say I could have avoided that if I hadn't started so resolutely at the back!

The changes also gave the spectators a good view as we came back through the start field. The descent down some more steps to the tow path was much less of a problem than formerly because the field was well spread out – but John McD must have had a problem because he was waiting by the pipe at the bottom – I expect it was his knee.

The rest of the course was much as I remembered it. Much of it was unseasonably dry, but they did find one satisfactory boggy patch to put us through twice. I felt that I did all right – considering – although I was gasping for breath by the time I reached the top of the rope climb.

Emma Oughton was second woman overall and first FV40 behind a slip of a girl from Bristol AC who had only three blokes to beat to win outright. Martin Bird and Cathy Fagg picked up prizes wearing Nailsea vests (2nd MV40 and 1st FV50). Jonathan Gledson was the first home in a TACH vest (4th MV40) just outside the prizes. PK won a consolation prize, which I picked up for him.



Jonathan skirts the mud with PK in pursuit

Results for TACH runners (including those who have ever run with TACH in brackets)

9th	Martin Bird	2nd MV40	42:51)
17th	Jonathan Gledson	4th MV40	44:20
20th	Pete Kennedy		44:33
42nd	Emma Oughton	2nd SF (1st FV40)	48:29
(65th	Patrick Scallon		51:09)
75th	Chris Smart	MV50	51:53
(142nd	Paul Cann	MV50	57:30)
164th	Chris Bloor	4th MV60	59:25
169th	Cathy Fagg	1st FV50	59:54
(197th	Dickie Scallon	MV50	1:02:24)
207th	Chrissie Kelly	FV40	1:02:49
(209th	Sue Low	FV40	1:03:10)

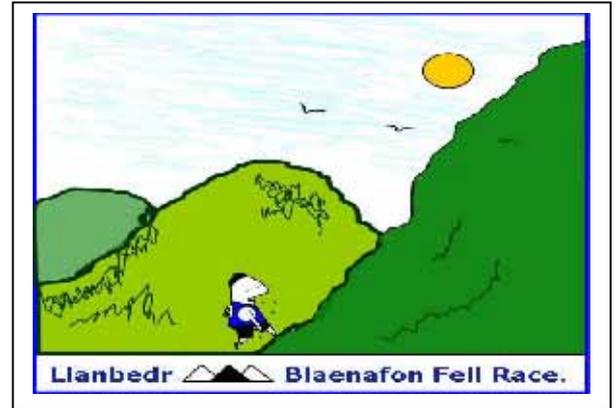
Llanbedr To Blaenafon Fell Race

(by Jonathan Gledson)

Saturday, 4th April

The marathon training schedule was becoming oppressive. I wondered if my legs could survive the months of hard road pounding. Seeking a break from the tarmac totalitarian regime, I scanned the Runners World listings and something caught my eye: a 15 mile fell race with three big hills on the edge of the Brecon Beacons including a killer climb up the Blorenghe — a great lump of a hill overlooking Abergavenny.

On race day the weather is clear and bright and I meet with Antony at Blaenafon rugby club and register. I probably shouldn't be doing it three weeks before the Marathon. He probably shouldn't be doing it two weeks before the Highlander. I should be grinding out another 22 slow miles on tarmac but this seems like more fun.



After registering, we drive to the start at Llanbedr which is certainly a change of scene. Blaenafon is small town in the South Wales valleys. Llanbedr is a quaint little village hidden away in the national park. It's warm for early April so we leave the recommended "full body cover" in the car. The start is held up by a flock of sheep in the lane and then by late arriving runners who've had trouble finding the place.

Once we start, it's a short descent into a wooded valley followed by a zig-zagging climb up through the woods on the other side and then out onto the open country. It is clear that those who know the area are finding their own way between check points. It also becomes clear that, for those not among the athletically gifted, this is a race with a certain amount of walking required.

In "What I Talk About When I Talk About Running", the novelist Haruki Murakami claims that his proudest achievement is the fact that in 23 years of Marathon running, although his times were unremarkable, he never once walked. He wants his gravestone to be inscribed with the words "At least he never walked". All I can say is that if he really wants that epitaph, he should steer clear of fell running. Trying different techniques to keep yourself moving upwards is part of the fun. Vigorous arm swinging to keep up the momentum or short pitter-patter steps? Maybe hands pushing down on knees. Whatever method you favour, it's inevitable that at some point you will walk.

This is a beautiful place for a walk though. Table Mountain is close by and beyond that the rest of the Beacons ripple hazily into the distance. It's not far to the first checkpoint at Crug Mawr trig point. Then we double back along the ridge until a steep descent brings us to the second check point where the twins from the 118 ads are taking our numbers dressed in 1970s athletics gear and moustaches. We run down into the valley bottom before the next climb which is the Sugarloaf. None of these peaks actually qualifies as a real mountain (the Sugarloaf falls just short of the required 2000ft) but with a total ascent of 4500ft I think I can claim to have run (or walked) up the equivalent of two mountains. The line taken up the Sugarloaf is fairly gentle so I actually manage to do some uphill running. The route also gives you a great, if worrying, view of the Blorenghe just in case you've forgotten the horror that lies ahead.

From the Sugarloaf summit, it's a rocky path down towards Abergavenny. A dry spell has made the ground very hard and I'm regretting the choice of fell shoes. The descent takes us along a pleasant wooded valley and through a farm to the road section through Abergavenny. Even after dried out footpaths, the road running is a shock to the legs and a reminder of what I'm taking a break from.

After crossing the river, we begin the climb up to the Blorenghe. The scooped out face, visible for miles around, looks bad enough but I wasn't prepared for the prolonged ascent just to get to the steep bit. Once

there, it's the kind of climb that makes your whole body hurt. Half way up I glance back to see a line of runners labouring slowly upwards. They don't seem to be gaining on me and I wonder if any of the leading pack managed to run up (or if anyone has, ever!). Eventually I see a welsh flag and a marshal at the top of the slope. As I go over he directs me toward the summit but I'm so exhausted, I can barely make sense of his simple instruction and he has to repeat it as I start to stagger the wrong way. Once back on track, I get my breath back and follow the rocky path along the top.

I'm overtaken by a woman from MDC (South Wales Mountain Running Club). I try desperately to hang on as the markers on the final leg are scarce and she seems to know the twisting, turning route down to Blaenafon. A good move as the last half mile through the streets to the finish is completely unmarked.

At the finish, feelings of relief, joy and satisfaction hit me as I sink to the pavement. Only after I've showered, changed and had another drink do my breathing and heart rate return to normal. It's been a very hard run but hugely enjoyable. To cap it all there is a huge free buffet awaiting us in the rugby club bar. Antony and I refuel and reflect on the race. In spite of the navigational shortcomings, it's a definite hit and a diary date for next year.

Training Runs

Three Peaks Of North-East Somerset

(by The Editor)

Inspired by an article in a local newspaper, the esteemed Gaveler organised a training run around this 16-mile circuit on 15th February. Fifteen runners met in the Chew Magna car park at 09:00 on a dry, brisk morning.

The route took us north, through North Wick, before turning east to bag the first of our peaks – Maes Knoll. We were joined on top of this ancient hill fort by a number of off-road vehicles, to the drivers of which our intrepid leader bravely pointed out the need for land-owner permission for such environmental vandalism (my words – not the ones he used to them).

We then headed south through Norton Malreward, where we joined the Green Man Challenge route as far as Pensford. Libby and Jana met us in Pensford with gratefully-received refreshments. After a brief halt, we re-joined the path, continuing generally southward through Lord's Wood and on to Strawberry Hill, the second objective in our circuit.

In Clutton the refreshment team met us once more and their wares were even more gratefully received, before we turned northwest for the few miles to Knowle Hill. With all three peaks in the bag, the pace picked up as thoughts turned to the final objective – the Queen's Arms back in Chew Magna for a well-deserved lunch.

Thanks to Chris, Libby and Jana for leading and sustaining us upon this excellent run.



On top of the world – well, Maes Knoll

Bag O' Nails (Handicap Race)

12/02/09

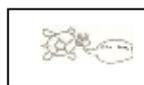
It was nice to come out again on a Thursday and even better to go home with a medal! I did find hurtling down pitch-black alleys a bit disconcerting – and at one stage nearly crashed into a banker staggering home from work.

Mark W

Ran the recce and then did the timing – didn't have to wait too long as all nine came in pretty quickly. Sue was also out helping.

Libby

Well, I haven't run for a month so tonight was a challenge. good to do a bit of sprinting and clear my lungs. Steve but still managed to overtake me – he did very well. Glad to be back in the saddle.



I really enjoyed it and it was moaned about his handicap

Turtle

Dundry Inn

19/02/09

Great run tonight. You can guarantee that a run from this pub won't be flat and tonight's didn't disappoint with lots of ups and downs. Well done to Pete deB, who chose a great route and then shot up Elwell Lane like a rat up a drainpipe.

Turtle

TACH runs have been getting a bit soft. Need to put the TACH back into TACH. More mud and hills please.

Pete deB

The Salutation, Henbury

26/02/09

Excellent night with some new faces. Enjoyable to watch people's reaction to a first night run. A good rout and an enjoyable evening

Don Juan

Enjoyed first run in the dark – was rather unusual. Friendly and sociable. Looking forward to the Summer Pub Series

Sue Lowe

Great to be back after a week away. The Weston Prom does not compare to running hills in the dark. Path along the motorway was noisy but I loved cutting through Blaise – and a free history lesson as well!

Cathy

White Hart, Weston-in-Gordano

05/03/09

Lovely night – stars, moon etc. Turned off torch to appreciate the moonlight. I think that stretch by Cadbury Camp should be called Childbirth Lane – because I always forget how much I hate running over those stones.

The Gaveller

Hurray – Duncan was here to receive his certificate!

Thanks to CS for leading the 5-mile route so I was able to get a run in. New shoes survived hills and freezing water.

Libby

The Swan, Conham

12/03/09

Felt a bit like the walking wounded tonight – PK back from injury, CS and PdB carrying post-Grizzly injuries, myself feeling lethargic. View from Trooper's Hill perked me up. Discovered loads of trails in my own backyard that I'd never seen before.

Jonathan

I'm back, I'm bad and I'm hungry – but not hungry enough to sample the pub's 'finest sausages'. To concur with PdB, once again Chris B has magic-ed paths where once there were woods. **Pete K**

The Fox, Inner Down, Old Down

19/03/09

Or is it The Old Fox? I fell over on the first descent into the wood from Inner Down and banged my rib. I carried on but it stiffened up when I tried uphill in the wood with a hill fort on it. I knew exactly where I was from a hash so I decided to drop out and head back to the pub.

The Gaveller

Great run. I fell over early and broke my thumbnail quite badly. Ow! I was wearing my pack so the momentum meant that I couldn't stop myself as soon as I started falling.

Turtle

Oh dear! One third of the group fell and got injured. David's football-size knee is the most dramatic injury.

Ed.

The Prince's Motto, Barrow Gurney

26/03/09

The Woman At The Farm. "What are you doing?" she asked. "Just running along the footpath" I replied. "You're not allowed to use footpaths at night!!" she exclaimed. I politely disabused her of this strange notion.

Ed.

A couple of twists and turns – some good climbs. Couple of rutted paths – what can you say. Pub has a pleasant ambience.

Pete K

The Victoria, Chock Lane

02/04/09

(The Gaveller's 60th Birthday Run)

Complex, multiple-route run laid in flour because my ribs still hurt. Several hashers out (Sweat Monster, Legover and Sex Goddess) as well as new runners.

The Gaveller

Well done Chris & Libby for a lovely evening. Well organised routes, great camaraderie, pizzas in the pub – what more can you say?

Sue

Very enjoyable. Very scenic route with good terrain – nice and dry as well. I was at the back and everyone was very friendly and encouraging – thanks!

Claire

Blathwayt Arms, Landsdown

09/04/09

Lovely route for climbers – with fantastic views from the hilltops and some ‘let it all go’ descents. Landlord persuaded to let us have a couple of bowls of chips even though he only had one chef working and five tables waiting for food. Tribute and chips – a result for the hardcore. **Don Juan**

Turtle led up the hill past the mad woman’s farm – apparently she is apt to wield a shotgun, I met her on Tuesday at a ROW meeting – she reminded me of my mother – ‘my family has been here since 1651, etc.’. Unfortunately for her, most of her farm has been declared to be ‘access land’. **The Gaveller**

Old Inn, Congresbury

16/04/09

(TACH 14th Anniversary Run)

Rain threatened and it started off a bit cold, so we sheltered in John’s car until the off. Grest route and just the right length. **David**

My last TACH run before the marathon. Nice long climb through Wrington Wood – wild garlic everywhere. Great little pub with entertainment. **Jonathan**

George, Abbot’s Leigh

23/04/09

Woods and wild garlic – a charming run in good company. **Don Juan**

Had a great run tonight. Fantastic route from Chris and he’d organised some superb weather for the evening too.

Last weekend I ran the Highlander Mountain Marathon, with Mark ‘Gypsy’ Vogan, from Inverness. We had a brilliant time, with 1,800m of ascent on Saturday and 1,200m on Sunday. It’s a great event including a bar and ceilidh at the overnight camp. **Turtle**

(Thought I would include the above as the Highlander MM race report has not materialised. Ed.)

Priory, Portbury

30/04/09

(Bluebell Run)

Organising the route means I have really made the most of the bluebells this year. Early on Sunday morning, when I recced the route, I thought I would have a tranquil run through the bluebells. It was not to be – I had chosen the same day as the Charlton Farm Granny Walk – the route was crowded with grannies. **Ruth**

Well. A lovely run courtesy of Ruth (with some back-seat driving from Jason). Lots of muddy hills with some good fast sections where we could stretch our legs. Pants pub but the beer is good – hurrah! **Turtle**

Club Championship 2009

Quarter 1

(by El Capitan)

The Club Championship started back at the Fox (Old Down) on the 1st January with the seven runners present kicking things off. The first quarter ended at the Victoria (WoT) at the end of March.

The Club Championship has had years of great success and others of apparent apathy. Years where many runners have competed to claim the trophy and others where it has remained on the same mantle uncontested. The championship has been administered by non running members in some years and through various systems of self administration in others. Points have been won for racing performance, member recruitment, handicap relays and regular training as well as others awarded by the captain or committee for other achievements.

This year a simple scoring method of points for training, racing and supporting the club has been introduced. Extra points are given for leading training runs and winning handicap races. A monthly Championship Race has been included with the aim of improving TACH turnout at certain local events (this has had limited success) again with extra points. The scoring has been recorded whilst having a drink and has generated interest in some members, others are clearly less interested – or maybe more interested in the beer!

The table so far.....

Chris Smart –	116 points
Chris Bloor -	90 points
John McDonough –	80 points
Jonathan -	57 points
Cathy -	53 points
Turtle -	47 points
Libby -	41 points
David -	35 points

The rest of us range between 34 and fewer. I will keep the figures to date safe and add the second quarter to them (so don't despair if you are falling behind).

The upcoming selected races are:

June 23rd – Beacon Batch

July 23rd – Tintern Trot

August 19th – Crook Peak Cake Race

It seems the key is to lead a few Thursday training runs and get out and race – my idea of a worthy Club Champion

Race Results

Results for TACH Members

Tough Ten Challenge 10 miles 22/02/2009 - 1069 finishers		
Name	Time	Position
Robert Hicks	1hr 01:42	22
Cathy Fagg	1hr 26:22	604
Peter Ellis	1hr 27:51	650

The Terminator 11 miles 22/02/2009 - 691 finishers		
Patrick Winstone	1hr 43:17	150

Ironwood Challenge 6 miles 01/03/2009 - 113 finishers		
Patrick Winstone	53:12	44
Chris Smart	54:14	53
Chris Bloor	1hr 01:28	82
Peter Ellis	1hr 05:40	93
Chrissie Kelly	1hr 08:41	98

Grizzly 20 miles 08/03/2009 - 1446 finishers		
Peter de Boer	3hr 16:44	217
Emma Oughton	3hr 26:33	338
Patrick Winstone	3hr 26:34	339
John McDonough	3hr 41:20	519
Chris Smart	4hr 14:07	956
Antony Clark	dnf - shoe disaster	

Hogweed Hilly Half Marathon 22/03/2009 - 270 finishers		
Jonathan Gledson	1hr 34:18	24
Emma Oughton	1hr 41:46	52
Chris Smart	1hr 47:11	88
Patrick Winstone	1hr 47:12	89
Cathy Fagg	1hr 56:51	171

Harptree Havoc 10k 29/03/2009 - 69 finishers		
Cathy Fagg	52:43	51

Llanbedr - Blaenavon Fell Race 15 miles 04/04/2009 - 61 finishers		
Jonathan Gledson	2hrs 52:11	19
Antony Clark	3hrs 14:33	36

Hanham Horror 6 miles 12/04/2009 - 296 finishers		
Jonathan Gledson	44:20	17
Peter Kennedy	44:33	20
Emma Oughton	48:29	42
Chris Smart	51:53	75
Chris Bloor	59:25	164
Cathy Fagg	59:54	169
Chrissie Kelly	1hr 02:49	207

Highlander Mountain Marathon 19/04/2009 - 'B' Class		
Antony Clark (Day 1)	7hrs 13:15	6
Antony Clark (Day 2)	5hrs 50:31	6

Frenchay 10k 19/04/2009 - 577 finishers		
Chrissie Kelly	51:49	237

London Marathon 26/04/2009 - 35247 finishers		
Jonathan Gledson	3hrs 43:14	5482

Pensford 10k 26/04/2009 - 251 finishers		
Patrick Winstone	47:57	86
Tony Bishop	49:21	104

Long Ashton 10k 03/05/2009 - 159 finishers		
Peter Kennedy	40:30	15
Mike Bastow	44:33	39
Patrick Winstone	46:56	62
Dickie Scallan	52:26	100

Bristol 10k 10/05/2009 - 6144 finishers		
David Giles	52:31	2135

Summer Spectacular Run List

THURSDAY RUN-LIST: SUMMER		
TACH RUNS START at 7pm (with 10 minutes leeway for latecomers)		
WHEN?	WHERE?	WHY?
May 21 st	The Bowl Almondsbury Dfc 7M ST604841	Chris and Libby's anniversary run
May 28 th	The Compton Inn Compton Dando Dfc 10K ST646646	It might be the race route, but there are other good routes from here
June 4 th	Rowberrow Rabbit Run Swan at Rowberrow Dfc 13M ST451583	TACH race (starts 7-15pm) – all hands to the pump
June 11 th	White Hart, Bridge Yate Dfc 5M ST681733	Jonathan Special
June 18 th	Gloucester Old Spot, Dursley Dfc 19M ST753981	A Touch of the Cotswolds
June 25 th	Prince's Motto, Barrow Gurney Dfc 4M ST530679	They're offering chips!
July 2 nd	Pony and Trap, New Town SE of Chew Magna Dfc 7M ST588613	Folly Farm, hills and dales
July 9 th	Dundry Thunderer Dundry Inn Dfc 4M ST557668	TACH race (starts 7-15 pm) – all hands to the pump
July 16 th	The Crown, Churchill Dfc 12M ST445595	A Mendip classic.
July 23 rd	Tintern Trot Anchor Inn, Tintern Dfc 18M SO532001	6M MT championship race. Club runners £5 on the night only. Race starts 7-15 pm Suggest lift shares to cut bridge toll.
July 30 th	The Windmill, Portishead Dfc 8M ST458767	Views over to Wales and the seaside
August 6 th	Burrington Blaster Burrington Inn, Burrington Coombe Dfc 12M ST 476589	TACH race (starts 7-15 pm) – all hands to the pump
August 13 th	Lock and Weir, Hanham Abbots, Dfc 4M ST 648700	A riverside pub with seating near the weir. Should be a good evening.
August 20 th	George and Dragon, Pensford, Dfc 6M ST620638	An attack on Maes Knoll – a version of Turtle's run
August 27 th	Blue Flame, Nailsea Dfc 7M ST448690	Probably Bill's route. It seems to be the best from this excellent pub.
Dfc = Distance from Centre (IE Neptune's Statue)		