

King Ali & Queen Katie rule

Hot favourites for triathlon gold at the London Olympics Alistair and Jonathan Brownlee, took first and second at the eighteenth Daleside Auld Lang Syne race on New Year's Eve, but family bragging rights went to 23 year old Alistair as he just had the edge to become King Ali. Younger brother Jonny, fresh from winning the Chevin Chase on Boxing Day for the second year where he won by a proverbial country mile and blitzed the 850 odd finishers, had to settle for second place for the second year in succession, last year it was to Andi Jones. Mind you Haworth Moor is a far cry from the Olympics in London where both Alistair and Jonny have been selected to compete in the triathlon.

The moor was at its best after the warmest December for five years, very wet, very muddy and very testing with standing water in many places and a strong wind facing the 401 runners.

The World Championship Triathlon Brownlee

pair stormed away from the off and even the swollen crossing of Sladen Beck couldn't put a dampner on these two as they took it in turns into the head wind along the Pennine Way to Top Withins ruin and Stanbury Trig Point. 'I took the lead fifty meters from the Trig and on the rough descent back to the Pennine Way took my chance. Out of Sladen Beck I just kept pushing, knowing that Jonny never gives up. I crossed the line, tired, exhausted and knackered, but very happy to win the race for the third time. Two races, the Reebok 10k where I ran 29.15 and this have taken their toll, but I'm happy to be running so well in December, because last year I was injured. After the prize giving fun we celebrated the New Year in Ilkley,' said ITU World Series champion Alistair. Both these athletes have competed for many years in this race and Jonny said, 'Ali is fresher than me at the moment, and just had the edge, he even pulled a few

more seconds out of me on the last really muddy moorland crossing back to the finish. This is my fifth year here, and it's always so much fun. The 2008 race was amazing, everybody finished with grey hair because of the freezing conditions and had ice crystals everywhere. I crossed the line and my shoes were frozen solid, where as today the weather was boiling for Penistone Hill. Training is going well especially after winning the Chevin Chase for the second time, although all this rain is getting to be a bit tedious and I wouldn't mind some snow,' said U23 World Tri champion Jonny. The Brownlee's nearest rival was two minutes behind in the shape of the Lakelander Chris Steele, while it was another minute to Matt Lockyer in fourth.

Twelve times ALS winner Ian Holmes had a nightmare start when a collision with Christian Holmes put him on the floor and he spent the race chasing the rest, 46 year old Ian amazingly

Ali leading the Brownlee train





Above: Phil Livermore makes a splash
Below: Good job I stayed on my feet



pulled through to seventh and won the V40 title for the seventh time. 'Christian caught my leg from behind. He was gutted about it and was very apologetic. I took a couple of stumbles and thought I'd managed to get away with it, but ended up falling,' said Ian who did still manage to take revenge on Stoop winner Sam Tosh.

Phil Taylor from Rossendale took that V50 beer pump trophy for the third time with Steve Carter winning the V60's and 'Caveman' Norman Bush the V70's.

Two more world class triathletes graced the race: U23 World silver medalist David McNamee finished thirteenth, while Slovakian Richard Varga slid across the finish line in his road shoes just one place behind.

England internationals finished in the first four places in the women's competition: 27 year old Katie Walshaw won the ladies race to become the Queen of the moor finishing thirty-fifth overall, with Withins Skyline winner Jo Buckley second, Kate Bailey third and English U18 champion Beckie Taylor fourth. 'I really

loved that, mud, river crossings, anything a little mad I really enjoy. I wanted to finish in the first fifty so my new coach Kath Farquhar will be chuffed. I want to focus on the fells and Mountain Running, and maybe after this win I'll start to believe in myself more, especially since I had tonsillitis over Christmas and didn't believe I was that fit,' said the West Yorkshire XC series champion Katie, who is a teaching assistant. Aly Raw won the FV40 prize in seventh and was fanastically dressed as a cheetah, while Karen Taylor emulated husband Phil by winning the FV50 prize and Aileen Baldwin won the FV60.

Ilkley Harriers with Sally Morley in sixth, Emma Barclay in twelfth and Kate Acrher in nineteenth again collected the ladies team chocolate awards. Queen Katie and King Ali will now grace the beer bottle label that all the runners will receive in the 2012 race.

Fell runners are an extreme breed and the fancy dress definitely proved that, with Clive Greatorex and Phil Cooke providing the most entertainment dressed as Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer. They even pulled a sleigh full of presents, how they completed the course is

a mystery, but we can guarantee there was no flying involved! 'We took it in turns to be the rear end, my back is killing me now, that was hard work,' said an ashen faced Clive. Others to bring joy and laughter on the overcast day were Sam Watson and Paul Carman running in The Wharfedale Bath Tub, Colin Moses in full Zulu Warrior attire, Sophie Brown as a bouncy Tigger, Sarah Smith as a honey loving Bumble Bee, Mark Birbeck as a rich Arab and Janet Chaplin as Mrs. Claus who all won Daleside beer gift packs. Infact there were so many that official starter Louis Holmes was spoilt for choice, just look at all the photographic evidence on woodentops.org.uk. Next year will see more fancy dress prizes because Avatar, Bertie bassett, Beetlejuice, Robin Hood were fantastic and deserved prizes, sorry we missed you. Even our official race sweeper, Dave Throup, was swept up in the fancy dress, as he dressed up as Trigger from the tv comedy *Only Fools and Horses* and even carried a broom. A special thanks and mention must go to all the helping hands who make this race what it is – without them the race simply couldn't go ahead.

English U18 champion Jack Ross leads U18 British & Irish champion Marc Scott





Once a fell runner always a fell runner ...you can never give up something you love

By Three times Junior English champion Kate Bailey

Many people who are old enough may remember me as a junior fell runner. With very supportive parents my brother, Simon, and I were often seen in junior races. I trained and raced hard and this paid off in my achievements – it seems a long time ago now! My England vest tally reached fifteen and I also managed to run for Great Britain at senior level – it makes me smile when I see juniors giving the seniors a run for their money now! The moment I am most proud of was when I won an individual bronze medal at the World Mountain Junior championships in Borneo. I disappeared off the racing scene for seven years when I embarked on my veterinary science degree. Unfortunately shortly after starting university I developed reactive arthritis and this combined with an intensive course lead to me running just to keep fit.

However on graduating I soon caught the racing bug again. Being based in Snowdonia I had plenty of mountains surrounding me to entice me back. Once a fell runner always a fell runneryou can never give up something you love. Over the last few years I have really enjoyed my running and have even competed for England again – much to my surprise! In September I came sixth in the Commonwealth 33 mile trail race and helped England to team gold. It is great to get out and do as many races in the calendar as possible. They are all so

different, I love the challenge of the fell races – some short and fast, some long and brutal and some needing navigational skills. I think my forte may well lie with the longer races.

Apart from running, a lot of my time is taken up with being a large animal vet in Staffordshire. Having farming roots I find the challenges of the work very rewarding. Every day is different and there are definite highs and lows – from performing a caesarean to getting called out on a cold winters night for a calving!

My spare time is also action packed. When I am not running you may find me in a kayak bashing down some rapids or in a canoe on an overnight river trip. I took these sports up when I met my fiancé Geraint who, under my influence, has caught the fell running bug. I also love mountain biking and long days out walking on the hills with Geraint and my two naughty terriers, Gamlam and Dyfi. Holidays often consist of walking the long distance national trails with my home on my back for a couple of weeks. On the more sedentary side I have an allotment and I love cooking. I really never have a dull moment.

Last year was my first experience of the well known Woodentops races. Having competed in the Withins Skyline, Geraint and I were crazy enough to come back on New Year's Eve. Dave had put a little more pressure on me by giving me an elite name 'number', so this only added to

my competitiveness! The race day previously has been graced with cold icy weather, this year there was wind and rain on the moors, but I suppose it was December! As I have been competing in a lot of ultra runs my legs always seem to be in shock when I ask them to do a fast six miler, so I was chuffed when I came third. The race was great fun with plenty of mud, a few tough climbs, a great river crossing not to mention the prize giving! The fancy dress costumes were fantastic, especially the two guys in the bath tub and the others in the reindeer outfit.

I think that I shall have to give the fancy dress a go next time.



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Clockwise from above: Kate Bailey runs in the Commonwealth ultra race finishing sixth and helping England to team gold. Third lady at ALS Kate Bailey; Simon & Kate Bailey West Nab winners 2000

Oops – I seem to have left the bath running!

By Sam Watson

The question has been asked on quite a few occasions, by quite a few people: WHY?

Neither Paul or myself can answer why we would want to run a fell race in the middle of winter, semi naked, in a bath tub. I guess it must have just been a rush of blood to the head.

The idea I think first came to mind in a discussion between Andy 'Wharfee' Holden and myself about what fancy dress costumes we were going to do the race in. Andy who ran as a rich Arab told me about some blokes from Bingley Harriers, I think he said their names were Ian Holmes and Ian Ferguson ...never heard of them to be honest! These two seemingly did fancy dress in a canoe with the bottom chopped off, so the idea was born, although Paul didn't know it yet!

We managed to get a bath donated from fell runner and plumber extraordinaire Derek Walkden, and I was pleasantly surprised how light the bath was. That was until Paul decided it would be a good idea to fasten some solid steel taps on the front of it, trebling the weight of the bloody thing!!!

Race day arrived and up until the morning

of the race, I'm pretty sure neither of us had contemplated how far the race was. Nor had we taken into account the weather conditions, rain, wind and freezing cold and that was just at home. For those not familiar with Penistone Hill, it's always about five degrees colder than anywhere else in the UK.

I arrived at the race to find Paul and our transport ready, but Paul was having second thoughts on doing it topless, I reassured him, it wasn't actually that cold and the tops came off. Paul did say it might also have something to do with the fact that I liked getting my top off! We set off on our test run which just happened to be down to the start line. There was quite a few people just staring, as if they'd never seen a couple of blokes running in a bath, what's wrong with these people?

The shout went up 'GO' and off we went like a rocket! Just in front of a reindeer and Colin Moses in full Zulu Warrior attire. By the time we had left the quarry a mere hundred yards, my arms were starting to ache and my shower cap had fallen over my eyes. The race sort of flew by in a strange way, and once we got going I didn't

Sam Watson at Kettlewell



Photos © Dave Woodhead www.woodentops.org.uk

The Wharfedale bath tub - Paul Carman & Sam Watson



Photo © David Brett www.photos-dsb.co.uk

feel the cold. Some of the funniest comments were, 'My running career has hit a whole new low, I've just been overtaken by a bath' and 'I have been overtaken by many fancy dress outfits, but never a bath'.

The only remaining question is what fancy dress next year?

Suggestions can be sent to
i'vegotagoodidea,doityourself.co.uk

I took up running at an early age, and completed my first fell race at Lotherdale Show at the age of eight. I was introduced to the sport by my then football coach, John Thompson who suggested having a go when we had a game called off. In my first full season I took part in the

British Open Fell Running Association (BOFRA) championship and loved every race! I have competed at every age group level, from U12's up to U17's. I won my first BOFRA championship in 2005, when I won the U23 title, I won this again in 2007 and 2008. My best senior finish came last year when I finished third behind Alistair Dunn of Helm Hill runners and my Wharfedale team mate Ted Mason.

Although I am probably better at shorter races, two of my favourite races are on the FRA calendar, the Ben Nevis in Scotland, because of its immense climb and the descent has to be seen to be believed! Borrowdale is the other, because it takes part in one of my favourite parts

of the country and is a real test of endurance over some really challenging terrain.

I have been lucky throughout the years, receiving help from many people along the way, John who introduced me to the sport, David Hird who is my club coach and Tom Robertshaw who sadly passed away last year, who coached me and took me running when I first started out.

In my spare time I like to go cycling and also enjoyed football up until a couple of years ago when I had to stop playing, because I was always getting injured, some could say too soft! I am a BIG, BIG, Burnley FC fan and have had a season ticket for a few years now.

Drink beer, not recovery drinks

By Paul Carman

I entered my first fell race about four years ago, after being bullied by Sam 'Watdog' Watson, my friend and colleague at Robertshaw's Garden machinery, where we are both mechanics.

It was Kelbrook Fell Race and Sam said I had to do it because it was 'the law' to do your local race. Having lived in Kelbrook all my life, how could I refuse?

It was my first ever experience of fell running and I felt really chuffed because I beat people wearing club vests. The fact that most of them were V60 was of no consequence! About half way round I remember thinking 'why am I doing this?' and I still tend to think that during most races!

I started doing a few more races with Sam and enjoyed them, and also met loads of nice folk. I also liked the fact that you drink beer afterwards and not recovery drinks like road runners!

Sam was already in Wharfedale Harriers and not long after the Kelbrook Fell Race I decided I wanted to run in a vest, so joined the mighty Wharfedale along with my sons George and Joseph. It is a great club to be in and full of friendly and supportive folk. The social side is great too, especially after big events.

About a year after joining Wharfedale I won third place in the Club Championship – but hadn't realised until they called my name out at the presentation night! I've also come fourth in Cowling Fell Race and second in a Pendle Night Race last November.

My favourite race is the Ben Nevis, because it's the highest one in Britain, although you don't get chance to look at the views, and it's a cracking weekend and night out. My first attempt was with ankle ligament damage so I had to run in a brace. Everyone joked that it was a false leg, and that was why it took me 2hrs 23mins. I went back this year for a second attempt without the 'false leg' and managed 1hr 57mins.

I also love the 3 Peaks because it's the major one locally and you get lots of support and spectators cheering you on. I've completed it twice in under 4hrs.

Blencathra in the Lakes is another favourite – a

good midweek race and fantastic views, but the midges kill you.

And then there's Borrowdale – fantastic just for the pure pain of it and concentration needed. Again, I managed that in under 4hrs, just !!

About a year ago I started leading an informal running group in Kelbrook with friends and their children covering all ages and abilities and it's still going strong every Tuesday night.

My other interests include cycling and generally trying to keep fit.

I have completed the 3 Peaks Cyclo-Cross and the Etape du Dales several times as well as doing the odd triathlon.

Before fell running became my obsession, my hobbies and interests included football and off-road motorcycling.

I played for Barnoldswick Park Rovers in the U13s team and continued into my late 20s, also playing for Kelbrook Football Club.

I was a member of the Bradford and Craven motorcycling clubs from the age of 14 and won several trophies taking part in Motocross and Enduro off-road racing in Wales in my twenties.

My hopes and aspirations for this year include completing the 3 Peaks in under 3hrs 45, the Ben Nevis in under 2hrs again, and also going out to Italy to do the Dolomites Sky Race in July.

The only problem with improving your speed is that it doesn't get any easier – you just run faster and it hurts just the same! And the major disadvantage is you don't get stuck behind as many nice ladies wearing very tight shorts!

Overall I am just looking forward to having a great year, injury free, running with great friends.

'I really like being in Wharfedale Harriers.

Sometimes we get together after races and do really good stuff, like when Dave does 'chocolate throwouts' – chucking sweets and chocolates to us after the prize giving.

I like running because it makes me feel good and I like racing with my friends and team mates.

I came third in the U12s at Guisecliff Gallop near Pateley Bridge and I've also won medals and money at BOFRA races including Burnsall Fell Race.

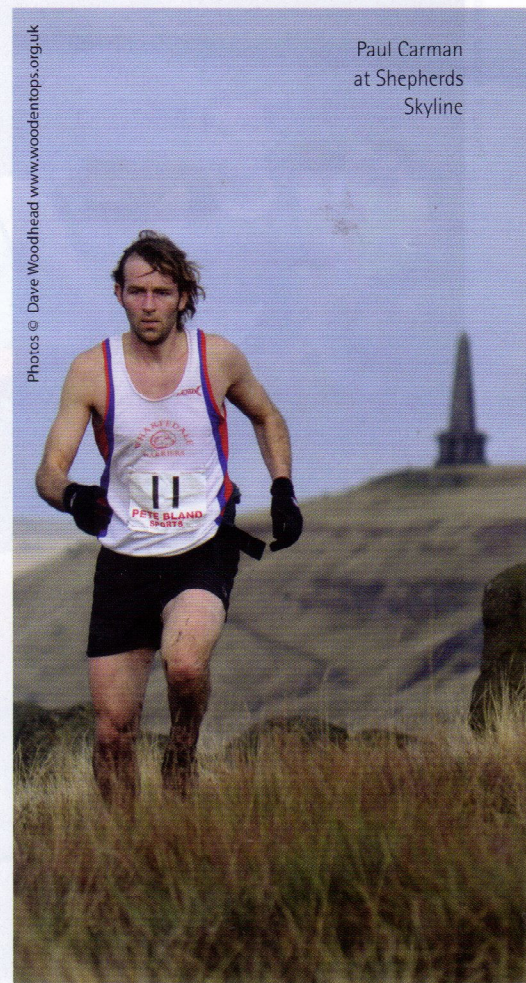
Dad is a really good runner, he inspires me, I

want to be like him and as good a runner as he is. He's my hero.' By George Carman age 10

'Running makes me feel happy, especially when I go faster and I'm in front of more people.

I'm a good runner and I won a big trophy for being the youngest one running at Coniston Gullies BOFRA race when I was six.

My daddy is really good at running. When he gets cuts on him he can't even feel his cuts because he is so strong. He looks funny when he is running with his Buff on his head, but I'm really proud of him.' By Joseph Carman age 8



Paul Carman
at Shepherds
Skiffline