

# WESTERLANDS CCC

NEWSLETTER JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1998

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## news

### westies no more

As most of you will probably now be aware, after months of speculation, the historic Westerlands grounds have been sold for housing development. The final club run from westies took place on Wednesday 3rd of December and featured a complete perambulation of the grounds and buildings, backwards, cuddy-back, wheel-barrow and relay races, and an emotional final hokey cokey round the flag pole. The club will now be meeting for its Monday and Wednesday night runs at the new Garscube pavilion. Trackless track sessions will take place on Tuesdays, and hill sessions (with hills) on Thursdays, both meeting at Garscube at 6pm. See below in the AGM minutes for full details.

### subs

Your club subs are now due. The cost is £12 for full members and £6 for social members. Please pay to Jenny using the form attached to this newsletter, asap. The next newsletter will be sent out only to those who have paid - you have been warned!

## captain's notes

### curry nights

As always, will be on the first Wednesday of the month - except from now on will be at the more user friendly time of 9pm (leaving The Ritz at Charing Cross). This will hopefully allow members other than the Glasgow based Westies to partake in the delights of the Karma Sutra Restaurant in Sauchiehall Street. This has been an excellent venue for the past few months and will remain so unless changed by notice in the newsletter. Pre-curry runs should leave Garscube by 6.30pm to allow for an hours plodding/changing/travelling/drinking before 9pm. A lot of people have agreed to these timings, including your social convenor, Isabel, to allow the club majority to access a good night out and still get home at a reasonable hour. Some drinkers may want to return to the pub after the meal.

## newsletter

I heard a few moans from people about the stories in the newsletter. Simple - phone Brian Bonnyman and ask to be taken off the mailing list and you will cut down on club costs and Brian's time and effort. If you only want to know what events are forthcoming: 1. Get a race calendar, 2. Come to club nights, 3. Phone a club-mate, 4. Get a life. On the other hand, I have also heard critics cry, 'why is there no race report for .....?' The answer is ..... write one yourselves! The few people who do such reports cannot possibly cover everything! Your editor has changed our rag into the envy of many clubs and put in many hours of graft in the process. Thankfully, moans are in the tiny minority.

### westie runner of the year presented at the christmas do 17<sup>th</sup> dec 97

For almost constant Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday club nights attendance combined with consistently good performances at races throughout the season, and also for finding the time to carry out the newsletter editing and production, this year's Westies award could only go to Brian Bonnyman. Well deserved.

### any keys?

If anyone anywhere finds any keys of any kind, I bet you they are Pat's. Thanks for your graft in '97 as secretary.

### social deposits

I would like to give a deposit of thanks to Isabel for all the events she has successfully organised last year. Well done lass.

### lost westies?

It's nice to see Joe McConnell, Euan Ramsay, George Reid, Steve Wells and others are still loyal to the big W, but it would be even nicer if they would come along to the club or some events/races so we could all laugh at their non-running beer bellies!! Come back, we love you really!



Christine and Elspeth on the trail of Pete and Drew at the FRAs.

**westies all**

Wishing everyone a safe and happy Christmas and New Year. Keep on plodding! Captain Manny.

**minutes of agm 29/10/97**

Present: K Adams, S Bell, A Cameron, A Campbell, C Campbell, S Cohen, I Coombs, M Gorman, G Irvine, N Jennison, P MCLAughlin, R Masterton, C Menhennett, J Rae, M Rigby, T Ritchie, D Smith, I Struthers, M Thomas.  
Apologies Des Gilmore

Minutes of 1996 meeting read and approved.

**1. Westerlands Grounds**

Westies has been sold for housing development and will no longer be available from mid December. We have been offered special membership rates at Garscube where there is a new sports pavilion and grass pitches. The cost will be £15.00 per person and each person will be issued with a card. A list of names of regular users will be compiled by P McL and we must have the money upfront from people to get the cards issued. People who appear occasionally during summer months, and any new members can pay a guest fee of £2.00 on the night to use the changing and shower facilities. Garscube is still being developed and hopefully money from the sale of Westies will be used to build track facilities.

**2. Vests and T shirts**

Pmcl to get price list from Ron Hill. Sweatshirts can be various colours, material of vests to be determined, cotton vs nylon or synthetic materials. New members who join will now have to pay half the price of a vest instead of getting one free as before.

**3. Membership Cards**

We hope to provide a membership card for discount use in sports shops etc. These would be issued annually on payment of subs. Alisdair will investigate costs and production of these.

**4a. Treasurers Report**

Jenny reported difficulty in keeping books in order, there should be stricter control over income and expenditure and all items should be issued through her. For pre entry cross country events eg West district and Nationals club will pay money upfront which will then be collected from individuals. For all

other events such as FRA relays, Devils Burdens, and Hodgsons etc, individuals must pay first.

Jenny suggests a year end of 30th September for accounts. New bank account is proving very successful with no excessive charges. AGM should be 4-6 weeks following the end of year date and will be announced in the newsletter to let everyone know.

**4b. Subs 1997-98**

Membership subs to remain at £12.00 for full members. Social membership is increased to £6.00 to cover increased admin costs for newsletter. Subs are now due and must be paid before end of December. No subs, no newsletter, no affiliation for races.

**5. First Aid Kit**

Sports First Aid kit available from St Andrews Ambulance Assoc. at £35.00. Ian Struthers and Gillian Irvine have offered to provide a kit at a lower cost.

**6. Physiotherapy**

Free affiliated membership for club members at Marcos Leisure Centre Sports Injuries Clinic, Glasgow Green. Physio is Paul Green. PMcL will supply him with a list of members names. Clinic Hours: Mon, Wed, 6 - 10pm, Sun 12 - 6pm. Price £12.00 for initial treatment, £10.00 for follow up visits. Tel 0141554 7184

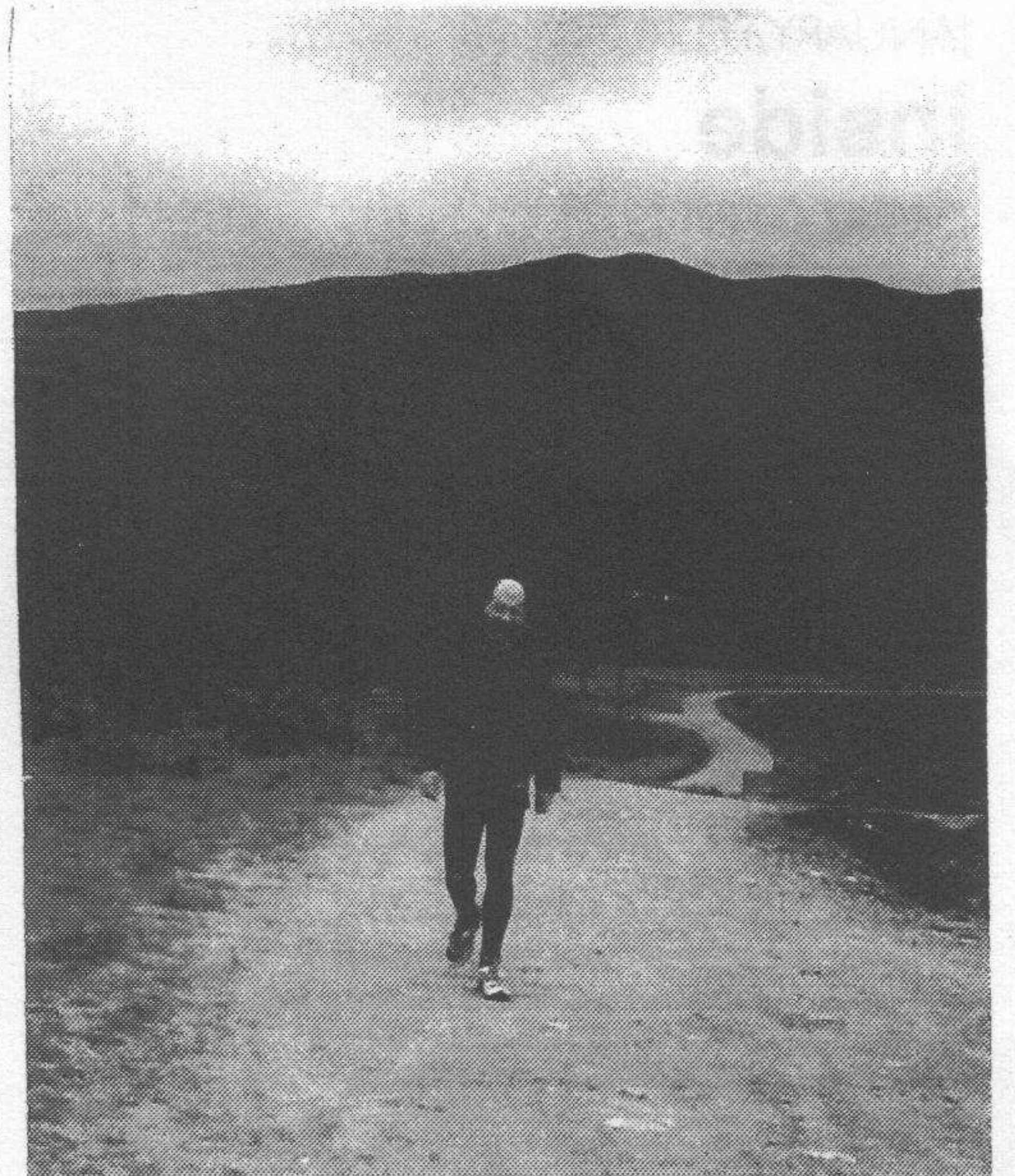
**7. Election of Office Bearers**

- Secretary Pat
- Treasurer Jenny
- Club Captain Manny
- Ladies Captain Chris
- Race Convener Alisdair
- Social Convener Isabel
- Publicity Officer Brian
- W/ District Rep Pat
- D/shire Rep Pat

**race reports**

**west-highland way race**

21st june 1997



(Please Note: The author of the following literary work of art (i.e. MOI), was only the ED's fourth choice, after his more preferable choices didn't come up with the goods. Hence with the intervening six months from said event, and minus several million cerebral cells courtesy of the Westies Social Calendar, there may be some transmutation of the actual facts. Any queries or complaints regarding this should be addressed to the BB(c), Carrington St, Glasgow.)

( Now let's think, when was this bloody race, again----- ?!£%&^\*\*~#@--????? )

That's right, let's start on

**FRIDAY 20TH JUNE**

Well to sum it up, final preparation went just like the last few years .....a nightmare ! 8-9pm.

Running up and down the aisles of Safeway Anniesland, throwing all my food for the next 48hrs, into a trolley, gave me some last minute training that I didn't want.

9-10.45pm

Sorting all my gear and throwing it into the back of the van gave me some last minute packing that I didn't want.

11-1.30am

Finally get some ZZZZZ's which I really, really did want.

**SATURDAY 21ST JUNE**

1.30am - After about two hours of broken sleep I'm up, feeling as fresh as a daisy. (Daisy the BSE ridden cow who's off to the knacker's yard)

Between sorting the usual last minute hiccups and downing several large mugs of coffee, I'm "running" late. Manage to get out to Milngavie for 2.50am, just in time to miss the competitors race talk, and see them putting away the lap top computer (Hi-Tec this WHW race, or what!)

"HHHOOOOLLLLLDDDDDD On"  
"I've still to sign in" (or should that be "Log On")

Wee Jim (Stewart) signs me in and slags me on how I'm the nearest competitor to the start and yet still only make it by 10 mins.  
"Years of practice, Jim"

2.59am - Water the bushes then I finally bump into the other masochistic Westies who fancy some pain for the next day or so. Dave Rodgers is smiling and in good humour - (obviously he hasn't tried this race before). Stevie Bell has a grin and is more sedate (you can tell this is a 20 hr man). I'm told that Ronnie Gallagher is somewhere but don't see him (he must be in the blocks waiting for the starters gun).

3.00am - Off and running/jogging/walking according to ambition. I settle into my favorite position at the back and let the real athletes and neophytes stream off into the

darkness.

(N.B. the following description of said walk/jog/run/"race" will be kept to extremus minimus otherwise we'll all be here for the next day).

So the merry bunch meander through the Carbeth countryside, gradually becoming more sinewy as the early greyness arrives. I meet my backup, (Mother and Brother), at the scheduled stops and everything is going fine.

6.55am - Change of gear at Balmaha and I feel like a new "man" (we'll see how long this lasts). Keep it steady, just walk/ jogging up the lochside and now I start to catch up with people who I haven't seen in over six hours.

12.30pm - Get to Inverarnan at the top of the loch and just have a fairly short stop. Dave is in ahead of me, munching away. No sign of Ronnie or Stevie as expected. Keith and Sue are there to cheer us on. Head on up Glen Falloch and begin to feel rough (i.e. wanting to stop and puke).

I manage to meet my backup on the A82 where the WHW crosses the road, and I spy my brother having some lunch. This I dutifully grab off him and I wolf down his two rolls n' sliced turkey and wash it down with a large mug of tea. This makes up for not eating enough backat Inverarnan and is a welcome change to the cans of isostar that I have been constantly consuming.

Dave, who's looking good, and his task

master for this stage, Manny, go by as I stuff my face. As the energy gradually returns, I begin to feel better again and manage to pick it up a bit. Dave and Manny are passed again in Strathfillan and this time Dave is looking a wee bit jaded (that just shows you the effect that Manny has on people).

4.10pm - Feeling much better as I pass more competitors and manage a jog into Tyndrum. Feeling much much better as I meet more fellow Westies who are out supporting. Isabel, Pat, Jane, and Helen give a welcome smile. Whilst devouring another two rolls and a tin of soup (Stevie's tip for the run), they inform Dave and I that Stevie stopped at Inverarnan as he injured his ankle or something. Running Ronnie was still doing fine and streaking on ahead.

Dave and his new stage partner Isabel, and I, saunter on towards Bridge of Orchy. Some more cans of isostar are downed at our stop, then I'm off after 3 mins on up the hill. (This makes a change to last year when I stopped for 30 mins for a shandy). Get down to Victoria bridge, have some more soup and potato scones, then my father, who's come up to spectate, adorns his 1950's shorts and proclaims that he's going to come across Rannoch Moor with me. Sh--!, I think to myself, It's nice for the company but I'm feeling stronger and I hope he doesn't slow us up. In typical ironic WHW fashion, he's off like a shot (well, steady running), and I'm struggling to keep up with a jog. Needless to say, a few more competitors are passed going over the moor. (What's keeping me going is the promise from Manny of a pint if I get to Kingshouse).

8.50pm - Arrive Kingshouse and there is El Capitano Manny with the promised pint. I had been thinking of something like a shandy but I'm presented with a 3 course meal in a glass - a pint of Guinness. Of course who am I to knockback a drink, so the drink was dutifully knocked back. Manny also says that Ronnie had to "retire" with feet problems, so it's just left to good old Dave and yours truly to fly the Westies flag.

I head along towards the Devil's Staircase with my brother who's joining me on this stage. I'm feeling really queasy now so I guess a guinness on an empty stomach after 70 odd miles, isn't the perfect replenishment. The climb (crawl) up the Staircase is murder and I break into my emergency chocolate eclairs with more isotonic brew going down. It's at time's like this when you really appreciate company



Alert and competent back-up is essential for a successful attempt.

and my brother helps drag me on into the increasing darkness.

11.40pm - Plod into Kinlochleven and on this damp and dreary night it's even more gloomier than ever. Still there is a God after all as I see wee Jim Stewart snuggling under his blanket in his landrover. I take great pleasure in battering on the window and seeing the disgruntled face come to life. "Right, log me in Jim". Daggars are drawn and the check sheet filled in. (1-1 after the slugging from 21 hrs previously).

Weariness prevails so the luxury of a twenty minute break is taken. More food & fluid is taken on board and just to keep it a family affair, my mother wants to join me on this final stage.

(NOTE: I can't actually remember meeting any other Westies at this point but I remember that I knew at this point that Isabel was joining Dave over the D/S and that Marvellous Man was doing the last stage with him - maybe Pat was in Kinlochleven and told me?).

SUNDAY 22ND JUNE (Far too early for sensible people).

Slow climb up into the Lairig Mor and now the wind is picking up and more squalls of light rain prevail. We walk along at a steady pace, which is top speed for me, just following the bobbing of the head torch in the blackness. It feels quite eerie up in this lonely glen - stuff doing this section on your own at night.

Looking far behind in the distance I can see other headtorches moving and I sense that it is Dave & Manny struggling on like the rest

of us. At the junction at Lundavra a figure looms in the darkness. Neither party wants to say anything then a voice asks "Is that Charlie". I think to myself that some weirdo up here must know me, then I recognise that the voice is Isabel's. Pat is catching ZZZZZ's in the car at the road end, and Isabel is waiting in the gloomy darkness for Dave and his trusty companion.

The first glimmers of light are appearing as we work our way through the final forest section. At four in the morning it's not exactly paradise but the thought that the finish is only a few miles away drives you on. I now get the idea into my head that if I could just speed up to a slow jog then I might just be able to get in under the 26 hour mark. The long downhill jog out of the forest is agonising to already painful feet, ankles, and shins. At last the final mile of tarmac road is reached. A fellow competitor is just ahead and starts jogging faster - as if I'm bothered about passing him after 95 miles!

4.53am - Hobble in to the leisure centre and sign in. Great, I managed to get under the 26 hours and take 4 hours off last year's time. A quick change and shower and out to the van to try and get a couple of hours kip. This is impossible as the body is so on edge and then I hear Pat, Isabel, and Manny's voices outside.

6.53am - Dave has just got in and we all go back into the centre. Sit and swap stories whilst having tea. Manny crashes out for a while and looks in a more shattered condition than Dave. Pat decides to liven things up a bit by telling us she's lost her car

keys. This keeps us busy for the next hour as we scour every inch of the Lochaber leisure centre, questioning people and putting notices up, etc., only for Pat to finally find them jammed down behind the radiator in the changing rooms - \*£%T!

Manny emerges from his comatose state with a dose of the mega munchies (what's new), so we get together with the Fife boys and have an early assault on the Nevisport cafe. After some serious amounts of breakfast are shifted, we go our own way.

3.00pm - Prize giving. Much chatter and booze abound as the prizes are given out. It is just like a big family party/atmosphere as back-up, competitors, relatives and friends all mingle and there is a mutual respect for what everyone has done.

Wee Jim is in usual fine fettle and the rest of the Calderglen Harriers have done a fine job again of organising the run. We buy the t-shirts which are a nice bright yellow this year, then we all go on our merry way.

POST-MORTEM

- So what about WHW '98?
- Will Stevie come back to beat his great time of '96?
- Will Ronnie's feet hold out?
- Will Charlie get under the Holy Grail of 24 hrs (or is he just looking through Guinness coloured glasses)?
- Will Dave relinquish on this year's statement of "NEVER AGAIN"?
- Will any other Westie be daft enough to enter?

Tune in again in six months time to find out

HAPPY ENDURANCE TRAINING!



01 B. Davidson	17.55
02 D. Wallace	19.27
03 S. Gayter (1st F)	21.03
<b>13 C. Campbell</b>	<b>25.53</b>
16 D. Rogers	27.53

Charlie Campbell



Chas and Dave in Fort William

## kinabalu...

(possibly) the toughest mountain race in the world.

The phone went in early July: it was Robin Morris. "They've invited a British team to Kinabalu this year, and BAF want you." Wow. I'd had my eye on this Borneo race for a few years, and here was an offer not to refuse, with old pals Ian (Holmes) and Mark (Roberts) for company. I was glad I'd shown some form at Jura!

A few Brits have done this one in the past, and I'd heard the legends about the terrain, the ropes and ladders, and the descending skills of the locals. Also the sheer statistics speak for themselves: 7500 ft climb to a 13,500 ft summit in 5 1/2 miles, then back down, and 2 extra miles on road to finish. Oh yes, and that the British army got lost there a few years back..... Andy Kitchin, who I have always respected as a descender, had been overhauled during his descent and warned that the locals were "awesome". Helene Diamantides had experienced their sisters at first hand too, but had managed to get the better of them. She also had dietary advice: "They eat fried rice for every meal, so take your own breakfast!"

Preparation for this would have to take priority over trying-yet-again for the Scotland team for the World Trophy a month before. Even after making the team I managed some slightly longer sessions than were strictly necessary for the three-lap, 1000 ft Czech course: e.g. Ben Lomond from Rowardennan. Twice - ask Manny's Dad whos quiet evening run was spoilt by my passing him three times! Also one-and-a-half times Ben Nevis ("Are you doing the race? ...")

At the world Trophy we met the Malaysian team. Balwant, their manager, is also Kinabalu race director and Guianus Salagan, in the team, is three times winner at Kinabalu. We had a lot of questions. I wanted to know about conditions ("not as hot as here" was the surprising response). Ian asked about shoes. Mark asked about beer. We berated them for not running the women to the top and for not inviting a women's team from the UK. "Maybe next year". After the race, we might secretly have been rather pleased that Guianus came in 96th, but none of us were under any illusions: there are horses for courses, and on home territory Guianus (and his sister, and their pals) would be firm favourites.



A belated summer holiday with Jen for two weeks in Zermatt after the World Trophy served as last-minute training. 5000 ft base, and lots of lovely big runnable climbs to 11000 ft or so. We came home tired but happy. Happy too, to discover Angela Mudge had been called up, albeit at 8 days notice. A week later, I was still very tired and rather less happy, but that's apparently normal (said Ian). I saw a quote from Mark in his local paper just before leaving the UK: in uncharacteristically humble mood he'd said: "We may be good . . . . but at that altitude . . . . against the locals . . . . we've no chance!" Oh dear. Headlines in the national press also suggested pessimism was in order: smog, a plane crash, boat collisions and an earthquake!

We all met at Heathrow, also Danny Hughes who was to 'manage' us. I've learnt from bitter experience to take all essential kit on planes as hand luggage. So guess who's bag attracted attention at the Xray machine? I started mentally to rehearse my excuses for wanting Walshes, racing kit, full first aid kit, mosquito spray, head torch, staminade, jelly babies, weatabix, longlife milk, ambrosia devon custard and a spoon in the cabin with me when an official came over and said "Have you got a pair of nail clippers in here sir?" I'd never considered them as potential hi-jack equipment, even if the entire plane crew were as proud of their nails as Gail Devers.

There was no sign of any atmospheric inconveniences in Kuala Lumpur, and we boarded the internal flight across the South China Sea. Danny became worried as we threaded thick cloud banks, but they obviously weren't smog and we landed in Kota Kinabalu in a 'mere' tropical downpour: the daily rain cycle had started and would flush out whatever the fires flung into the atmosphere whatever the wind direction. A more pressing problem was the ambient temperature - here at the coast, 32°C!

We were feted by The Press even before we left the airport - shades of more to come, it turned out. The organisers and tourist board couldn't do enough for us. Tour-guide Teles

ably looked after the four of us; Danny got VIP treatment from Eric (previous charges: Jim'll Fix It and David Attenborough) and we hardly saw him again! His fame was because they all believed he'd single-handedly succeeded in landing them the world trophy in 1999. The Italians had arrived and were ALREADY UP THE MOUNTAIN. So was itinerant Irishman, Francis Cosgrove. We were treated to a slap up meal, and a press conference the next morning, but I couldn't help thinking of Fregona, Molinari and their pals, already up there and doing reps at 13000 ft. None too soon we were free to set off inland with Teles at the wheel.

Mount Kinabalu is about thirty miles from the coast. On a clear day, its jagged summit crest rears above the forested slopes behind Kota Kinabalu, but our first view wasn't until the next morning, from up at the national park HQ. Spectacular. Also pleasantly cool. Tree ferns and eucalypt forest stretched up and up to a sudden tree line beyond which the 3000 ft granite dome rose up to a series of impressive crags and peaks that looked huge even seven miles away. We reccied the first few thousand feet with Francis, and met the Italians on their way down; none of the big world trophy names, but still potential dark horses despite the reactions of one "Non! Non! Impossible! Dangerous! . . . . .". The Austrians had sent former world (uphill) champion Helmut Schmuck and Rudolf Reitberger (next behind Tommy Murray in the Czech Republic). WHAT was Helmut playing at? His aversion to descending is so legendary he doesn't even bother with up and down world trophy courses! Amiable American Lyndon Elefson, participant at many a world trophy (and the Three Shires) had come too. Jonny Beardsall, ex-Ghurka now photo-journalist and a British competitor in the early days of this race, had come to get the story.

The next day, we chose to ascend again to look at the granite at first hand. In the absence of a cable car, that unfortunately meant 6000 ft up and down two days before the race, but "better the devil you know", we

thought. Angela just did 3000 ft - a short walk! The climb was fairly unremitting, the path through the forest divided into runnable (maybe) stretches with an earth surface, rocky sections (like the lower path on The Ben), well-spaced steps, and brutish flights steeper than the stairs in your house. These latter were constructed of greasy wooden risers held in place by booby-trap metal pegs, each shoring up a tread made of mud, stones, tree roots and other un-level things. And Francis had claimed it was all runnable climb! Then there were the ladders. These inhabited the upper forest and consisted of parallel long poles laid up the slope with slippery 2-inch wide batons about a foot apart as rungs. Some were about fifty yards long. They didn't fit the contour of the uneven ground underneath particularly well so there was real ankle-breaking potential if your foot were to miss a rung and go through. Their only saving grace was the bannister rail.

Above the forest, the trail emerged suddenly onto bare granite. The youngest in the world, but old enough to have been shattered into precipitous pinnacles and scoured into vast smooth inclines by long-gone ice. Ropes marked the route round one massive series of slabs, across to the highest hut (our turning point that day; 12,500 ft) and beyond out of our sight up onto the summit plateau. The true summit, Low's Peak, is thankfully one of the few accessible crags. It stands at the left-hand end of the plateau which extended above us and to the right for several miles in a huge curve round the head of Low's Gully. The gully, being on the other side of the mountain, we unfortunately never got to see. A sign near the hut said "Hold on to the rope; Do not run". We delighted in not holding on very tightly and running down at top speed. Ian's road flats gripped just fine (but I wore Walshes NB Pete Bland!), and gloves allowed our arms to take some of the braking effort off our thighs - they were also useful for sliding down the bannister rails lower down.

The next day was Ladies Day with a five o'clock call courtesy of the park fire engine siren, and the start two hours later. Angela's progress was radioed down regularly to the tannoy at the finish near the cabins where we were all staying. She sounded to be holding her own with one of the locals to the turn at the 'half-way' hut (11,000 ft) but there were no split times given. We sauntered up the last mile of road to watch the finish, and Kuilin Gongot trotted into view. No she wasn't from Skye but from a local paddy-field and (she claimed) not a regular runner. Her



short stride was less suited to the road than it obviously had been to the steps, and Louise Fairfax (Tasmania) in second place nearly caught her by the end. Next came Angela, also gaining ground but with the painful-sounding slap, slap, slap of uncoordinated Walshes on tarmac. Our amusement was tempered by the hope that we wouldn't sound any worse the next day. She'd had a great run considering her last-minute call-up, last-minute cold and being forced to recce the previous day. Next time here's hoping they let her reach the top!

On Sunday, another five o'clock reveillez, and Ian hi-tech-carbo-PSP Holmes sheepishly came round to my cabin for a breakfast of homely weetabix and milk and admitted he'd be taking humble jelly babies for in-flight refuelling . . . . . Angela got up too and set off immediately to get as high as she could to support us. What a star.

At the start we three were the only ones with bumbags and we enjoyed fuelling everyone's curiosity as to their contents (mine had cag, jelly babies, two small bottles with staminade powder and leather gloves). The locals hared off in a mass sprint but some were already walking after the 200 yard tarmac run-out. On the short downhill that followed I was cut up (by an Italian! - Adriano Greco) and sent sprawling. Great. By the time I was up, I'd lost track of my position and attempted to make up ground while trying not to panic as my monitor reached numbers more consistent with

800m reps at home. Eventually I settled down in the company of Rudolf and Adriano. A marshall at one of the drinks stations shouted "fifteenth" and offered cups of warm water; yuck. Angela, a short distance further on, assured us we were actually fourth, fifth and sixth which calmed me down no end.

There was never a view ahead or behind of more than 50 yards all the way up through the forest, and it was only late on that I realised Guianus was just ahead. When we reached the top hut I finally saw Helmut about 6 minutes ahead on the slabs and Ian not far behind. Up on the plateau (15000 ft) I started to wobble and felt myself slowing down. But Guianus wasn't getting away and Ian later admitted to slowing also. Mark seemed to cope best of all and almost caught me at the top, where Jonny was well placed for some spectacular photos. Ian looked comfortable as he came down and must have known he'd got it in the bag.

When you turn to descend, you don't need all that oxygen and relief is instant. I forced myself not to go off too hard, but quickly left Rudolf and Adriano and had an exhilarating time on the ropes. I passed Helmut wobbling down one of the ladders: "You are all mad!" he shouted. Much later, on an easy-graded section, I tripped and went flying head first into the rocky bank. Bang. For a split second I thought I'd still be there when Mark arrived and that he'd race by with more dollar signs lighting up before his eyes. Infact I was OK though lucky not to be the first Kinabalu

'statistic' in 11 years. But it's the first time I've finished a race with an ear injury.

Further down I became aware of footsteps ahead and was surprised to see Guianus, who'd had trouble with cramp for much of the descent. I hit the road clear second and dug in for the last two miles. At the finish there was just time for a drink and to hug Ian before the press closed in for interviews. Midway through one of these I probably broke the tape recorder (or deafened the whole of Malaysia if it was a live broadcast) by whooping with delight when Mark came in having overhauled Guianus in the last few hundred metres. One-two-three for GB; only Teles our guide had predicted that! (and one-two for weetabix: is there an opportunity to exploit here?) We started to see a lot more of Danny!

The organisers put on a great meal for the closing ceremony and handed out goodies (Ian got a nice hat) and, oh yes, a little bit of cash. No-one seemed to mind that we were heading home with most of 'their' money. Celebrations continued down at the coast where Teles revealed himself to be Karaoke King. For the journey home Ian had disguised his trophy in a carrier bag, but it was spotted for what it was by the X-ray machine staff and he was a hero all over again. But not for long; on leaving Borneo our new-found fame declined exponentially as we headed back west and by the time we landed in London we were once again very anonymous but still very proud.

So was it 'The Toughest Mountain Race in the World'? We were reluctant to endorse this slogan, even though it had been Jonny's idea years ago. Certainly it was very long, very steep and very unusual underfoot, but there was a well marked path throughout and all those ropes and bannisters to help. Perhaps, we agreed, the toughest mountain race . . . . . outside Jura.

Mark Rigby

## twelve go to buttock '97 fra relays



As like many race reports, this one started with a phone call from Manny: 'We need bodies for the FRA relays.' Never having run in a proper relay before, the idea seemed sound so ten days later I found myself in the Gormanmobile hurtling down the M74 in the company of Drew Turnbull and quasi-Westie John Donnelly. The car journey was highly entertaining, with Manny demonstrating what the serious athlete has for lunch (i.e. crisps and Irn Bru, most of which John consumed) and Drew remonstrating with great enthusiasm about the merits of coal fires on holiday.

Our overnight destination was 'somewhere' in deepest Lancashire to share a semi-detached hut with a group of Cosmic Hill Thrashers, led by the shy and retiring Ewan Rennie. Several hours later we found the chalet and our numbers were swelled by the arrival of Christine, Moira, Archie, Charlie, Brian, Noreen, and the Baxters. The first hour in the chalet became a think tank session as we came up with more combinations of six runners than there are of six numbers in the lottery. Finally, Mystic Manny decided on the teams and we piled out to the nearest hostelry. By the time we got there, those Cosmic Hill Whackers had purloined the best seats, but we soon had them shifted. It was quickly discovered that there was a highly entertaining beverage on draught called Black Sheep Ale. By the time it came to Drew's round, this peculiar nectar had taken its effect and the bar tender was puzzled by a request for three pints of Shag

Pile Ale. I was beginning to enjoy this relay race lark, apart for the small matter of having to run.

Later, back at the chalet, Manny decided he wanted to spend a night under canvas rather than be kept awake by snoring, so instead he was kept up by the hippies in the next chalet who decided to go star gazing at 2am around his tent. However, he did get his revenge the following morning when we drove off at 8am, by shouting out of the window in his finest Kirkie vernacular, 'Wake up ya bastards!' I just thought 'Please God don't let the car stall!'

Pendle Village, where the relay legs radiated from, had been transformed into something reassembling an Olympic village with athletes everywhere. The first checkpoint that every leg had to pass through went by the amusing name of Buttock (hence the peculiar race report title).

The event was organised over four legs as follows:

Leg 1	Short leg	Single runner
Leg 2	Long leg	Pair
Leg 3	Long leg	Pair
Leg 4	Short leg	Single runner

There were 75 teams in the open category, 25 in the veterans', and 15 female teams. Westies had A and B teams entered. Our B team was really a female team plus John Donnelly, but had to enter the open category as the organisers would not allow one of the



girls to run two legs to make up the six runners required. For Westies, the race went something like this:

**Leg One**

Archie running for the men's team and Jenny Rae representing the ladies took part in the mass start of 115 runners, but it was Jenny who won round one of the 'battle of the Westies' with a clear lead over Archie.

**Leg Two**

This was a longer leg requiring two runner teams, and saw the men readdress the situation with Brian and Charlie overhauling Noreen and stand-in lady John D. This lead built up to ten minutes by the time they handed over to Westies A third pair, Drew and Pete. However, the third ladies pair brought together the running talents of Christine and Elspeth and so the battle of the Baxters began.

**Leg Three**

By the time the first third leg runners appeared, it was Chris and Elspeth who had not only pulled Pete and Drew in, but had pulled a sixty second lead over them.



**Leg Four**

The last leg runners, i.e., me for the A team and Moira for the Bs, were left to battle it out. It was about this time that the fine, clear weather was spoiled by a thick blanket of mist descending on Pendle hill. 'Sod it', I thought, 'Another fine view wasted.' By the time we got to Buttock, Moira and I were neck and neck, but fortunately for the boys, I managed to make my escape in the clagg (do they call it that in England?), to get back to the finish first.

**Results**

**1<sup>st</sup> Pudsey and Bramley**

Westies A	58 <sup>th</sup>	4hrs	59mins
		3sec	
Westies B	62 <sup>nd</sup>	5hrs	8mins
		16sec	

Well done the Westies B team who, if they had ran in the ladies category would have finished 6<sup>th</sup>, and to Chris and Elspeth for running the fourth fastest 3<sup>rd</sup> leg in the female category! Well done all!

**meall a bhuachaille**

1<sup>st</sup> november 97

6 1/2 miles, 2000ft

All the major categories were still up for grab in this last Scottish Championship race of '97. Mark was going for glory against John Brooks of Lochaber for the senior males 1<sup>st</sup> spot, but there was a large quality field at the start, all looking for these last precious points for the team prize. Fifteen Westies vesties

were on their marks and the perfect mild weather allowed for semmits and shorts running over the tops.

A mad sprint start along 100m of road before cutting up through the mud and trods saw Stevie Bell come to grief with a prize burst ankle! Speighty, Gibby, Murdo and Don all went haring off in front leaving me a bit deflated. The Ws stretched out ahead of me and I thought 'Oh well - enjoy the view'. However, I must have just went off too fast because it wasn't long before they all started to come back to me. Tucked in behind S.H.I.T. Donnelly, we worked our way efficiently through the lines of bodies falling into oxygen debt. Shouts of encouragement to Westies on the way past to raise the spirits. The first climb is a relentless steep slog through heather, trees, rock, then eventually levelling enough to allow a run to the summit cairn (which Ronnie tried to knock down). The Shit man pulled away on the first descent while I tried an Elspeth type fairy foot run down, but my climbing was strong and shouts of encouragement from Jenny and Jon Broxap allowed me to pull him back before the second top. As anyone who has tried it knows, the second descent is hell - steep and deep heather! Perfect ankle/knee/head busting terrain. I lost several places here but again made them up on the track. It was also here that the Donnelly man bit the dust as I flashed past in a burst of Westies supremacy! The sting in the tail for this race is the half mile or so slow climb back up above the start area, but I had cunningly left a bit in the tank for this and picked up five places including Angela 'zoom' Mudge. I was delighted with my 'enjoy the view' run, especially as Baxter had pointed out that my spare tyre was bigger than his at the start. Ha - eat flab skinny! It was superb packing not far behind me with six Westies coming home in four minutes. Mark sadly only got third, finishing the second in the championship, but hey, we know he's the best - well done big guy. Ronnie had a jog round finishing just outside the points - too much time wasted at the cairns!

001 John Brooks	LAC	42.16
002 Dermot McGonigle	Shett	42.59
003 Mark Rigby	Westies	43.56
022 Ronnie Gallacher		47.30
040 Manuel Gorman		50.45
049 Chris Speight		52.26
055 Murdo Macleod		54.18
059 Stevie Bell		54.38
063 Gibson Fleming		55.17
066 Don Reid		55.20
073 Pete Baxter		56.17
079 Donald Smith		57.55
091 Christine Menhennet		60.03



095 Elspeth Baxter		61.08
104 Drew Turnbull		63.34
111 Lesley Gorman	LAC!	66.33
124 Graham Benny	Westies	75.22

## the first fintry frolic 18th january 1998

Well done to Don Reid, Manny, and everybody else involved in organising and participating in the inaugural Fintry Frolic relay/grudge-match. Full results and report in the next newsletter.

### Teams

1 Ochils A  
J. Stevenson, J. Gallacher, E. Mackay 42:40

2 Ochils B  
G. Wilton, D. Duncan, P. Buchanan 45:04

3 Westies A  
A. Dytch, S. Bennet, G. Fleming 45:08

1 Female, Westies Wummen  
E. Baxter, J. Robertson, L. Gorman

### Individuals

01 John Stevenson	Ochil	12:54
02 Dave Mackay	W	13:59
03 Stevie Bell	W	14:32
04 John Gallacher	Ochil	14:43
05 Gary Wilton	Ochil	14:47
06 Andy Dytch	W	14:52
07 Sandy Bennet	W	14:54
08 Davie Duncan	W	14:56
09 Ron Mcraw	Ochil	14:57
10 Euan Mackay	Ochil	15:03
11 Brian Bonnyman	W	15:05
12 Stevie Briggs	Ochil	15:14
13 Brian Bonnyman	W	15:15
14 Don Reid	W	15:21
14 Pete Buchanan	Ochil	15:21

## aunty pat advises...

Free your life of anxieties by sharing your troubles with your Aunty P.!

Many of you will have been shocked by the letter published in the last newsletter. Your may think that I was disturbed somewhat by the vindictive and personal abuse which was heaped on me by some anonymous wee nyaff. This pathetic and malicious diatribe was written by someone who didn't even have the decency to sign his (or her) name. I found the allegations contained within his (or her) letter quite shameful and if I get my hands on the alligator, I will probably wring

his (or her) neck !!

As for the comments about "faded magnetism", it is clear that the author and me are obviously poles apart on this subject. But never fear, fellow readers, for if you know me, you will realise that I won't be put off by some petty-minded, opinionated oaf. I shall therefore continue to contribute my wealth of experience in the pursuit of giving compassionate, balanced and useful advice.

*Dear Aunty Pat,*

*My husband is the Captain of a small-to-medium sized running club based in the west end of Glasgow. Recently he came home from a weekend away with a cut on his lip. He explained to me that he received this when attempting a snog with a female member of the opposite sex during a rendition of the Hokey Cokey. Does he really think I am so gullible that I will believe this nonsense ?*

*What is really going on ?*

*Lizzie Gormless*

Dear Lizzie,

I hate to be the bearer of bad tidings, but your hubbies explanation is probably not far off the mark. I recently heard that a small-to-medium sized running club in the west end of Glasgow has become a covert recruiting ground for an extreme religious sect called the Mannies !

This sect involves itself in many strange rituals including baptisms in the icy cold waters of secluded highland lochs and chanting of dirges at 4 o'clock in the morning. They also practice masochism in the form of carrying extremely heavy weights along remote paths late at night on Rannoch Moor.

But don't worry, help is at hand. An organisation has been set up which will help to knock some sense into members of this frightening group. Please contact the French Foreign Legion at Marseilles.

*Dear Aunty Pat,*

*During a wild weekend away with my running club, a wild girl bit my lip during the Hokey Cokey ! I tried explaining this to my wife afterwards. Normally she is quite patient and understanding, but now she just gives me strange looks .*

*What have I done wrong?*

*Morgan Nammy*

Dear Morgan,

Hmmmm !!!! You really do have a problem ! The problem is **You Told the Truth!!**

Just think of the sympathy you would have received by telling your good lady that you had been running towards the summit of a Munro, just behind one of the female club members, when a sudden gust of wind blew her precariously towards the edge of a precipice. Without thinking, you threw yourself towards the damsel in distress, just clinging onto the rocks as you battled to save her. Only extreme bravery and a hidden reserve of strength prevented you both from disappearing over the edge.

You could have added some other "injuries" to add authenticity to the tale. Your wife would have considered you a true hero. Instead, she probably thinks you are just a plonker !

And... who can blame her ?

*Dear Aunty Pat,*

*Last month I was on a weekend trip with my running club. Whilst performing the Hokey Cokey, I got involved in some innocent tomfoolery which resulted in the club captain receiving a bit lip. Now I have found that he has confessed all to his wife !*

*How can I look her straight in the eye again?*

*Maureen Caught*

Dear Maureen,

"Innocent Tomfoolery " indeed ! Humbug, I say.

What I interpret from this completely irresponsible act is a blatant attempt to discredit a senior figure in the club and make him the laughing stock of his peers. In this you have succeeded beyond your wildest imaginations. The poor guy's self-esteem will have dropped to rock bottom !

Of course the guy had to tell the truth. Making up some lame or fantastic excuse for his injury would have had dire consequences had this been discovered by his wife. What did you expect him to do?

There is of course only one route open to you. A public apology to all parties should be accompanied by your offer of resignation from membership of this elite organisation. Whether or not this is accepted will depend on the amount of grovelling and sycophancy shown by you over the coming weeks. You don't sound like the type of person who acts in this manner normally. The change will do you good !

Dear Aunty Pat,  
Is good running compatible with the occasional smoke?  
Melanie McHerson

Dear Melanie,  
Oh for goodness sake, woman! What a ridiculous idea. You should realise by now that I'm not into half measures! If you're going to smoke, make it more than occasionally. Some recent research on this subject has come up with the following good reasons for smoking AND running. What could relax the nerves before that all important race more than a quick puff at the starting line?  
Smoking and running, simultaneously and at the same time, gets rid of midges during these warm summer night runs in the hills. A pre-run smoke will induce coughing which in turn will get rid of all that phlegm and other garbage, thereby clearing the lungs. This saves unsightly gobbing and spitting while running in the company of friends. The back of the fag packets are very useful items for planning of weekends, Saturday outings and Wednesday night runs. Also the silver foil inside can be collected and joined together to make a useful emergency blanket.

I'm still disappointed that I don't receive more pleas for help from all you club members.

You know that I can't answer your letters personally, as this would prevent the others having a laugh at your expense. So, go on, and tell me your tales of woes. If nothing else, it will help to pass some time during these long cold winter nights.

### ask uncle archie...

*The alternative column for 'real men'.*

Dear Uncle Archie,  
Please, please help me. I have just recently finished my hillracing campaign for this season, and I find that I am only 2nd best in Scotland, which isn't good enough. I don't understand it as I regularly thrash those whippersnappers Brian and Charlie at Tuesday night track sessions, yet this young Brooksie boy is no.1 in Scotland - why?

Marr Kigby

My dearest Marr  
Do not be so despondent. Yes, we all know you'll soon be a vet, but there's still a few years of running left in those knees yet. And as for those youngsters, don't worry. I've seen how you've whipped their asses at those Tuesday night sessions - you truly are

a master at work. Just keep those steamy intervals going throughout the winter, steadily increasing the pain threshold: come next summer, the Brookside Bomber will be begging for mercy as you run all over him in you Pbs.  
I hope I have been of some service to you - feel free to drop by for a more personalised advice session.

Yours in leather  
Uncle Archie

### forthcomming events

29th Jan (Thurs)	Shooglenifty
30th Jan	Martyn Bennet
31st Jan	<b>Dumbarton CCC</b> Irvine
	Salsa Celtica
04th Feb	Curry Night
07th Feb	<b>The Devil's Burdens Relay</b> Falkland: 10.00 Followed by ceilidh back in Glasgow, at the Riverside.
21st Feb	<b>Carnethy 5 HR</b> Penicuik: 14.00

### thanks...

to all of you who have contributed to this edition. Please keep on sending stuff in - photos, results, reports, new training routes - anything you like. If at all possible please send in your reports on disc or via e-mail as this saves me hours of typing. The next newsletter should be out sometime in March. All the best for 98 - Brian.

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The end of an era - the night of the last run from westies.

