



# HOGWEED EXPRESS

July 2004

## Tracey Booth goes 'ultra' on Dartmoor

I vaguely remember how it happened...

Bob (*who else?—Ed*) said, "You're up for *the Devon One* aren't you Tracey?" Before I could ask what, when, or where was I staying, an entry form was in the post. "Well", I thought, when I discovered that it was a 32 mile ultra, "It's only a 10k over a marathon, how difficult can that be?" The famous last words of a naïve ultra virgin!

I thought my marathon training and two marathons in the previous couple of months under my belt would prepare me. I was soon to find out that it would be barely enough.

I studied the course profile, sent out with the 12 sheets of pre-race info, and tried to get an idea of the hills involved. I had a very loose race plan—break the distance down and run it as four 8 mile runs. I thought that if I could average 1 hour 20 for each 8 mile split it would give me an ideal finishing time of sub 5 hours 30 mins. I thought being a first timer would be a bonus. With no previous experience of this type of race, I'd have a completely open mind with very little expectation, except to finish.

So, on the Friday afternoon, with 11 labelled drink bottles, 7 labelled gels and 3 labelled bananas plus overloaded kit bag, I set off for Dartmoor. Saturday morning dawned with clear blue skies and warm sunshine. Perfect for going up on the Moors for a picnic—not ideal for running 32 hilly miles.

Feeling relaxed and reasonably confident I stood on the start line, the Mayoress wished us luck, sounded the air horn and we were off.

The race starts and finishes in Princetown, one of the highest towns on Dartmoor (approx. 450m above sea level). The countryside was stunning, which briefly took your mind off all the miles that lay ahead.

It is hard to report on the route because there were

just so many hills the miles blend into one another. It became a test of mental endurance as well as a physical one. I do remember, however, running down the first hill and thinking that I'll have to climb this at the end. Then running past the one mile marker and hearing someone behind me say "31 to go then". Cheers. I also remember running past the deserted 31 mile drinks station, on the other side of the road. Little did I know it would be about six hours before I saw that again.

By the time I got over the *first significant climb* at 6 to 7 miles I'd already re-evaluated my finishing time to inside 6 hours. I finished the first 8 miles in 80 minutes, but it was a struggle already, battling on against the hills and the heat. I remember seeing a supporter cyclist about here. She was so pleased that she had managed to help someone in distress. Apparently someone's knicker elastic had gone and she was able to provide the runner with some safety pins to save embarrassment. "Could it be...", I wondered, "nah, surely no...he wouldn't risk that kind of a fine".

It was then a slide downhill to Ashburton (70m) via Dartmeet & Poundsgate—that's a half marathon out of the way. It was about this point that I caught up with **Bob** and discovered that it was indeed his elastic that had given way, sending his shorts in a southerly direction. He'd pinned his shorts to his running vest in a kind of romper suit fashion.

As we started to climb back up from the lowest point of the course, I remember thinking "all uphill to the finish then". But it's not quite as simple as that. There were some severe up-hills on the way *down* and then, surprise, surprise, when you think Ashburton is behind you, and you're safely climbing back *up* (the longest climb is well over a mile continuous when you leave Ashburton), you hear a cry of "oh no, why are we going down again?" The road takes you up and down through Buckland, Widecombe & Postbridge like a roller coaster.

I soon discovered that the consistent thing about this course is that after each hill you know there'll



# HOGWEED EXPRESS

July 2004

be another one. After 13–14 miles the whole thing just became surreal. Don't look round the next corner because you just know there'll be another hill to climb.

By this time I had re-evaluated my finish time again. Now I just wanted to finish inside the 6 hours 30 mins cut off. If anyone had asked me at this point if I'd do it again I would have said "Absolutely not, no way, never again!"

I went through *Marathon point* in 4 hours 53 mins, which I was horrified with at first. However that's only 44 minutes slower than the time I did in flat Copenhagen three weeks earlier. But the final 10k took 1 hour 18 mins—so much for the plan of averaging 1 hour 20 per 8 miles!

From 27 miles there were countdown mile markers. Then, 6 hours after running past it on the other side of the road, I was running towards the last drinks station at 31 miles. I was so close to the finish. Not quite a hop, skip and a jump away, more like a limp, stagger and stumble.

At the top of the next hill I could see Princetown—what a welcome sight! By now I was walking up the hills and doing the best I could to run the down. Cruelly another *hill*, that I'm sure wasn't there in the morning, was between me and the finish. Driving out of Princetown the next day I discovered this *hill* was more of a speed-bump. My legs must have just been so tired that every bump in the road added to the torture.

Suddenly I heard the announcer calling out my name. I turned the corner to the finish and could have cried with a mixture of relief that it was over, pride in my achievement, and knowledge that I am now an Ultra Runner. If anyone had asked me at this point if I'd do it again I would have just said "No".

I finished in 6 hours and 11 minutes, but it ceased to be about times. It's said that it is the whole beauty and secret of this event. To enjoy it—do not think of **times**. The key is to **relax**, drink loads

and **never give up!** It is the "I will not be beaten!" thought that brings people back year after year plus the camaraderie and the stunning scenery. The Dartmoor Discovery is about the most endurance most of us will ever encounter. For that alone there is a tremendous sense of achievement.

**Bob** finished in a time of 6 hours 35 minutes—a gallant effort given his recent injury problems. While we watched **Dave Burton** pick up his prizes for 1st male veteran 40+ and 4th overall, Bob vowed to be back next year.

The Ultra's special atmosphere is forged from the generous help and support given by the volunteers and helpers all along the course, the cheering, the hot cuppa, food, blankets and masseur plus the post-race meal, presentations & disco. All this helped allay the fear and trepidation felt by us entrants, particularly first-timers.

So now the pain is forgotten and my legs are feeling like they belong to me once more. If anyone asked me now if I'd do it again, I'd say "Funny you should ask, I'm just filling out the entry form".

But I do know now that this is definitely not "just" 10k more than a marathon.

**Tracey Booth**

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## **Tales of the unexpected**

Following the strange tale of **Danny Kaye** (a good friend of the Hogweeds) from the Avon Valley Runners who on his 61st birthday ran the Majorca Marathon with race number 61 and finished in 61st position, another odd story.

From the whole club, just three Hogweed Trotters decided independently to take part in the Lynham Half Marathon. They didn't really know each other that well but shared a car to the start. Spookily, all three, **Dave (Rawhide) Mullins, Kaye Hall** and **Kevin McNicholas** shared the same birthday!



# HOGWEED EXPRESS

July 2004

## “The Hogweed Trot”—24th May 2004

Well what a surprising turn out, helped by the nice weather. It was especially pleasing to hear all the complimentary comments from the runners afterwards. Well done to all those who ran especially the novices (first timers at 10k) the results for Hogweeds are shown below:

<i>Sodbury Slog (8ish miles, Multi Terrain) - 9th November 2003</i>				
Name	Time	Position	Category	Category Position
Andy Hawkins	32:53	1	MS	
Tim Lund	36:38	5	MS	
Peter Willoughby	38:55	14	MSV50	
Dave Ford	43:13	40	MS	
Sarah Richards	44:10	47	FV40	
Colin Rathbone	44:34	55	MS	
Stuart Robertson	44:44	57	MS	
Adrian Pook	44:55	61	MS	
Mandy Spedding	46:53	75	FS	
Staurt Wilkie	46:58	77	M	
Tim Sadler	47:30	81	MV40	
Jonathon Wells	47:39	85	MU17	
Claire Seward	48:42	95	FV40	
Bronwen Llewellyn-Evans	48:58	99	FV40	
Paul Denton	49:05	103	MSV50	
Richard Finch	49:18	106	MV40	
Jenny McCallum	49:30	111	FSV50	
Mark Hutchinson	49:47	114	MV40	
Nigel Chapman	49:49	115	MV40	
David Wells	50:23	118	MV40	
David Mullins	51:35	122	MSV50	
Julie Froggatt	51:48	123	FV40	
Marcus Axford	51:53	124	MV40	
Kaye Hall	52:03	129	FS	
Claire Searle	52:14	132	FV40	
Sandra Killen	52:19	134	FV40	
Rob Smith	52:38	137	MSV50	
Mike Green	53:01	138	MSV50	
Sheena Robbins	53:49	142	FV40	
Vicki Pearson	54:04	144	FS	
Sue Hutchinson	55:25	150	FV40	
Pat Tracey	55:50	153	FV40	
Cheryl Cant	56:01	154	FS	

Lynette Bonnick	56:08	155	FV40	
Sarah Phillips	57:17	163	FS	
Carol Box	58:11	169	FSV50	
Barbara Denton	58:37	170	FSV50	
Jenny Riley	59:05	171	FS	
Kate Coggins	59:09	173	FV40	
Ann Wells	59:09	174	FV40	
Jo Butters	69:21	191	F	
Pauline Fletcher	71:22	193	FSV50	
Beverley Woodward	72:59	194	FV40	
Joanne Wood	78:42	195	FS	

### A special thanks to all the helpers:

*Bob Bell, John Clapp, Linda and Dave Morgan, Amanda Richardson, Paul Christmas, Faith Hurford, Jo Noott, Barry and Derek Fletcher, Will Gray, Helen Willoughby, Pete and Sarah Holden, Mike Hallgarth, Aileen Brown, Dave Snell, Kevin MacNicholas, Ian Drury and his dad, Ray Maddock, Justin Littlechild, Pat and Brenda Hall, John and Pat Curtis, Liz and Dennis Butterworth, Mike and Shorley Brokenshaw, Jo Wilson, Anthony and Rebecca Febry, Nicola Ashford, Steve Chandler, Martin Wood and little helper, Kevin Tompkins, Al Young, Colin Axford, Ian Dunningham, Tim Hudson, Chris Martin, Dawn Connor and Richard, Martin Roper, Ian Rowland, Paul and Richard Chappell.*

Without your help the Trot would not have taken place. It was due to your help that the event went so smoothly. Thanks very much to you all.

Next year's Trot will again be the Monday before the Whitsun bank holiday.

**Philippa Crocker**

### The Revel-it's back

The Revel, Family Day and BBQ guarantees a great day for everyone—face painting, bouncy castle, the Hogweed stocks, music, games, competitions, races, raffle and much more.

The Revel is at Horton Village Hall on Sunday August 8th from 1pm until 6pm. Adults pay just £2 each and there is no charge for children. **Linda Morgan** is co-ordinating the American style supper as last year. Tickets are available at the club. See you there!



# HOGWEED EXPRESS



July 2004

## 3 Peaks Challenge

I'm sure the 3 Peaks challenge began life in a pub somewhere. There's no way sober people could think of walking to the top of the highest mountains in Scotland, England and Wales all within 24 hours without a belly full of beer.

So with that background, three work colleagues and myself set out to walk to the top of Ben Nevis, Scarell Pike and, the best of them all, Snowdon.

Sampling the delights of EasyJet we left the sunshine in Bristol and flew to face the tartan army at Glasgow airport. The torrential rain at Fort William and surrounding mountains made us realise what exactly we had let ourselves in for. Undeterred, we headed for the nearest curry house to fill ourselves up with enough carbohydrates to last the next 24 hours. Upon reflection this wasn't such a good idea. Four blokes sat in a car for 24 hours is not a pleasant smell.



Setting off mid afternoon in what we were told was "light drizzle" we headed into the clouds. Just over 2 hours later we were stood atop the highest mountain in Britain, totally soaked with an amazing view of the clouds. The rush was on now to descend as fast as possible and drive to the Lake District.

At a time most people are just on their way home from a night out, a rather odorous car pulled into a car park and four very tired people began walking uphill. Unfortunately, I can't describe any more than

that as it was pitch black for the majority of the climb and descent.



Stocking up with more pies and pasties we set about driving to the beautiful land of Wales and the best mountain of the three. It is at this point some people may be laughing. May I just point out that the Welsh, in all their wisdom, choose to build a café atop their highest mountain that serves beer. I rest my case.

So, pausing to drink a pint of Guinness and study the clouds once again, off we headed back to the car to complete the challenge in 21 hours 52 minutes. In doing so the four of us raised almost £600 for Frenchay Hospital, had a great time and admired the Welsh for their common sense.

Dave Snell



<http://www.hogweedtrotters.co.uk/>



# HOGWEED EXPRESS

July 2004

## Race Results—we've got your number

You just all keep running don't you—won't you all consider taking a break and making the editing team's life a little easier?

<i>Horton Bull Run (4ish miles, Multi Terrain) - 14th June 2004</i>				
Name	Time	Position	Category	Category Position
T Lund	24:24	3	SM	3
J Littlechild	25:21	7	SM	6
P Willoughby	25:36	8	MV55	1
M Roper	26:16	12	MV40	3
S Wilkie	28:13	20	SM	12
A Richardson	28:45	25	SL	2
A Howell	29:08	28	MV40	10
J Curtis	29:38	32	MV40	11
M Fitzhugh	29:49	34	MV40	12
D Davies	31:11	53	MV40	17
P Curtis	31:32	58	L40	2
S Brokenshaw	31:37	60	L55	18
J Perrett	31:52	65	MV40	20
M Hutchinson	32:47	79	MV40	23
J Broad	32:49	80	MV40	24
T Sadler	32:52	81	MV40	25
P Smith	32:55	82	MV40	26
P Denton	33:10	86	MV40	28
H Crook	33:37	90	L40	4
J Wells	33:45	93	Boys 12-16	8
B Bell	34:16	104	MV55	5
M Bowes	34:24	107	SM	43
D Wells	35:03	122	MV40	38
M Brokenshaw	35:07	124	MV55	7
L Roberts	35:20	130	SL	10
D Morgan	35:49	140	MV40	40
T Booth	35:52	141	L40	8
K Hall	36:56	155	SL	12
D Mullins	36:58	156	MV40	43
M Axford	37:48	164	MV40	45
S Robbins	37:54	166	L40	10
L Harris	38:12	173	SL	16
R Smith	28:20	176	MV55	9
P Tracey	38:30	180	L40	12
C Axford	38:56	187	MV55	10
D Clarke	39:31	200	SL	23

K Tatton	39:34	201	SL	24
I Soilleux	39:37	202	SM	69
C Cant	29:46	205	SL	25
J Riley	39:57	209	SL	26
S Butters	39:59	210	SL	27
L Perrett	40:16	216	SL	28
L Morgan	40:19	217	L55	2
C Box	40:26	220	L40	18
M Blue	41:32	233	L40	21
A Wells	42:11	239	L40	23
J Hudson	42:17	240	SL	34
J Beare	43:56	256	L40	25
M Mackenzie	44:49	261	L55	3
J Froggatt	46:29	276	SL	39
J Dixon	46:41	279	L40	29
C Golding	46:49	281	SL	41
A Hudson	46:58	282	L40	30
S Cropper	47:08	286	L40	31
P Fletcher	47:35	295	L55	5
M Chandler	47:38	296	SL	43
J Butters	48:58	302	SL	48
W Gray	52:28	319	MV40	62
P Green	55:58	324	L55	6
J Green	56:02	325	SL	55
M Green	56:05	326	MV55	16
F Hurford	56:09	327	L40	35
J Wood	57:00	329	SL	57

<i>Bridge Inn Series - Race 3 (5K, Road) - 30th June 2004</i>				
Name	Time	Position	Category	Category Position
Peter Willoughby	18:23	17	M50	
Ian Drury	20:01	35	SM	
Anthony Febry	20:03	36	M40	
Tim Sadler	21:22	50	M40	
Shirley Brokenshaw	22:35	66	L55	

## Read all about it

Please send any race details, performances, times (especially PB's), anecdotes etc. to **Tracey Booth** before noon on the Monday following your race so she can include them in the press reports. Either Email Tracey (freeing91@hotmail.com) or ring her on 01454 711547.



# HOGWEED EXPRESS

July 2004

## Know your fellow Hogweeds

**Name:** Will Gray.

**Age:** 43, *One day I will catch up with the "weathered" exterior and people will say he hasn't changed at all (although some might say "mind you, he has looked like that since he was ten").*

**Occupation:** *Regional Sales Manager in the Wine Trade. A job I have been in since the last days of the "old trade" in 1984 when family operations ruled the roost and supermarkets accounted for a very small percentage of the trade.*

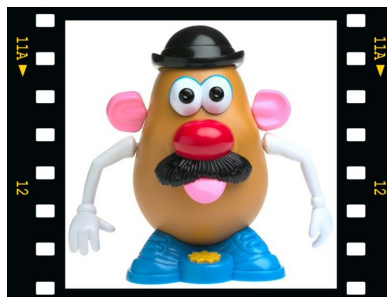
**Home:** *Horton—a great viewing point from which to watch my fellow club mates running up or down the Hill, (actually it is not "great" at all, it just makes me feel guilty).*

**Favourite pastime:** *Running, and drinking wine, though not together. Probably not advisable (take note Bob!) although it is known in the Bordeaux Marathon.*

**Pet hates:** *Ally McBeal—I could not stick that programme! And giant loo roll machines, why are they never in the right position to get the piece of loo paper? Is it just me or does every body have to stick their hand right inside the machine in order to rotate the roll to tear off a strip? Having done so it invariably breaks off leaving you with one sheet and having to go through the whole performance all over again! (Meanwhile the race has either started or the queue outside has begun to resemble a riotous mob.)*

**Family profile:** *There are six of us, Sara and myself plus three daughters: Felicity (15), Emily (14), and Lucy (9), and one beleaguered son, Harry (12).*

**Most bizarre running incident:** *Running in a small town in Argentina at 7.00 in the morning, just as the night clubs were closing and the clubbers were spilling out on to the street. Out there running is seen as totally unnecessary and they could not understand*



**Artist's impression of Will Gray**  
(No photo submitted)

*why I was doing it. The catcalls that I received plus those trying to keep up gave me a deep feeling of nostalgia for Britain in the 1970's (I once took the school cross country team on a short cut that involved running through the Winchester branch of Woolworth's. But that's another story.)*

**Favourite race:** *Cotswold Way Relay. How on earth I found myself with the lead pack in the final stages of the race and then come in second, I will never know (though altering the signposts helped).*

**Greatest achievement:** *Completing the London Marathon. Then after the resulting injury put me out of action for two years, to come second in the Cotswold Relay (for which I owe a huge debt of thanks to Clifton Physiotherapy for believing I would get better, even when I didn't, and then making it happen). The icing on the cake was to be made Hogweed club Champion this year.*

**Aspirations:** *To run sub three hours for the Marathon, and to master my PC.*

**Weaknesses:** *Eating (I have a voracious appetite). Putting off things to be done until "tomorrow". Being the first to arrive at party and the last to leave.*

**Favourite food:** *Sausage sandwiches.*

**Favourite group:** *As I grew up it was Genesis, (for which we have to thank for our club anthem "The return of the Giant Hogweed"). As I continue the growing up process it has become U2 (I have become a 43 year old rebel without a clue).*

**Favourite wine:** *No such thing, it depends upon my mood and the situation.*

**Favourite beer:** *Stella Artois. (Afraid of the taste of real ale eh? —Ed)*



# HOGWEED EXPRESS

July 2004

## Triathlon corner

**Peter Holton** was recently on international duty at the **Ironman France**. This was 2.4 mile swim, 112 mile bike ride and 26 mile run—very scary.

Peter swam in 1 hour 7 mins, biked in 5 hours 33 mins, and ran 4 hours 7 mins for an overall time of 10 hours 51 mins and 252nd place.

See the race details at: <http://liveupdate.ironmanlive.com/frameset.php3?url=http://vnews.ironmanlive.com/assets/2004results/2004France.htm>

Hogweeds, **Steve Clayson, Ron White, Anthony Febry** and **Tim Lund** represented the club at the **Bath Triathlon** on 11th July. Results are at: <http://www.triathletes-uk.org/2004/bath.html>.

## Magic Fairy solves more problems

The Magic Fairy has turned many back from the brink. More words of wisdom from the lady herself below...

Dear Magic Fairy,

Overheard after the Horton Bull Run by three runners who didn't perform as well as expected. "I'm gobsmacked", "I'm gutted", "I'm as sick as a parrot". On the disappointment scale, which is the most severe?

Mr H. Ogweed.



**Magic Fairy:** *Poor performance is often closely associated with diversionary comments such as those listed. Strictly speaking, the term "gobsmacked" is reserved for extreme surprise—i.e., when some ugly bloke pulls the top bird you were eyeing in a nightclub. Also, being "as sick as a parrot" is more of a pre-race excuse, whereas being "gutted" is a general purpose word for disappointment, commonly used by groups of males gathered in a public house talking about nothing in particular.*

## Get ready for the Bristol Half Run...

On Sunday September 5th, just a week before the Bristol Half marathon, there will be a choice on the "training" front. The club is organising the "Kilcott Experience" which involves running distances from 4.5 miles to 7 miles and longer starting and finishing at the Beaufort in Hawkesbury Upton. All courses involve the pleasant Kilcott valley! The longer runs begin at the club at 9.30am, the 7 miler at the Beaufort 10.30am and 4.5 mile at 11.00am, also from the Beaufort.

## ...or walk

Alternatively the Rotary Club of Chipping Sodbury are organising "Along the Edge". This is a charity fund-raising annual 10 mile circular walk beginning at Old Sodbury Village Hall, where you register from 8.30am, to begin from 9.30am. The 5 mile and Llama walk starting at Hawkesbury Upton (transport provided) returns to Old Sodbury along the Cotswold Way. The Bristol Area Stroke Foundation and other Rotary projects will benefit as well as walkers own charities. So if you fancy something different, a walk with Llamas, a peaceful ramble along the byways that you so often run, a chance before the hustle and bustle of the Bristol Half Marathon to relax, then please contact **Bob Bell** or **Jenny Riley** for further details and sponsor form.



## Demise of the food rota

As from July 2004 we have decided to abandon the members' Food Rota that has been with us for the past few years. With the club's continuing expansion it has become impractical to maintain and monitor this practice. So we are reverting to the early days at the club when everybody chipped in by occasionally bringing along an item of food, six apples, a packet of biscuits, some chocolates, savouries etc. and pooling them all together. The club will continue to provide all drinks and ensure that the cupboard is never bare. Many thanks to all of you who have made the effort and contributed so generously over the past years.

**Bob Bell.**

<http://www.hogweedtrotters.co.uk/>