



January/February 2016

Established 10/08/1984  
Affiliated MCAA, LRRL, DRL, RWA.

## Raising the Standard

We're now at the end of the second season of County Standards. These were designed to give everyone targets to aim for; wherever they finished in races. Whilst everyone's achievements should be seen in the individual context, they also provide a way for runners of differing ages to compare their performances. Any result from a race taking place on an accurately measured course is eligible (this rules out parkrun).

Standards are based on your best performance at each distance over the year and you need 5 distances to qualify. Your final standard reflects the weakest of your best 5 distances. Jackie and Dale were our best performers this year, both achieving Gold. Jackie also recorded the highest single standard with Diamond in the Mablethorpe HM. Our most prolific members were Clare and Dale, who recorded distinctions (Copper and Silver, respectively) by racing over 9 different distances. In all, 36 members achieved a standard in 2015. Turn to page 5 to find out how you did. Certificates will be issued in the next couple of months.

## When Ben met Ben



Roadhogs' 'most improved runner' Ben Milsom capped off his year of achievement by running his first ever Marathon last month. He achieved this milestone running in the company of Ben Smith, who is attempting a world record for back to back Marathons. Read more on Page 2.

## The Winter League is here!

The 2016 Leicestershire Road Running League season starts on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> January with the Markfield 10K. Race fees have gone up to £5 this year, but the good news is that if you're a paid up member of the club, it's free!

At your first race, you'll be given a number (which you keep for all 5 Winter League races) and a chip (which you return after the race). Club kit must be worn in all League races.

### Winter League

Markfield 10K	January 17 <sup>th</sup>
Barrow 6	January 24 <sup>th</sup>
Asfordby 7	February 28 <sup>th</sup>
Kibworth 6	March 6 <sup>th</sup>
Desford 6	March 27 <sup>th</sup>

Individual prizes = best 4 races

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## Picture Credits

The 401 Challenge, Dave Lodwick, Gilmorton Village Store, Stephen Lee.

## The 401 Challenge

Ben Smith had most of the things that are supposed to make us happy; a good job, a nice house, a fancy car and a long-term relationship. Despite these apparent blessings, he was deeply unhappy (and had been for many years). His father was in the military so he was sent to boarding school, where he was extensively bullied. He obviously tried to counter this by trying to conform; following the path he believed people expected. It was only after he turned 30 that he decided to change his outlook on life and concentrate on the things that actually made him happy. One of those things, and of course the reason why I'm writing about him here, is running. Like many people, Ben discovered the healing power of running; indeed, I believe him when he says that it saved his life.



Day 1: Ready for the off

Just over a year ago, Ben gave up his job, sold his house and car and started planning a quite remarkable feat; undertaken to raise funds for anti-bullying charities (Stone wall and Kidscape). He is trying to break the world record for running Marathons on consecutive days. Initially, the plan was to go for 400 (the record is currently 365, I think). However, when running in the US he was convinced to add an extra one 'as a lap of honour'. Of the 401 planned, only 20 are 'proper' organised Marathons; the rest have been devised by running clubs around the country, contacted by his support team. When they contacted me early in 2015, I plotted a couple of routes but never expected anything to come of it; after all Leicester was going to host Marathons 108 and 109. Surely he would have got ill or injured and given up by then?

Backing Ben is a small team of friends and family, who provide support with PR (press, website, social media etc.) and planning. Out on

the road though, it is just Ben and his camper van. In many locations, physios and massage therapists have offered their services, but that's the extent of the back-up. Every day he turns up, runs his miles and then drives off to the next location. In most places, he has local runners for company but he has ended up on his own a few times.



Heading towards Kings Norton

### Marathon 108: Great Glen

Attempting to avoid busy roads, I planned a course from Great Glen out to Hallaton and back. After dropping a car in Illston, Alison and I made our way to the start point. We spotted Ben's van as he drove round the village searching for a parking space large enough. Alison jogged off in pursuit and for a few minutes it was like one of those comedy films with people disappearing then reappearing from the opposite direction but never quite meeting in the middle. Eventually, everyone was gathered in one place. In addition to Ben, Alison and myself, there was a lady from Corby (with her Jack Russel, Eddie), Emma (who used to run for West End and had met Ben at a 24 hour race) and Jo from F&K. After the introductions and a comprehensive round of photos, we set off towards Kings Norton.

The pace was quite relaxed; one of the ways that Ben prepared for the challenge was to learn how to run slower than his natural pace (he would normally run well under 4 hour pace) in order to minimise the strain on his body. I'm not in Marathon shape at the moment, so I accompanied the group on my bike. Jo and Alison peeled off at Illston while the rest of us headed for Goadby. At this point I got a text from Valerie, who was supposed to be joining us for the middle part, saying she was lost and not



to wait. In the end, Valerie arrived in Goadby just after we'd passed but thanks to an observant villager, was able to catch us, abandon her car on a verge and join the group.



Valerie and Ben

I'd assumed that Ben had a support crew to keep him fed but it turned out that he just stopped in cafes on the way; somewhat of a problem in rural East Leicestershire! Fortunately, there was a pub en route in Hallaton and we were able to stop for a restorative hot drink (complete with festive biscuits). Eddie the dog was still going strong and treated us to his party piece while we rested (playing dead when 'shot', in exchange for treats).



Eddie the Wonder Dog; tail still wagging after 26.8 miles

We said goodbye to Valerie at Goadby and headed back to Great Glen via Illston (where I locked up my bike and joined on foot), Carlton Curliu and Burton Overy. Everyone was impressed with the scenery, but perhaps not the

number of hills en route! When we finally made it back, Eddie the wonder dog had changed colour from the wet and muddy roads but otherwise looked as if he was ready to go round again! As I went to retrieve my bike, I left the party tucking in to tea and cakes in the village café.



Day 2

### Marathon 109: Blaby

Friday's route started at the Bakers Arms and looped out through Willoughby, Gilmorton, Kimcote, Walton, Bruntingthorpe and the Peatlings. To everyone's relief, I was able to reassure them that this one was only 'undulating'. Emma was back for a second day (nursing a crop of blisters from day one) and we were joined by Ben Milsom. Our Ben had never run further than a half Marathon and had already walked several miles to get to the start but he's made of stern stuff and he announced that he was there to do the full distance!



Refuelling en route

We set into a steady pattern with me, as guide, cycling behind the runners (on the wrong side of the road, to avoid narrowing the space too much when cars passed). In Gilmorton, Ben spotted the café above the village shop and we stopped for fortification. As he put away a hot chocolate and a bacon cob, he explained that running a Marathon every day left him permanently hungry. When the proprietor found out about the Challenge, she refused payment and then posted a picture of the group on the shop Facebook page.

Apart from a cold wind, conditions were good and the miles ticked over nicely. At one point we encountered a couple in the middle of nowhere who had heard about Ben and come out to bring him greetings from his home city of Bristol. Our planned coffee stop was Peatling Parva but once the two Bens spotted the carvery, they were in for the full works!



Don't tell the sports nutritionists!

Amazingly, once plates had been cleaned, we were back out on the road again. Our Ben had entered uncharted territory some time earlier but he stayed strong right to the end; Marathon number one completed and I don't think even Keith has managed a full roast dinner in the middle of any of his!

## Eleanor Robinson: A Life Spent Pushing the Boundaries

I recently had the pleasure of listening to this trail-blazer for women's ultramarathon talk about her life and times. In her career, she held 40 world records and was twice a world champion 100km runner.

Eleanor was born in Guisborough (N. Yorks) and ran with her brothers, who were keen athletes, from an early age. At the time, girls couldn't join an athletic club until they were 14 and even

then, they were only allowed to compete over 150 yards. At the age of 16 this was increased to 1 mile on the track and 2.5 miles cross country. Running any further than this was considered too dangerous for frail female bodies! Rules were rigidly enforced by the women's AAA and local officials. For example, Eleanor's brother lied about her age and entered her into a race before she was old enough to compete. When the organisers found out, they demanded that she give back the second prize she'd won so, as she dryly commented, they could give it to someone she'd beaten.

Running fell by the wayside as marriage and motherhood intervened. However, something reignited the spark and she started to run again; under cover of darkness (it wasn't the 'done thing' for women to run the streets), after the children were asleep. She says that at first, running to the end of the road was exhausting but eventually her fitness started to return. Now living in the East Midlands, she joined a club and started to compete again. Her first Marathon was the 'People's Marathon' in Birmingham. At the time, AAA rules prevented women from running Marathons. However, as an event aimed at the general public rather than athletes, the 'Peoples' event was not bound by these rules. She didn't win but she did record a quick time for a debut Marathon and subsequently became hooked on longer distance events.

Born with a strong competitive streak, Eleanor has always been motivated to challenge herself and to push to find what she is capable of. In this spirit, she agreed to make up a team for a track 12-hour race organised by Notts AC. She was told that to score for the team she would need to cover at least 100km. She modestly claims that she only agreed because she 'wasn't very good with maths or the metric system' and had no idea that 100km was 62.5 miles! Her aptitude for ultra-distance was clear from the start; after she had been running for a few hours, the race director sent a message that if she maintained her pace she would set a world record for 50 miles. At first she thought this was a joke but duly persuaded, she broke the first of her 40 world records. Setting the record brought no respite though; she was expected to keep going to record further marks and to score for her team.

Longer events followed; 24 hour, 3 day and even 6 day events were common at the time. The ultimate, which she completed twice (once in a stage event and once on the track), was the



1000 mile race, setting a record of 13 days, 1 hour and 54 minutes.

One of the most interesting races was the first Badwater event. This was a 146 mile run from the lowest (and hottest) point in Death Valley (282ft below sea level) to the top of Mount Whitney (14,494ft) the highest point in the US outside of Alaska). Just to add a little extra challenge, the race started at noon on the 31st of July. The event was a challenge between a couple of locals, representing the USA and a British team to which Eleanor had been recruited after answering an ad in *Athletics Weekly*; her partner was an out of shape adventurer named Ken Crutchlow (who had made the original wager with the Americans). Eleanor finished first in just over 53 hours (setting a female record) with the American pair behind in just under 59 hours. The fact that Crutchlow condemned his team to comprehensive defeat by taking a whopping 126 hours could not detract from her achievement, though.

Sadly, Eleanor's career was cut short at 54 by a foot injury (she says this was caused by falling over a child in the gym) but she continues to run for pleasure at the age of 68 (she was doing 70-80 miles per week at the age of 60). Her older brother set a V50 world record for Tetra-Ironman Triathlon (8 mile swim, 336 mile cycle, 80 mile run) at the age of 69, so without injury she would probably have continued setting records and seeking new challenges.

## County Standards 2015

Gold	Jackie Brown, Dale Jenkins
Silver	Emma Raven, James Boyd, Dave Lodwick, Mark Ramsden
Bronze	Clare Mendes, Colin Bowpitt, Dave Bullivant, Fabio Caraffini, Will Carter, Nick Cobley, Mark Coulson, Keith Dakin, Robin Meynell, Ferrante Neri, Hitesh Pandya, Terry Woodhouse
Copper	Jeannette Franklin, Alison Lodwick, Trudy Sharpe, Valerie Spezi, Ruth Stevely, Vicky Sutton, Baz Barratt, Martin Capell, Brian Feldman, Ben Milsom, Peter Sloneczny, Michael Vaughan-Smith
Pewter	Caroline Evans, Amy Barnes, Chris Peach, Marcus Sheikh
Tungsten	Hannah Price, Edd Smissen

## For the Record

Bpr 12/12/15		
Ben Milsom	41st	22.05
James Thurman	45th	22.25(PB)
Baz Barratt	58th	23.21
LVpr 12/12/15		
Terry Woodhouse	34th	22.31
Steve Wheeler	52nd	23.47
Lee Hennell	59th	24.21
Brian Feldman	91st	31.18
MHpr 12/12/15		
Steve Barnes	37th	24.10
Turkey Trot HM		
Fabio Caraffini	140th	1.32.05
Dale Jenkins	162nd	1.33.25
Steve Robinson	293rd	1.40.56
Chris Peach	705th	2.01.23
Valerie Spezi	734th	2.03.51
Mark Jowsey	787th	2.06.37
Barbara Hermann	797th	2.07.42
LVpr 19/12/15		
James Thurman	52nd	23.12
Terry Woodhouse	78th	24.34
Baz Barratt	82nd	24.46
Steve Wheeler	103rd	26.22
Brian Feldman	158th	31.12
Caroline Evans	170th	32.37
Edd Smissen	171st	32.37
Gaddesby Gallop		
Nick Cobley	12th	38.59
Dale Jenkins	30th	43.14
Fabio Caraffini	35th	44.36
Dave Lodwick	38th	45.03
Colin Bowpitt	50th	48.12
Amy Barnes	95th	57.33
Shaun Heaphy	105th	1.00.32
Ian Bass	121st	1.07.02
LVpr 25/12/15		
Baz Barratt	54th	24.00
Valerie Spezi	117th	29.51
MHpr 26/12/15		
Steve Barnes	50th	24.42
Baz Barratt	59th	25.15
LVpr 26/12/15		
Ben Milsom	27th	21.40
Valerie Spezi	104th	27.07
Shaun Heaphy	113th	27.46
Kathryn Evans	123rd	28.15
Brian Feldman	152nd	31.25
Barrow Handicap		
Dale Jenkins	47th	42.20
Edd Smissen	53rd	42.36
Colin Bowpitt	90th	46.22
Caroline Evans	263rd	59.58
Sunrise to Sunset Challenge		
Chris Peach		35.28 miles
Zurich New Year HM		
Fabio Caraffini	55th	1.39.19
LVpr 1/1/16		
Ben Milsom	24th	20.29

Emma Raven	50th	22.57
Michael Vaughan-Smith	58th	23.20
Terry Woodhouse	60th	23.22
Steve Barnes	74th	24.18
Baz Barratt	106th	26.23
Bpr 1/1/16		
Ben Milsom	31st	20.42
James Thurman	58th	22.20
Baz Barratt	104th	23.52
Pegwell Bay parkrun 1/1/16		
Brian Feldman	80th	30.39
LVpr 2/1/16		
Terry Woodhouse	26th	23.02
Valerie Spezi	78th	28.20
Jacqui Womersley	96th	30.58
Bpr 2/1/16		
Ben Milsom	38th	21.35
James Thurman	53rd	22.15
Baz Barratt	73rd	23.26
MHpr 2/1/16		
Steve Barnes	45th	24.52
Pegwell Bay parkrun 2/1/16		
Brian Feldman	93rd	31.24

## Getting Muddy with Kim

### Derby Runner League Race 2 - Bradgate 6/12/15

This is the race hosted by Roadhogs, and we wanted to make it as successful for everyone as it was the last time at Bradgate in January. The omens were not good the day before, as the strong gales of Storm Desmond hit Leicestershire. Bradgate Park is quite exposed and so the runners and marshals would have to battle Desmond as well as the tough hills around the course. Also it would have been impossible to put up tents and signs in those strong winds. But by Sunday morning it had eased down a few points and it was ok providing you picked a sheltered spot to pitch the tent ... we arrived early so we had the best spot just inside the woods for the Roadhogs' base camp. Some of our runners arrived early to help out with the car-parking. At base camp, Kim-Jong Dale asked for golden tent for himself, and his own cakes in a golden tin from Trudy, as befits the winner of our club athlete of the year just the previous weekend. But then he decided to stay with his team-mates in the common tent and allow his greatness to rub off on them. As a number of our runners were helping on the day instead of running, other Roadhogs stepped up to make sure that we completed full teams; it was good to see Nick, Peter and Afra back again. And we welcomed Steve Barnes and Paul Barton who made their XC debuts for us.



Peter: A welcome return

Bradgate is such a great venue for cross-country running. The course designed by Dave was very scenic but very challenging. The men started ten minutes before the ladies and the 5.25 mile route was two different laps, which meant that you could see the races going on in several places at once. From the start/finish area, you could watch the runners come through for the second lap, and see the ladies setting off on into the distance as the lead men were coming over the hill from another direction and charging down to the finish. Mark Ramsden led our men's team home, chased in by Nick Cobley and Dave Pearce although Dave does not count for the team as he is a second-claim runner for us. Dale and Fabio were next in, then behind them a group of Roadhogs must have chased each other round as they finished close together. The girls were led in by Emma Raven and Afra Kelsall, followed by Amy and then Trudy and Janet bringing up the rear, Janet wearing her usual smiley face. The times were around ten minutes less than at the last race at Bagworth, which was a good mile longer, but Steve R, Marcus, Shaun, Emma, Amy and Trudy all were quicker than that so they had much better runs this time.



Emma is taking to XC

The men's team gained slightly on the ladies, and overall we moved up a couple of places. Well done to all on what was a very tough course.



Marcus: Improved performer

Trudy provided her usual high-quality post-race carbohydrate recovery food, which was soon devoured back at base camp. The rain held off for the morning, but at home in the afternoon it poured down so we were lucky with the weather. Thanks once again to everyone from the club, and family and friends, who helped out on the day.

#### RESULTS:

**MEN:** 40th Mark Ramsden 35.02, 55th Nick Coble 35.55, 66th Dave Pearce 36.22, 42.40, 163rd Dale Jenkins (V50) 40.39, 202nd Fabio Caraffini 42.09, 240th Steve Robinson (V40) 43.45, 243rd John Davies (V50) 43.53, 247th Peter Sloneczny (V50) 43.57, 249th Ben Milsom 43.59, 255th Colin Bowpitt (V40) 44.19, 262nd Terry Woodhouse (V40) 44.49, 290th Paul Barton 46.34, 307th Hitesh Pandya (V50) 47.30, 309th Steve Barnes (V50) 47.35, 316th Marcus Shaikh (V40) 48.08, 359th Shaun Heaphy (V50) 57.04, 369 finished.

**LADIES:** 61st Emma Raven (V40) 46.11, 98th Afra Kelsall (V40) 50.06, 116th Amy Gasper 51.56, 178th Trudy Sharpe (V40) 59.56, 181st Janet Hall (V40) 60.44, 202 finished.

**TEAMS** (all division 2): men 9th, ladies 11th, combined 9th.

**TEAMS AFTER 2 RACES:** men 11th, ladies 8th, combined 8th.

Birthdays	
<b>January</b> 7 <sup>th</sup> Janet Hall 8 <sup>th</sup> Marcus Sheikh 9 <sup>th</sup> Emma Raven 10 <sup>th</sup> Brian Feldman 15 <sup>th</sup> Terry Woodhouse 17 <sup>th</sup> Martin Capell (V60) 18 <sup>th</sup> Fabio Caraffini 19 <sup>th</sup> Bec Bromwich 22 <sup>nd</sup> Steve Barnes 27 <sup>th</sup> Vicky Salt 29 <sup>th</sup> Hamir Godhania	<b>February</b> 8 <sup>th</sup> Keith Dakin 11 <sup>th</sup> Shaun Heaphy 15 <sup>th</sup> Drew Simpson 24 <sup>th</sup> Peter Sloneczny (V55)

LRRL Summer League	
West End 8	Sunday May 15 <sup>th</sup>
Gaddesby 7	Sunday May 22 <sup>nd</sup>
Swithland 6	Sunday June 5 <sup>th</sup>
Hungarton 7	Wednesday July 6 <sup>th</sup>
Joy Cann 5	Wednesday August 3 <sup>rd</sup>
Carl Rutt Memorial 10K	Sunday August 14 <sup>th</sup>
John Fraser 10	Sunday September 4 <sup>th</sup>

