



DFR Newsletter

September 2021



DFR runners out and about

As the racing calendar has returned to normal our club runners have been taking advantage and getting back to racing in the hills and mountains.

Two Top Tens for Tom!

Tom Dobbing has been on form in some tough races. He finished a very respectable 8th place in the Grisedale Horseshoe race over in the Lakes. A few weeks ago he then placed 5th at the Thieveley Pike race in Lancashire. Max Wilkinson also travelled down to this race and a report can be seen on our FB page.

Lakeland 100 and Lakeland 50

James Osborn, Martin Wilson and Thomas Dobbing all completed the 100 mile course. Adam Bridges and Suzy Cramb completed the 50 mile route.

Snowdonia Ultra

Three of our members travelled down to Wales to take on the Snowdonia Ultra. Stan Gibson and James Ridley ran the 50km option. James even picked up a trophy for 1st MV50 – nice work James! Martin Wilson ran the massive 165km route in an impressive time of 36:31:14 to finish in joint 4th place with friend of the club Ali Black. A fantastic achievement.



Lake District Mountain Trial (LDMT)

The LDMT has been described as not a fell race but 'the fell race'. It is held each September in different locations around the Lakes with a Short, Medium and Classic course to choose from. It has been a feature on the fell running calendar since 1952 and the event always provides a severe test of route choice, navigational skill and stamina in difficult mountain terrain.

This year the event start was in Loweswater. The weather gods were very kind and the courses took competitors on a wonderful tour of the North Western fells. The courses did not disappoint in challenging our club members who travelled to the Lakes to take them on. Duncan Archer cruised round the Classic course; Chris Watson, Fran Blackett, Dougie Nisbet and Dawn Hosking took on the Medium course and Jason Bateman, on his way back from injury and illness, took on the Short course.

A continuous relay of the Wainwrights

It is hard to know where to start when writing a recount of this amazing adventure but I have had a go! A short report follows on the next page. Hopefully a full article will appear in an upcoming edition of Fellrunner magazine.

Summer Club Races Chapelfell Top

It was great to be back to our traditional route and mass start on a fine summer evening for our race. We had a good turnout of runners who lined up on the start line ready for an out and back blast up to the summit.



The race was won by Richard Bateson of NFR who had a clear lead in the end. Further up the hill there had been a close race with Craig Jones of Tyne Bridge Runners but unfortunately he missed the final left turn down to the finish. Molly Pace was first lady home, backing up her win from 2019. Northumberland Fell Runners were the best male team.

Cronkley Fell



With a new location for registration and the start we had a great running of the classic Cronkley Fell race. Chris Alborough was first runner back in 1:20:44 in his first fell race. First DFR was Tom Carter in 1:24:15. First lady home was Katherine Klunder in 1:33:05.

DFR Championship; current standings

A brief report by club captain Paul Hodgson

With just one race left it doesn't look like it will do an awful lot to change things in the men's competition, with Andy Blackett having secured an unassailable lead following the medium race at Beater Clough in August. Meghan McCarthy is currently clinging on to top spot in the ladies competition by a single point; but could Denise Tunstall nick it with a run in the last race? As well as Beater Clough, there were great DFR turnouts during the summer. Firstly, the brilliant Old Crown Round fell race which tested everyone physically and mentally with a lot of route choice across the northern fells of the Lake District. Then back on home turf at Cronkley on a fine September's day. Preparations for 2022's calendar have begun. With many more races being registered for 2022, there is a great selection to choose from. Hopefully the fixture list will be confirmed by early December to allow preparations to begin.

Complete points tables can be found on the website

Upcoming races and DFR events

Date: Sunday 14th November

Event: Roaches fell race (the final counter in the club champs)

Location: Leek, Peak District

Date: Saturday 11th December, 11am

Event: Bollihope Carrs Fell Race

Location: Bollihope

Date: Monday 20th December, 7pm

Event: Silent Night Fell Race

Location: St John's Chapel

A Continuous Relay of the Wainwrights

At the start of 2020, there was a discussion on the DFR Facebook page about a suitable challenge for our club to take on. The Billy Bland Challenge or a relay of Wainwrights Coast To Coast path appeared to be gaining some traction until a misread of the second suggestion led to a discussion of the possibility of organising a relay of the Wainwrights fells. It seemed an exciting prospect and the seed of an idea had been sown!

Andy built a schedule based on the distance and ascent figures from Steve Birkinshaw's book, *There is No Map in Hell*, his account of his staggering solo round of the Wainwrights in 2014. The schedule suggested that 4 days 12 hours was achievable with no stops for sleep, this seemed suitably eye catching when compared to the current solo record held by Sabrina Verjee of just under 6 days – no one in the club is either Steve or Sabrina – could we collectively take 36 hours off the record?



After hours of planning, reccying and spreadsheet building, the August bank holiday soon arrived and it was go time! Paul Hodgson and Max Wilkinson got us off to a great start leaving the Moot Hall in Keswick 8am on Thursday 26th August. From then on everything went like clockwork thanks to amazing efforts from all club members taking part – the logistics were not always straight forward. People drove over and completed night legs before going straight back home to take over child care duties or head straight back to work, others completed multiple legs whilst also shuttling fellow runners around. Each and every member made such a fantastic effort to make this crazy project work. Every transition was flawless, nobody was late, everyone was in the right place, not a single top was missed and there was only one Great Cockup (Wainwright 176/214). Bogs were fallen into, boulders took chunks out of shins, head high bracken provided many amusing photo opportunities and slips and tumbles were aplenty, but everyone continued with a smile.



The opportunity to chat with, and run with, club mates at all hours of the day through four and a bit days of the most perfect Lakeland weather was incredible. The only drops of rain fell as we approached the Moot Hall as Steve Lumb and Stan Gibson brought us home on the final leg to finish our relay 4 days 6 hours 50 minutes and 15 seconds after we set off. In the following days, Eden Valley Mountaineering Club put out in a claim that they had also achieved this feat in a similar time. We had an anxious wait while they dug out the paperwork from their loft. A breath of relief was exhaled when they confirmed it had taken them 4 days 12 hours! Durham Fell Runners hold the record time for a continuous relay of all 214 of Wainwrights Fells. Thanks so much to everyone that took part it really was the most amazing four days and something so fantastic to be part of. Here's to the next one ...



Memories of the Wainwrights Relay in three words:

'Tracker's dead?! F*#!' 'Proper good crack' 'Go team DFR'
 'Mates and Mountains' 'Midnight Wainwright Fun' 'One too much'
 'Top notch fun' 'Teamwork, friendship, adventure'
 'Memories made together' 'Brutal but beautiful' 'Rheged sausage rolls'