



Welcome to the 3rd Rebel Newsletter of 2020

.....and here's what you could have won!



Actually this is Jason Mallion-Wood's medal collection (read more about Jet set Jase later on) but they also represent everything that we've missed in lockdown.

Rebels have been very busy though, and in this newsletter we will look back on what we have been able to do over the last 3 months.

There's a lot to read!

Firstly a message from our Chair

Hi Rebels,



It's certainly been a strange and uncertain few months. As lockdown restrictions continue to be eased we are very hopeful that we can start to run as a club very soon.

It's been great to see so many of you participating in the many challenges that have been going on, well done to everyone. It's also been great to see your photos of your runs, either on your own or with others (at a social distance of course). You've all been inspiring others to lace up and get running, whether

it's been a mile or in some cases, an ultra marathon!

For me lockdown has been a great opportunity to spend more time with my little one and see her reach her own milestones with her first steps etc. She has been getting used to the running buggy as I have taken advantage of the time to start my running journey again.

I hope we will be able to all get back together at some point very soon 🖤💚

Lorraine

Covid 19 & Rebel Runners (part 2)

April 2020 was one of the most difficult all of us would have ever experienced living in the UK. Whatever take you may have had on the Government handling of the pandemic these were very difficult times. As the figures of deaths and cases climbed what we used to call normality seemed a very long way away.



Fortunately, we were able to run. Whether this was for an hour, half an hour or as long as we liked seemed to depend on which minister was speaking at the time.

What we were sure of is that we were not supposed to travel to exercise. This meant running from our front doors! Personally, I found quite a few new routes that I'd overlooked and enjoyed the bluebell season more than ever before, running through anything locally with a few trees and a path! Hopefully others were able to do the same.

Most running clubs appeared to have drawn up their metaphorical drawbridges and come to a halt. Rebel Runners, however, kept going as much as possible. The committee met virtually and came up with a variety of challenges to try to keep members motivated and help everyone through these difficult times.

Firstly, we had the Strava Challenge which ran every two weeks or so.

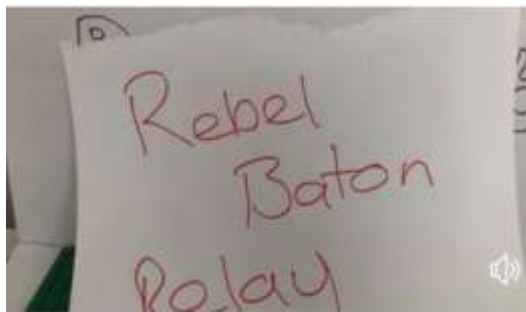


This created a lot of interest and engagement with hundreds of runs recorded and at times

some lively competition. The winners were:

Great Strava Challenge Results

Challenge	Overall Points	Points per run	Secret Segment
March	Paul Heywood	Wendy Kirby	John Allen
Early April	Iain Booth	Alan Byron	Jane Jeffery
Late April	John Allen	Becky Winter	
Early May	Martin Venus	Hollie Reader	Teresa Szumanska
Late May	Dean Sears	Polly Claydon	Alan Warrington
Early June	Wendy Kirby	Isabel King	Chris Doran
Late June	Isabel King	Wendy Kirby	



In May we held the Rebel Virtual Relay which everyone who look part really enjoyed. It was a competition on many levels. Planning was paramount, running important and IT skills essential! Later in this Newsletter Karen will tell you how the Breakfast Club pulled everything together.

In fact, the event was such a success there is even plans to make it an annual event!

We also introduced the Alphabet Challenge in May. Find a road name beginning with every letter of the alphabet by running to it. X proved a challenge as there wasn't one! That needed a solution! There were also precious few Q's, Y's, Z's and U's! Still, James Murrin plotted the downfall of all 26 letters and had them in the bag not long after the sun was up on the first day!



As lockdown began to ease there was a glimmer of an opportunity that team runs could recommence. The first stage was our 'Scavenger Challenges'. Close in spirit to a team run, and taking place on a Monday & a Wednesday, but still virtual these have proved to be more fun and motivation. The idea was to find a variety of common (?) objects whilst out running, take photos and post to report back in. Again, strategy is involved, as well as the use of google at times (what exactly is a double kerb?). Scavenging kept us busy throughout June & July.



For guidance during lockdown we followed the advice of England Athletics. During late June EA introduced a challenge of their own that gave members a chance to represent their club virtually. This initiative runs until the end of 2020, possibly giving an indication of how long EA think the restrictions will remain in place. To sign up to represent Rebel Runners go to <https://www.englandathletics.org/athletics-and-running/england-competitions/weekly30-run-challenge>. The password you need is REBEL.

Another opportunity to represent Rebels is at the inter Running Club competition the 'Medway Virtual 1K Event'. Darren Jarvis will tell you more about this as part of his coaching article elsewhere. Rebels are defending champions from the (non-virtual) event last year so your club needs you!

Rebel Lockdown Virtual Relay Challenge

Karen Illman reports on the success of 'The Breakfast Club'



Hi, as a member of the winning team for the best virtual batons, I've been asked to write a little piece about the Rebel Lockdown Relay Challenge. As most peeps know, the Relay Challenge was started 4 years ago in 2017. It was hugely popular and was such a success, that it was decided to become a regular feature on the Rebel calendar. In 2018 it was run again and was a huge success again. We were all set to do it again in 2019, when heavy rain and thunderstorms stopped play. A lot of effort and organisation had gone into it, and everyone was hugely disappointed it had to be cancelled at such short notice. And then this year, the Relay Challenge was in danger of not happening again, due to Covid-19 and social distancing measures. THAT WAS UNTIL the committee all got together and hatched a plot to make it all happen!

We would have a VIRTUAL Relay challenge instead! They even went so far as to do a short video to give people an idea of what they could do for their team's entry!

So, on Sunday evening 26th April, I was happily minding my own business, catching up on a bit of 'Sewing Bee' on't telly, (I love Sewing Bee!), when I got a message from the lovely Jane Jeffrey, asking me if I wanted to be in a relay team with her and Iain Booth. 'What is she on about?', I thought? So, I checked out the Rebel page, watched the video and thought 'This looks like fun! Yes, I'm in!'

Well that put paid to my relaxing Sunday evening! The next thing I knew I was added to a group, and my phone just kept going 'Ping, ping, ping' about 30 times over or more! (Probably more!). Mandy Brown had also joined the

group, and we had a couple of others who may join, but which hadn't confirmed yet. I thought that Carina would be up for this and got on the case with her straight away. She immediately said 'Yes!' We heard from the others, and they had already been entered into another team. We really needed another person, so I messaged Helen Marron to see if she would be up for it too, and she said 'Yes!' straight away! We had our team of six!

The amount of tapping away with ideas at the beginning was absolutely phenomenal!

Most of the credit has to go to Jane Jeffrey! Without her, we wouldn't have got off the ground or even won! She came up with the original list of props / baton ideas, and then everyone chipped in with ideas, tweaks and embellishments after that! We took some out, added some in, and even changed the running order of the video and batons to make it work better, have more impact and be more cohesive.



Carina and I had been social distance running together, so we said we could take photos of each other throwing a toilet roll up in the air, and to include a street name into the bargain, to make it look more plausible that we were throwing it to each other! What peeps didn't see, is that I actually ran with a

toilet roll strapped to my bum bag to the photo shoot! The funny looks that I got running along the street were hilarious! We were messing about and laughing hysterically for about half an hour, for photos that were going to take up just 2 seconds in the video! At that point, we didn't know Jane was doing a video! We just sent her a load of photos and asked her to pick the best ones. That's when she put them together in a stop motion picture fashion! Genius!

Carina and Iain both had a metal ladder, and both had people that could take photos of them! Perfect! We had to make sure that they passed it from the right side of the fence, for continuity and realism!

Helen came up with the idea of Iain passing Jane an alcohol-free beer! Anyone that knows Jane well just knows that isn't going to happen! And came up with the idea of Jane passing it back, and then Iain shaking his head in shame, and then passing Jane a can of real beer! Hence a happy Jane! It was more photos and work, but so funny and so worth it!



Jane then had to pass a bucket of water to Mandy, and Mandy then catch it! (Poor Mandy got the wrong end of the deal, but still went for it with gusto!). The stop motion on the water sequence (along with the ladder passing and



toilet roll throwing), we later found out, was what helped to sway the votes with the committee for some of the best virtual batons being passed!

We needed an obscure baton to pass, and Jane came up with the idea of passing a cat! Mandy and Helen both have cats, but Helen's cat wasn't going to play ball! After Helen's cat had an accident, Helen hadn't been able to pick her cat up without getting scratched and mauled by her cat for 15 years. It was going to take some doing to get a photo of Helen holding her cat! Helen gave herself a lockdown challenge of 2 days of being nice to her cat, or else they would need to find an alternative baton. It was touch and go, but Helen was victorious in getting her picture with her cat! (Whilst gaining a few scratches along the way! Ouch!) ... The things we do for a lockdown Rebel challenge eh?!!



Jane came up with the idea of a plate of food as one of the batons. I said if we're going to do a plate of food, then it has to be a cooked breakfast! I don't mind volunteering to do that one! It would be funny as everyone knows how much I love my food! After a bit of tweaking, it was decided that the cooked breakfast was going to be the last baton. I had posted my photo of a cooked breakfast to the group.

Helen then went shopping for ingredients, but couldn't find any flat mushrooms anywhere! So, she improvised with a slice of black pudding, and put a mushroom stalk on top! Did anyone notice?!!! Clever girl Helen!

We were trying to think of a team name, and I suggested that if we're going to finish with a cooked breakfast, then maybe we should call ourselves 'The Breakfast Club! or 'We run for food!' Everyone loved the idea of 'The Breakfast Club', despite some fab team name suggestions from Iain. Mandy said she loved the film, and I said that's what gave me the idea. Jane took the soundtrack from the film 'The Breakfast Club' and used it as the soundtrack for the video. Everything was all coming together nicely!

Jane worked so hard putting all the photos, music and video together. Without her, we wouldn't have had a team or won. She organised us all, gave us the first ideas, and then everyone came in with lots of extras ideas, tweaks and embellishments after that. There were no divas, or anyone getting upset that their idea wasn't being used. Everyone was open to change and came together with what was going to work best for our entry, and especially Jane, who was open to constructive criticism with the final polishing and editing of the video.

I don't know about anyone else but being a part of this challenge really helped me to get through a couple more weeks of lockdown, when it was at its worst. It was soooooo much fun to do and gave us all something in the week and weekend to look forward to, as our ideas and the photos and video continued to develop.

When Jane sent us the finished article to view before posting, we were all just blown away and became very excited! (Well, maybe it was just me that became excited! You know what I'm like and how excited a bubble I can get!). We knew we had some good ideas, and had so much fun doing it, but then to win, was just simply the icing on the cake!

Thank you to the committee for coming up with the idea in the first place, but mostly to Jane and everyone else in the team for making it a really fun couple of weeks! ... It was a great team effort. I absolutely loved being a part of the team, and love being a Rebel!

Club Champs Update

The fate of the Club Champs was discussed at the Committee meeting in June. Only two events had taken place so far with everything else as far forward as August being cancelled. Although there was still a small possibility that a couple of events that had been rearranged would take place the decision was taken to abandon the Club Champs for 2020.

At this stage VLM was still undecided so it was not possible to know exactly how to treat our club places or indeed if it took place how many we might be allocated for 2021. Therefore, this remains a 'watch this space' item.

BONKERS OR WHAT!

Whilst most of the (non-running) population sat at home and got fat Lee McAfee tells us how he took on an incredible challenge.



The rumours are true. I stupidly took on and completed the David Goggins 4x4x48 challenge. The rules are simple. Run 4 miles, every 4 hours, for 48 hours!! So why have I done this to myself? This challenge requires more than just the ability to run 48 miles. It requires a person to be mentally focused over a long period, the ability to exercise when

your body and mind are telling you not to and the worst of all, trying to function with sleep deprivation. A few running friends and myself virtually took on this ridiculous challenge as part of mental health awareness week to try and prove that even in these difficult times we can all still have goals and push the boundaries in life.

Its 20:00 on day 1. I actually had pre-race nerves... Social lock down has deprived us of these unique feelings but even though this isn't an actual event, I'm having all of the physical and emotional responses of race day. It's the hottest day of the year but my adrenaline has kicked in and I can't feel a thing even though I'm a sweaty mess....

and it starts... I've got to run 12 x 4 mile runs.

The plan is to mix up the routes so boredom

doesn't affect me and keep the elevation to a minimum. After each run we've



agreed to message on a group chat with an update on how we was doing. We knew that each and every one of us was going to hit the runners wall at some point. Even if we weren't physically with each other, a team mate was only a WhatsApp message away.



00:00 run 2... Every person is different in life. I took the decision not to sleep before this run. Weather is still crazy hot but I'm ready to go.

04:00 run 3... Yuck!!! Who in their right mind goes for a run at this time in the morning? I've had approximately 2 hours sleep and I'm still a sweaty mess from the last run (don't judge me for not showering).

08:00 run 4... Got a maximum of 2 hours sleep since my last run. Not in a happy place but got it done.

12:00 run 5... Yesterday we had a heat wave, today is all about the gale force winds.

16:00 run 6... Think I've invented a new sport. Played online poker with friends while running.

20:00 run 7... Boom. The excitement of hitting the 24 hours running target has given me a decent adrenaline boost.



00:00 run 8... Still haven't slept. I'm tired and I smell because my running wash hasn't dried in time. 04:00 run 9. About 2 hours sleep again. Sleep deprivation is kicking in. I'm having no physical issues but mentally I'm seriously considering giving up. Team mates to the rescue thanks to some abusive messages!! (I'm sure it was just reverse psychology and they didn't really mean some of them things).

08:00 run 10... I'm no longer hearing my alarm. I slept through 3 very, very loud and annoying alarms before eventually crawling out of my deflated blow up bed 9 minutes before I've got to run.

12:00 run 11... Beers are in the fridge!!! I'm feeling super happy and confident. Randomly it started to rain at the halfway point of the run. I looked up at the clear blue sky to only see one small cloud positioned directly above my head piddling down on me. Is there someone in the sky having a bloody laugh at my expense?! 16:00 run 12... OMG!!! I don't know if I wanna laugh or cry. I've done it! We've done it! My entire group has completed this ridiculous challenge. This was never really about the physical element of the challenge. I've been pushed to breaking point and carried on.





The advertising video for this challenge mentioned that on completion you will have this experience stored within your own personal cookie jar to reflect on when life is tough. For once I actually believe an advertisement was telling the truth. So, in the words of David Goggins, I am now officially a badass....



If Lee's antics have inspired you to find out how you can help with mental health awareness please visit www.mind.org.uk

Member Spotlight

Jet Set Jason Mallion-Woods



How much running have you managed to do during Lockdown?

I have only managed to complete a few runs during lock down. I have attempted to follow a set plan, but bigger things get in the way. I have enjoyed the challenge set by Coach DJ - the running, timed distance then repeat, produced good results for me and was a good boost to motivation. I also managed a run with a fellow Rebel, who very nearly killed me!! I was informed I went off too fast. I have heard that Rebels run in the rain however we ran in a torrential down pour. I know my running is not where it used to be and this hurts on many levels. I cannot wait to run again with others, running is a big part of my life.

I think everyone is aware that you have had all your 'Jet Set Jason' events cancelled or postponed during this time. Can you bring us up to date on whether they have been cancelled completely or moved to next year? Are you in a position to take up all the revised dates?

My running as Jet Set Jase has been on hold due to COVID and travel restrictions. Here is a list of places I would have been running: Samaritans 10K, Tokyo, New York, London, Gatwick, Liverpool, Ragner, GNR, Royal Parks, Boston to name but a few of the 1/2 and Full Marathons

I have no idea how I will manage all the new dates for the rearrange runs but I will pace myself and do them the Jet Set Jase Way.

You are obviously associated with running marathons but is this your favourite distance? Which run have you enjoyed the most and which are you proudest of?

One of the best runs I have taken part in is the Abbots DASH to 5K in New York. I saw Paula Radcliffe in the crowd and said hello. Best of all though, I ran this with Rosie, my best friend, my wife (& my running manager)



We finished on the line together in Central Park - we were mentioned and so were the Rebel Runners - WOW flying the flag in New York.

How do you manage to fit all of these events in and how do you manage to enter them all? How has being a member of Rebels influenced your running and how important is the support that you get from other members of the club?

I enter runs just like everyone else, luck in some ballots and not in others. Boston and Tokyo are with Sports Tour Companies. I would never get a Best Qualifying Time for Boston, so that's my only route to get my SIX STARS -major Marathons around the world. I was lucky in the RR Ballot and have a RR place to run in the VLM whenever it might be. It is such an honour to run with members of the RR's and to be cheered on by so many RR too. Thank you for this opportunity.



Can you tell us whether lockdown has affected your mental health and if so, how you have dealt with this?

Mental Health issues have taken over my life, the last two years being faced with difficult challenges. Sadly, at the lowest times in these past years I have attempted to end my life twice. It was the love of Rosie and the support from some extra special people who stood by me, talked to me, who didn't judge me instead they would call, text, said a quiet hello at parkrun - you are awesome & I thank you !! you kept me alive, you kept my dreams alive and you cared for me (and Rosie) during the darkest times. I still need people and I still need to run.

I am aware that I have achieved so much over the years. I have been able to run locally with the RR and also with my parkrun family - can't wait until I can get back into a routine again. I have also been lucky enough to run around the world.



I would like to think I inspire others to run, there are up's and down times in running but look at the achievements you can make too; sometimes my goal is to just get to the finish line, or take a minute off my time, or to get a medal for Rosie as she likes the colour. I know she is proud of me; this makes it easy to run in the rain, up the hill, the extra mile!!

Is there anything in particular that inspires you to run and can you explain what you enjoy about it?

I started running back in my late teens to raise money for a young girl with Terminal Cancer. Years later I took up running to lose weight and prove to certain people who laughed at me when I said I had run marathons before (never judge a book by its cover)

After completing all your re-arranged runs next year what else have you on the list?

My future goals in running now would be to enter the Great North, South, East and West Runs. I will look to run in some more Rock and Roll Marathons around the world.

These runs will be completed to raise money for the Samaritans

Because no one should ever struggle alone!



If you have been affected mentally by lockdown, or indeed at any other time, support from the Samaritans is only a free phone call away. Phone 116 123 which is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. You can also email jo@samaritans.org.

Coaching and Virtual Racing

Darren Jarvis

Since our last newsletter in April we as runners are adapting to the new 'normal', whether this be running in small groups or virtual races, the key thing is to lace up the pumps and do what feels good for you.

During May we held the Bank Holiday 1-mile challenge, with the aim to improve your mile time from the first bank holiday to the last. It was great that we had 30 runners take part in this virtual challenge with the overall winners being Clive Charles (05:23) with the fastest mile and Richard Townsend who knocked off just over 2 mins between the two bank holiday runs.

Just over a year ago we as a club we hosted the inaugural inter club track night with our running friends from the other Medway clubs; The Wolfpack, Medway Runners and Medway Fit. It was a great event and made even better when we emerged victorious. Our intention was to hold a similar event this year but due to current circumstances we had to rethink what we could do.

After discussions with the other clubs we will be participating in a virtual 1K event held between the 20th and 31st July. There are two trophies up for grabs:

1) Fastest club over 1K - we will take the top twenty 1K times from each club, a runner can only submit one time. These times will be added to a leader board. Depending where you are on the leader board points will be awarded. If you are the quickest and hence in first position you will get one point, second = two points and so on. The club with the least amount of points will be awarded the trophy.

2) Fastest age graded club over 1K - there is no cap on the number of runners that can take part from each club. We will use an average and age grading system to determine the winning club.

The last part of the event is to see how many K's the four clubs can accumulate between the 20th & 31st July

I encourage everyone one of you to take part, you can all make a contribution regardless of age, fitness or pace, every run counts! #teammedway #getmedwayrunning

If you are aiming to match yourself over 1K here are the current world records, good luck!

- Men's - 2:11.96 by Kenyan runner Noah Ngeny in 1999.
- Women's - 2:28.98 by Russian runner Svetlana Masterkova in 1996.

For context the Eiffel Tower is 324m tall, so just over 3 towers gives you the 1K distance...



A Facebook Event will be set up so that you can post your runs.

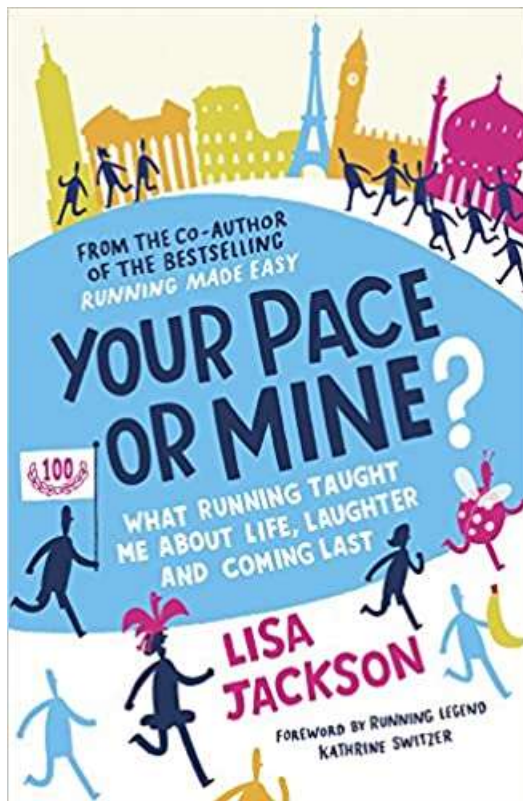
Your Pace or Mine by Lisa Jackson

Book review by Jane Jeffery

I read a lot when I have time and try to alternate fact and fiction with favourite authors and always the odd book that will be a challenge.

I have read two running books by the same author but saw this book reviewed and knowing Lisa Jackson is a frequent sight at events I take part in felt I should learn her story and support a fellow runner at the same time.

The main character is Lisa herself and various running partners, I was astounded at how easily



she manages to convince others to get involved in her running adventures. The plot is made up of many tales of various runs where she has been fraught with worries about being, slow, last or failing to finish. The end result is recognising that you run because you enjoy it and a successful run can be measured in many ways. Throughout the book she comes to various conclusions about her running and training style with the thread of do what makes you smile at the top of the list. I tend to judge a book quickly within the first few paragraphs as to whether I am captured or if it will be a welcome slog to the end. With this book I knew it was a page turner in the first chapter I was laughing and crying. This book has caused more emotional outbursts per page than

any other I have read. Lisa may not be the fastest runner but the book fly's out the starting block.

Sprinkled in the pages are other running friends she meets on the way giving their own tales of running many of whom you would know or know of, so this lends the book a personal feeling.

I will take the theme and sentiment with me on my own running tale I agree that what makes a successful run is not always speed and stats but the people you meet on the way and the experiences you can learn from even if you are dead last. Every run has a positive you just have to find it.

If you run because you enjoy it, enter races to be sociable and have new experiences, want to undertake challenges even when the demons in your head say these challenges are not for you. Then grab this book from the shelf prepare to be inspired and go from wanting to complete a 5k to a desire to be an ultra-runner in the space of 320 pages. I even read the acknowledgements.

From Surgery to 13.1 miles

Nigel Hidson takes a personal journey

I've read this from Runner's World dozens of times, to the point of almost being able to recite it word for word. *"There are many people who run with total hips. That said, there is not much data available to tell you how far and how often you can run, or even if you can. The prevailing thought is that running will speed the wear compared to lower impact activities. Most of the orthopaedic surgeons I know, including my own, do not encourage—or frankly discourage—running after a total-joint replacement in the hip or knee."*

In fact, most of the information online, even from the American companies trying to sell you hip replacements, say much the same thing. There is more positive stuff out there. Not much mind, but there's a hiprunner website and I've read of an 80-year-old woman running a marathon 8 weeks after the op as well.....

So. I wasn't sporty at school but got into running a bit at University in the early 80's, pushed into doing so by a friend whose attitude was too positive to resist. Not sure how far we ran back then but it was a similar course to Cardiff

parkrun. I did a bit (mainly running back from the pub) over the years before getting a bit more serious when time permitted more about 10 years ago. By 2012 I'd run my first half. I'd also begun to suffer pain in my left hip. I kept running, the hip kept hurting and gradually getting worse. Running was less painful than walking, but sometimes I'd run with a limp. Other normal activity was difficult as well at times. Generally, on a run the pain was at its worse for 10 minutes or so around a mile, then go off until about 6-7 miles and flare up again for 5 minutes or so. I used to reckon that after that the body didn't have any reserves left to send out pain signals! I took painkillers before nearly every run. On some longer runs I even took them during the run, just to be sure!

Clearly it was getting worse though. The Ostio helped a bit but wasn't a solution. The Physio really did nothing but did at least send me for an X-ray on a wet and windy day in December 2017. I'd discussed running with the radiographer whilst the pictures were being taken. We looked at the X-Ray together, "looks moth eaten" she pronounced. "You never know, there might be something they can do for you". Happy Christmas.

So, the only option was surgery. "Of course, you can run afterwards", said the confident surgeon. I asked about half marathon but wasn't entirely sure from his answer if he knew what one was.

I kept running, the hip kept getting worse, and I kept re-reading everything the internet said about running after hip replacement. The running must have been doing me good as it was less painful than walking. I was sure, wasn't I? The operation was booked for November and ran up to and including the day of the operation. By this time, I'd managed to convince myself that I'd run again afterwards.



I never expected the first week to be so painful. You are told you will walk within 24 hours of the operation. You are not told how painful this would be. The Physio asked me what I wanted to be able to do afterwards, so she could tailor her programme accordingly. My response of “maybe a half marathon” was met with, “That’s interesting. I’ve never worked with anyone who’s wanted to run again before”.

I learnt to walk on crutches (including 1 lap of parkrun) and did my exercises like a good boy.

I think I experienced a lot more pain than is usual during the recovery but achieved my personal target of running in mile in the first 4 months. Obviously, I did a little bit more. Like you do.

Three months in the physio said I could go to the gym. So, I did, nearly every day. The pain was still a lot more than I would have expected though, so I went back to see the surgeon. He said it was my fault. I was too thin apparently. Strange, never been told that before.

There is very little literature on the subject of running with a replacement hip. However, I found a book from the States, with the enterprising title of ‘Running with a Replacement Hip’ (the Ronseal edition probably) only available on Kindle. The author was a lot younger than me, and once quite an athlete (so the opposite of me really). He’d managed to enjoy running again but nowhere near the speed or distance he’d run before. I took the rather depressing overview, ‘don’t expect too much’.

However, over time, with the exercises and bike work in the gym, the pain got less, I started to run further and even quicker. After 7 months I was running well with hardly any pain and almost getting up to the pre-op times. I started parkrunning and booking races up to 10K. The Replacement Hip book had advised landing further forward on the foot, to put the impact through the knee rather than the hip. This seemed to be working well until as I increased my mileage when I began to get quite severe knee pain and then a succession of calf injuries.

The calf injuries were probably handy in that they reduced my mileage during the summer so that I was able to be overjoyed with walk/running the Great South with the help of Suzanne. So overjoyed that I had to get very drunk afterwards on the Chris and Lesley’s happy bus home in fact!

I entered the ballot for the Landmarks Half in March this year and got a place. Would the hip be up to 13.1 miles? This was the big test and to be quite honest I wasn't really ready for it. Covid was a way of putting off finding out. Mentally I wasn't ready. I still wasn't sure about whether I should do the mileage needed to train and were those 3.1 miles extra a bridge too far?

Lockdown. Everything stopped except running. Deserted roads, good weather, nothing else to do. Just run! Foolishly I decided to take on the challenge of running every day in lockdown. March Fantastic, loved it. April, found new local routes, smelt the bluebells and then disaster. Sudden and severe hip pain after about 5 miles one Sunday morning. Hobbling home with one thought. Is this it?

For a few days I lived with this possible prognosis. I tried again with a shorter distance and all seemed good. So, I thought I'd carry on taking it easy and did over 100 miles in May (think I'd only managed that once before). June came and Strava challenged me to run a June Half Marathon. I lived with that for a few days and then pressed 'enter'.

Most of June was flaming. The challenge was in my head all the time. I went out twice with half a thought of taking it on but found reasons not to even though I'd managed 10 miles.

Weather and opportunity were aligned for the very last day, June 30th. I put together a route stolen from other Rebels on Strava and got round! It would have been nice to have crossed the finishing line on race day falling into the arms of family with a PB and thunderous applause, but instead, I stumbled across the road almost in a daze back to the car.

Elated does not begin to describe it.

