

# **The Dash**

**January 2020**



**Jules Dawson rescuing Linday Coffey from a swamp on the Marl Pitts Cross Country.**



# from the editor...

Happy New Year everyone.

There was no Dash published in December so I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the host of the "Jingle Bell Rock" which again was a fabulous night enjoyed by all.

Chris and I are preparing to walk the Coast to Coast at Easter and we are planning out our route and accomodation.

Chris is taking part in a Half Marathon in Vienna at Half term (excuse for an overseas trip) and if he manages to stay injury free he is contemplating doing the Bolton Marathon which has been resurrected.

Preparations are underway for the Heritage Half Marathon which takes place on 29th March ( the day the clocks go back ) and I will soon be asking for volunteers to marshal this fabulous race.

Well done to all who have been racing over the last month or so and in particular Congratulations to Ady Humphrys who won the Jackals Night Trail Marathon.

Good luck to Chris Cooper who has very kindly taken on the role of collating the Parkrun results for the Parkrun Championship. until next month .....keep dash-ing.

Debbie  
Biscuit



# Contents

From the Editor  
Chairman's Chat  
From the Road Captain

Meet the Committee  
Cyprus 4 Day Challenge  
East Lancs Hospice 10K



**Darwen Dashers Running Club: Founded 1990**  
**Club Committee**

**Chairman**

Simon Fox  
[the.dash@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:the.dash@hotmail.co.uk)

**President**

Jim Taylor  
[jimtaylor@uwclub.net](mailto:jimtaylor@uwclub.net)

**Secretary**

Sharon Cocker  
[shazzyc\\_work@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:shazzyc_work@yahoo.co.uk)

**Treasurer**

Allan Harle  
**Beginners Captain**  
Alison Abbott  
07971 451431  
[alison.abbott22@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:alison.abbott22@yahoo.co.uk)

**Fell Captain**

Gareth Davies  
[gareth@sportingnrg.co.uk](mailto:gareth@sportingnrg.co.uk)

**Road Captain**

Gareth Taylor  
07889 633672  
[gjtt15@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:gjtt15@yahoo.co.uk)

**When/where to meet us:**

Tuesday

The Sunnyhurst, Tockholes Rd,  
Darwen BB3 1JX  
19.00  
All Welcome

Wednesday

Darwen Leisure Centre  
18.30  
Beginners

Thursday

The Sunnyhurst, Tockholes Rd,  
Darwen BB3 1JX  
19.00  
All Welcome

Check our Facebook page for details of runs which are taking place on club nights. If you have not run with us before, please get in touch before you come so we can arrange for somebody to meet you.

**The Dash**

Editor Debbie Cash

**Contributors** Debbie Cash  
Simon Fox, Gareth Davies,  
Jules Dawson, Allan Harle,  
Gareth Taylor, Viki Walsh

**Designer** Sophie Atherton

**Darwen Dashers Running Club**



**On Facebook:**  
**Darwen Dashers Parkrun Information Page**



All contributions for the The Dash to be sent by 1st of each

month to:

[darwendashers@gmail.com](mailto:darwendashers@gmail.com)



# Chairman's Chat



Sod's Law. Sod's law is a British culture axiom that "if something can go wrong, it will", sometimes also made to include that it will happen at "the worst possible time". I finally start to see some improvement in the tendinitis that has been plaguing me for the last 6 months and come up with a goal of completing the Kendal Winter League series and what happens? I go down with what appeared to be a simple cold virus and how now developed into a chest infection that has been hanging on for 3 weeks so far. Smashing. I've missed too many of the KWL races to stand a chance of completing so that has gone out of the window. To say I am fed up would be an understatement. However, life goes on and sometimes you have to reassess things and make a few changes. Running as a metaphor for life.

A few things to make you aware of – the AGM is looming on the horizon and you will all be notified as soon as a date is settled and a venue booked. As always – this is your club so please attend and put forward your constructive views on how we can improve things and how you can contribute to achieve them.

Also coming up fast is the club's 30th Anniversary. We are looking into a whole host of interesting ideas and events to celebrate this landmark in the club's history. Several things have already been put forward and we will be looking into making as many people as possible involved. Watch this space.

Well, that's about it so I will love you and leave you.  
Enjoy your running,



Simon

# From the Road Captain

Happy new year everyone, I write this following on from Sundays East Lancs hospice 10K, It was good to see all 22 Dashers taking part and others watching along the course. There is a total of 24 races this year to get your six qualifying races in so fear not if you missed the first! Everybody can have a go in the championships and looking back over the years you certainly don't need to be the fastest to win – you just need to turn up and give it your best (top best six scores count plus ten points for each race completed after that).

A reminder of the various training runs that take place during the week, we have the usual groups on Tuesday and Thursday (improvers, intermediate and fast groups). Also there is the hill reps that take place on Monday evenings. You'll see these advertised on social media each week and they are all open to everyone.

Men's Table (after 1 race)

| <u>Dasher Name</u> | <u>Total</u> | East Lancs Hospice 10K |
|--------------------|--------------|------------------------|
| Gareth Taylor      | 150          | 150                    |
| Andy Smith         | 145          | 145                    |
| Aaron Mawby        | 140          | 140                    |
| Paul Conlon        | 135          | 135                    |
| Brian Morris       | 130          | 130                    |
| Philip Seddon      | 125          | 125                    |
| Mark Taylor        | 120          | 120                    |
| Peter Huggill      | 115          | 115                    |
| Chris Cooper       | 110          | 110                    |
| Chris Cash         | 105          | 105                    |
| Andy Howarth       | 100          | 100                    |

Women's Table (after 1 race)

| <u>Dasher Name</u> | <u>Total</u> | East Lancs Hospice 10K |
|--------------------|--------------|------------------------|
| Louise Oldfield    | 150          | 150                    |
| Rachel Wilding     | 145          | 145                    |
| Kerry Elliot       | 140          | 140                    |
| Viki Walsh         | 135          | 135                    |
| Catherine Ferro    | 130          | 130                    |
| Sarah Marsden      | 125          | 125                    |
| Victoria England   | 120          | 120                    |
| Linda Coffey       | 115          | 115                    |
| Julie Dawson       | 110          | 110                    |
| Alison Abbott      | 105          | 105                    |
| Julie Fitton       | 100          | 100                    |

Next Five Road Races:

|                     |        |            |
|---------------------|--------|------------|
| Winter Warmer       | 10K    | 02/02/2020 |
| Lostock 6 Road Race | 6 M    | 23/02/2020 |
| Red-Hot Toddy 10K   | 10 K   | 08/03/2020 |
| Trimpell 20         | 20 M   | 15/03/2020 |
| Wigan Half          | 13.1 M | 22/03/2020 |

Gareth



# From the Fell Captain

So the turn of the year has arrived and many of us will be making promises to ourselves to run more, eat healthier, do something more adventurous or try something new. So it was great to see so many of the Dashers running at Scout Scar in the first of the Fell Championships. The honours went to Michael Wilding in the men's and to Louise Oldfield in the women's. What was most pleasing was seeing so many Dashers vests amongst the pack. It would be great to see as many again at Flower Scar on the 15th February - I guess most will have either tired legs or foggy heads after either running, marshalling or drinking at Mr Sparkles Dark Un the previous evening. I guess you could take your respective partners to the Dark Un - after all five pound to race with food and fine company after.....Its a date.

I will shortly be sending information out regarding the Keswick Mountain Festival Weekend so keep your eyes peeled and be sure to respond quickly as places are limited.

Exciting times ahead as various of the Fell crew have big plans for this year which include Northern Traverses, Lakeland 50's, Bob Graham's and various other long distance events.

Finally, I would like to take the opportunity to wish James Mellor all the best in his transfer to Clayton. Whilst no longer a Dasher he remains firmly a friend of ours.

## Gareth



## Meet the Committee Chairman – Simon Fox

My name is Simon Fox. I am 57 years old. I work for a Sound Insulation Company.

At school I was largely rubbish at sport. I liked cricket and badminton but hated cross country with a passion. I was one of those who hid in the bushes smoking a fag and hitching a ride on a milk float. I came into running late in life. After I got married and moved to Darwen

I took up mountain biking, did a bit of racing and got fairly fit. I used to read the Lancashire Telegraph and every week there would be a piece about what races Darwen Dashers had done and it intrigued me. I started to do some running and then entered the David Staff fell race having never done a running race before. Being very nervous I started right at the back as everyone else seemed to know each other and what they were doing. I passed quite a few and finished maybe mid-field. Encouraged by this I entered the Roddlesworth Roller. I met the ever encouraging Jim Taylor there and he advised me to join Dashers which I did. I was 36 then.

Dashers was the first club I'd ever joined and I loved it. I looked forward to meeting up twice a week at the Lychgate where we held our meetings at that point. Everyone was very encouraging, there were some great athletes but there was no snobbishness. Eventually I improved slightly as a runner and began to lead runs on the road then became more interested in fell running and, as I was doing a lot of night-time mountain biking, I adapted that and began to lead runs year round on the moors, using headtorches.

As I got more involved I realised that a club is only as good as the contributions its members make and wanted to 'do my bit'. I served as Secretary twice and started writing a slightly satirical column for the Dash called the 'Sec's Line'. I quite enjoyed doing this and so when there was a plea for a new Editor for the Dash I took it on.

I poured my heart and soul into it, spending hours writing reviews, interviewing people, taking photos, nagging people for race reports etc etc. Cath used to despair at the time I spent on it. After 8 years of this I thought maybe my way of doing it was becoming a bit stale and stood down when Deb said that she would like to take over.

Back in the day I also created the Dashers first ever website – Darwendashers.com. Again this was a painstaking affair as I made it from scratch using html rather than software. I thought it looked pretty good but it may be rose tinted glasses! As a family we got a video camera and I began filming races with my son, Will. It was way before the era of GoPro's and looks a bit clunky now but we had fun doing it. They are still on YouTube and are like a snapshot into the past!

I used to be very keen on cross country and would organise training sessions on a Saturday morning (pre-Parkrun days) on Blacksnake playing fields. I would often nag people into taking part in the Men's team, pick them up and drive to the event.

On the back of leading the night runs on the moor I came up with the idea of holding a night fell race. Encouraged by then members Paul Livsey and Jo Nelson, this eventually became reality as Mr Sparkle's Dark Un which was at the time a unique event.





The race has raised a lot of money for charity over the 8 years it has been running. I also organised a few other fund raisers: the Full Moon Wander from the Sunny to the Royal with a whip round for Mountain rescue, following the Nepal earthquake I organised an Everesting relay from the Bandstand in Sunnyhurst Woods to Darwen Tower and back. We did this for two years and it was very popular.

A social event that I took over from ex-Chairman Mick Heath was the Real Ale Wobble – a mountain biking pub crawl. I used to love this, organising new routes and different pubs to visit every year. I organised this for about 12 or more years before giving it up in the last few years. Another slightly off the wall thing I was involved in was running Darwen Dashers Table Tennis Club. We competed in the Blackburn league for a few seasons.

I've never been a talented runner if I'm honest, but I have represented the club many times in races over the years. I think I am most proud of being a member of various teams that we have fielded at the FRA Relays.

I think the one personal running achievement that I take pride in is completing the Joss Naylor Challenge last year and being the first Dasher to achieve it.

When Chris Cash announced that he was stepping down as Chairman and it looked likely that no-one else was willing to take on the job I decided that I should give it a go. I said at the time that they would be big shoes to fill as Chris did such a fantastic job and I was right. It is a tough job at times and I must admit that I have found it hard to devote as much time as it requires recently. The club has been a major part of mine and Cath's (she joined a few years after me) lives for many years now. We have met people who have become firm friends and have had some wonderful experiences at races and various events. Looking back at 21 years in the club I like to think I have at least put in as much as I got out and I'm happy with that.

# Simon



## Meet the Committee Treasurer - Allan Harle

Hi, I'm Allan Harle and I am your treasurer.

I have only recently stepped into this role, after being asked to take over from Rebecca who had done it for many years.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Rebecca for all the help she gave me during the handover.

Previously, I have been involved in the committee of the Darwen Pool Association for many years. My experiences from that should hopefully contribute to what is already a hardworking Dashers committee.

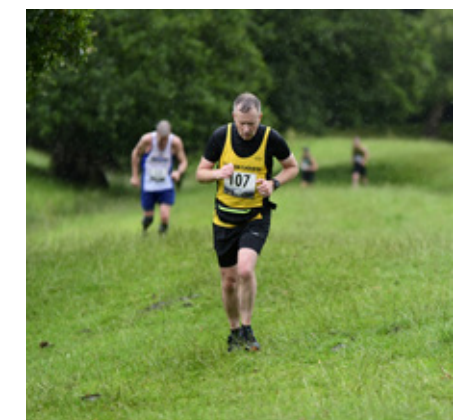


I joined the Dashers last year, after many years of running independently and I can honestly say it was one of the best things I have ever done. Since joining the Dashers I have gained the confidence to run Parkruns (50+), 10k races, half marathons and in October I completed the Chester Marathon!!

Originally from the Wirral, I moved to Darwen about 30 years ago and I am currently working in Accrington as the Warehouse Systems Manager for Studio (formerly Express Gifts). I am also a life-long Tranmere Rovers fan.

At home I am married to Jane. We have two boys Kenny and Taylor, who unfortunately still don't understand that going for a run for more than an hour can be classed as fun!

If you have any ideas for fundraising or sponsorship opportunities (or anything else) please feel free to contact me [allan.harle@outlook.com](mailto:allan.harle@outlook.com)



# Allan



# Cyprus International 4 day challenge

It all began one afternoon with 3 pings on my email inbox. The first one was a booking for a hotel I wasn't aware I had booked so thought it must be a mistake. The second was flight details for a return flight to Paphos in Cyprus in November. The last one was a confirmation of my entry into the Cyprus International 4-day challenge. Quickly followed by a text from Phil to book dates off work. He has done this challenge for the last 4 years and I had competed on day 4 with my Dad, Norm, in 2015.

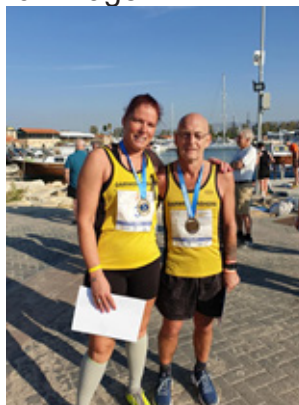
The 4-day challenge consists of 4 different events on 4 consecutive days, day one being a 6k time trial where all competitors are set off at 10 second intervals, day two is an 11k uphill trail race into the Akamas mountains, day three is a half marathon which begins in the Akamas mountains running towards the coastline finishing with the final 400 yards on the sandy beach. Day 4, which I had done previously, starts and finishes on the harbour at Paphos. I was unsure if I would be able to complete this challenge but was assured if I can do a triathlon, a 24 hour relay and a marathon, as I had done in the last 12 months this was achievable. There was a mixture of entries from individuals, or teams, with a number of RAF teams amongst them who were stationed on the island.

## Viki

So come November we set off for some winter sun and a 'relaxing' holiday. At registration it was apparent some runners had been coming back year after year, a good sign of the excellent organisation and was run predominantly by British expats. Day one set off from Coral Bay in mid afternoon and I felt fairly strong and completed it in a decent time considering the temperature.

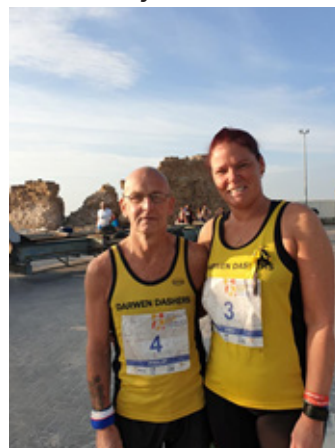
On completion we walked a couple of miles back to the Coral Beach hotel as a warm down and refuelled. Day two was an early start from Coral Bay on a fleet of coaches to transport us to the start of the trail race in the middle of nowhere. Start time was 10am, perfect for sun-stroke!!

We began on the beach and up it went up and up, I thought Phil as joking when he warned me pre race. It was hell and I hated it, some of our off road dashers would love it, I didn't. The finish was in yet another picturesque village with the biggest ice cream you could imagine. Day three began with aches and pains and the half marathon to 'look forward' to. Another early start to be transported to the Akamas peninsular for the start in a beautiful village.



The first mile was uphill followed by five miles down on a winding trail akin to the tour de france, with the remainder running parallel to the sea, it was more hell, I said things which were unprintable, I ran, walked, moaned, but completed it with the final 400 yards on a beach!! Phil thankfully ran with me on the 2nd & 3rd days but was relieved when I said he should leave me to run day 4 on my own. A man can only take so much abuse. Day four and a leg I had done before with Phil and Norm who ran together 4 years previously with me trailing in behind them. This year I wanted to beat that time and I succeeded in so. At the finish you get a certificate, huge medal, t-shirt and a pint of draught Keo amongst the goodie bag.

It was a very poignant moment when we crossed the line and we took some of my Dads ashes to scatter in the sea at Paphos harbour as he loved that holiday and we wanted to take him back there. We sat there with David and had a chat with him and vowed to come back again to do this brilliant horrible race. You should try it.



## And their are off!

The Mayor imbibed pre – race brief had promised black ice and mud, highlighting that dirt dodging would be entirely pointless.

Traversing a small section of industrial estate, fully equipped with a pre-breakfast false flat certainly got the legs working. Winding through the urban setting of Great Harwood saw runners diving in all directions to find the least slippery/muddy sections of the route. Little did they know how futile this attempt to avoid the conditions would be. From here we was soon directed off the path into the wooded area and onto the trails.

The pack had begun to spread out, leading the ebony & gold for us, our gazelle like runners at the front were Gareth, Andy, Aaron & Paul with Brian & Phil close on their tail coats. Mark & Peter battling the undulations between themselves.

A respectable lead for the ladies saw Louise, Rachel, Kerry & Viki (pb) in incredible form. With last year's Ladies road champion Catherine comfortably pacing a sub hour. Sarah Marsden & Victoria were the closest to the coveted hour marker on what is most certainly not an easy course.

Jostling for position in the middle of the pack was Chris Cooper who managed to pace 3 Dashers during this race. This saw the Most improved Dasher of 2019 pacing the most inspirational new Dasher (myself) once again. Chris Cash, Andy & Alison tucked in with our newest Dasher Andrea as she took to the trails for the first time.

Up and over the bridge next, where from here the 'lumpy' course started to need some work. Mud was exchanged for ice & a glimpse of the faster runners returning helped us to swap smiles and well wishes. A hard right took us into the park & it was really here that the beauty of the fresh, sunny winter's day became apparent. More so to our poor Julie Fitton who unknowingly decided to take an additional section here to admire the morning.

The earlier memo of lets tag some additional miles on was taken too literally. It's a good job our Alison is always on hand in every situation. Around the park to the drinks station & the descent towards the canal. Whilst still tricky underfoot, the canal path provided a pick-up of pace and the sun on your neck. (2/2).



Back through the trails and the lay of the land became familiar, meaning that this beautiful course was soon coming to an end. Chris Cooper pushed on from here to catch Linda Coffey up & join her up the finish hill to claim 2nd in her age category Winning the first road race of the Championships was Gareth at an impressive 41.54 which, at just short of 6 ½ min milling brought him in at 26th. Andy Smith won his age category & his Brucey bonus is a challenge to source something from RunDirect with his £5 voucher.

It was fun, for a great cause & we all now have a wonderful drinks bottle.

Until next time you wonderful people.

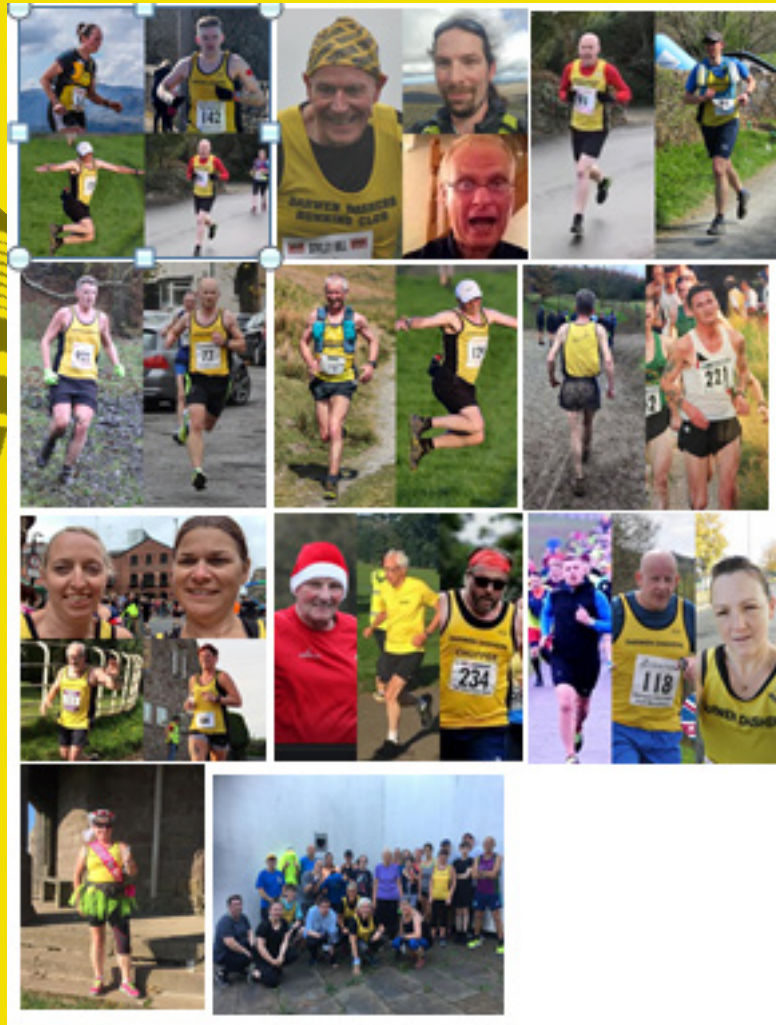
## Jules

And well done to these two mini Dashers who took part in the Fun Run. Jack and Eva Dooling.



# DARWEN DASHERS

## RUNNING CLUB



The !2 Days of Dashing Christmas. Thank you Alison wonderful idea.