

# Prattle & Run

The Thornbury Running Club Magazine

March 2008



Thornbury Running Club colours in evidence as the team tackle one of the Tough Guy obstacles in January.

Why the swim hats?

More pictures and article in the next edition.

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## Editorial

A big thank you to all contributors to this edition of Prattle & Run, the first of 2008.

With the new year we can look forward to lighter evenings and off-road runs on Thursdays again.

The issue of the Club Night running groups has been a cause for much discussion lately, and we must all be grateful to those members who take time and effort, and assume responsibility for leading the groups. The most important things are that all members enjoy the runs, surpassed only by the need for safety of club members and other members of the public. If the groups become too big, or too 'spaced out' they become difficult to manage, and adjustments have to be made. Hopefully, whatever your ability and whatever your aspirations, one group will be right for you. If not we'll just have to form another group!

Which leads us back to the subject of group leaders. Approaches will be made to encourage more members to qualify as recognised leaders. Are you prepared to lead? Speak to the Caretaker ...

Articles, photographs, letters for the next edition will all be gratefully received – by 3<sup>rd</sup> April please, to [judy.mills@avonandsomerset.police.uk](mailto:judy.mills@avonandsomerset.police.uk)

## From the Caretaker's Cupboard



This is now my second stint as "Captain" and I would prefer to be known as Caretaker Captain until a replacement is found. It is disappointing that with a membership of over 170 we can't find anyone to take on such a task.

I have made it clear that I will only remain in this role for a maximum of 1 year. For the good of the club (including myself and my wonderful wife) along with its own

progression, new people are required, to evolve it to its next stage what ever that might be.

I would like to thank Garry on behalf of the club for his enthusiasm and commitment over the last two years; I don't propose to change anything that Garry has put into place. I have already got technical with the use of Gmap.

I would like to continue with the four groups system (until the summer months), hopefully catering for all needs within the club. I would also stress that these groups are NOT mandatory, but there to encourage people to achieve their potential in running. In my opinion the groups have traditionally been labelled inappropriately. I would encourage people to use the Team Leader's name as the group names. This will prevent the groups from being labelled specifically in terms of ability.

Please come and speak to me or anyone else on the committee, if you have any better ideas or are just simply not happy, just don't moan in the corner.

I will soon be looking for people to put their names forward for the Cotswold Way relay.

Can we support more than four teams this year ??????????????

The relay consists of 10 legs covering 105.5 miles starting at Chipping Camden finishing at Bath Abbey. Pete Mainstone no doubt will be running the legs soon, for those of you who wish to get familiar with the route. The Relay is in June (Normally the last Saturday, probably 28<sup>th</sup>)



So here's to another great year of running ahead of us.....52 weeks left !!!!

## And Counting

*Mark Williams  
'The Caretaker'*

## Story of a Bike Race – a Final Comeback?

You saw it then – the Tour de France? Well, if you didn't go up to London to watch the start, you must have seen it on the telly. Even if you missed it there you probably tut-tutted over the drug scandals, and let's face it, there were plenty. I think the Tour is a microcosm of real life – a whole spectrum, from squalor to incredible bravery. So that's life at the top of the sport. Want to know what it feels like at the other end? Well, read on.

I didn't race my bike during 2006. By racing I don't mean time-trialling. I mean road racing, the sort where you ride in a big bunch – exhilarating, occasionally dangerous, totally absorbing, great for an adrenaline junkie etc. The quick-slow-quick-slow pace of road racing makes for fantastic interval training. By June 2007 I was really missing the bike. If I entered another race, could I, now a veteran, still cope with the speed

set by the younger riders? Had I lost the bike-handling skills to ride in a big group and I could I still cope with the pushing and shoving? I then realized I could kill two birds with one stone by entering a road race – get some intervals in before the Cotswold Way Relay and test myself out. Also, to be truthful, and perhaps for the last time, I wanted to feel the buzz of riding in a big bunch.

A beautifully warm Thursday evening last June saw me on the start line of an evening race at Brinkworth, between Malmesbury and Swindon. It's funny how I fell back into the pre-race routine – packing my kit bag, checking and loading the bike into the car the night before. As always I left plenty of time to get there. In fact I was the first rider to arrive. That's okay – time to get changed, prepare the bike and avoid the queue of nervous riders that always forms outside the gents.

Also time to figure out some of the other riders. There is a big guy – we'll meet him later – looks like a second row forward, but without the flab. Not sure that I would want to tangle in a sprint. I chat to a rider who looks even older than me, checking out which races we have ridden in the past: let's call him the old guy. We'll also meet him again later.

The race was thirty miles long. Only thirty miles I hear you say – we'll talk about that one after we've finished. Three ten mile laps, with one real hill that leads up to the finish line. None of the guys I talked to had ridden this circuit before, because it's a new one, but apparently there is a bit of a nasty descent; definitely a fact I need to put in my tactical race plan.

Talking of which, the high level of tactics in a massed-start race is something that sets it apart from running. Appreciating how to slipstream other riders, riding in crosswinds and knowing when to ride all out to get to the front, or when not-to mean that your brain should never switch off in a race. If it does, something usually goes wrong.

With all the anticipation I always feel a bit nervous before the start, but this usually falls away as I start the warm up, and this evening everything feels good. I've done lots of miles in preparation, the heat and the finishing hill will suit me. Now, all I have to do is to ride.

We all bunch up behind the lead car. Everyone copes with the pre-race nerves in a different way. Some talk – noisily. Others are silent, like brooding pre-fight boxers, and there is always someone who needs that last natural break in the hedge. I chat to a couple of fresh-faced youngsters in their first race, they remind me, well, of me about twenty years ago. There is a short briefing from the commissaire (the race referee) and finally the lead car revs its engine and we are off. A short section to the outside of the village is neutralized (no racing); then the real action starts.

I always work on the philosophy that it is better to do something and blow up, rather than spend the whole race sitting on other guys' back wheels, so I get up right to the front of the bunch. The start of the race is also a nervous time, so it's a good place to be to avoid crashes.

Then two guys sprint off from the front, really going for it. What do I do now? A moment's thought. Do you remember Harry Callaghan (Clint Eastwood in Dirty Harry)? His catchphrase was "a man has got to know his limitations". The two fugitives are heading off at the start and it's a long way to the finish. Two against fifty plus, and on this part of the circuit they are riding into a headwind. They are either super strong or tactically naïve. I know my limitations, and am neither, so decline to

chase. The two breakaways dangle out in the wind for a bit, wasting energy they will need later, and are caught by the bunch just before we start the descent.

In a good position at the start of the drop, the twists, turns and blind bends heighten my natural instinct for self-preservation, so I start to brake. Several riders come past, including the big guy, who accelerates like a piano falling out of a window. The noise of squealing brakes from the front slows everyone and we all get round the turn at the bottom of the hill without incident. Now near the back I start to move through the bunch, conscious that the big hill is coming up.

The miles pass quickly but I don't put my mind into neutral. Keep looking round, memorise the course for the next two laps and try to figure out which riders are doing what. Then a turn and we see it – the finish hill. Time to really go. If there is a split here then I could be left behind. A really hard effort and, for the first time I use the little chain ring. The front of the bunch is now a thin line, and I go over the top in about tenth place. Only cost is slight nausea but worth it. At the back the riders who don't do hills or were badly positioned will fall away, never to return to the bunch, and have a lonely ride to the finish.

The second lap went OK, except that I made a real mess of the descent through overconfidence. Went down too quickly and then had to brake hard. Back wheel locked up and then slalomed a bit. Kept upright, but by the time I had sorted things out and got round the turn at the bottom there was a thirty metre gap in front. Went hard, but it had no effect. Then looked round. The old guy was on my wheel, with a train of others behind him. No need to panic and waste energy chasing when someone else can do it for you. Just wait, and think this is the good thing about not being at the back as the train accelerates past me. I wait for a gap, jump in, and after a short recovery start to move forward.

Second time up the hill was relatively easy. Third time down the descent I got it just right. Things went quiet really then – guess everyone was thinking about the hill. We make the final turn and see the finish about a kilometer away.

Steady for two hundred metres, then things kick off in the gentle gradient at the bottom of the hill. Everyone gets out of the saddle simultaneously and starts to sprint. A rider moves in front of me and slows ever so slightly. At the same time someone else moves on to my right shoulder. We are really flying now, but I'm boxed-in on the left-hand gutter. A train then goes down the right-hand gutter. S\*\*t. Have to wait. Change onto the little chain ring as the hill starts to bite. Useful – I only need to think about the right-hand lever now and I've nothing better to do. It seems ages but is really only a handful of seconds. Then a gap opens.

Give it absolutely everything. Change down as the hill steepens even more. Pass two riders then the big guy, who seems to be pushing that piano up the hill. Gotcha! Pass three more and change down for the last time as the hill reaches its steepest. Twenty metres to go. Look ahead and realize I won't catch the next one. Ten metres to go. Check behind and I'm clear. Soft pedal to the chequered flag and it's all over.

I don't hang about because I don't want to get cold so I gently roll back to the race HQ, spend a few minutes chatting over a cuppa with the old guy who said he cursed me for not closing the gap on the second lap. I tell him that if he had breath to spare he should have closed it himself. It's all good-natured banter now with lots of relaxed faces.

Well, how did I do? There were 55 starters of which 44 finished. I was 17th. This

won't exactly set the world on fire, and with the Tour starting in a couple of weeks I can be fairly confident my services won't be called-upon. If I hadn't been boxed-in, or the hill had been longer then I would have done better. But there are always ifs and you can't turn the clock back. Nevertheless, I'm happy with my performance given that a lot of the riders have been racing all season.

Because I have to drive home, unpack, cook, eat and ride to work tomorrow I skip the presentation. Looking in the rear view mirror as I drive off I see one of the first-timers is just arriving back. There is no equivalent of fun runners in bike racing and it must have been a long and lonely ride to the finish. Only thirty miles! I do hope he sticks with it though, as the rewards are great. You can lose or spend your money, but good memories, like this one, last for ever.

A cycling philosopher once said that there is only one winner to each race, but that doesn't mean that the rest are all losers. He was right, and I spent a lot of time on the way home working-out when I could enter the next race.

*Bob Tyrrell*

Postscript

I did start another race about a month later. It was a disaster as I had some sort of virus and abandoned with incredible cramp. But, as they say, that's bike racing – and life. - *BT*

## **Prattle & Run Book Review**

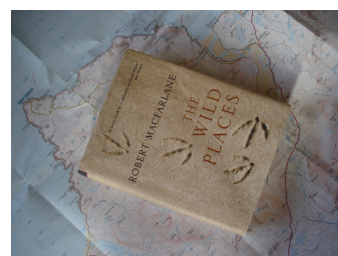
When I started to edit P&R I announced that there would be a book review.

Last edition, John told us of a book he had received for his birthday, but just in case that's not enough to cover me under the Trade Descriptions Act, I shall have to provide my own.

*The Wild Places* by Robert Macfarlane. Granta Publications 2007, £18.99

This isn't a book about running, but it's a book that I may never have heard of if I hadn't been a runner, and it's also a book that ties closely to my love of running.

I first saw it last September in the University of Essex campus bookshop. I was staying a couple of nights there, competing in the PSUK National 10 mile road race. After a look through I returned it to the shelf, unable to justify the cost. Last week I found a near-mint copy in a charity shop.



*The Wild Places* is a travel book. It is also a celebration of the British Isles. It encompasses natural history, climate change and being at one with the natural world.

Robert Macfarlane takes the reader on a journey around the wild places of the British Isles, and there he had me hooked, as in one chapter he visits Cape Wrath and Sandwood Bay, and in another Ben Hope, all known to several club members through our annual jaunts to the Cape Wrath Challenge.

Macfarlane has an immense vocabulary which he uses to describe scenes so that you can see sunlight glinting off mica sand; taste the chill of Scottish rain and feel the warmth of limestone pavement against your palm. He selects different environments; Rannoch Moor, Orford Ness saltmarshes, coast, woodland, Lakeland mountain ridge, and takes you there with him as he looks at the changes wrought by man and overcome by nature.

Reading it, I wanted nothing more than to pack a rucksack and go. Go on my own, or maybe, as he does at times with a special friend, to places where I could immerse myself in my surroundings and know my own limitations and fragility. Very much the same sort of sensation I have when running through rain, or across wild country.

Turning the last page was like the arrival home after an exhilarating run; warm, comforting, but leaving you wanting more.

## **A Weekend in Wales to rival Beachy Head?**

Those familiar with my Marathon surname letter quest will be aware that I did the Beachy Head marathon in 2006 partly because I thought it was also called the Seven Sisters marathon. This was the case previously so it seemed to me that it did not qualify as an "S" so I decided to look for another. A friend of mine had run Snowdonia before and it was on a Saturday (unusually) in 2007 so we planned a weekend in Wales. Tracy and I were put onto a good hotel about 20 miles away from Llanberis, where the race HQ is, so that appealed also. So I filled in the form and started training, with more hills than usual (which I was very glad of on the day). I perfected an "African hills" circuit of just over half a mile which comprised on one short, steep climb and another longer, more gradual incline (to use Mr Grimsey's terminology). I built these up to about 10 reps which was quite enough but served to toughen me up physically and mentally for the rigours to come at Snowdonia. 2007 was also the 25<sup>th</sup> running of the event with a reminiscing evening at Llanberis for past runners hence having the event on Saturday. 2008 will revert back to Sunday apparently as some mad people run the "big three"- Beachy Head on Saturday, Snowdonia on Sunday then hop across to Dublin to run their marathon on the bank holiday Monday.

We travelled up the night before and checked into the Princes Arms hotel in Trefriw, near Betws-y-Coed, had a good meal and retired to a relatively blissful sleep, knowing I had prepared as well as I could. The hotel was great, the manager took an interest in what I was doing so we would recommend it to anyone, as one of our neighbours had.

The next morning brought....rain...and.....wind, lots of both in fact but there again it's not a PB course. So after a room service breakfast it was in the car and off to the start. We parked in the race hotel car park to make final preparations and then Tracy dropped me off at the actual start at Nant Peris, about half a mile outside Llanberis. She was going to keep seeing me around the mostly circular route around Snowdon which proved to be a great morale-booster. The race start is in a field by the main road and had a nice atmosphere to it, being a fairly small race of about 1500 competitors. Apart from the final brutal six miles back over the top to Llanberis it is almost all on roads, to preserve the local National Trust countryside. It is similar to Beachy Head in that the sting in the tail is in the last six miles. I chatted with four Hogweeds, wished them luck then it was line up for the start. I said I would be happy with anything less than five hours.

The race was being filmed for Welsh TV (I got a tape of it later, all in Welsh!) so I grimaced for the camera and we all trotted up the Nant Peris Pass to begin the marathon. This is a four mile gradual climb up to the Youth hostel at the summit (where



the 1953 Everest expedition trained apparently), so chatting died away somewhat towards the top. The weather was still wet and windy but the scenery was spectacular. Unfortunately Snowdon was shrouded in mist for most of the day but it didn't spoil my enjoyment as I felt good. With most ascents of course you get a descent and this was an opportunity to recover, regroup and think about the race ahead. I descended to hit the main road on the A498 and turned right to head to Beddgelert. I also saw Tracy, frantically waving her arms and trying not to get too wet. At least I was keeping warm! This leg skirts pretty lake and reservoirs and is largely downhill so was quite pleasant. Being a small pretty village Beddgelert was



rather gridlocked on marathon day so I had to pick my way through by road or pavement. I stopped briefly (see picture) to let Tracy get a decent photo and check she was OK and then I was off again, up the two mile drag on the A498 out of the village towards Waunfawr I had been warned about. I was still feeling good and kept a steady pace up the climb, the rain keeping me cool and I even had the breeze at my back for once! Once over the top the route was undulating and I saw Tracy again for a banana break. She was wearing a Hogweeds hilly half woolly hat and she seemed to have been adopted by the Hogweeds runners to provide food and support for them as well!

The climb up into the village of Waunfawr signalled the start of the serious climb as I took a right off the main road (still with great local support considering the terrain) and headed up towards Llanberis again. The road dwindled to a rough track and I headed up again to around 1200 feet and the mist got thicker and thicker until I could hardly see ahead of me! I learned later that the leader abandoned up here when he slowed to a walk and became hypothermic! I was managing a kind of shuffle with only the odd walk so I was relieved to finally get to the top. I didn't see it, I just realised I was running on level ground so I made another mental note (did a lot of those on the way round) to tell Mr Grimsey about all these "inclines".

As I said before if you have an ascent there is usually a descent and there certainly was here as the track dipped sharply downwards and I had to go with it. I was bounding down the rough track like some kind of demented and ungraceful mountain goat, giggling as I went thinking "This is supposed to be a (expletive deleted) marathon, no-one mentioned fell running!" By the time I got to the bottom my quads were killing me but I was able to raise a trot as we finally entered Llanberis. The race

ended with a frustrating circuit around the town as I anxiously checked my watch to finish inside five hours. The finish banner at last came into view and I crossed it in 4 hours 56 mins 17 secs, which I was pleased with on arguably the toughest marathon course in the UK on a difficult day.

I saw Tracy as I turned into the finishing straight, she had had a good day spectating as the circular route helped with plenty of parking places (except Beddgelert!). I was given a very nice Welsh slate coaster to commemorate the event as well as the obligatory T shirt. The post-race tent was very social and I didn't realise how tired I was until I sat down! I found Tracy and we headed off to a tea shop for sandwiches and then journeyed back to the hotel. We had a lovely meal and slept fitfully that night. After a huge breakfast there was time for some sightseeing and shopping on our way home. I would recommend Snowdonia to run, if you are not after a fast course, as it is a well-organised event in a beautiful part of the country. For me, after three fairly tough marathons (I had tackled the Neolithic and Beachy Head marathons previously as well) I intend to try a flat, fast road marathon for late 2008. "F" for Frankfurt sounds promising and direct flights are starting in 2008 from Bristol! So if anyone fancies a club trip I would be happy to investigate it.

I raised £325 towards Jane Tomlinson's Cancer Appeal for my efforts and a big thank you to all those who sponsored me.

*John Francksen*

## **The Times they are A-changing**

The recent discussions about the organisations prompted a flurry of responses to the captain and have been the subject of much discussion on club nights. I have given the matter some thought and offer the following as possible solutions:

### **Roger's group**

This could be split into two. The fast ones will go very fast, the rest will go fast but not as fast as the others and not as fast as they'd like to.

### **Arthur's group (formerly Garry's group but now likely to start late, go well for a few miles then come to a sudden stop)**

Again, this could be split into two groups. The first of these should consist of fast competitive runners. They would be going as fast as they could but not quite fast enough to join (or even get within sight of) Roger's group apart from possibly the one or two in Roger's group who have been left gasping by the wayside, detritus in the Great Running Race of Life. They may well be going too fast for the group leader. The second or "fast social" group will be going quite fast enough, thank you, and will be quite happy as they know they could go faster if they wanted and are absolutely convinced (though they're not telling anyone as that would seem like bragging) that they could, if they so wished, put in a bit of training and move up into Roger's group, maybe taking it easy for the first couple of weeks so they didn't appear to be showing off too much.

### **John's group**

This could be split into slowish faster runners and faster slowish runners. The slowish faster runners will be at the front and will be trying to keep the ones at the back of Arthur's group within range as this will be what they are striving for. Some of the

slowish faster runners will really be fast social or fast competitive runners who are just having an easy run.

The next group will be the faster slowish runners. They don't really care how fast they are going, as long as they are fast enough to stay in front of Sue's group.

**Sue's group, sometimes called Mike's group**

This would split into the faster not-quite-so-fast runners and the slower not-quite-so-fast runners. Beginners and those recovering from injury would normally start in the latter group, progressing as necessary through the other groups. The faster not-quite-so-fast runners will want more of a challenge but because they perceive the faster slowish runners as much faster than they are, whether or not this is the case, they will continue to do speed work in isolation from the other groups until they will become as fast or faster than the slowish faster runners and will cause great consternation and bewilderment because everyone in the club thought they were slow.

The slower not-quite-so-fast runners will be having a good time, enjoying the run and supporting or being supported by the other runners in the group.



Whatever is finally decided, it will not please everyone and may upset a few. In order to alleviate future difficulties, I would suggest that the groups could, if required, be further sub-divided along slightly different lines

1. **The old timers** have of course run much faster than anyone else in the past and are only running at this speed because they are preserving their real speed for competition.
2. **The fast-social-but-unattached group**, a sort of speed-dating-while-you-run group. I'm sure there would be considerable interest in some quarters.
3. **The educated/scientific group** would concentrate on proper aerobic development in order to maximise their true potential thus running at a pace well within their capabilities. This pace would nevertheless be designed to develop their aerobic potential so that they can absolutely thrash anyone in the faster groups who mistakenly thinks that hard training runs are the only way to develop speed and endurance when the time comes to race.
4. **The superinterval training group**. The members of this group would be former (possibly the more senior) members of group 2 who found the hectic social whirl rather too much to cope with while running. They would run as fast as they possibly could, with active or passive recovery periods used for continuing the social side of things which they had started previously. Drinks (hot chocolate, coffee, tea, whisky, etc) could be provided as required.
5. **The slow, slow, quick, quick, slow group** would appeal particularly to those who also have an interest in ballroom dancing.
6. **The “four steps forward, four steps back, four steps forward, four steps back, dosey doe, turn, swing the person next to them, form hands into an arch and pass the people in front” group**. They wouldn't win any races but they would be absolutely brilliant at the next ceilidh.

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I am sure that the problems are not insurmountable and with some careful planning we can please everyone in the club. If you have any further ideas for groups please contact the editor or the captain.

*Gwyn Fastaugh*

*Below is a letter sent to the Daily Telegraph by one of our members (and submitted by another who obviously reads the paper). It has been suggested that there might be space for a Letters page in this publication. Any contributions would be gratefully received and may be printed anonymously if requested.*

### **Daily Telegraph 11 January 2008 Why Walter snapped and struck a fan 85 years ago**

Sir – I was sorry to read that Liverpool FC's likeable Jamie Carragher was goaded by Luton fans into climbing onto the terraces and challenging them to a fight at the weekend (Sport, Jan 9)

Footballers have to put up with too much abuse these days – but then, they always have. Jamie may be interested to learn that 85 years ago my grandfather Walter Wadsworth who also played for Liverpool 'snapped' at the end of a match. The incident happened at Sheffield in December 1923 when Walter hit a spectator who had been insulting him (or so he thought, Walter actually hit the wrong man!) Court proceedings were talked about, but came to nothing. However, Walter was not happy to let the incident blow over. A week later, he wrote an impassioned piece for the now defunct Topical Times.

Here is the gist of it.

'Let me state here and now that I hit a spectator. I admit it. I think I was justified because a spectator called me something that I will allow no man to call me. It must not be imagined that because a spectator has paid his bob that he can, willy-nilly, help himself in the epithets department. He has no justification for something worse than swearing at the players. He has not the right to shout vile words at them.

'I hope the action I took will lead to the offenders realising that they cannot lean over the railings and offer vile insults at footballers.

'After the match I begged the people of Sheffield to bring the man to the dressing room to see me. No-one came, I am sorry to say, and I am more than sorry that the man has not gone to court, for then the facts would be published and it would be seen by all in the game of football how some spectators carry on.'

Walter had been with Liverpool since 1912 and captained the side during the 1920s. He was a respected player.

Nothing's changed, eh, Jamie?

*Jacqueline Wadsworth*

### **World Team Challenge 2007 – Nice**

Some of the multi-sport athletes amongst you may be familiar with adventure racing. Indeed one of our own, Jim Godden, has been a prolific adventure racer. Adventure racing is a type of event which typically combines running, mountain biking and canoeing whilst orienteering at all times. Events come in many formats and can be as short as a single stage of five hours or as long as two weeks. The UK is at the forefront of a corporate adventure race series run by Challenger World. They run adventure races in the UK, Europe and around the World for teams from companies and organisations under the banner of intelligent sport. The events are not straight

navigation events, there is a significant amount of strategy involved and teams have to demonstrate both mental and physical strength to win.

I have been lucky enough over recent years to represent my company, Airbus, in several of these events. As 2007 reigning World champions we automatically qualified for the 2007 final in Nice. All the other teams had to reach the finals through finishing in top positions in the Asian, USA, Europe and UK events. Our team for 2007 was made up of two highly experienced adventure racers Tom Gibbs and Pete James, a Trek sponsored mountain biker John Ross, me and a fellow lapsed triathlete John Price.

The event was broken down into 4 stages and time bonuses were awarded to teams for reaching bonus checkpoints.

Stage 1: A five hour mountain biking and running navigation stage in the French mountains.

Stage 2: A two and a half hour stage where we had to navigate to 20 checkpoints on a wooded hill at night.

Stage 3: A two hour white water canoeing and running stage where we had to reach checkpoints within strict time limits to avoid penalties.

Stage 4: A two and a half hour sea swim, canoe and run.

Despite being favourites to win we had a mediocre first stage and finished in second place, nearly two minutes behind Qinetiq. The second stage saw us begin our comeback with Airbus



demonstrating our strengths of running and navigation to win the stage. We also won the third stage to take us in to the final stage with over one and a half hours lead. We took a cautious approach to the final stage to ensure we took no time penalties. You can see how cautious in the photo below where I am still on the start line whilst many of the teams have already taken a 10 metres lead.

Then we had to wait until the evening and all the stage times and bonuses were calculated before being announced as the 2007 winners. We also sent a mixed team to the finals who had qualified through coming second in the UK event earlier in the year. They were equally strong and finished second.

I would recommend the Challenger World events to anyone interested in a mental as well as physical challenge. However you do need to work for a company that is enlightened enough to see the benefits for team building and staff development as well as having the cash for large entry fees.

For those of you interested in an introduction to adventure racing I would recommend taking a look at the Ace races or Dynamic adventure racing websites. There is also the



Rat Race series which Thornbury's own Jim Godden can tell you all about as one of the race organisers.

The emphasis of my training has now shifted to finish off the cross country season and to start on some serious cycling over the summer. My next challenge is the Raid Pyrenean – to cycle the length of the Pyrenees in under 100 hrs.

*Martyn Green*

2007 World Team Challenge Results:

Overall Position	Overall Time	Team Name	Country
1	4:50:28	Airbus	UK
2	6:36:06	Airbus (Mixed)	UK
3	6:52:58	Detica	UK
4	7:11:24	QinetiQ	UK
5	8:21:54	AWE	UK
6	9:04:59	VT Group	UK
7	9:10:40	Fortis	Belgium
8	9:18:17	Barclays	UK
9	9:23:12	Atea Sweden	Sweden
10	9:37:29	Pfizer	UK
11	9:59:57	Team Motorola	USA
12	10:08:10	Anaconda Rare Coins/St Jude	USA
13	10:13:47	Accenture	UK
14	10:34:18	HP1	Spain
15	10:40:25	BG Group	Singapore
16	10:58:59	Dell	UK
17	11:01:16	Soitron	Slovakia
18	11:14:00	Dimension Data Europe	France
19	11:22:34	HP 2	Spain
20	11:31:20	Wheelabrator Group	Canada
21	11:53:57	Stanchart Flyers	Singapore
22	12:17:01	LloydsTSB	UK
23	12:19:37	Mack Trucks + Volvo	USA
24	12:36:13	Cisco Channels	Euro
25	12:36:50	Boy Scouts of America	USA
26	12:43:02	Dimension Data	Germany
27	12:48:38	NTS/Cisco	Austria
28	13:05:55	BG Team Hope	USA
29	13:28:29	Acision	Singapore
30	13:38:28	Cisco Channels	UK
31	13:56:46	Disneyland	Hong Kong
32	14:00:27	Dimension Data	Netherland
33	14:09:35	HKAYP	Hong Kong
34	14:12:56	Roanoke County	USA
35	14:40:58	M1 Riser	Singapore
36	14:43:12	Hewlett Packard	USA
37	15:31:10	United Stationers - Universal Warriors	USA

Links:

<http://www.challengerworld.com>

<http://aceraces.com>

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

<http://www.ratraceadventure.com>

## AGM and Annual Dinner 2008

The weekend of 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> February proved to be a busy one for running club members.

On Friday the AGM was held in the refurbished but reduced-size room at Christ The King. It was good to see so many members attend, and the lack of space may have added to the impression that there were more there than usual.

Business was conducted quickly and efficiently, and the new Committee duly elected. This saw Mark Williams move along the table to take the place of Captain which has been held so well by Garry over the past couple of years. Mark, as you will see, insists that he is only caretaker captain and is looking for someone to take over the role in its entirety at least by the next AGM.

The Editor becomes the new Chairperson, and is very pleased that Gareth Thomas, Arthur Renshaw and Jon Greenwood are remaining in their respective posts as Secretary, Vice Chair and Treasurer. We also welcomed to the committee Craig Carscadden, Jan Constable, Martin Dunne and John Francksen, and welcomed back Selina Davies who has volunteered to arrange the club social events (leaving Garry at home looking after the baby).

The following day it was back to running as the cross country runners drove to Brecon for the penultimate Gwent League race. Surrounded by the beautiful hills including Pen-Y-Fan it was disappointing to have to run round a flat playing field, but the springlike weather helped to compensate.

In the evening around eighty members donned their glad rags to attend the dinner at Tortworth Court, a change in venue and venture, organized by Jane Leslie, to whom we must give our thanks. We were serenaded during the meal by *Spinach For Norman* who then, with the help of a cheerful and ever-patient Caller, put us through our paces on the dance floor.

Whilst Stripping The Willow is not everyone's cup of tea, most people joined in enthusiastically even if some seemed a little bemused ... Pete Mainstone took this as an opportunity to change out of his collar and tie, and he may even have mentioned Wales beating Scotland a couple of times.

The hardier runners were out again on Sunday for the Dursley Dirty Dozen, which this year enjoyed less mud and much more sunshine than usual. Elsewhere, Phil Lucker came a creditable 19<sup>th</sup> in the Longleat 10k, his time of 37:37 ousting Mark Curtis from the leaderboard of 2008 Club Records.

Ah, but the year is yet young ...

