

Lakeland 100 Race Report

Friday 27th July to Sunday 29th July 2012

105miles starting and finishing at Coniston in the Lake District

Pre Race

When I first heard about this race a few years ago I was really keen to do it as I love the Lakes and it sounded an amazing race. The problem for me is that it is only a few weeks after the West Highland Way Race and I didn't feel I could do both.

After last year's struggle on the West Highland Way I decided I needed a change. Initially I thought I'd do the 50 but my friend Dave Troman suggested we both enter the 100 and we could train together. It didn't take long to accept his offer.

So from March to June Katrina and I travelled down to Keswick, where Dave and Tracey live four times for our recce runs. We made videos of each leg to help us with our navigation.

Finally after all our preparation and waiting the race weekend arrived. Katrina and I drove down to Keswick on Thursday morning, did a bit of shopping in the afternoon and then relaxed in the evening.

We left Keswick about 10am on Friday morning arriving at John Ruskin School, Coniston just after 11am. As soon as you arrive at the school you know that this is a well organised and run race. There were volunteers everywhere showing you where to park and pitch your tent.

We got weighed, registered, kit checked, dibber fixed on wrist and wandered round the stalls.

We pitched out tent then went for a backed potato at the excellent event kitchen. A group of ladies provided food right through the weekend for runners, supporters and marshals. They made £4,000 which was donated to a charity working with children with disability.

It was great to meet up with a number of friends who were also doing the race. I wandered back to our tent and lay down for an hour or so going over the route on the map. I knew I wouldn't be able to sleep but it was worth it to keep off my feet.

Race briefing was at 4pm and again chatted to friends as the time of the race approached. I felt as ready as I could and was looking forward to the challenge. I received lots of texts and comments on facebook which was so encouraging.



The race has an excellent web site with live updates of splits and positions so I knew friends could follow my progress throughout the race.

Back to the tent to get changed, puts lots of sudocrem on my feet and make final decision on what top to wear. As the weather was warm and the forecast for the night was favourable I opted for a short sleeved top. I was wearing my Hoka Mafate to start with and I had my Mafate 2's in my drop back at Dalemain if I wanted a change.

Dave and I wished each other a great race, took some photos and wandered over to the start.

Katrina and Tracey gave their men a final hug and kiss and then they walked up the route half a mile or so to get a better view of the start.

The start was very relaxed. Once again the volunteers were super efficient making sure we dibbed in so they knew exactly how many started. There were 263 on the start line. So at 5.30pm on Friday 27th July 2012 we all set off from Coniston on a journey of 105miles around the beautiful Lake District.

Leg 1: Coniston to Seathwaite

My main goal for this race was to finish. I knew that with a drop off of over 50% that was not going to be easy. Based on our training runs I had a schedule for 30hrs and I felt this was possible if everything went well.

The key for me was to run the first half of the race to Dalemmain as comfortable as possible. I was determined not to go off too quick, making sure I ate well and had enough energy to keep going strongly right to the end.

There was a great crowd lining the streets for the run through Coniston. One of the great features of this race is that there is a 50 race as well which starts from Dalemmain at 12noon Saturday. So all the 50 runners and their supporters are there getting ready for their race.

I ran until I came to the point in the road that I'd decided to walk and set off up the hill feeling really relaxed and glad to be started. I saw Katrina and Tracey at the side of the road and went over for a final high 5.



I chatted to a few people on the long first climb up Walna Scar Road. A number of fellow runners thanked me for the videos that Dave and I had done of the route. This was repeated by many people throughout the race and it was great to know that so many had found them helpful.

My plan for the climbs was to keep a nice steady pace going. I didn't want to push but get into a steady rhythm that would get me up the hill without too much effort.

It was a glorious summer's evening and I had a good look round as I climbed. What a privilege it is to be able

to do these events. I hope I never take for granted.

Once we were over the top we headed down to the first checkpoint. I was with a group of runners and felt really comfortable. My plan was to do this first section in around 1hr 35mins and so I was very pleased with myself when I arrived at Seathwaite Hall just over a minute after that.

There were loads of people in the checkpoint but the marshals were very efficient at getting everyone dipped, fed and watered and off again. I spent no more than a couple of minutes getting my water bottle filled and I took some cake and a banana for the next leg.

7.26 miles in 1hr 36mins 43secs (13.44 pace) 176th place

Leg 2: Seathwaite to Boot

The route goes back up the road for a minute or two so you see more runners heading in. I had a different group of people to run with now and once again I settled into a comfortable pace. I made sure I wasn't at the front of any group so I didn't feel I was pushing the pace.

I chatted to John Trott for a bit on this section. John and I have got to know each other through the Lakeland 100 facebook page so it was really good to chat and encourage one another. Sadly I saw on the results that John didn't finish but I'm sure he'll be back.

As we approached the plantation I was chatting to a guy called Peter Jamieson, who is in the army based in South Wales. He is also from Liverpool and supports the right team. In fact he has a season ticket at Goodison.

Anyway as we chatted I was a little concerned about my stomach. Before the race it had felt a bit off but I put it down to prerace jitters. But it was still feeling not quite right.

I thought I was going to be sick but managed to hold it in but had to concentrate really hard to fight the feeling of nausea. The climb up through the plantation was very wet and boggy and by now my feet were wet.

I often find the first few hours of a race like this a bit strange. I find it takes me a while for my body to settle into the run and while I felt comfortable with the pace I didn't feel totally into the run if that makes sense. The other things that concerned me was my vision.

I couldn't focus properly. I sometimes get this when I'm really tired or near the end of a race but never after a couple of hours. I tried to concentrate and shake myself out of it. I took a succeed tablet and ate some food but it stayed it me for an hour or so.

The descent was really wet and slippery and I guy in front of me took a tumble in the boggy ground. I was slipping and went down a couple of times.

On one of them my knee extended as I slipped and it was sore especially on the downhill sections. So as I approached Eskdale Corn Mill checkpoint I was feeling too great. My stomach had settled thankfully but my vision was blurry and my knee was a concern!

My plan for this section was 1hr 45mins and I arrived in 1hr 42 so once again happy with that especially given how I was feeling.

But the checkpoint volunteers were great and once again with a couple of minutes I was in and out. I had a lovely piece of flapjack and took some nuts for the next leg.

6.95 miles in 1hr 45mins 01secs (14.41 pace)

Overall 14.28 miles in 3hrs 20mins 19secs (14.19 pace) 163rd place

Leg 3: Boot to Wasdale Head

I think I must have been quicker than most of the people around me as I seemed to leave with a different group of people again.

We climbed up the track and settled into a good pace up the hill. The food helped my stomach but my vision still wasn't right. I had planned to ring Katrina at various points but thought now would not be the best time. "yeh I'm okay but I'm seeing double!"

It was starting to get darker now but I hoped we'd get to the next checkpoint before needing the head torches.

I wasn't really enjoying this section and took another couple of tumbles on the wet and boggy ground. Looking back it was probably the time (after 3-4 hrs) that my body was switching from carbohydrates to fat as an energy source.

I often find that I go through a bit of a struggle during this time and it coincided with darkest coming and the prospect of a long night and my blurry vision! Plus I had another fall into wet boggy ground.

A few runners went past me on the descent to the checkpoint at Wasdale Head. They looked so much more comfortable than me but I tried to hang on to them for a bit of a tow. I did try and ring Katrina at this point but couldn't get a signal.

It was getting really dark now but we made it into the checkpoint safely. Despite how I felt I was still just inside my 1hr 23mins plan.

The checkpoint was fairly busy with a few folk sitting down. My plan was to be in and out as quickly as possible. The race publishes what is available at each checkpoint and I'd worked out (with help from my friend Cara) what to take.

Here it was soup and bread and it as delicious. I also refilled my water bottle and drank some coke.

5.44 miles in 1hr 22mins 05secs (15.05 pace)

Overall 19.43 miles in 4hs 44mins 44secs (14:44 pace) 159th place

Leg 4: Wasdale Head to Buttermere

It was now 10.15pm and really, really dark. I had my head torch on. I'd decided to use my Petzl Myo torch and it was fine.

I left with one other guy even though I'd come into the checkpoint with at least 10 others. The pair of us set off up the hill. I can't remember his name but we chatted a bit as we walked. We could see a few head torches ahead but for the first time I felt the race had opened out.

Having felt pretty grotty coming into the checkpoint I was now feeling really good. Probably a combination of some food and the fact that my vision was back to normal.

I knew we had to make sure we took the right path after a gate and once we were past that it was the long climb up. Once again I didn't want to push too hard but it felt fairly easy and I followed my unknown friend up the hill.

Just before we reached the point when you cross Gatherstone Beck we caught up with Jon Steele. Jon is a good friend and is half way through a massive challenge this year. He is running 50 ultra marathons in 52 weeks. An amazing effort.

I don't think he recognised me at first but once he did we shook hands and had a quick chat. He said he doesn't like this hill but I told him to stay positive.

I crossed the Beck and found myself at the front of this group so I decided to keep going and within a few minutes I was on my own and I could see some head torches ahead so set off after them.

I was so pleased that I was moving so much better and I was feeling far happier with how things were going. I caught up with the runners ahead and we all headed down the hill to Black Sail Youth Hostel. I seemed to be going a bit better than the group I'd caught so I went to the front and made my way down.

There are several paths down but I remember Dave saying to try and keep near the stream as if

you can't see it in the dark you'll be able to hear it. It really helped and before long I was at the bottom and over the bridge running past the Youth Hostel. A light was on but no-one was about.

I set off up the next hill in good spirits. I was moving well and loving being part of this race. I caught up another group by the time we reached the top and we set off down the hill to Buttermere. That first section is really rocky and I made sure I took my time (as did the runners around me) and we all safely made it to the gap in the wall.

The next part of the path is easier but still hard to run on we all slowly made our way down. There must have been about 10-15 of us in a line when suddenly one guy comes bounding down the hill. He had a very bright head light and went past us all and off into the distance.

I would be very interested to know how he got on as the pace looked a bit suicidal to me at that stage of the race.

Once we got down to the lake side path I really enjoyed being able to run for a while. Up until now the route was either up or down with few opportunities to run on flatter ground.

I didn't want to push too hard but it was good to feel my legs were fine and I caught up with a few runners ahead. There were 2 guys both called Andrew who I caught. The race numbers have your name on as well so it's good to be able to know who you are running with.

I followed the two Andrew's into Buttermere. They knew me from my blog so it was great to meet. We would end up seeing a lot of each other over the next 7 hours.

On the menu at the checkpoint was more soup and once again it hit the spot. I took some Kinetica drink and some sweets for the next section. The volunteers were doing a great job at the checkpoint and there was a superb atmosphere.

6.91 miles in 2hrs 15mins 53secs (19.40 pace)
Overall 26.77 miles in 7hrs 05mins 23secs (16.09 pace) 113th place

Leg 5: Buttermere to Braithwaite

Once again I took less time at the checkpoint than those around me and I set off with someone I'd not been with. We head up the woods by the river, over the stile and then up the track.

I'm so glad we had done this section again on our last recce run as it does all so different in the dark. There are a couple of key places that would be so easy to miss. I chatted with the guy I'd joined up with (sorry can't remember your name).

He led until we crossed the first beck and then I took over and I pulled away from the runners behind. So for the time for ages I was on my own. It was good to be able to go at my own pace and I knew the next bit was going to be a steep climb.

Over the four recce runs I'd done with Dave we'd marked 2-3 mini-splits between each of the main checkpoints. My first one for this section was at Sail Pass (3.48miles from the checkpoint). I was feeling good as I went over the top and headed down to Braithwaite.

On the way down I got a phone call from Dave. We'd arranged to try and ring each other a few times during the race. He was going well and said he went through Braithwaite in 7hrs 47mins. He also told me to be really careful with finding the path as it is easy to miss in the dark.

I'm always a little slower than others on the descents and I wasn't surprised when I was caught. I'd run with Steven Foster a few times over the race so far so it was good to chat and get to know

him.

As we chatted I realised we were going too low and I realised, despite Dave's warning, we'd missed the turn off. Fortunately Steven had a gps and we were quickly able to get back on the right track. I was so thankful Steven came along at the right time and I told him a few times how grateful I was.

As we descended we were caught by the two Andrew's and a couple of others. Steven and I arrived at the checkpoint in just under 2hrs. On my sub 30hr plan I estimated 9hrs 6mins and my overall time for the 33.32miles was 9hrs 5mins 47secs!! So I was 13secs under my time.



Just as I was going into the church hall Stephen Weston came out. Stephen has done the whw race and we know each other through the race. He looked as though he was going well and I see from the results he finished in 30hrs 48mins.

This was the first indoor checkpoint so far with tables and chairs. It was so tempting to sit down but I didn't. I took some rice pudding, drank some coke and after 5mins or so I was off on the next leg to Blencathra in good spirits.

6.46 miles in 1hr 56mins 02secs (17.58 pace)

Overall 32.80 miles in 9hrs 05mins 47secs (16:38 pace) 97th place

Leg 6: Braithwaite to Blencathra

I left on my own knowing that I'd be seeing the 2 Andrews and Steven again soon. Another guy was leaving at the same time so we set off together. I asked him how he felt but wish I hadn't as he wasn't happy. He wasn't enjoying it at all, couldn't eat and didn't think he was going to get much further. I'm not sure what happened to him.

So I started running and was soon on my own. On our last training run we'd discussed how much we would run on this flat section to Keswick. I was really pleased to feel that I was running really comfortably after over 9 hours at 3am in the morning in the pitch dark.

I did a mental check list and everything felt okay. My stomach was fine and I was eating and drinking fine. My knee from my slip was still there on downhill sections. The Hoka's were feeling great on the tarmac. So all in all I was happy and in good shape for the challenges ahead.

Once I turned off onto the track past Dave's school I had my first wee. I'd gone past one other runner on the road section but couldn't see anyone else ahead so once again I was on my own. But not for too long as when I came on to the road past the Pheasant Inn I went past another runner.

I was right on my mini split and headed up the hill in good spirits. I like having my mini splits for each leg as it gives me an indication of how I'm doing. If I fall behind them I try not to let it bother me and readjust my overall aim as the run goes on.

Up until this point I hadn't even looked at the road book sheets that I'd laminated but I came to a gate that I couldn't remember so I had a quick check and it was through the gate and carry on up.

I soon arrived at the car park and could see a group of 3 ahead so I kept going at a steady walking pace and within 10mins or so I'd caught them up. I ran past as they walked and I was definitely

feeling I was in the middle of a good section that had started at Wasdale Head.

After another 5mins I caught and went past another group of 3. I looked across at the track coming back towards Blencathra and could see a few head torches.

I was running when I could along the track but happy to walk bits when there was any sort of uphill even if it was a few paces. There was still a long, long way to go and I needed to save as much as I can for the challenges later on.

There is the possibility of cutting down too early so the organisers put a compulsory check dipper at the corner of the sheep fold. So I decided (wrongly as it turned out) that I didn't need to concentrate too hard on the turn right as there would be a dipper with a light to point it out.

I remember seeing the sheep fold building but it didn't register as I was looking for the light. So I ran on past the turn. There was a wall on my right that I didn't remember but as it was still semi dark I couldn't quite make out where I was.

So I ran on. I looked at my garmin and I knew that I should be turning at 2.68 on my split. It went past that I was still trying to convince myself it would come soon. By the time I saw a large wall in the distance in front of me I realised I had made a mistake.

So I turned round and ran back. I reckon I'd run for half a mile so I've just added a mile to my journey. I resisted the temptation to quicken the pace but I probably did go a bit faster than I had been going.

I got to the corner then ran down the track and saw the dipper to the left. It was not where I expected it to be.

In races of this length and time there are bound to be times when things don't go right. It's how we deal with them that matters. For the next few minutes I could feel myself getting annoyed that I should further up, that the people I'd gone past will now be ahead of me again, that my splits won't reflect how I'd run the run, etc, etc.

So I decided to make a mental decision to try and forget it. I couldn't do anything about it and in the big picture of the race it wasn't going to make that much difference. I was dreading telling Dave next time we spoke as he'd helped me so much on getting the navigation right.

I saw the 2 Andrew's ahead so caught up with them. Having decided to try and put my mistake behind me I inevitably told them all about it. They said they saw a light in the distance and wondered whether it was the dipper!

So we ran together for a bit and I found out a bit more about them. They are friends who do a number of events together including Mountain Marathons. It was about this time that I switched off my head torch which is always a real boost.

With half a mile or so to go to the checkpoint I pushed on catching up the guy I went past near the Pheasant Inn over an hour and a bit ago.

The split from our recce run was 4.54 miles and my garmin now showed 5.59 miles so I did run a mile too far. So taking off say 15mins for that mile I was about 6min slower than my plan.

The checkpoint staff were great, filling up my water. I ate a banana and took a Kinetica Milk Pro Protein bar which were excellent.

9.51 miles in 2hr 13mins 08secs (14.00 pace)
Overall 42.31 miles in 11hrs 24mins 14secs (16.10 pace)

Leg 7: Blencathra to Dockray

I left the checkpoint following a couple of guys but I walked for a bit as I was sorting out my garmin. I had brought a recharger with me so that I could take the data from the whole run but for some reason it didn't work so the figures from now on are based on my ordinary stop watch, the official times and the distances are based on our training runs.

Once I got sorted out I ran comfortably along the course. I caught up with a couple of runners just as we came to the arched railway bridge that we don't go under. The guys were about to go the wrong way so I called them back.

A few minutes later the Andrew's caught me again and it was great to run with them for the rest of the way to Dockray. They said they have a non moaning pact as they run which was just what I needed. I don't think they were aiming at me but it was good for me not to have to talk about my mistake again!!

We ran together along the railway line track and then headed up to the Old Coach Road. The weather started to close in a bit and it was getting colder and wetter. When we reached the road I decided to put my Montane water proof top on.

I'd not worn it for the whole event so far right through the night so that was pretty good. The Andrew's were a distance away by the time I'd got my jacket on. I enjoyed the run/walk along the road and after 30mins or so I caught up with them.

After a few more minutes chat I pushed on ahead and after going past one more runner reached the checkpoint at the car park. My plan was 1hr 46mins and it had taken me 1hr 55mins. I knew I'd walked for a bit at the start but I wasn't too bothered as I was still feeling fairly good.

I had some soup and bread here and took some nuts and seeds for the journey to Dalemain.

7.70 miles in 1hr 55mins 00secs (14.56 pace)
Overall 50.01 miles in 13hrs 24mins 05secs (16.05 pace) 78th place

Leg 8: Dockray to Dalemain

This is one of the few checkpoints where you start downhill so I took advantage and ran down to Dockray going past a runner on the way down.

Ever since Dave and I did our first recce I've been looking forward to this section as you run round Gowbarrow Fell and then see the views around Ullswater.



I caught up and went past another couple of runners enjoying the woods and the fact that my legs, though getting tired, were still strong enough to run okay.

Once I started climbing up I ran Katrina and had a great chat. Even though this race is unsupported I took a lot of encouragement from Katrina and lots of friends who were following my progress. Katrina had my iphone and was sending tweets about my progress.

Katrina told me I'd had lots of texts and messages as people were getting up so it was so good to know that people were following me. I've been in their position following races such as the UTMB and it is fun to follow the splits.

I also rang Dave who was on the hill after Pooley Bridge. He was still going well but thought that a sub 28hrs might be difficult. We encouraged each other to keep it going. I took some photos and a video clip.

I had decided to try and do my video diary of the day and so this was an excellent place to do a bit. At some point along the next mile or so the 2 Andrew's caught up again and we ran together again. It's a lovely run through Swinburn's Park.

On the road towards Bennethead we caught up with a couple of runners including Matt Moroz who ran the whw race a few weeks ago. I said a quick hello as we ran past.

The two A's stopped for a synchronised wee and I ran ahead to the Dalemmain checkpoint. I'm sure for a lot of people reaching Dalemmain is a significant point in the journey. It is well over half way distance wise at 60miles with 45miles to go.

I had decided to have a longer stop here as you can have a drop bag with change of gear etc. Anything left will be taken back to Coniston.

The section had taken me 15mins longer than my plan but to be honest I probably felt that a sub 30hr time was beyond me so my only goal was to finish the race as well as I could. It took any pressure off which was good.

As soon as I arrived a marshal said you sit down and tell us what you want.



She was so helpful and brought me some stew, then rice pudding as I changed my socks and shoes.

I put on my Hoka Mafta 2 for the rest of the journey. My feet were looking worse for wear with a few small blisters but very white and scaly.

I dried them off and put lots of sudocrem on but I did wonder how they would feel as the race went on. I also changed my top and cleaned my teeth. The later was something that I know others do and Katrina had suggested I try it.

I had taken 25mins at the checkpoint which was longer than the 10-15mins I'd planned but still quicker than the 2 A's who were still enjoying the excellent hospitality.

10.07 miles in 2hrs 29mins 17secs (14.49 pace)
Overall 60.08 miles in 15hrs 58mins 58secs (15.58 pace) 73rd place

Leg 9: Dalemmain to Howtown

I left on my own and I decided to walk for a few minutes to get my legs going again after the longer stop. I now had 45miles left. The previous day Dave had suggested that looking on previous results if you double your time to Dalemmain it gives you an idea of a finishing time.

So if I double 16hrs you get 32hrs so that gave me a target to keep things interesting. I felt that was still well within my reach. Only time (and lots of it) would tell.

Just after crossing the road and running towards Pooley Bridge the 2 A's caught me once more and we ran together through the village and up the hill.

By the time we came to the end of the tarmac, through the gate and onto the rougher track they had pulled ahead and that was the last I saw of them. I was so impressed with the way they ran together, encouraging one another all the way.

I climbed steadily up the hill enjoying the views and preparing myself for the big climbs to come. I felt good on the way down to Howtown going past one runner. I was cheered on by a family who were impressed when I told them we'd run over 62 miles.

The boy asked me if I was winning! I wish. There were a number out walking along the course and everyone was so supportive.

As I came down the hill towards Howtown the 2 A's were heading up the hill after visiting the checkpoint so they had taken 13mins quicker than me from Pooley Bridge. They kept it going and finished in 32hrs 15mins 46secs.

I was in and out of Howtown in just over 3mins after enjoying a flapjack and coffee. I've not drank coffee for several years but I thought it might give me a bit of a boost for the big climb out of Howtown.

7.25miles in 2hrs 02mins (16.50pace)

Overall 66.85 miles in 18hrs 20mins 13secs (16.20pace)

Leg 10: Howtown to Mardale Head

As I set off up the hill there were 3 runners immediately ahead of me and I wondered whether I might catch any of them.

I would say having done the whw race 5 times that this race is a lot harder. In the whw the longest climb takes about 25mins and it is pretty runnable for the majority of the way. In this course there are several climbs that take me up to an hour.

I knew the next two long climbs would be the make or break of my race and I was determined to climb up as best as I could. I set myself the challenge of walking all the way to the top without stopping.

I used all sorts of mind games to keep going. In the end the main one was counting four paces over and over and over. Every few minutes I'd look up and even though the top still seemed a long way away it was getting closer.



About half way up the three guys stopped at the bench so I went past and kept my continuous movement going. The upward climb levels off for a few minutes but then goes up and up again. It was getting colder and started raining but I didn't want to stop to put my jacket on so kept going.

Just before the top I realised I needed my jacket on so put it on as I kept walking. As I did so one guy did catch me. I reckon I took just over an hour. It

was raining a bit heading towards High Kop but the visibility was fine and I made my way over to the short wooden post.

From there it is a good clear path over Low Kop. The guy who had gone past me suddenly headed off to the right. He was too far ahead for me to shout but then I wondered if I should be going that way. I checked the road book to make sure that I was to stay on this path.

I didn't see him again so hope he made it down okay. There was a runner behind me who seemed to be following me so that was good. I found the small cairn by the rocky outcrop and could see the bridge I was heading for so that part of my navigation went well.

I was rewarded with a spectacular view of Haweswater as I descended. I ate one of the Kinetica Milk Pro bars. It was a chocolate orange one and it went down a treat. I was also taking a succeed tablet every 90mins or so.

Once I got down to the lake I knew I had 4 miles to the checkpoint. I was going to try and run when I could but my feet for the first time were starting to hurt and it was worse on uneven ground. I knew there was plenty of that to come so I went as fast and as best as I could.

I spent some of the time thinking when the Lakeland 50 runners would catch me. They start at 12noon so 18hrs 30mins after the 100 race. By now I'd running for well over 20hrs so I thought they would catch me before the Mardale Head checkpoint.

Sure enough the first runner skipped by followed by the second runner and then lots more. It was great to see them and be encouraged by them. Over the next 12hrs there was a steady trickle of runners going by and it is no exaggeration to say at least half of them thanked me for the videos that we made.

Dave told me afterwards that lots of people recognised him from his distinctive rucksack. So thanks to everyone who encouraged me on my way.

I arrived at the checkpoint and took two cups of soup as I felt I'd deserved it!! My friend Rick Williams came through the checkpoint running well. He went on to finish the 50 race in 9hrs 36mins 02secs.

9.44 miles in 3hrs 24mins 20secs (21.39pace)
Overall 76.77miles in 21hrs 47mins 55secs (17.02pace) 71st place

Leg 11: Mardale Head to Kentmere

It was quite warm as I set off from the checkpoint but I had my game face on and I set off with a determination to keep moving. I allowed myself one brief stop on the way up this time!

It is not quite as long as the hill out of Howtown but still took me 45mins to reach the top. I knew there was a long descent which I was going to find hard with feet getting a bit sorer by the hour.

The highlight of the descent was seeing Andy Cole who was running the 50 race. He said 'Hi well done' as he went past. I said 'Andy, it's me!' So he slowed down and we walked together for a few minutes.

I have such respect for Andy. We have been running ultras for about the same amount of time and enjoy each other's blogs. Andy did the 100 race last year and had a touch time from Kentmere onwards so was able to encourage me to keep going even saying I should be under 33hrs.

Having slowed him down he set off down the hill. By the time I'd got my camera out he has

disappeared round the corner. He finished in a superb 9hrs 56mins 55secs for 35th place. Not bad for a 63 year old!!



On the descend Steven Foster caught me again and we ran for a good bit of the next miles together. I sensed he was moving better than me but took longer at checkpoints so we saw each quite a bit.

As I arrived at the checkpoint Steve was standing outside enjoying some food. I knew there were Fruit Smoothie's at Kentmere so went straight to that table for one. I also had a bit of pasta and set off as soon as I could.

6.44miles in 2hrs 25mins 24secs (22.35pace)
Overall 83.21miles in 24hrs 21mins 18secs (17.34
pace) 74th place

Leg 12: Kentmere to Ambleside

As I left the checkpoint I realised I'd been running for over 24hrs and had another 23miles to go. It's a bit mind boggling sometimes so decided to concentrate on the next 7 miles to Ambleside.

I had a small laminated card for each section with my splits but also the route profile on the back. These were really helpful. I knew I had a climb then a descent to Troutbeck, then another climb before the descent to Ambleside.

There were plenty of 50 runners going past, thanking me for the videos and generally encouraging each other to keep going.

I'd forgotten just how steep that climb is but I suppose any hill after 25 hrs of running will seem hard. But if you keep putting one foot in front of the other you will make it to the top. My mantra for this hill was 'You can do it ... yes you can.'

As I was going through Troutbeck Katrina called me and said Dave had finished!! I looked at my watch and it was just over 26hrs. Katrina said he'd finished 10th in 25hrs 52mins 24secs and was buzzing.

It gave me a real boost. We'd run the whole route together and somehow felt part of his achievement. I know it was nothing to do with me but at this stage I'd take anything if it kept me positive and focused on getting to the end.

I'd like to say at this point that at no stage did I ever consider not finishing. I knew I could do it. I had plenty of time to be within the cut off of 40hrs so it was just a case of getting there as well as I could in the circumstances I found myself in.

So and over the hill and down into Ambleside. One couple going past had a variation on the thanks for the videos. She had a written sheet and told me it was notes from our videos with things to look out for. That kept me amused for a good few minutes. I was beginning to feel like a minor celebrity!

At the race briefing Marc had said that they had put signs up around Ambleside explaining the race and he hoped that some people would cheer us on our way through. It was just after 9pm as

I ran through and a good number of people did clap and cheer.

Into the Lakes Runner shop for some more lovely soup and bread, some more cola and an Protein bar for the next section.

7.33 miles in 2hrs 35mins 44secs (21.25 pace)

Overall 90.54 miles in 27hrs 03mins 22secs (17.56 pace) 75th place

Leg 13: Ambleside to Langdale

As I left the shop someone said 'You're almost there, keep going.' On one of our runs Dave had asked me when I'd consider I was on the home straight and I'd said Ambleside. I felt that but with 14miles to go and my feet complaining I knew it would be hard.

I thought back to the whw race last year when I had a death march over the last 14 miles from Kinlochleven. That had taken me over 7hrs but I couldn't run at all. At least in this race I was still running when the ground was even.

My legs were okay given I'd run 90 miles. So I ran through Ambleside and the park and walked up the hill. Out of all the sections this was the one that I just couldn't for the life of me remember much about. I'd watched my own videos but I was getting all confused about certain things where.

For example I couldn't remember if Elterwater was in this section to Langdale or the next one. Or how we got into the woods a mile or so before the checkpoint. I think I must have been really tired and not thinking straight.

Fortunately there were still lots of 50 runners going past so they helped me. I was pleased to see that I was able to keep up with some of them for a while before they pushed on. There walk/run was slightly faster than my run/walk.

We did go through Elterwater and I knew we turned left, over the bridge and turn right. So I got out my road book and it said uphill for 400m. I walked up for a while but it didn't recognise anything so decided to wander back down and wait for the next runner. I just hoped it wasn't someone who had watched our videos!

Fortunately along came Sally Howarth. Sally was first 100 runner I'd seen in ages and knew the way so we chatted and made our way to the checkpoint together. Sally told me she'd started the 100 race last year but pulled out at Mardale Head. So it was a big boost for her getting over that hill and still be going.

We met a couple just before the camp site. They were very interested to know how far we'd come and how far we still had to go. They were very impressed and sent us on our way with their best wishes.

We had to check just where the checkpoint marquee was but when we saw it we realised we couldn't miss it! It was massive. As we approached Sally and I agreed to set off together and help each other over the next section.

Sally had been an Olympic Torch bearer and her sister was waiting for her at Coniston so she could run in with it. What a great incentive to keep going.

The marquee volunteers were very friendly and helpful. Sally sat on the couch which I thought was a bad idea! I had some Stew and bread and then we were off again.

5.75 miles in 2hrs 00mins 07secs (20.53 pace)

Overall 96.29 miles in 29hrs 11mins 39secs (18.11 pace) 75th place

Leg 14: Langdale to Tilberthwaite

I felt really chilled leaving the marquee as it had been nice and warm but it didn't take long to warm up again. For the last several hours I'd had my jacket off and on so many times.

We were slightly confused with the route as it all looked so different in the dark but we found our way to the gap in the wall and the stone steps down to Side Pike Farm. My feet were killing me on the steps down. Every step was so painful and I knew the next bit across the wet and boggy fields was going to be hard but I didn't realise just how hard.

A number of runners went past us and I lost contact with Sally who was moving better than me. I hoped she would keep going and told one of the runners to tell her I was fine and not to wait. Every step was so sore as the ground was wet and boggy and I kept sliding and slipping. Each step was agony.

For the only time in the whole race I wondered whether I was going to be able to finish. I somehow made it across to the main path up and thankfully it wasn't quite as sore on the uphill.

I was on my own for a while in the pitch dark but soon enough more 50 runners went past. The route goes down and through the woods and then across Bleamoss to the compulsory dibber. Thankfully I found that one okay.

Somewhere along here Dave rang and we had a quick chat. He was full of encouragement to keep going and told me he would be there waiting to see me finish.

The first part of the road was fine but once I'd turned right to go and over to Tilberthwaite every step was so sore on the rocky, uneven road.

It seemed to go on for ever but through a combination of grid and determination I eventually came to the farm and a tarmac road to the checkpoint.

The section from Langdale had taken me 1hr 15mins longer than the 2hrs I'd planned but time didn't matter at all by now. It was all about finishing and the end was in sight. A final flapjack and coffee before tackling the hill.

6.00 miles in 3hrs 14mins 03secs (32.21 pace)

Overall 102.29 miles in 32hrs 25mins 42secs (19.01 pace) 76th place

Leg 15: Tilberthwaite to Coniston



One more hill was all I was thinking climbing out from the checkpoint. I was more concerned about the descent but I had to get up first.

A couple of 50 runners followed me for a while but I encouraged them to go by as I needed to go at my pace which was a lot slower than theirs.

I wasn't too bad going up and kept moving as best I could. Katrina rang as I climbed and was full of encouragement. She said to take my time and be careful and she was waiting for me. Even though Katrina hadn't seen me for the whole race her support was spot on at each phone call.

She never once even hinted about stopping as she knows how I'd feel if I did and what I'd be like to live with. So she told me to keep going and how proud she was of what I was doing. I'm looking forward to supporting Katrina on Saturday's Devil o' the Highlands race.

The descent was as and as I thought it would be. Ever step was so sore. I stumbled many times. My vision was back to its blurry worse as I very slowly made my way down.

To add insult to injury it started really raining and I was soaked on top of everything else. But eventually I somehow made it down to the road. Just as I got there I saw Gaynor. She had come up to find me!

She said Katrina, Dave & Tracey were all waiting for me at the school. I was so grateful and touched that she'd come up the hill to make sure I was okay.

We walked/jogged down together. It was the first conversation I'd had for ages and it made the last few minutes fly by. We ran into Coniston, and then walked past the garage to the corner and then I ran down the hill to the finish.

There was a small crowd (it was 4am!!) but it was so good to see Katrina, Dave and Tracey waiting for me.

I did my final dibber and then was taken into the school where the runners and supporters gave me a round of applause.

I'd finished in 34hrs 33mins 59secs for 82nd place.
 3.50 miles in 2hrs 01mins 47secs (34.48 pace)
 Overall 105.79 miles in 34hrs 33mins 59secs (19.36 pace)

A massive thanks to all those involved with the race which I understand is over 120 people.

Congratulations to all those who ran and to all those who supported.

Finally thanks to Dave and Tracey for your amazing hospitality. We are still at their house in Keswick as I write this! Thanks especially to Katrina who has even been willing to put sudocrem on my feet. If that's not real love then I don't know what is!!

Here are my official splits.

No.:	131
Name:	John Kynaston
Course:	Lakeland 100
Team:	Kilbarchan AAC
Gender/Age:	M53
Team Type:	Male
Team Size:	Solo

Checkpoint	Time of Day Elapsed	Leg	Position
Pre Start Coniston	Fri 17:24:52	-----	-----
Start	Fri 17:30:35	-----	-----
CP1 Seathwaite Village Hall	Fri 19:07:18 01:36:43	01:36:43	176th (263)
CP2 Eskdale Corn Mill	Fri 20:50:54 03:20:19	01:43:36	163rd (263)
CP3 Wasdale Head	Fri 22:15:19 04:44:44	01:24:25	159th (255)
CP4 Buttermere Village Hall	Sat 00:35:58 07:05:23	02:20:39	113th (245)
CP5 Braithwaite Church Hall	Sat 02:36:22 09:05:47	02:00:24	97th (235)
CP6 Blencathra Centre	Sat 04:54:49 11:24:14	02:18:27	85th (228)
CP7 Dockray	Sat 06:54:40 13:24:05	01:59:51	78th (216)
CP8 Dalemain	Sat 09:29:33 15:58:58	02:34:53	73rd (201)
CP9 Howtown Bobbin Mill	Sat 11:50:48 18:20:13	02:21:15	67th (169)
CP10 Mardale Head	Sat 15:18:30 21:47:55	03:27:42	71st (158)
CP11 Kentmere Village Hall	Sat 17:51:53 24:21:18	02:33:23	74th (147)
CP12 Lakes Runner Ambleside	Sat 20:33:57 27:03:22	02:42:04	75th (141)
CP13 Langdale	Sat 22:42:14 29:11:39	02:08:17	75th (136)
CP14 Tilberthwaite Quarry	Sun 01:56:17 32:25:42	03:14:03	76th (136)
Coniston Finish	Sun 04:04:34 34:33:59	02:08:17	82nd (136)