



KIMBERLEY AND  
DISTRICT STRIDERS

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Hi welcome to the Xmas edition of Blister. As it's the festive time of the year, I've gone a bit bonkers and included a Father Christmas profile, with assorted bad jokes. Elsewhere Dimitris tells us about the Spartathlon. Anyway, Merry Xmas to you all!

## A Few Questions with 'Nick'



**What is your Job?** I'm sort of a delivery man, although you could say I only work one day a year.

**Partner :** Haven't got time. Spend all year wrapping presents, looking after reindeer, and waxing the sledge. Too tired after all that.

**What is the best/worst thing about running?** The best thing is getting out of the house and away from all the madness. Getting into the countryside and running in the fresh air.

The worse thing is seeing loads of my impersonators.

Running a 10k with a costume on is bad enough, but doing one with a dodgy white beard is just not on.

**How far do you run per week?** : My doctor told me that if I took up jogging I would add 10 years to my life. And he was right. I now feel 10 years older. I do go out a couple of times a week with my elves to try and keep them fit. And you know what I do with fat elves don't you? I send them to the Elf farm. Some of them are so lazy as well, Harry is so lazy that if you shot him he'd probably ask someone to help him to the floor.

**Runs I'd like to do :** I would like to do the Marathon du Medoc—a glass of wine every mile—that's my kind of race. But as you know a hangover is the wrath of grapes, so I'll perhaps pass on the first 2 miles.

**What are you interests outside KADS?** : Dancing and cricket. In fact cricket reminds me of the story of the expectant father who rings the hospital to see how his wife is getting on. He inadvertently dials the number for Lord's cricket ground. 'How's it going?' he asks. 'Fine' comes the answer, 'we've got 3 out and hope to have the rest out before lunch . The last one was a duck'.

Unfortunately, I'm not very good at dancing. In fact I'm quite bad at the

Ballroom thingy. During a disastrous two step I trod all over my partner. I apologised, saying 'I'm so sorry, but I'm a little stiff from badminton.' My partner replied (quite unnecessarily, I thought) 'I don't care where you're from. Keep off my bloody feet.'

**What are your favourite pieces of music?** : White Christmas? Santa Claus is coming to town?

I did make a conscious effort to learn a musical instrument. I went into the music store and said 'I'll take that red trumpet and that accordion.' The store assistant replied 'Okay, you can have the fire extinguisher but the radiator's got to stay'.

**Favourite Books** : 'I was a failed lion tamer' by Claude Bottom. No, seriously I don't read much, although I thought the other day that I really ought to read some of the classics. I went into the bookshop and said 'Can I have a book by Shakespeare?' 'Of course, sir' replied the book seller. 'Which one?' Puzzled, I answered 'William.'

**Favourite Places** : I'd rather be on the beach in somewhere sunny like the West Indies. Hate the cold. I like living in hotels too, although the last one was a bit of a disaster. I went up to the front desk and asked how much it was to stay the night. The desk clerk said it was '£50, or £25 if I made my own bed'. I reckon I'll do that, I said, to which the desk clerk said 'Here's the key, pick up your timber and nails at the top of the floor'.

**Places I'd never go again** : 6 Tennyson Drive. Don't ask!

**Things I'd like to see KADS do** : Run.

**Favourite Tipple** : It's got to be a hot toddy. Great in a cold place like mine. I was in a bar the other night and a man walked in with a steering wheel down the front of his trousers. 'Hey' said the barman 'what's that steering wheel doing down the front of your trousers?' 'Oh, don't start me on that' said the man 'it's driving me nuts'.

**TV shows that I watch** : I love that TV show with all the different video clips of things going disastrously wrong all the time. What's it called? Oh yes, the news.

**Favourite Films** : It's got to be 'It's a wonderful life'

**Pet Hates** : I don't hate pets, I love my reindeer. In fact I was at the zoo last week. I asked the keeper 'Have you got any speaking parrots?' 'No' he replied 'but we've got a woodpecker that knows Morse code'.

I went into a pet shop the other day and saw a duck tap-dancing on an upturned flowerpot. I decided to buy the duck for a fiver and took it home. The next day I rang the shop to complain. 'This duck has been sitting on my kitchen table for hours' I said. 'and it hasn't danced a single step. The shop owner replied 'Did you remember to light the candle under the flowerpot?' And do you know why polar bears have fur coats? Because they would look funny in anoraks!.

**Favourite Food/ Places to Eat** : Eat anything, not fussy. I went into a restaurant the other week and quite fancied the chicken dish. I asked the waiter 'how do you prepare the chicken?' 'We don't' he replied 'we just tell it straight that it's going to die'. A man walks into a fishmonger's carrying a salmon under his arm. 'Do you make fishcakes?' he asks. 'Of course' says the fishmonger. 'Oh good' says the man, 'it's his birthday'.

**Describe yourself in 6 words** : I'll leave you to decide that.

## Recipe book for runners

### **New recipe book for runners!**

*Munching through the miles* – Simple, healthy recipes for runners, complete with nutritional information and advice.

### **Christmas offers from *out\_running***

Buy one get one half price (includes *Munching through the miles* and *Get those knees up!*)

Free postage on all orders

Tipton Harrier, Mike Apinall, together with partner Louise Gardner have just released a new book, **"Munching Through The Miles"**, a recipe book for runners.

*"We both love eating as much as we love running, but like most people we don't have masses of time to spend in the kitchen conjuring up complicated recipes. We've always tried to cook simple and healthy meals to help us re-fuel and recover from our running. But it's not all just about supporting optimum training; the meals have to be tasty too. There aren't many recipe books out there for athletes, so we decided to write our own and it's meant we've had to spend a lot of time baking and eating cakes – now that's dedication!"*

*Michael, an engineer for a Lancaster University spinout company, who is originally from Radcliffe, Manchester, continues: "As with our first book, we're the authors and the publishers. Each book has been carefully crafted by our very own hands; it's hard work but immensely rewarding. A draw back is relatively low production quantities, which means this book is strictly limited-edition, but personally I think that just makes it all the more special."*

The book has been reviewed by some of Britain's top runners; Charlie Spedding, the 1984 Olympic Marathon Bronze Medallist and author of *From last to first* (ISBN 978-0-9563296-0-8) and Hannah England, the 2011 World Athletics Championship 1500 m Silver Medallist and one to watch at the London 2012 Olympics.

Louise explains who the book is aimed at:

*"The book is intended for runners of all abilities. It comes complete with a nutritional guide, as well as telling you when and why each meal is best consumed for particular types of training. Each recipe also comes with nutritional information, which is useful if you're following a strict dietary plan and need to know if something is particularly low in fat or high in carbohydrate. Although the book is written by athletes, it's perfect for anyone looking for simple, healthy, tasty recipes to help you look and feel great."*

Available from *out\_running*, 10 Rose Avenue, Oldbury, West Midlands, B68 0EA. Tel: 0121 423 3068. Email: [out\\_running@hotmail.com](mailto:out_running@hotmail.com) This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it

Special Price: £7 plus £1.00 p&p.

# SPARTATHLON

Article by Dimitris Triantafyllidis

## SPARTATHLON

For those who feel that the marathon isn't far enough, there is always the Spartathlon: 153 miles in less than 36 hours!

The 30<sup>th</sup> Spartathlon race took place during the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of September in Greece, with the participation of 350 runners (315 male, 45 female) from around the world. It is considered one of the most challenging races in the world due to the physical and mental strength that is required to complete the race. The runners start at sea level early in the morning, climb up mountain Parthenio at 1200m altitude in the night, experiencing a temperature drop from the early 30's to less than 5°C, before descending to Sparta for the finish. Winning in this race is not the goal of the athlete; the challenge is to complete the race within 36 hours.

The 250-km (153-mile) race starts on the Acropolis in Athens and finishes in front of the statue of Leonidas in Sparta. The race follows in the footsteps of Pheidippides, the ancient Athenian runner, who was sent from Athens to Sparta in 490 BC before the battle of Marathon, to seek help from the Spartans in the war led by the Greeks against the Persians. Historical records show that Pheidippides arrived in Sparta the day after his departure from Athens, completing his mission in less than 36 hours.

True to the spirit of ancient Greece, there is no monetary prize for the runners who finish the race and professional athletes are not allowed to run; the ones who reach Leonidas' statue receive an olive wreath and are offered a goblet of water from river Evrotas, exactly as the ancient Olympians did. It is rightly considered the purest running race in the world.

The event is very popular in Greece, there is a lot of spectators along the course, cheering and encouraging the runners. There is also coverage from the mainstream Greek media and Greek TV show the finish live.



### History of the race

The idea for the creation of the Spartathlon race belongs to John Foden, a British RAF Wing Commander. Foden read about Pheidippides' achievement and wondered if a modern man could cover the distance from Athens to Sparta within 36 hours. He was a long-distance runner and thought that the only way to find out was to actually run the historic course himself. Thus, he and four other colleagues from the RAF came to Athens in the autumn of 1982 and planned the run as closely as possible to the original course. They started the race on the 8th of October and on the 9th, John Foden arrived in Sparta in front of the statue of Leonidas, having run for just over 37 hours. His colleague, John Scholten, had arrived three hours earlier and another colleague, John McCarthy, got to the finish line in less than 40 hours, proving that a man is really able to cover 250 km in 36 hours. After the success of his attempt, Foden began to envision the creation of an organised race that would bring long distance runners from all over the world to Greece to follow the tracks of the ancient runner. The 1st International Spartathlon was organized in 1983 with the participation of 45 runners from 11 countries. The success and participation were decisive for the future and the development of the race. In 1984, the "International Spartathlon Association" (I.S.A.) was created. Since then, the I.S.A. has organized the race every September as Pheidippides' mission to Sparta was made at that time of the year.

### The route

Described as the world's most gruelling race, the Spartathlon runs over rough tracks and muddy paths, crosses vineyards and olive groves, climbs steep hillsides and, most challenging of all, takes the runners on the 1,200 meter ascent and descent of Mount Parthenio in the night. There is no pathway over the mountain that is swept by strong winds with temperatures as low as 4°C (the temperatures are in the early 30s at the start of the race).

The race is very demanding, not only because of the distance and the weather conditions, but also because of the cut-off requirements. Runners must pass through 75 checkpoints along the way and each checkpoint has a cut-off time.



## SPARTATHLON

There is food, water and other refreshments as well as the runners' personal supplies at each checkpoint. Runners outside the cut-off times are pulled out of the race; in the last third of the race organisers may also pull out runners who display extreme fatigue.

At most, only about a third of the runners complete the race. Since its conception in 1984, no more than 700 people have ever completed the Spartathlon.



### Entry Requirements

In order to run in this race, an individual must meet at least one of the following requirements:

- The individual has finished a race of at least 100 km (62 mi) in less than 10 hours and 30 minutes.
- The individual has competed in an event of more than 200 kilometers (120 mi) and has completed the race.

The individual has already competed in Spartathlon and has reached the checkpoint "Nestani" (172 km) in less than 24 hours, 30 minutes.

### Race Records

Ioannis Kouros, who won the first Spartathlon, still holds the record time of 20:25:00. Throughout the history of the race, 4 British men and 4

British women have won the race, amongst whom Patrick Macke has recorded the fastest time of 23:08:41



### Further Reading

There is a plethora of literature in the world wide web. Here are some links:

[www.spartathlon.gr](http://www.spartathlon.gr)

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/8434764/Spartathlon-the-worlds-toughest-race.html>

<http://www.runningandstuff.com/blog/2012/9/9/what-i-know-about-the-spartathlon-2012.html>

<http://www.irunfar.com/2012/09/introduction-to-the-spartathlon.html>

[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spartathlon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spartathlon)

and a facebook page

[www.facebook.com/spartathlon](http://www.facebook.com/spartathlon)

## MARATHON Du MEDOC

What's the first thing you want when you cross the finishing line of a marathon? A drink of water? A cold glass of beer? A glass of wine? Well, imagine a marathon where runners can hydrate themselves with the finest wines along the way.

Winding its way through the vineyards of 50 chateaux in the Medoc region near Bordeaux, the Marathon du Medoc see runners enjoy 23 wine and food pit stops—in fancy dress (next year's theme is science fiction). It takes around 6 and a half hours to complete and, as you can imagine, it's a popular event. Places are limited to 8,500 of which 2,500 are reserved for foreigners.



Participants can also get involved with countless other events over the weekend, including a ball, dinner, fireworks display and a recovery walk. (It makes it sound even better than the London Marathon!).

Next year's race is being held on September 7th, but you will have to have entered by March 18th.

The run was created by 4 passionate marathon runners in 1984 and is built on the 4 pillars that are inseparable for them :- Health, Sport, Conviviality & Fun.

The web-site is informative and should answer most of your questions, if you are tempted to enter.

[http://www.marathondumedoc.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=66&tmpl=index\\_en](http://www.marathondumedoc.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=66&tmpl=index_en)

## RECENT NEWS

We are now well into the Cross Country season, with 3 races already completed. Turn-out has been disappointing, although in the last race a full team made it for the men, and we achieved a reasonable 7th place (out of 13). Unfortunately, we didn't have a women's team out on the day.

In other news, the Goose Fair Gallop was also a disappointment, in terms of the number of runners that it attracted on the day. This, however, did not detract from a splendidly organised race (thanks Kev!), with a real class field. In the men's race there were the top 2 runners from the Notts AAA's summer league, plus a Ripley runner who came 6th in the Nottingham half, plus 2 very fast runners from the City Park runs. One of the latter, Tom Mahon (pictured with Pete Moyes) beat off all the competition and won, in a new record time of 33.07. 2nd was Dale Annable from Ripley in 33.45, with Jarrett Perkins from Notts AC 3rd in 35.20.



In the women's race Sarah Harris from Long Eaton was 1st (11th overall) in 38.46, Geraldine Tutty 2nd in 42.06 and Sally Hopkins from Mansfield Harriers 3rd in 44.33.

In the team event Long Eaton won both the men's and women's races.

The race will be along the same route next year, but the organising committee will have to decide which weekend, and what prizes to award next year. We'll let you know!

At the KADS AGM, there were a couple of committee members who decided to stand down—Peter Fowles, who has done a splendid job for us as Secretary, his place being taken by Sue McLoughlin who relinquished her post as Treasurer. The new Treasurer is now Chris Chandler.

Neil Kirk (men's captain) was not present, and it was decided in his absence that we ought to appoint someone else. Dan Gooch was finally appointed. Having words with Neil the following weekend, he was quite happy to give up the post, bearing in mind that he is in full training for his attempt at the Hawaii Ironman! We wish him well for that.

There was also a beer trip to the Blue Monkey Brewery where 2 barrels were put at our disposal. We did our best, that's all I can say. But it was an enjoyable afternoon.

Other recent events have been the KADS Kristmas Party organised by Nicola at Greasley Miners Welfare (thanks for that Nic).

Upcoming are the KADS Festive meal organised by Paul Turville at Chatterley House on Friday 11th January. Price £19 per person—please contact Paul if you are interested.

Also tonight—drinks in town—meet at Fat Cats at 8 p.m.

Before that we have a New Members night on 9th January, and it would be appreciated if there was a good turn-out of members on the night.

The Presentation evening will be in the New Year, which will be combined with a quiz. There are even more trophies this year, with 2 new Grand Prix shields to be awarded.