

OBSERVATIONS OF A RELUCTANT RUNNER

Race definitions

It's a flat race – there will be hills.

Softly undulating – there will be many hills.

Undulating – there will be many hills, some of them very, very steep.

Hilly – read as 'mountainous'. Basically, it will be hands and knees.

Challengingly hills – let's face it, you are gonna need crampons.

No toilet facilities – men – there is always the roadside – women - good luck getting a private pre-race wee in a bush.

Limited parking – get there 2 hours early or risk parking so far away that you will have to do the race distance twice.

Pre-race chat

Not feeling it today – can mean 2 things:

- a) I am so gonna knock it out of the park and annihilate your fastest time that you should feel embarrassed to be stood near me.....but I am hedging my bets.
- b) I feel shocking and don't want to admit I sank 2 bottles of wine last night and a large dominos as pre-race prep.

Hopefully this race will go ok – I have been training like a demon, my kids don't recognise me anymore and my partner is threatening divorce. If this doesn't go well, and I don't get a PB, I will burn my trainers.

I hate running, me – as per Darren Horobin – means, yes, I hate running me.

I like to race a bit – ask me about my running, please! Ask me my best times for 10k, half marathon, etc! Please, please, please – let me bore you so much that you will want to cut your own ears off!

When is your next race after this one? – we have nothing in common but running and I need to make conversation to take my mind of the horrific agony I am about to put my body through for the next hour/2hours/4hours (delete according to distance).

Post-race chat

I enjoyed that – no I didn't, that's a total lie. I enjoyed that now it's OVER! Where is the bar?

I did ok – I did absolutely chuffing amazing! I am officially awesome! Ha! Beat you too, loser!!!

That was harder than I expected – my eyeballs are bleeding, I am in agony, I nearly shat myself and I am never ever running again... apart from the next 7 races I have booked.

That was a tough race – (usually said whilst lying prone on the floor trying not to vomit) I am traumatised. I have no more words. My body hates me right now. I need re hydration.... Where is the bar?

How did you do? - I am not the slightest bit interested, I am only asking so you can ask me, and I can bask in your praise and SHOUT from the rooftops how amazing I am!

Medals! – means I really do love medals, what am I? 6 years old? Don't care!!

I am off to the bar – I have now fully justified drinking 7 pints and replacing every single calorie I have just burned and some. I will do this whilst high on endorphins and talking about nothing but the race I have just done. I will then arrange for my long-suffering wife/husband to collect the drunk me and fall asleep on the sofa for the rest of the day. I will also bore said long suffering spouse by talking about nothing but my race for the next 7 days.

By Jane Illingworth, April 2020