
Juliet's Marathon training

Since January I've been in training to run the London Marathon in April 2017. This is my journey so far....



December

It's the Christmas holidays and some friends, also known as the Hemingford Hobblers, and I are planning on a few runs just for fun (!) and to be social. The only time of day we can usually meet is early morning, so I'm up early before Ed and the children, creeping about trying to find trainers and a running bra.

The early hours prove to be beautiful and with amazing sun rises and awesome frosts. The group of us all set off together weighed down with multiple tops, hats, scarves and gloves, chattering away until the app on the phone says "start your first run...". We are following a programme designed to get you running up to five kilometres with walking and running in intervals.



January

This is where the Marathon training starts, ahhhh!

Back in May, some friends and I applied for a place in the London Marathon. It feels like consumption of beer should have been present, but alas, there was none! A close friend and running partner, Carolyn and I made a pact, if one of us got a place, the other would try for a charity place and what ever the out come we would train together. Results of the ballot were out in October; I didn't get a place. Gutted. However, I would still be training because Carolyn was offered a place, hoorah. Many applications and rejections for charity places later, I'm thinking of applying for an alternative marathon that is on the same day as London, after all, I am training and knowing the immense time and effort I'll be putting in over the next four months, I want a medal!

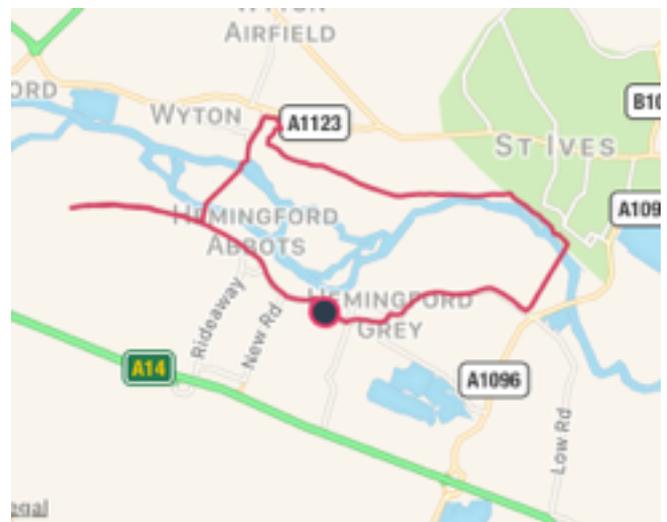
Still hoping I'll be offered a charity place, Carolyn and I down load, read and absorbed (kind of) the exciting yet daunting sixteen week marathon schedule for first time finishers. Wow, three pages of a running programme, some parts looks do-able, other parts scary and out of my league. Thirty or forty minutes of easy running- can cope with that. (Five minutes of tempo running with three minutes jog to recover) times five, or three hour runs, maybe the marathon wasn't such a good idea. How can I back out now? But my wild part of me is stirring up and giving me butterflies, good butterflies, and a glow of glee, positive determination and sheer excitement for this incredible challenge ahead. I am going to do this!



Up early again, sun just making it over the horizon when we hit mile four. Starting when its still dark and in the holiday seems so wrong, but it is a wonderful thing seeing the day dawning. We're setting of fully clothed, as you'd expect when temperatures are near 0 degrees, and gradually

stripping off, first gloves and hats stuffing them in pockets, then scarf, stuffed in an already full pocket. Half way through, off comes the fleece revealing bear arms. Weird as I can still see my misty breath in the freezing air.

The early morning runs continue, taking us further a field. I'm really enjoying this challenge. I can't believe it's nearing the end of January and running eight (yes eight) mile! Still needing to wear hats and gloves on the outset and avoid icy puddles, and returning pink in the face and stripped down to a t-shirt.





The frost and ice are melting and the ground is turning into a squelchy quagmire of mud and leaf mulch. Mmmmm, this don't deter us, infant it just reminds me

how mad this whole thing is.

Still haven't got a place in the London marathon yet.

I'm sitting in a meeting when my phone starts singing at me. Gosh, its so loud and I cant find it in my bag! Quick as I can, I turn off the volume It's a London number and now a missed call. Phone safely stashed away back in bag.

I'm waiting for Kitty to come out from ballet thinking my phone has been quiet all day having totally forgotten I'd turned the volume off. Several missed texts,whats apps, calls, and a voice message.

"This is a message for Juliet, calling from Breast Cancer Now about the London marathon".

I've missed my opportunity. Totally missed the chance I had at having a place. All because I assumed the call was a nuisance caller, then forgot to turn the volume back on my phone.

Arrrrrrrrrhhhhh!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

February

Last night I made so many calls to an answer machine, wondering if Breast cancer now were actually offering me a place, or just seeing if I was still interested if a place became available, and leaving garbled messages in a panicky sort of way. The email I had for them didn't work, all my emails were rejected. This morning I started calling at 7am and at 8.37am a lady, Sian, answered. I think she thought I was mad, and a stalker having tried calling her phone some may times.

I feel like a child at Christmas, or the winner of bake off. I've been offered a place to run in the London Marathon!

I'm in, I'm running London!!!!

The training is getting more intense now with interval training. I sometime break into giggles when I read what the schedule is asking us to do. Running at tempo for more than 20 seconds is an achievement, but for 30 seconds it must be a joke.

These are our quiet runs. I say quiet because we're so gasping for air we can't speak. Well, Paula can (tee hee), the rest of us are one word communicators as this is all we can get out of our lungs. Amazing what can be communicated in just one word, facial expressions and gestures.



"Bird" translates to "wow, look at that bird over there in the tree"

"Puddle" translates to "mind the puddle unless you want wet feet or dirt on your new white trainers"

"Time" translates to "How much longer at tempo, I'm pooped and ready to stop now"

Get the gist of it...?

Half term and I'd got used to running when the children were at school. Not just that, but also having company especially on the long runs.

I find myself at centre parcs, on my birthday running ten miles. I make it sound like a chore, but actually I'm quite looking forward to it. The family have gone to the pool for the afternoon, and i'm running in icy fine rain that turns to snow, but its quite exhilarating really. The run itself was pretty good, and found myself running up and down the same lanes just building up time and miles. Kept bumping into the same service guy who offered me a lift. I nearly accepted and wished I had when i was nearly complete. Cold and wet, I check my phone to see how much further- only two minutes and 300 metres to go... Then the phone died on me. All that effort and it wasn't recorded in my log. Bum!



My top has arrived from Breast Cancer Now. It fits. Now I have to iron on the letters of my name. Reality hits, I really am doing this mad challenge.

The envelope also contains leaflets, stickers and tins to help me with the fund raising. Must put a plan together.

Now is the time to start thinking about food, drink and fuel strategies. This is totally down my street; or so I thought. Knowing the types of food that good for long term release of energy is one thing, eating and drinking before and during the run is another. gosh, so much to sort out. When to eat before without feeling full, and

when to nibble before getting tired. I've concluded running and drinking are not compatible without dribbling, spilling or even getting your mouth, and more importantly, breathing. Small flap jacks works well.

Some suggestions....



Nandos v raw fruit,veg and
Mmmmmmmmm.....



dips



Om nom nom! I've a sweet tooth.



The Hobblers are also helping out with this part of the training. Rachel suggested this. Looks fab, but will probably save the experience until the job in hand is complete.



The first of the fundraising events is fast approaching. I've booked a body shop at home party. I'm inviting all the ladies I work with at First Steps, Blaze, Cubs and the coffee shop, and a couple of extra friends and Kitty's friends. The theme is hand spas.

Great party, and all went home with soft hands, and body shop orders. Money raised, £58!

My right calf is playing up. Not sure what the problem could be. Its not like an injury, it just doesn't want to work properly. Sure it will get better.

The next big step in training is completing a half marathon. We had applied and offered a place in the Cambridge half marathon on 5th March

March

Way hay, we're off running the Cambridge Half Marathon. There's four of us Hobblers. We have to set out early to get parked at Helen's, then walk to Mid Summer Common for 8.30am. Its trying to rain, windy and cold, brrrrrrrrr.



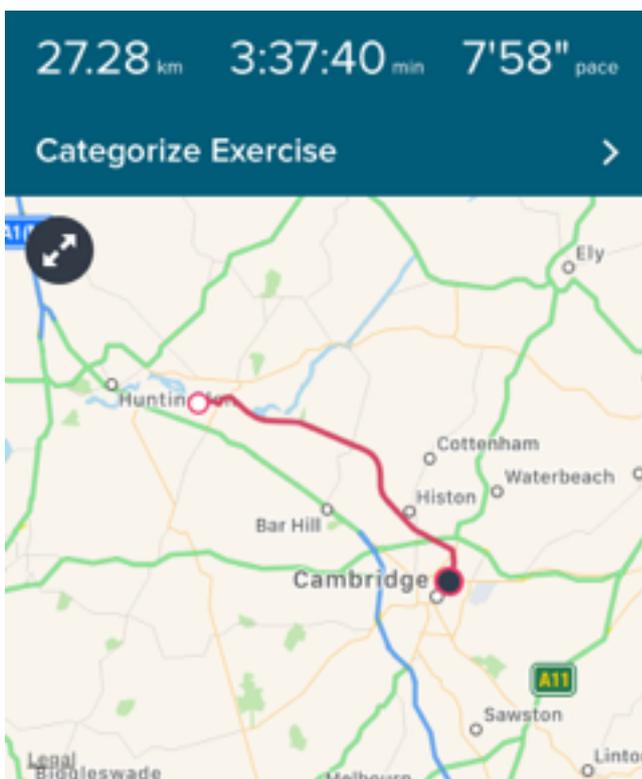
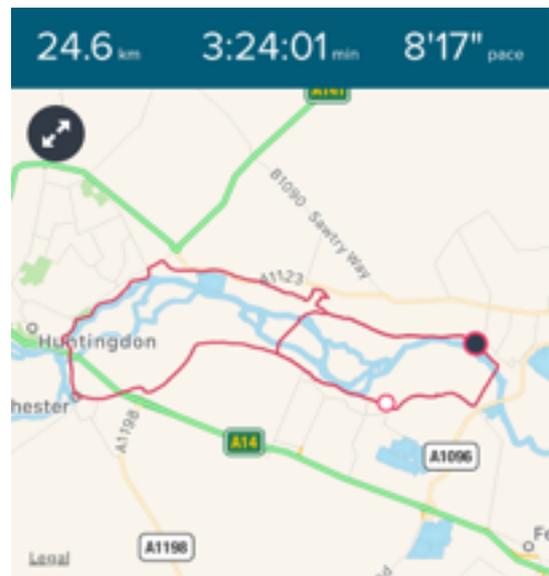
Feeling excited and nervous before the race begins.

Big smiles, we all finished and proudly stand with our medals round our necks.



Now the long (!) runs are introduced into the training programme. The last month was all about building up endurance and building the capacity to cover the 26.2 miles.

With careful planning, as we know we'll be out for hours at a time, Carolyn and I are able to get together for the mammoth runs. Fourteen, fifteen, seventeen and twenty mile runs (with shorter runs and interval tempo runs in the week).



Today we are running from home to Cambridge. Ive arrange Ed to pick us us. Its really exciting to think we're running that far! our route takes us along the guided bus way to Chesterton where we turn towards the centre of Cambridge following the river.

All went real well up to Chesterton, when we stopped at a local shop for water. after that short break, I swear someone had filled my trainers with cement and the air had turned to treacle.

Pooped! Arrive to find Ed and the children in Tescos cafe. Quick wee stop; afraid if I sit down on the loo I won't be able to get up again, then hobble to the car. I'm not doing much for the rest of the day.



Kitty, Tadhg and Henry are all helping out. They've made tea!

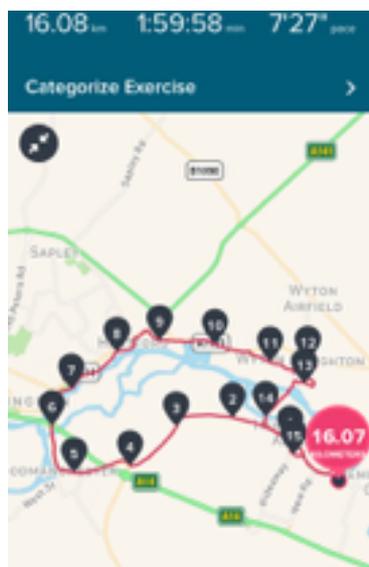
Twenty miles to do today. Carolyn take was "let just get it done". Probable the best said words at the time. Really enjoying the run today, feels good and the pressure is off. Emma joined us for the last eight miles and offered valuable encouragement when exhaustion hit along Long Road, a very long road.



Our longest run ever! Just over twenty miles. What a proud moment.

Time to start tapering the runs and relax. I'm sure I read somewhere to leave all household jobs now until after the run. Its odd not having the long runs and hard to relax thinking I really need to to be training. All the literature says to trust the training we've done.

Still have runs three times a week, but reduced miles. Really great to have other friends running with us again. completed ten miles, and six miles with shorter runs between.



It'll soon be the big day!