

Paul's marathon Blog 2019-2020

Cheer on our trustee Paul Lockyer as he prepares for the London Marathon on 26th April 2020.

Read about his exploits getting fit enough to complete 26.2 miles and raising £2000 for Northampton Mencap.

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Life gets in the way, in the best way possible

19th January – £967.61 raised, 14 weeks to go

A very welcome break from training this week as our first grandchild, Freddie arrived. Wonderful to meet the little fella and good to know, all being well, he'll be in London to cheer me and his Dad as we both run the marathon in April.

Freddie's arrival was part of a very busy week. I still managed to get out for some runs and some cross training on the bike. On Saturday I joined a bunch of other Mencap marathon runners at their training event in London. Lovely to meet other people running for this great charity and going through the same journey; getting ready for the run and working to hit their fundraising targets.

Dry January starts well

12th January - £967.61 raised, 15 weeks to go

Every runner's dream – dry, mild weather. Well January has certainly started pretty dry, even if it's very muddy underfoot after the rainfall in December.

It was back to the tried and tested routine this week; intervals, tempo run and a long run on Sunday. Add some yoga to stretch out after Christmas and a couple of cycle rides and I'll call it a good first week back.

What made it extra special was the return to our Mencap social clubs on Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings. It's always a joy and the enthusiasm from our members is infectious. Lots of fun with skittles and our favourite bean bag tossing game (corn-hole), the Wednesday group also showed how much their basket ball shooting has improved with practice.

A welcome reminder, if it were needed, why I'm doing this - raising funds to help this community live the life they love.

Christmas Fundraising

30th December - £919 raised, 17 weeks to go

Running took a back seat over Christmas, the focus turned to raising much-needed funds to get me closer to the huge and slightly intimidating target of £2000.

I organised a village bike ride, Mums, Dads, Kids, Grandparents all dressed as Santa riding round the villages of NE Beds. A lot of fun with the rural police team there to keep us safe. We shook a bucket after the Mencap carol service at Christ Church in Northampton and finally my neighbours went carolling and kindly donated their collection to our cause.



All in all, a very successful couple of weeks. Almost doubled the total from £500 to over £900, but still not made it to 50% of the target.

Fundraising is proving as tough as training. If you have any ideas please get in touch, any help will be very much appreciated.

Big push before Christmas

15th December - £500 raised, 18 weeks to go

Knowing when to rest is important when training for a long time. This week was a big one in anticipation of something slightly less intense over Christmas. Monday bike ride, Tuesday intervals (argh!), Wednesday Mencap Pantomime (a lot more fun than training), Thursday tempo run and general election, Friday rest, Saturday 19km including the local Park Run and a 40th birthday party in the evening. Sunday ... not very much at all.

Now to wind down a little to enjoy the Christmas season.

Sticking to the plan

8th December - £500 raised, 19 weeks to go.

Plans are great on paper, sticking to them is the tough part. Am I too early to claim success after only two weeks of my 20 week plan? That's 10% - so yes, I'm claiming success.

Tuesday intervals (argh!), Wednesday yoga (wasn't looking forward to that, but felt much better after), Thursday tempo run, Friday strength work, Saturday cycle to and from the local 5K park run and rest on Sunday.

Marathon training gets serious

1st December - £500 raised, 20 weeks to go.

Training for 26.2 miles (don't forget the .2) is a tough task, especially if you're not a runner. I'm pretty fit and I've been a very keen cyclist for the last 10years. I'd go for a couple of runs each autumn when it looked miserable for cycling ... and quickly give up. I don't have the legs for running, different muscles, any excuse I could think of.

Now the rules have changed. I'm excited about running in London and I'm very keen to enjoy not endure the event. So, I need to learn to run for fun.

This summer went very well. I started with "couch to 5k". Walk a bit, jog a bit, walk a bit more. Slowly building up the muscle strength and distance. Hitting 5km was a relief. Getting to 10km was quite fun really. I knew I was enjoying it when I completed a half marathon with my daughter, her partner and my son in September. They dragged me around Richmond where I met a couple of other Mencap runners training for London. A half marathon is a good achievement and left me pretty happy with my summer's work.

That was all fun and I met my first goal; learning to enjoy running.

Now it gets serious. I need a plan. I've got a plan. Intervals, tempo, easy, long - you name it, there's a type of run I need to do. Not forgetting rest. The body recovers and you get stronger when you rest between periods of exercise.

Four runs this first week of the plan; Tuesday intervals, Thursday tempo, Saturday 5k park run, Sunday 60min easy run. Add a gentle 60min bike ride on Friday and I'll call that a good first week. Fingers crossed the rest of the plan goes just as well, I think it's going to get a little tougher.