

Peter Simpson

When the young schoolboy with the physique of a high jumper or a distance runner realised he wasn't any good at ball games, he switched to running, and started on a sporting career which has been successful and most unusual. His manner is quiet and unassuming, which is possibly the reason his achievements have not earned the accolades they deserve, but his performances over the years have demonstrated an amazing inner strength. Although his weekly training mileage is normally only 60 and 70 miles, he is now an "ultra athlete", who has already run twenty-three races of one hundred miles or more, and ninety marathons - an astounding achievement!

Born on the 8th October 1947, and brought up in Rugby in the Midlands, he went to a few schools before attending Rugby School at the age of 13. It was there that his successful sporting career started, becoming the school's cross-country captain and winning the school mile. Like a number of Club members he came to Liverpool University to continue his studies, and on graduating he started his working career as a probation officer for Merseyside Probation, joining the Club in 1972. He soon matured into a solid and consistent performer, who represented the Club many times on road and country, and was on the fringe of the highly successful road relay squad of those years.

Peter's long distance exploits started when he completed his first marathon in 1972, clocking 2 hours 54mins 17secs, but then he progressed to events such as the London-to-Brighton (56 miles), the Comrades Marathon in South Africa (60 miles), 100 mile races, 24 hours races, and a selection of seemingly impossible ultra runs over the fells.

The tall lean athlete ran his first 100 mile event in 1979 in 23 hours, and the following year he did a personal best in the Barnsley Marathon of 2 hours 40mins 41secs. His liking for unusual events then led to him breaking the record for the Wainwright Coast-to-Coast - not an actual race, but a challenging 190 miles across the Pennines involving considerable planning and minimal sleep. Another fine performance was to complete each of the three British Classic "rounds" inside 24 hours - each being named after an icon of the high peaks: Bob Graham from the 1930's (Lake District), Charlie Ramsay from 1978 (Scotland) and Paddy Buckley from 1982 (Wales).

An outstanding run saw Peter set the record for the 115 miles course over the 2000ft Yorkshire Peaks. But he says his highlights over his distinguished career happened in 1984. The first was winning the team race at the Daily Telegraph 3 Peaks Yacht Race, competing with his friends against the elite army and marine teams. They were so well organised beforehand that they bought T-shirts and had them printed with their chosen team name: 'Team Wally'. The other highlight event was finishing third covering 122 miles in a 24 hours race.

With his ability to cope with all types of distances and terrains he also had a successful career between 1982 and 1994 at the three-disciplined Triathlon events (swimming, cycling, running), even though this period included recovering from serious injury when a lorry knocked him off his motor-bike and his leg was broken.

In 2007 Peter finished second in the over-60 category in marathons in Istanbul and Luton. Not resting on his laurels, he did his thing for 'Capital of Culture' in 2008, when he completed six marathons in six days in Ireland, raising £12,000 for charity. The same year he won five over-60 titles in marathons in Malta, Belfast, Blackpool, Cyprus and Warsaw. Peter has travelled the world in his pursuit of amazing endurance achievements and has done himself and the Club proud. In November 2008, the Club recognised this by naming him the 'Club Veteran Athlete of the Year'.

The photo shows Peter in a "Mystery 5k" race in 2010.

Peter and his wife Rosie have a daughter Katy and a son Paul, and live in the Aughton area of Merseyside. He retired in 2003 as an Assistant Chief Probation Officer and now has more time for his interests. Whatever will he attempt next?



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