



## Newsletter MAY 2016



Never be afraid of moving slowly, be only afraid of standing still.  
(Chinese proverb)

Welcome  
to the May issue of the...

*Derbyshire Dynamamos Newsletter.*

Well, here we are it's May already ! Time flies, even faster than Usain.

However, as this month's poem reminds us, runners are essentially explorers, experimenters, exploring and experimenting not only with our own, personal, abilities no matter how great or small, but with time itself.

And just a reminder, it's nearly the summer season so watch out for that sun - no we are not joking, potentially harmful U.V. is around even on days when you can't see a blazing sun.

See inside for **essential** sun safety advice.

Be careful out there !

Happy reading.  
Your's in running - P&M



*A.G.M. report inside !*

*We shall not cease !*

We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time.

Through the unknown, unremembered gate  
When the last of earth left to discover  
Is that which was the beginning;  
At the source of the longest river  
The voice of the hidden waterfall  
And the children in the apple-tree

T. S. Eliot - 1955  
From The Four Quartets

*Perhaps it is worth remembering, when we are bound up in our training programmes, that an ability to cover distance on foot enables us to explore.*

*Rather than pounding the same, or similar, routes perhaps sometimes we should explore, and, never cease exploring both our environment and our own abilities.*

Phill

**Want to keep more up to date with what's happening with your club?**

Why not join us on Facebook for regular updates including upcoming events, interesting and funny stories, photos and useful tips to further enjoy your running experience.

**Just click here [www.facebook.com/DerbyshireDynamamos](http://www.facebook.com/DerbyshireDynamamos)**

**We're also on Twitter @Jog\_D\_Dynamamos**

***Note our webpage is now live again !***

**[www.derbyshiredynamamos.co.uk](http://www.derbyshiredynamamos.co.uk)**



## **A.G.M. Minutes of meeting.**

Derbyshire Dynamos AGM  
Minutes of meeting 12<sup>th</sup> April 2016  
Chesterfield Fire Station Community Rooms

Present: Joy Walton-Power , Bex Sims, Darren Ward, Phill Alcock, Mike Gray, Chris Pattison, Linda Philo, Michelle Simmons.

Apologies: Liz Stillo , Andrea Garlick.

Welcome:

The AGM began with a general chat and drink prior to proceedings, to kick off the meeting we had around the table introductions.

Dynamo History:

There was a planned briefing on how the Dynamos were formed and the purpose for the formation, all were familiar with this so we moved on.

Current Committee Roles:

Joy gave a briefing on the current committee roles as the Secretary and Treasurer were planning to step down this year.

Chairs Report: (Hand outs given)

Joy gave the annual Chair's report to the meeting, outlining some main points throughout 2015/16, she thanked those who had put themselves forward over the year to help out, outlined the fact that the Dynamos were in a good place, financially sound and can run for many more years on its current footing.

Treasurer's Report: (Hand outs given)

Bex gave an account of the current financial break down from year 2015/16, the income was from new or renewed memberships, expenditure was payments to UKA for affiliation, website host. The balance and trend shows that the Dynamos are sustainable for many years to come.

Continued:

## **A.G.M. Minutes of meeting...continued....**

### Secretary's Report:

Darren gave an account of how the Dynamos began and is now, outlined the fact that we had to scale back operations due to resources, but from members feedback they were happy with this as the main reason for joining was for the affiliation for events and the benefits this gave. Darren thanked everyone involved for their time including Phil, Mike and Chris for their work on the Newsletter and Facebook. The importance of the Dynamos London Marathon place was emphasised as a great selling point to anyone wanting a chance to enter as the Dynamos ballot was usually very low subscribed increasing members chances of getting a place, Graham Stringer won this year's place for the Dynamos.

*Phill Alcock was proposed as Secretary and seconded by Mike Gray, Bex Sims will remain as Treasurer, Mike Gray was elected, but will take up the post at a later date and Bex will continue until then. Phill was duly elected as Secretary.*

### Communications:

Phil, Mike and Chris gave feedback on the newsletter and Facebook, ideas were banded about on how to get maximum coverage in these areas and it was decided that potentially to add sections to the website instead of putting in the Newsletter where Chris could then pick out links to post on Facebook and the Newsletter would be purely news.

Chris highlighted the increase in Facebook Likes, gave a breakdown on demographic areas and age ranges, and said trying to add a couple of post per day and will work on linking website links as well. Chris highlighted that he had tried to get discussions going via FB and also Phil had asked via the Newsletter for feedback, but this doesn't seem to be happening. The group agreed the importance on social media and the potential to grow the club through good social media links.

### Kit Update:

Darren gave a quick update on kit, everyone happy with current kit, slight change now to ordering, this will be done direct between the member and supplier, website updated.

### Mental Health Ambassador:

Phil gave a quick briefing on the role, he is now the Mental Health Ambassador for the Dynamos along with Mike Gray, not too much information has arrived as yet, but UKA should be going live with it as of 18<sup>th</sup> April, Phil will update us when he knows more. {EDITOR'S NOTE : *press release is included in this Newsletter*}

Continued:

## **A.G.M. Minutes of meeting...continued....**

### Satellite Club Runs:

Phil outlined the potential of setting up runs around Derbyshire to encourage Dynamos to join together along with Jog Derbyshire, along with a 'Coach' to help people with technique, there are possibilities of funding for this and Phil is going to pursue the matter and update on his findings.

### Jog Derbyshire Update:

Michelle briefed the group on where JD is now, fully funded until July 2017, but looking positive after that. Discussions were had about any new Jog Leaders could be automatically affiliated with the Dynamos for their first year, this helping out both parties as being affiliated Leaders this gives discounts on Coaching, Michelle to discuss with Joy. Michelle also thinks there could be another potential company who can affiliate runners cheaper, so will update us on her findings.

### AOB:

Liz Stillo had sent in a suggestion regarding registering the Dynamos with 'Park Run' so any Dynamos who take part in Park Run would have their times listed and as a club we could post out well done messages etc. Phill will reply.

### **Club Secretary's note.**

Hello - readers will know me as one of the editors of the Newsletter but I am very pleased to be taking up a new role as Secretary of the club.

I know it will be difficult to continue with the great work which Darren has done over the years and I am sure that you will join with me in thanking him for his solid efforts.

I feel that I am taking on an exciting but challenging role and I very much look forward to working with Joy and other committee members. There are a number of exciting plans in the pipe line for the further development of the club so keep watching Facebook (very ably managed by Chris), and twitter and the website, not to mention this newsletter.

In future it is proposed to place a number of the articles from the Newsletter onto the website as a reference source.

As always I must stress that this is your club.....please contribute your ideas and articles and news, it is only by our joint efforts that we will be able to not only continue to enjoy the benefits of membership of DD but to enhance it's services and activities to benefit us all.

Best regards and wishes Phill Alcock



### Find out how to protect your skin and eyes from the sun.

How does the sun damage your skin?

Skin cancers are caused by damage from the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays. UV rays penetrate deep into the skin and damage cells. These cells are then at risk of becoming cancerous.

You can't feel UV damaging your skin and it happens even when the sun doesn't feel hot. Getting sunburnt causes the top layers of skin to release chemicals that make blood vessels swell and leak fluids. Skin turns red and feels hot and painful, and severe sunburn can lead to swelling and blisters.

"Sunburn is dangerous at any age, but it's especially harmful in children and young people," says Katy Scammell of Cancer Research UK. "Sunburn in childhood can greatly increase your risk of developing skin cancer later in life."

After you've been sunburnt, the skin peels to get rid of damaged cells. It will eventually heal and look healthy, but permanent damage may have been done.

#### Who's at risk?

You should take extra care when out in the sun if you:

- have pale, white or light brown skin
- have freckles or red or fair hair
- tend to burn rather than tan
- have many moles
- have skin problems relating to a medical condition
- are only exposed to intense sun occasionally – for example, while on holiday

People who spend a lot of time in the sun, whether it's for work or play, are at increased risk of skin cancer if they don't take the right precautions.

People with naturally brown or black skin are less likely to get skin cancer, as darker skin has some protection against UV rays. However, skin cancer can still occur.

#### Be safe in the sun

Sunburn doesn't just happen when you're on holiday. In the UK, the sun is at its strongest between March and October, especially from 11am to 3pm.

You can burn when you're not expecting it, such as during a walk or sitting in your garden. Even if it's cool or cloudy, it's possible to burn in the middle of the day during the UK summer.

It is also possible to burn at other times of the day and year. There is no safe or healthy way to get a tan from sunlight.

Getting a tan provides little protection against later exposure to sunlight and the resulting skin damage outweighs any later protective effect.

The sunscreen label should have:

- the letters "UVA" in a circle logo and at least 4-star UVA protection
- at least SPF15 sunscreen to protect against UVB

Continued:



**Caution**

**Applying sunscreen.**

Most people do not apply enough sunscreen. The amount of sunscreen needed for the body of an average adult to achieve the stated sun protection factor (SPF) is around 35ml or 6 to 8 teaspoons of lotion.

If sunscreen is applied too thinly, the amount of protection it gives is reduced. If you're worried that you might not be applying enough SPF15, you could use a stronger SPF30 sunscreen.

If you plan to be out in the sun long enough to risk burning, sunscreen needs to be applied twice: 30 minutes just before going out.

Sunscreen should be applied to all exposed skin, including the face, neck and ears (and head if you have thinning or no hair).

**Protecting your eyes.**

Long-term exposure to sunlight increases the risk of a type of cataract and is also linked to pterygium (growths on the surface of the eye).

Over-exposure to sunlight, such as a day at the beach without proper eye protection, can cause a temporary but painful burn to the surface of the eye, similar to sunburn on the skin.

**Sun protection - continued:**

Reflected sunlight from snow, sand, concrete and water, and artificial light from sunbeds, is particularly dangerous.

Always avoid looking directly at the sun. Staring directly at the sun can permanently scar the retina (the area at the back of the eye responsible for vision).

Another risk to eyes is skin cancer, which can affect the eyelids and area around the eyes.

Long-term exposure to the sun can increase this risk.

Wearing a wide-brimmed hat can reduce the amount of UV rays that reach your face and eyes.

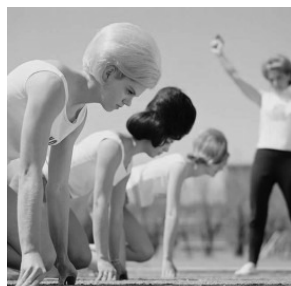
Sunglasses can also offer protection, but not all are good enough.

Choose a pair with wrap around lenses or wide arms with the CE Mark...

European Standard EN 1836:2005

**As we always say in DD**

**Be careful out there !**



Texas Track Club - Abilene - 1964

Sports illustrated

**SHORTLY**

We hope to be announcing some exciting new events to enter - so keep reading your newsletter !



As reported elsewhere Phill and Mike are our new Mental Health Ambassadors - here is the News release which explains these roles.

## **NEWS RELEASE By England Athletics**

19<sup>th</sup> April 2016

### **New Mental Health Ambassador Programme**

England Athletics, supported by Mind the mental health charity, have today launched a Mental Health Ambassador programme.

The programme aims to establish a network of volunteer ambassadors in affiliated running clubs and groups across England to support those of us who are experiencing mental health problems. Support includes helping people to start running, get back into running, or continue running as well as to improve the mental wellbeing of their existing members.

The programme links to #runandtalk, an England Athletics campaign to improve mental health through running in England by:

- getting people talking about mental health, sharing their experiences and removing stigma
- raising awareness of mental health problems
- supporting people experiencing mental health problems to be physically active through running start, return to and continue running

We're often told that physical activity is good for our bodies and our minds, but having a mental health problem can make it difficult to get started, for a number of reasons, ranging from negative body image, or a lack of self-esteem through to practical reasons such as having no one to go with or not knowing where to get started.

Initially 128 ambassadors have been appointed from 91 different England Athletics affiliated clubs and registered groups across England. The ambassadors will be working with their clubs/groups on variety of things including:

- Creating a mental health action plan for their club/group.
- Organising specific events or open evenings.
- Creating links with local mental health services/organisations.
- Sharing information on social media about #runandtalk and other related campaigns.
- Starting conversations about mental health.
- Sharing good news stories.
- Supporting leaders, coaches and other volunteers with relevant guidance on mental health.
- Volunteering through Mind and other organisations to support people experiencing mental health problems to start running.

England Athletics is committed to improving mental wellbeing through running. Our aspiration is to one day have a mental health ambassador in every affiliated club and group in England so that those of us experiencing mental health problems can access the benefits of running in a supported way.

Continued:



NEWS RELEASE...CONTINUED:-

England Athletics is a signatory of the Mental Health Charter for Sport and Recreation. The Charter sets out how sport can use its collective power to tackle the stigma that surrounds mental health and help people seek support when needed, see more at [www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/mental-health-charter](http://www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/mental-health-charter).

Hayley Jarvis, Community Programmes Manager (Sport) at Mind said:

“We are delighted that England Athletics are taking such proactive measures to support those of us with mental health problems to get physically active through running. Getting started when you have a mental health problem can be really difficult due to concerns around body image, self-confidence and the effects of medication.

“Through our Get Set to Go programme, funded by Sport England and National Lottery we have found that building in social, and fun, activities and providing peer support is crucial for both encouraging and sustaining participation. We encourage more people to take up running and to access the Mental Health Ambassador programme.”

Liz Purbrick, National Disability Manager at England Athletics said:

“We are really pleased by the response to the launch of the Mental Health Ambassador Programme. It is clearly something that resonates with our running clubs and groups, many of which have been doing some fantastic work to support those of us experiencing mental health problems for a long time already.

We have been really humbled hearing and reading the stories about the difficult times that many of our ambassadors have experienced personally or through family or friends but the difference running has, and continues to, make to their lives. We hope the programme can continue to breakdown some of the stigma attached to mental health and support people to access the social, physical and mental wellbeing benefits that running can bring along with the physical and social ones too.”

Running is one of the most accessible and low cost ways to be active and meet government recommendations to be moderately active for at least 150 minutes per week. Whether it's to get fit, improve health, make friends or take on a challenge running has something to offer everyone.

Join the conversation on social media using #runandtalk.

For more information on England Athletics please visit [www.englandathletics.org](http://www.englandathletics.org)

**Note: Phill and Mike will be developing the role and will report back on developments.**





## THE RAMBLINGS OF A (HOPELESSLY DERANGED)

### LONG DISTANCE RUNNER

A.K.A. Phill

DATE-LINE



She was blonde, or at least, I think she was. It's hard to tell in sports kit. If she had long hair it would have been obvious, with pony-tails sticking out of the back of the helmet.

However, no such indicator with this girl, no, obviously short hair with just a few wisps protruding from the front of a fetching light green cycling helmet.

Engaged in running hill circuits I was, turned the corner from the flat onto the foot of my nemesis hill, The Hill, the one which causes me endless challenges.

She was finding it hard too, despite riding her designer Boardman sports road bike, with 16 or so Shimano gears, ( perhaps Japanese Shimano gears are smoother than the Campagnolo set on my old Bianchi but, oh, that Italian style!)

We glanced at each other, time stood still as the sunlight bounced off her designer sunglasses and highlighted her high cheekbones – sorry, got carried away for a bit then – anyway, we said "hello" and struck up quite a little conversation.

Now it isn't easy to discourse on the more important things in life when trying to suck sufficient air to stop the soul from shedding this mortal coil, but we did quite a good job of it. Sticking to comments about the weather proved to be the best bet as this requires only the briefest of comments.

We crested the hill in perfect harmony and with a cursory wave from her gloved hand, she was off, with her rear end flashing safety light twinkling into the distance.

Now, this gave me an idea - stay with me you'll like this one – how about we set up a singles dating club for runners and cyclists?

A match made in heaven surely. You know the kind of thing, what with Internet dating, speed dating and

goodness knows what else being advertised on social media, why not cash in on it all and make a few bob for our club whilst providing a useful service at the same time?

Now, I haven't quite got all the details worked out yet, which is where you come in, read on.

My initial concept is that we set up a dating club for the unattached (that is, not with a spouse or partner, I don't mean someone attached to U.K. Athletics via an affiliated club!) and the "venue" is a good, challenging, hill at various locations in the county.

Buxton has a lot of hills, in fact, it's famous for them, along with a University building looking like an alien spacecraft, numerous charity shops and a group of "Crescent" buildings being renovated, largely at public expense, to provide a 5-star hotel and spa for the rich.

Despite our obvious advantages for my new scheme here in Buxton, I'm confident that we can find suitable hilly bits scattered all over Derbyshire.

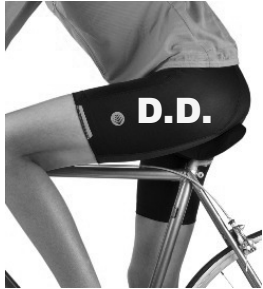
Now, here's the clever bit.

Runners and cyclists meet up and then proceed up the hill by means of their various modes of motion chatting as they go – perfect.

This allows our Romeo and Juliets (or Bradley and Paulas – we can sort the details out as we go along) to get to know each other in one of their most extreme moments.

Let's face it, if two people covered in sweat and clad in polyester-based garments can make a connection when gasping out a short conversation, it has to bode well for a lifelong relationship doesn't it?

Speaking of Bradley (Wiggins the cyclist), I couldn't help but notice the cycling shorts sported by my cycling Juliet as we travelled the hill.



A nice little logo on the hem of an otherwise nondescript pair of black cycling shorts.

I was intrigued by this (but I thought it would be too forward of me to enquire of her at the time), I looked it up on the 'net.

You would never believe it – £80 per pair – yes 80 – well I'm sure we could get a pair of orangery coloured shorts with a DD embroidered on them for less and make a tidy profit to boost club funds.

Add to this DD cycling glasses, sponsored helmets and other kit and we will be well away.

It need not end there, either, we could design a kind of bump cap for runners. The helmet when cycling is an obvious necessity, but runners also run the risk (pun) of falling over as they trip up on the ill-maintained, potholed pavements of our towns and villages.

Whilst I think about it, it comes to mind that some cyclists (allegedly) shave their legs - not, as it may seem at first, to gain an aerodynamic advantage, but to make injury treatment easier when they fall off the bike and get grit implanted in their skin.

This could be a good idea for runners too – actually just realised that ladies shave their legs as a routine – oh well an idea for the lads then!

But I digress, as usual. To return to the key point.

Our match making club is bound to have many advantages. I mean, couples will have so much to talk about.

Just as a few examples - compare injuries, discuss the best cures for chapped skin, exchange road-kill recipes – the list goes on. Well I'm certainly going to put the idea of DDD (Derbyshire Dynamos Dating) forward at the next club meeting.

As always I would be pleased to receive your thoughts on the topic – contact me by means of the DD email, or via my care worker.

Now where did I put that razor?



## NOW HERE'S A GREAT IDEA !



**Report, view, or discuss local problems**

*(like graffiti, fly tipping, broken paving slabs, or street lighting)*

How to report a problem - Log onto the website -

Enter a nearby UK postcode, or street name and area. Locate the problem on a map of the area and enter details of the problem. They send it the local council for attention.

D.D. member Graham won the club London Marathon Draw - here is his account of the great event !

ONE DAY !

Congrats Graham !



I grew up in South East London and spent many hours skateboarding in Greenwich Park, this is how I found myself in Greenwich Park on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> of March 1981 watching 7747 strange people dressed in strange sports kit lining up for the start of the very first London Marathon.

I was 16 then and I said to myself “one day I will complete the London Marathon.”

Life took over and both my age and waistline got bigger. I was now in my 40s and I got into running after being stuck in traffic watching the Derby 10k runners stream past and realised I had not completed that Marathon goal.

I found by chance Jog Derbyshire and later the Dynamos, firstly with Liam Jog leader at JD Rutland Ilkeston and later with Helen Jog leader of the Trotters at Pride Park.

I ran in many races over the years ranging from 5ks, parkruns, 10ks, the Great North Run half marathon and a few triathlons but there was only one Marathon that I wanted to do and that was London.

Even though I was not really sure if I was capable of

completing a marathon I applied online for the London Marathon fully expecting to get a place the next year. Little did I realise the odds were so poor on getting a normal ballot place and I spent the next 6 -7 years applying without success, including a few years of applying for the dynamos ballot as well.

I turned 50 in September 2015 and crossed my fingers that I would get a ballot place in October in that special year, I was once again disappointed.

The date passed for the Dynamos ballot draw without any news and then to make matters worse I was diagnosed with arthritis in both knees so I decided my goal would never happen.

Then a week later I received a mail from Darren at the Dynamos saying the draw had been made and I was successful. I did not know what to think and I had to consider long and hard whether it would be sensible for me to enter.

After considering it about it for all of 5 seconds I replied back to Darren with a “big fat yes” and registered on the Virgin Web site.

In at last no turning back now .....Gulp!

So I got myself a good training plan, booked the knee consultant for some injections, booked a physio to help put me back together, bought some new shoes and embarked on a 16 week journey which included many high and low points.

The plan I was following was specifically designed not to have any finishing time in mind it was just to get you to the end hopefully in one piece which is exactly what I wanted to do.

At the start of the 16 week plan 26 miles seemed to be out of reach but as the plan progressed in sensible steps the weekly mileage and long runs slowly built up to a final 20 mile long run 3 weeks before the marathon.

I wasn't exactly speedy but that was never the intention.



The day of the marathon came and luckily I got a lift to the start by an organised group from the Derby Runner shop that happened to be staying at the same hotel as me.

I left my wife at the hotel enjoying her unexpected lie in and hotel breakfast readying herself for supporting duties later in the day.

As the start time approached the number of runners around me started to increase and when finally the gun went off a big cheer went up and numerous excess clothing used to keep warm on the chilly morning went flying through the air.

Unlike my normal poor race strategy I pretty much kept to a pace that I was happy with and gradually the miles and the famous London land marks went by.

The crowds as expected were amazing and lined the whole route sometimes 10 deep along both sides of the 26.2 mile route.

As I had my name on my T shirt shouts of "Come on Graham you can do it" and "you're killing it Graham" were ringing in my ears and was certainly something that kept me going.

Miles 20 and onwards were tough but I managed to keep moving not always running but I kept moving

forwards and as always the crowds kept me going with their cheers , oranges, bananas and of course jelly babies.

At mile 26 my wife was there to cheer me on the last bit which was a great boost and finally after 36 years I had finally achieved my goal of running past Buckingham Palace and over the finishing line of the London Marathon, and yes I have the medal and the aching limbs to prove it.

I was one of 36057 finishers this year and one of 1 million finishers since the event began which is quite staggering.

It may not have been a fast time and unfortunately I had to disappoint one of my grandchildren by not actually winning as instructed but they were not my goals, I was just happy to be there taking in the atmosphere and enjoying the day.

Thank you to both Jog Derbyshire groups that I have attended over the last few years for keeping me going, to my knee consultant, to Guy the physio at the Sporting Joint and to the Dynamos for giving me this fantastic opportunity.

Lastly thank you to my wonderful wife and family who have supported me and put up with me over the years and especially the last few months of training.



**We are such stuff as dreams are made on, and our little life is rounded with sleep.**

The Tempest Act 4, Scene 1.



**How  
It  
Works !**

**and SHOE REVIEW !**



**A double wammy article !!!!**

**I'm in love - or - DO try this at home !**

**Anyone** who know me knows that I am not easily impressed. Furthermore, I don't follow trends or fashions, simply because that is what they are. But now ..... I'm in love.

**I decided**, last month, to try out minimalistic running that is - running with minimalistic shoes. I find them both so comfortable, useful, and interesting to use that I absolutely love the things.

**Having** been trained and worked in science disciplines all my career, I must declare that I love science, in all its manifestations, but I do accept that it is not everyone's cup of tea.

**Despite that**, I include some science here, necessary to understand the arguments and is always the case with any aspect of running this is fascinating.

**Perhaps** the finest aspect of our sport, or perhaps better described as our passion, is the fact that it is so simple and yet infinitely complex. Despite considerable practical and theoretical research the physiology, even the psychology, of sports performance remains an active field for research. Much has been learned over the years, but much remains unknown.

**The same** is true of "barefoot" and "minimalistic" running. This article is, essentially, a shoe review, but bear with me – this is a major topic worthy of some detailed consideration. I chose to try out minimalistic running with the Nike Free 5, which is best described as a transition shoe, about half way between barefoot and a fully cushioned shoe.

**Now the** numbering system with the Free range of Nike shoes differs from their normal. Usually you expect, for example, a Nike Dart 10 to superseded the Dart 9.

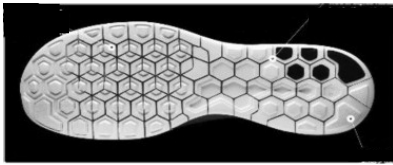
**The Free** Running range, however, is quite different. The numbers refer to the relative degree of cushioning of the shoe. The original scale range ran for 0, being most like a barefoot, to 10, being the most cushioned.

**Currently**, the range is headed by the Free 5 which certainly has some cushioning, but is still very minimalistic compared to the vast majority of running shoes on the market.

**Right out** of the box it is obvious that these shoes are very different to the norm. They are extremely light and the heel counter is completely unsupported making the back of the shoe very soft. Put the shoes on and they are a snug, though incredibly comfortable, fit. Perhaps the most obvious feature of the shoe, apart from its very flat profile, is the sole.

**It is reported** that Nike spent eight years researching and developing the shoes. This may be marketing rhetoric, but certainly the design of the sole is, to say the least, a stroke of genius.

**As you** can see from the picture of the shoe on the following page, which is Nike's own photograph, the sole consists of a series of hexagons and grooves and these allow easy movement in all directions, coupled with the design of the uppers, these shoes are incredibly flexible.



The Nike Free 5 are also reported as being the current chief fashion

training shoe selling in vast numbers in the U.S.A. - not as a running shoe but as a casual.

Hey, it is not often that we runners can be trendy. Is it?

### **Barefoot running – the arguments.**

Is "barefoot" and "minimalistic" the "natural" way to run? It is said that humans evolved running barefoot, therefore it must be natural. It is true, of course, that humans did evolve running barefoot, but they were not running on tarmac and concrete. So that is a good argument for not running barefoot.

**I personally** don't advocate barefoot, I think there is too great a risk from glass, nails, crown bottle tops and even stones, however, the use of a minimalistic shoe may make sense, or at least I decided to take the plunge and try them.

I'm glad I did as these must rank as the best shoes I've ever used. Of course they won't suit everyone but I will come to that later.

**Pronation** – is the natural inward roll of the foot on contact with the ground. This is a natural roll but a runner's foot shape, especially the size of the arch, affects the ability to roll.

A less than average roll is said to be under-pronation ("supination") or if more than average it is termed over-pronation.

Often you will see that an under-pronator should wear shoes which correct this, the same with an over-pronator (so-called "motion control" shoes).

**There is** a theory, however, that using shoes which artificially change an individual's gait does more harm than good. But again, this theory is not definitely proven.

So, although there is no definite proof that barefoot or minimalistic running are better or worse than running in cushioned shoes likewise there is no proof that cushioned or motion control shoes are of any use

as any kind of effective injury protection whatsoever. However minimalistic shoes certainly allow the foot to move in a natural way, no matter what that may be for any individual.

### **Pronation, videos and pseudoscience.**

Personally I doubt that the video machines used by some shops are anything more than marketing gimmicks.

**There are** two reasons for my view. Firstly, the pronation is "natural", and if you spent X years with your foot naturally moving in a particular way I've always thought that the shoe design which forces the foot into another movement pattern does not appear to be a good idea.

**Moving** to the fancy shop machines – this is pseudoscience. It's more show than substance. If a physiotherapist or podiatrist tells me that my foot needs artificial adjustment I'm highly inclined to believe them, but I'm not inclined to believe, with no disrespect, the salesperson with a little training provided no doubt by their employer who has a vested interest in selling shoes.

### **History of barefoot running.**

Barefoot running is nothing new.

Even in international competition. The famous Abebe Bikila from Ethiopia won gold in 1960 running the marathon barefoot. England's Bruce Tulloh also usually ran barefoot, including on cinder tracks.

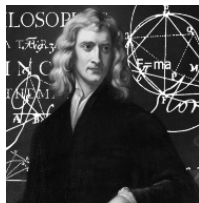
Then of course there's the South African barefoot runner Zola Budd, unfortunately, mostly remembered for the unfortunate collision with Mary Decker in the 1984 Olympics, 3000 metres.

However, Zola was, in my view, a great and elegant runner.



Zola Budd - she ran for England and South Africa.

**However**, here I am not considering barefoot running as I said, I don't advocate it. I'm dealing with running in minimalistic shoes which is quite a different proposition.



### **Newton and motion.**

The concept that the high level of cushioning can be undesirable in modern shoes is supported by good, and old, science. Newton's third law of motion states:

"For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction."

In approximate terms a runner will strike the ground with a force of from 3 to 3.5 times their body weight. So a 60 KG runner applies a force of at least in 180 KG with each foot as they land.

**This force** has to go somewhere, it cannot just disappear, and Newton's third law tells us part of its fate. The "action" of the foot, striking the ground, is countered by a reaction of the ground pushing up with an approximate equal and opposite force. This is called the "Ground Reaction Force". A bit technical, I know, but stay with me because this is key to the minimalistic shoe argument.

**In practice** some of the force will be dissipated into the surface of the ground, but if you are wearing cushioned shoes the cushion will absorb some of the force, reducing the shock to the leg, but also, as an undesirable effect, reducing the force returned from the ground which force is useful to you in your next leap into the air. Bearing in mind that running is essentially a series of leaps.

You can feel this effect very clearly when you run in minimalistic shoes. You will be rebounding with more force. Your feet and legs can now react more naturally and effectively to the ground reaction force being applied to them.

In addition "proprioception" is greatly improved with minimalistic shoes. This is the ability of the brain to sense position, motion and balance. In running the feet contact the ground and this is the beginning of a process whereby information is sent to the brain and interpreted at lightning speed.

The brain then decides upon a course of suitable reactions at an equally rapid rate, so that necessary adjustments in a myriad of muscle fibres can be made to maintain balance and pace.

It is therefore quite logical that shoes with minimum cushioning will facilitate better transmission of this information.

### **Extreme caution.**

Be very careful how you make the transition to minimalistic running. Even Nike put a cautionary label in the Free shoebox.

You must take this slowly, even with shoes like the Nike 5 which are certainly not the least minimalistic shoes on the market as they do provide some, though minimal, cushioning to impact. It is better to wear the shoes for, say, just 10 minutes at a time each day for a week.

The next week try 15 minutes, the next week try 20 minutes then in the next week 30 minutes. A full transition should take at least two months ! Remember that this is very like learning to run all over again.

The essential difference with minimalistic shoes is that the heel is low and the sole virtually flat. You are effectively closer to the ground. In addition the flexibility of these shoes is remarkably high allowing free foot movement.

**Nike** stated originally that the "Free" range was invented as a series of training shoes, essentially intended to improve running form, and not as long distance shoes.

It may be best for you to use minimal shoes for shorter runs and revert back to your "old reliables" for the longer distances, but much depends upon individual experience.

**You will** be using muscles in a new way and they will need time to adapt. In order to get the best out of the shoes and also to reduce risk of injury, be very careful and very patient in your transition to minimalistic running.

So there we have it - in the end you have to judge for yourself. Try minimal or not - but one of the great things, personally I think it is the best, about our sport is that it is both simple and highly complex.

**In the** final analysis runners are experimenters, experimenting on themselves - and in the end it's your individual choice based upon your individual results.

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