

# Local Events and Club Activity: KMR Virtual Series

Pete Humphries

A Rotherham Harriers committee meeting last week examined from various angles possibilities of restarting limited club activities, but none can be launched until the vital criteria are made clear and are met nationally. It looks like being a long wait for activities, and regrettably certainly is for racing.

Clubs up and down the country must be similarly placed, with a greater or lesser degree of isolation of members from normal activities- and it makes you realise just what a boon social media can be in these circumstances. Rotherham's WhatsApp group and various facebook groups have allowed go-ahead members to maintain a lively series of exchanges and challenges which do a lot to replace traditional leisure and training.

It's even likely that some runners have got more miles in than they normally do! And some runners weren't runners before the start of April. Coupled with the brilliant cheering nature of the flora and fauna, and weather, there have certainly been some unexpected positives from the 'lockdown'.

From the sport's point of view however nothing looks good. Except that is, for the determination of a sizeable group to keep the local and wider competitions in the public eye until such time as we can resume. The bulk of the participants in the first virtual KMR event (Maltby Memorial Race) are routine racers, and they are clearly missing the bonhomie, the atmosphere and the buzz of racing. I do know of some runners who have recently moved into racing but now have to hold back.

So no big surprise that stalwarts like Striders' Kev Doyle, Malc Senior, Claire Chapman and Steve Lowndes are prominent: Caroline Boyd from Maltby, Neil Shaw, Janet and John Dutton, and Gillian Neal from Harriers. There is no requirement to supply anything other than name, club and locality when you report doing a virtual KMR- but some have supplied course plans or detail, even times- though these cannot be regarded as races of course. (Photos would be good, and keep sending your comments).

Looking through the data, I was fascinated to find the lengths some had gone to try matching the terrain: very well done. I admit to being one of them- and I found the planning almost as good as the running. Though that said, there was no requirement to match: just the distance, and what is possible for you.



Some had to use road only due to their location. Caroline Boyd (MRS) and Brenda King (RH) both ran the real course, as they live in Maltby. But Maltby organiser Barbara Lowndes (pictured right with MRC clubmates in 2019) lives in Misson, and volunteered to disqualify herself as she says "there are no hills until Moscow". But her 18-mile reported run more than makes up for it in our view. The fourth Rotherham club, Rawmarsh Runners were well-represented by Anne Telling with a well-planned run taking in Rawmarsh, Stubbin and Hooper.

The furthest runs from base were from Rotherham HAC's Michael Lindley who devised a suitably-profiled run through the centre of his home town of Harrogate, and Mike Brown (Clowne RR) who used field and farm tracks from Elmton to Bolsover, and also writes "Stuff like this is keeping me sane and reminds me that life is worth living!...". Just so.

For second in the series we will be celebrating Kimberworth's off-road event: the Kimmy Kanter on the first, second or third of June. Don't worry if you go outside any of the given dates: your participation is more important than the niceties. The numerous social media apps available are a boon- but they can easily lead to reports not delivered: keep checking the results list please.