

## 2017 West Highland Way Race

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It's taken me several days to write anything about the race ( for some reason my eyes just well up). Thank you to Libby, Sarah, Scott, Ian, Vicky, Eileen, Alan, & Anne- Marie my amazing support team who were pivotal to me crossing the line. As a race first timer I was pretty terrified beforehand. Thanks also to Karen Wallace for your lists and to many I know and don't know whose blogs, podcasts etc have been inspiring. I read Rhona McKinnon's (whom I've never met) blog on the race just before I went to the start. The bit about the Lairig reduced me to tears - I somehow knew I would be experiencing that 24 hours later! But it was inspiring. Thank you to the marshals, Ian Beattie and those who gave me encouragement both on the Race and through the trials and tribulations of my sub standard performances over the last few years - a little word here or there sometimes makes all the difference.

Anyway a few thoughts on the race:

1. The training is tough, but learn to love it and embrace it.
2. When in doubt, take one small step forward.
3. The race is amazing – enjoy it.
4. When you're exhausted and hungry you can't take care of yourself. A good support team will.
5. Do something silly to make all around you laugh like have your support team dress as fairies!
6. It's not a sprint. Don't go off to fast.
7. It's OK to feel despair. If you feel despair you'll soon feel hope.
8. Don't be a diva. You're not as important as you think you are.
9. When it comes to having a different opinion to your support team, don't. Let them decide!
10. Let someone deal with your feet so they don't screw up your race.
11. It's OK to have a meltdown.
12. Don't compare your race to others. You have no idea what their race journey is about.
13. If you don't believe you can do it, you won't do it...
14. Eat a Magnum from Brodie's. It freezes the brain!
15. Get rid of crap from your pack. It weighs you down and you can't find what's important .
16. Take any encouragement you can get .... And say thank you for it!
17. It's never too late to change plan. But it's your plan and you have to be brave enough to change it.
18. When it comes to Jelly Baby Hill, choose your colour wisely!
19. Encourage others, be interested in them, they will encourage you.
20. Over prepare for all weather.
21. It's OK to come across as a nutter. Everyone else outside of the ultra running community thinks we're nuts anyway!
22. The most important bit of equipment you have is your brain - use it wisely!

23. Run/walk straight up the Devil - don't pause at all or hesitate, once you start on it it's just another hill - get over it!
24. For every setback you have, shrug your shoulders say " F\*\*k it" and move on.
25. Check the tree for wasps nests before you take a dump next to it!
26. Look out into the hills, embrace how lucky you are to be in this race.
27. Congratulate other finishers, commiserate with those who didn't get to the end - remember they will be gutted - you may be in that position next time.
28. If necessary seek counselling after a night out on the Lairig!
29. Say thank you to the race director and all volunteers- there's no race without them.
30. Recover well....