

My West Highland Way Adventure 2017

Billy Reid

Hey Billy how do you fancy putting in the ballot for the west highland way next yearyeah why not sounds good to me [Stephen Cooper](#) should be fun

Then the fun began

22hrs and 69 mile running / walking up into Glencoe pouring down with rain high winds , cold , miserable , I look at Stephen and say hey m8 I'm going to be sick . Then I'm as sick as a dog , first time in my life I've ever been sick on a run , then I thought wtf how did I get here ?????

Rewind it back about 4 years I had ran a few marathons and was thinking of going further that's when I met [Ally Robb](#) at Strathclyde parkrun , we got blethering and she said I should try the D33 in Aberdeen it's a good wee first ultra . I went down done it and I was hooked .

A few years later Friday 23rd June 8.30pm my support crew [David Dorricott](#),and his daughter [Dionne Dorricott](#) at my door to pick me up to take me to Milingavie to register for the WHW race , load up the van with my gear and were on our way .

Next thing I know I'm standing at the start line , nervous ,excited but confident , started blethering to. Few people I knew and also people I didn't know ,could feel the excitement in the air . Then my other 2 crew members came along I was glad to see them [Davie Mooney](#),and his lovely wife [Julie Mooney](#),my crew complete then Stephen Cooper and [Gail Cooper](#) where there who gave me a nice surprise later on in the day . Also my long time running buddy [Liz Watson](#) came running over with her to kids to see me start the race chuffed to bits they came to see me .

1am Saturday morning and we're off everyone running under the underpass with families and friends shouting there named it was fantastic .I ran the first 20 mile to Balmaha with [Ian Dorey](#) I'm so glad I got to run with this seasoned runner as it took the pressure of me trying to navigate in the dark by torchlight . Got to Balmaha and my crew had everything ready for me as planned it was a quick change over and away I went on way to rowardennan . I wasn't feeling to good at rowardennan but my crew soon sorted me out with food and water and a nice cup of coffee .next stop was Invesnaid picked up my drop bag , coke ,pork pie ,salted crisps lovely then on my way to beinglass .

Ian had already went on in front of me as we had a blether and I said for him to go on as he was strong and it was his race but it was brilliant running with him . My crew where brilliant again at beinglass everything ready for David with hot cheesy pasta and Dionne always remembering me to check for chaffing . Julie always made sure I went away with everything I needed .

Next wee jaunt took me through coo poo ally and yip full of shit but not as bad as I thought it would be as the rain had just really started . Next stop Auchtertyre I got a brilliant surprise when I was told Dionne was going to run the 3 miles with me into Tyndrum . A 16 year old girl giving up her weekend sleeping rough in a van wanting to keep me company for some of the run she's a star . We chatted all the way to Tyndrum wit a lassy .

I got to Tyndrum and the crew jump into action again getting me ready for the next stage of the run I've never ran further than 53 miles in my life . But I got a brilliant surprise Gail cooper was running 7 miles with me she has run a few ultras with me and I was over the moon with her company . We both took of to bridge of Orchy having a chat and laugh as usual , the weather was starting to turn for the Worse getting really wet and windy . We got to bridge of Orchy and the crew where on the ball as usual feeding me and making sure I was ok and well hydrated . Then Stephen cooper took over from Gail to run with me I had already ran 60 miles and 18 hours on my feet the weather was getting worse and off we went after all I only had 36 miles to go and 17 hours to get there { easy } well that's what I thought , Stephen was a rock I was starting to slow down but he kept my spirits up , we had a laugh as we always do when I go out running with him his patters shit but I just let him think it's minted 😊 as we head to the crew

bus at Glencoe I feel like shit tired cold and to make it worse the weather gets even worse 21 hours on my feet and 36 hours without sleep and I've still got a marathon to Run .

The crew are amazing they bundle me into a nice warm van with the heater up full blast drop a hot baked potato on my lap and a hot coffee and shut the door and tell me to relax and enjoy for 10 minutes . My god I remember feeling so warm and comfy I'd been awake for 36 hours I was thinking I've got to find the strength to keep going . Then I thought of my wife Jacquie and my son Jack who were worried about me doing this run and that I told them I would be fine and never do anything daft . I know my limits . That's when I realised . Yeah I was tired yeah I was feeling like shit but as long as I can put one foot in front of the other I will keep going , after all it's only rain and wind . I can't possibly feel any worse than I am now { can I }

One more push only a marathon to go . Got out the crew bus to be met by the crew who put extra layers on me nice warm hat and gloves and we were ready to go said goodbye to David , Dionne , Gail ,Julie ,and Stephen got a big cuddle and headed into the dark with my good buddy Davie Mooney who I have ran a few times with but he knows the route like the back of his hand , we got to the bottom of the Devils stair case , I was nervous but felt OK as I was in David's capable hands , then we started to climb I asked Davie to slow down as I was struggling to keep up as I was afraid I would get cramp again as I had cramp earlier . So we climbed slowly but surely ,then Davie said that's us at the top , I was like no way m8 ARE WE REALLY wasn't as hard as I thought 😊👉confidence at a high then boom going down the other side my quads are crying out the resin is heavy as ever and the water running off the hills make the path a stream . This was horrendous but Davie kept me going with his positive chat about future goals in life and general chit chat .

Next was Kinlochleven wtf more hills no way why did no one tell me about this ???????? Wits going on here are you having a laugh . By this time the rain was really coming down and the wind was getting stronger . David insisted we stop and get some dry gear on .we stopped behind an old stone wall and David started to pull dry tops ,gloves ,buffs hand warmers ,arm warmers out his back pack he told me to get my emergency blanket out and take my jacket of wrap emergency blanket around me put on a new warm top ,gloves ,and jacket .it was bliss even if it only lasted half an hour .what a feeling to know I had the right guy with me at a rough time . Off we went into Lundy 30 hours on my feet and 7 miles to go . Met Julie there who checked we were ok and sent. Us on our merry way with a big hug she told me it's ok Billy it's all down hill from here . { it wasn't }

This last stretch was a nightmare it had stopped raining and the wind had died down but that didn't make any difference this was tough . Davie just kept talking positive to me walking just in front setting pace I could keep up with { something about that guy that makes you believe in yourself } . Wow David Dorricott is just down the road shouting up to me just a mile to go Billy just a mile to go . I had 2 hours to finish the race but that didn't matter I just wanted to get over that line I kept asking every 2 min is it around this corner .where is it cmon guys how far now . Then I seen the finish post and actually ran over the line .

I done it I've ran the west highland way in 33:52:27 for that moment in time I'm feeling like a king 😊👉

This has been an incredible journey not only for me but all my crew who were fantastic through the whole race the marshals and all connected to this race have made this the biggest adventure of my life I have so many people to thank it's impossible for me to put to pen David Dorricott for one has pulled out all the stops to make this run as smooth as possible his posts and video to all my friends kept everyone up to date with my progress. My wife Jacquie and son Jack supporting me throughout this journey to the WHW. Liz .Gail .Stephen.my running buddies Dionne for being there for me . Julie for all the big hugs and Davie Mooney honestly words can't say how I feel about you pulling me through that last section m8 your a feckin Saint m8 😊👉thank you all I'm the happiest man on the planet 😊👉😊👉😊👉😊👉😊👉😊👉😊👉👍