

West Highland Way Race 2017

By Joanna Murphy

THE LEAD UP

2016 was my first crack at this race and in a time of 23 hours 41 minutes. I didn't fancy it again, in fact it was just like my first marathon in 2012...I just want to do one to get it out my system. Yeah well anyone who knows me, knows that was a lie!

The Adventure show was aired on TV a short time after and that was my mind made up again, the glorious sunshine, the rolling hills and the banter. Of course I was entering again!

The 1st of November 2016 came round and I sent my entry away, I'd been sure I'd get a place and didn't consider the alternative. December came round and I received my unsuccessful email, what on earth?! I wasn't gutted but perhaps I had the London marathon on my mind again, this had been a focus of mine for a couple of years and I ached for a sub 3 hour time. I told myself and everyone I was ok with not getting a place but I don't think they or I were totally convinced.

Early January came and I received an email invite from Ian Beattie as there had been a number of people who hadn't taken up their place, without question I took him up on it. I absolutely believe everything happens for a reason.

TRAINING

I'd been training hard all winter, I was running the London marathon so training was well and truly underway, however my main focus was now to be the West highland way. I knew it needed to be, as I spent too much time road running last year and not enough time on the hills.

My mileage was good and I clocked up almost 1300 miles between Jan and race day, much the same as last year.

What was different?

My ascent for the first 6 months of 2017 was more than I did in the whole of 2016. My legs felt stronger and I had also lost weight.

Early April saw me gaining a 10k PB of 37.56. Not sure where the speed work was coming from but I was loving getting these short ones ticked off before the biggie.

London marathon came round and I ran the perfect race, even splits and clocking 3:01:32. I narrowly missed out on sub 3 but that's a story for another time.

PBs came in 5k (18.14) and 5 miles (29.52).

After a blip in March with a heel issue, it quickly resolved itself and thankfully hasn't returned. At this time I decided to add a bit of cross training to the mix in the form of Triathlon, I can be quite impulsive with decision making but it's a trait I like and I needed something to occupy my time when not running. It's early days but this seems to be complimenting the running.

I am someone who likes a training plan, I enjoy the structure and it means there's no place to hide as the sessions are there in black and white.

What did I choose to do this year? No training plan of course! I was gonna run to feel, as long as I was off road, getting in the mileage and a mixture of sessions I was happy. This made me feel more relaxed and I found myself getting more enjoyment from my sessions. I was getting out with more people and I loved that.

WEIGHT

I've always sat around the 11 stone mark in my adult life (69kgs), however recent years have seen this reduce slightly and always seems to coincide with better performance.

My body fat now around 14 percent, muscle mass at 40 percent and my weight around 65kgs.

My longest run this year being only 30 odd miles, there was no Cateran 55 or similar mileage but I was getting decent back to back long runs in and sufficient rest so I wasn't concerned.

FUNDRAISING

I spoke to Jac about this around March, there hasn't been a year since 2013 that I haven't had a fundraising cause. This year I was unsure about which one and that had been the delay. It was between two, our friend Gee from work has a young daughter that has cerebral palsy and receives a lot of support and assistance in her day to day life. I found that Gee was taking care of this though and set himself his own goal of Edinburgh half marathon where he raised thousands for her. Decision made, I'd do it for Cammy, a colleagues 11 year old son who after having a virus in 2016 lost his sight. More details about that on my just giving page.

<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/joanna-murphy-1>

My fundraising has been something that has given me focus and motivated me hugely. In the past 4 years I've raised around £6000 and now with this year's, it's almost adding another £2000. This is down to having a great support network of friends and family.

SUPPORT TEAM

This didn't need much thought, 2016 went well and I had not been too much of a diva that they all agreed to come along for more of the same, suckers!

In addition to this, I asked Jac to be a part of it. We'd done much of our training together since November, Jacs time is precious now that she's got 2 little boys so her me time is running. The added bonus is that she's a pure beast and really pushes me on the hill training.

Jonny is someone who has similar goals to me in his running and I hope to support him on the WHW next year. It's the only way I won't be tempted to enter myself again!

Steven is a man that likes a list, granted his list gets longer and longer and tasks rarely get ticked off but it's there none the less. He's also my new cycle coach so I need to be kind to him!

Sam is a sweetheart, if you ever need a kind word to be said then she'd lift your spirits in a minute, she is also what id call eccentric.

Kristin is very organised and keeps people in check when it comes to decisions. She'll also ensure that everyone is doing their job.

We didnt have much discussion until the week of the race but we didn't need to. I think they call it a well oiled machine!

It would be wrong not to mention Gal here, he's my unsung supporter throughout the year, having to put up with my chaotic training schedule, constant hunger and tiredness, ridiculous expenditures on race entries and clothing. He has always told me that he wants me to achieve my goals in respect of my running and allows me to do that guilt free for the most part. The guilt is my own but I don't think anyone gets to where they want to be without some element of being selfish. I'm just thankful for his understanding.

RACE PLAN

It was no secret that I wanted to better my 2016 time, hoping for a sub 22 and dreaming of sub 21 hours. How was I gonna do it?

I scrutinised my split times from last year and reckoned I could half my CP stop times and take off almost 2 hours in the second part of the race where my feet cost me dearly.

Attention turned to my trotters. They serve me well all year round, I don't get blisters and my toenails cope well. Last year however nearly all my feet blistered during the race. I put it down to tending to the hard skin and softening them right down so this year I was leaving them hard, fair braw in flip flops! I think the terrain has a lot to go with it, there's a lot of side to side motion on rocky ground to contend with.

THE LEAD UP

Less food was purchased and less clothing packed. Weather was forecast to be wet and windy (I underestimated this).

Gal and I moved house at start of June, always useful to keep you busy during taper.

I broke off on holiday on the 19th of June. One of my fellow Carnegie Harriers asked me to come along to his school to do a presentation about my running and the WHW race to P4-P7 pupils. I was impressed by their own running achievements and the volume of questions I was asked. I then joined them for their after school running club, started up by Mr Bisset himself and we ran the almost 5k route in under 30 minutes, the quickest they've ever done it. Mr Bisset has a lot of respect from these kids and rightly so. P7 was where my running started and if even one or two of these kids continues with half the motivation they showed then they are destined for great things. That was to be my last run before the race.

THE DAY BEFORE

I slept very little, from 1am to 8am on and off. It was like Xmas, only better. I had breakfast and went back to bed but Facebook was alive with excitement and I couldn't break away from my phone. I think I got 40 minutes on and off (pillow over my face due to having no blinds and living on a building site)!

The afternoon dragged, I just wanted to get going. Stevo and Jonny arrived and Stevo wanted to repack my clothing and park the car. Steven is anal about these things, who was I to argue. Johnny was in charge of food and was happy with it being thrown in the box. It's this yin and yang combo that I need. Butch came round briefly and had crazy thoughts of me running with him and James for sub 19 hours, once I heard their race plan I opted not to do this.

Tony Macs for tea with Stevo, Jonny and Gal, sufficiently stuffed before heading to Kristin's to get my race hair on (these things are important), pleats in and a quick trip home before changing and saying goodbye to Reggie and Gal. Poor Reg sensed something was up but the mere mention of his Glemma and he

didn't even look twice at me. Treats galore were to ensue. Next time I would see Gal would be a Tyndrum (or just before as it turns out). Sam and Kristin collected and Off we went.

REGISTRATION

Arriving a bit later this year, I collected my chip, weigh in card and race band. There as no number this year which was another less thing to worry about as I'd been faffing when it unstuck last year. I got weighed in, fully clothed with my gutties on at 67kgs, 4.4kgs down on last year. Ya dancer!

We popped back to the car, I was a bit restless and did not feel much like being sociable initially but think I was getting nervous.

We then spoke to team Fozzy and Ben Hopkins before heading for the car park to catch up with Derek, the twins Fiona and Pauline and their loyal crew.

I saw Butch and James, Butch was calm, what was going on? This guy was running around the car park last year like he was on speed but he was different this year. Butch had a different and not quite as planned preparation for the race with factors outeith his control. If there's one thing I know, Hutch is headstrong and this race was gonna be his therapy.

Before I knew it the briefing was upon us, I'm not sure how much I actually listened to this. Disclaimer* I did read the email brief beforehand! Headtorch on and ready to go, oh no wait do I or don't I want a jacket on. The jacket went on.

THE RACE

Derek and I lined up together. We both had similar target times in mind so were gonna see how it went, his banter is ok too.

The horn sounded and we were off. I forgot to start my watch and was half way up the high street before it started, without GPS signal. Nearly £400 spent on this, for the sole purpose of this race and it was unlikely gonna record my run properly now. Epic fail! The watch looked mint tho, a rose gold customised suunto. All about the gear.

Lynne Allen passed Derek and I about 4 miles into the race, she was bouncing along and Derek said she would do well. Little did we know she would go on to win.

The miles were ticking away, Dave Andrews caught up with us just before the Beech Tree Inn, I'd watched him run the fling earlier this year and he had a great performance there. He was aiming for sub 20. On hearing this I was concerned I was pushing too hard but I felt good so went with it. I saw Dave again a few times throughout.

Support team were at Beech Tree and I screeched when I saw them forgetting the minimal noise policy, sorry. This was around 2.08am.

I then became aware that I couldn't hear Derek anymore, I thought he might have stopped for a pit stop and would catch me up. I would never see him again till Fort William.

I had a tummy rumble at 11 miles and had to see to that, wasn't concerned about it but knew if round 2 came then the imodium was getting cracked open.

Saw headtorches of some of the supporters at Drymen, I knew mine weren't there as I told them to go directly to Balmaha. I found myself in my own at this point, I was picking people off and feeling good. I made myself walk some of the climbs, this was a psychological thing as if I didn't and I suffered later then I'd blame this.

Just before reaching Conic Hill I saw Ben and Fozzy ahead, without even seeing Fozzy's face I could see his head was down, both physically and metaphorically. I pushed on and said my hellos, I think I told them about my toilet stop, of course they needed to know!

Ben caught me up in conic Hill and we power walked and jogged our way up it, it was nice to hear about his training and home life. He said Fozzy was struggling a bit. I know Fozzy and he has more mental strength to complete endurance events than anyone I know, he was finishing this regardless.

We started to descend into Balmaha, passing the small group of scouts, I turned my headtorch off here and loved it was now daylight.

I called ahead to Sam and Kristin and was informed Sam was waiting in me already and Kristin had my bacon roll ready. It was 4.08. I flicked my headtorch on as I entered the dark forest but only for a short time.

Bright orange jacket and massive smile, it was Sam, car park just around the corner.

I ran in, dibbed my timing chip. It was 04.14.

I grabbed my bacon roll, it was greasy and beautiful all rolled into one! Fresh OJ and milkshake, bottle change and some sweets packed. I ditched the headtorch, took my light enhancing sunglasses, Ipod and midge net before heading off, stopping for only about 3 mins. Sam walked me out and I ran on, I threw half my bacon roll in the bin and chewed the other half for about 2 miles, by god it was chuck!

Neil Rutherford caught me up and we chatted for a bit. Roll washed down with water, thank god. Neil and I were chatting, he didn't realise we did the same job, he told me he'd run this race a number of times, I think near 10 and always under 24 hours. I was impressed. He said I'd been running well and wished me a good race.

I pushed on and had a good run to Rowardennan. I pod was blasting and I can only apologise for my out loud rendition of Birdy's 'wings' as well as 'Rhythm of the night' . Quite the play list!

I had to have a second pit stop and 2 imodium were gubbed, I'd have no further troubles thereafter.

I couldn't believe how quickly I hit Rowardennan, I called ahead and was told the team were all ready. I saw Sam and ran to the CP. I wasn't for stopping and grabbed a milkshake and pork pie before heading off.

I was a good half hour quicker than last year.

At this point I passed Carrie Craig. Carrie would pass me a short time later and went on to gain 2nd place female.

I was singing away, chatting as I passed and got passed by runners but on the whole running on my own, I was enjoying that at this point. Truth be told I didn't have a good section here towards Inversnaid. I don't know if it's the change to more technical terrain or knowing you won't see your crew for a long time. I knew Ruth Howie was at Inversnaid with the drop bags and that a cuddle awaited me. Ruth is one of these people that lights up a room, you can't be down when you are in her company. Quick refuel and off I went.

I could hardly see any runners on this bit and started to feel a bit lonely, I didn't know if I really wanted company until it came along and was just what I needed in the form of Nikki Hann. I'd passed her earlier before Rowardennan. We got chatting, she was over from Hong Kong having lived there for 14 years, originating from Aberdeen, however never having been on the WHW. I couldn't believe it, we spoke about her running and mine and the Loch section came to an end before we knew it. I told her about Darios post and we stopped for a couple of photos here, it would have been a shame for her not to have some keepsakes of the day. I had called ahead to my support team to tell them about my imminent arrival and asked for them to shout to Nikkis crew to tell them of hers. She was grateful for this.

We ran into Beinglas together. It was just before 9am.

I can't believe I forgot about the midges, not the amount of them but the lack of them, I don't think I even saw one! Hallelujah.

I sat down here briefly and had a bite to eat, was feeling good and set off. I'd run this leg in the fling relays and know it's undulating so decided to walk/jog the steep bits and keep my breathing steady. On getting to the roller-coaster, Nikki caught back up with me, she was moving very well on the downhills, me not so much. My quads were a bit sore and my feet started to hurt. I feared a remake of the 2016 saga. I took the downs easy and found I worked well on the ups.

I got to the road crossing and had to wait on about 4 cars passing, to my surprise the last car was Gals, a big cheeser from us both and a wave before skipping across the road was all I needed to push on, knowing it would only be 3 to 4 miles before I could see him properly.

I got into Auchtertyre just after 11am and immediately noticed Sam's trousers were covered in mud, I didn't dare ask after she nearly got run over last year!

Got weighed in and only a marginal drop, nutrition was good.

I stopped and changed my socks here, or possibly changed them at Beinglas. Anyway, considering a shoe change, it was like I was in Kurt Geiger but these were less glam. I tried on my other road shoes they were too tight, then my trail shoes but these were too rigid. In the end Goldilocks decided to stick with the ones she had. Compeeds would have to do the trick. I was too quick to allow for a support runner to join me. I think I was initially disheartened (there were swear words) before heading off and reminded by my crew that not having one was a sign I was running well. I ran hard to Tyndrum. I didn't see Nikki again until Fort William.

I saw my team, including Jac, Gal and Ruth and Richard.

Ruth and Richard came up to support me last year and again this year. Two great friends who I've had the pleasure to meet in my adult life.

Jac provided traffic control to let me cross and there were hugs all round before I set off towards Bridge of Orchy. The relay runners would catch me up as they were setting off in 20 mins time. I wanted to run hard here and see how far I could get before being caught by the relay runners! A little up the path I saw Big Bird aka Hazel Smyth, we had worked on the QBR together in the summer of 2014 and I hadn't seen her for a couple of years, a hug before heading off. I'd see her again at the prize giving.

I got a blast of the horn from my passing support team and fist pumped the air as they did so. I was worried I was pushing too hard too early but felt good for it and decided to go with it. The first of the relay teams started passing me and by god were they flying, they cheered me on and I them.

Just before Bridge or Orchy I was passed by the first relay girl, she was very chatty and encouraged me on. I flew down to B of O and had to put the brakes on at the bottom of the hill before crossing the road. Jac and Sam were there and told me I was doing well, I was delighted to tell them I'd just done a 9 min mile. I arrived here at 12.50pm.

I got a clothing change here. I'd been wearing my skort, something that is somewhat a requirement for female ultra runners and also looks quite nice but causing me no end of grief as my thighs chaff! No amount of Vaseline assists.

I put my waterproof on here, buff and 3/4 leggings.

Gail was here too and that was a nice surprise. Gail is one of my inspirations. effectively she's my running mum and I've followed in her footsteps. It was here she told me I better not beat her time, she wouldn't disclose it! Gail's times are something I strive towards so if I was anywhere near hers, I was doing well. Of course she was joking.

I ran off on my quest to the top of Jelly Baby hill, anyone who's been there on race day will know this is quite something, you wouldn't be mistaken for thinking you were tripling, jelly baby collected and a brief chat before heading off.

My feet and quads now feeling good and I negotiated the downhill quickly. Possibly the lure of getting my teeth brushed here was the reason. It never felt so good, I'd like to say it was like an advert for toothpaste but my face was covered and I wouldn't have made the cut for a TV appearance!

Kristin read out a message from my best mate, Cola. She lives in England now and has a little boy who I'm proud to call my godson. The message started 'hey boots' and I immediately smiled knowing it was her. The usual mix of encouragement and taking the mick made me giggle.

Big smiles with support crew and off I went to Victoria Bridge, they were heading round there too for another cheer. I knew it was only about a mile and I was almost there before they pulled up. It's here that Kevin appeared from the bushes, armed with his camera and some kind words.

Steven placed my lucky owl in my backpack before I hit Rannoch Moor. It's a bit of a joke between us that I think bad things happen out there, that's maybe down to me having read a few real crime books and having a wild imagination!

It's here I passed another runner, I later learned to be Tom who it turns out I have a mutual friend with. Tom thought I was a relay runner as I chatted with him and encouraged him to adopt the run/walk strategy here to cover the ground quicker (more on that later). He asked me if he could run in behind me and lace off me, sure I said. I secretly think he was drafting off me and using me as shield from the wind and rain that was getting worse.

I stopped for the loo and didn't catch him up again on the Moor but overtook him at Glencoe and didn't see him again till after the race.

By this point the wind and rain was battering my face and was relentless. It was becoming hard to see a positive and on looking up I was met with the sight of 3 miles of winding trail, so cruel. On the plus side, it goes in quickly if you keep moving. Before I knew it, the descent was upon me, my jacket acting as a slight windbreaker but also seemed to double up as a parachute and I was lifted off the ground at points, very Mary Poppins. There may have been tears.

I got to the bottom and saw Sam at Glencoe, she lifted my spirits but I was a bit down. It was now 1510. I changed my clothes here and that was a wise choice, I felt much better and warmer. I didn't hang around long and was told by the team I was in 4th, apparently I replied 'what use is that', sorry guys. This was the worst they saw of me. They referred to my pace and said I was right on sub 20 pace, I don't know if I didn't quite believe it or because I thought the wind was gonna slow me up that I was quite dismissive and said I didn't care. Also the chips I earlier said I didn't want were good, turns out they know my needs better than me. I kept going. I shed a couple of tears on the way out again but saw Sandra Beattie in the car coming towards me and a wee wave got me in check.

Oh my Lord, I thought the wind had been bad on the Moor but it was now making every step twice as hard and I thought I was going in reverse. My stride had to be more of a shuffle as the wind was so strong. This section is long and I started to think ahead to the next 26 or so miles. Knowing that they were all into the wind. I then told myself one bit at a time.

At this, I felt an arm on my shoulder and it was Andrew MacIntyre, I'd been out to Ireland with work in 2014 and met him there, this was just the ticket. I hadn't seen him for well over a year, the last time being when he ran the fling and I passed him just before Rowardennan in 2016. I was in the relay race. I had thought about him earlier in the day and didn't know he was running the relay. Nice coincidence. He said he wasn't worried about his time and was happy to run with me, I was grateful for this and didn't protest. He spoke about his crossfit and lack of running and before we knew it we were nearly at the Devil. I then saw Jac, waving n like a mad woman. I told Andy he could just push on now and I'd see him at Kinlochleven. I'd secretly hoped to see Jac here, she came to this point in 2p16 with Wayne as I'd been upset. My chat with Andy had lifted my mood and it wouldn't dampen again thereafter, I'm thankful for his company.

Jac had been choking to run with me but I still wasn't allowed a support runner. I think this had been beneficial in some ways as it encouraged me to run hard to get to the next checkpoints. I was told Butch was not far ahead and was having a tough time, I used this info to push on as I wanted to see him. The rest of the crew cheered on me as I approached the Devil and told me I looked good. I ran and power walked up the staircase and could see Butch ahead. What was he wearing? I only recognised him because of his hydration vest but he looked like a homeless man with all manner of clothing on. I wouldn't catch him until 3/4 of the way up. We hugged and I hoped some of my words allowed him to refocus. We ran together, he told me not to wait on him but we naturally ran together for a mile or so chatting about our races. He said James had pushed on and was going well, I said we would do the same together. I ran ahead a little, I thought this would encourage Butch to tuck in behind me but I got further and further away before hitting the trail and he was out of sight when I looked back. I was concerned I wouldn't see him again, however several minutes

later I nearly choked on my Haribo star mix as a madman ran past at break neck speed, it was only blooming Butch. I knew he was back, this is what he does, he needs to get things out of his system. I was side by side with another runner and we chatted about Butch's sprint, at that point I could hear cheers and knew my support crew was near, at that I turned the corner and Jac and Sam were there. They couldn't believe what they had witnessed, they said Butch had been given a new lease of life.

I got into Kinlochleven at 1743, weighed in and at the same as my starting weight but carrying a lot of water. I was kit checked and requested a quick sorting of my feet. Steven likes to do footcare properly and was a bit put out when I just wanted the Compeeds stuck on without any prep work of the feet! No change of clothes here as I wanted to push on. I thought Butch was away, the girls chummed me to the staircase and it was just about 6pm. I then heard a familiar voice and it was Butch again, I knew here that we would see this out together. We spoke briefly about sub 20 hours, was it a possibility, probably not but let's push on and get as close to it as possible. We knew we wanted to beat his time of 20hrs 33mins from last year. Decision made, we would work hard along the Lairig. I think the wind and rain was just as bad but I stopped noticing it here. Butch and I were club mates and friends, having run many a training run together. We had run the Cateran together in 2016, I finished that in under 10 hours thanks to him and our run/walk strategy. I've adopted it ever since. Butch said to me, run till that rock, we did. Before long all we were doing was running and not walking. It felt good, we were like a drug for each other, he asked if I wanted to walk or run, I'd shout back 'run'. The Lairig Mor goes on a bit, winding trail that keeps on giving after each corner, very generous! Then we saw the flags and knew Lundavra was near.

We saw Patricia here and the mountain rescue vehicle and got our pic taken. We were caught up here by a lovely Kinross Road runner, Gill Lopez, she was in the relay and it was lovely to chat to her. She had run the race last year and had to pull out at Beinglas, she was very encouraging and we tried to keep her in our sights. Lundavra and our support teams came into sight, I called out 'look who I found in reference to Butch'. They said we looked good and were pleased with our progress. At this point Kristin told me I was in 3rd place, I couldn't quite believe it. Armed with that info, a fire was ignited and I yelled at Butch to get a move on, with 7 miles to the finish I wasn't gonna give up this opportunity. We ran and we ran hard, pushing on. It felt like we were in a 10k race, not nearing the end of a 95 mile race. We kept looking behind and saw nothing. We got to the fire road and knew it was all downhill and flat to there, no more than 4 miles to go. We were going some, passed Gill again and she told us to keep going. Kevin came into sight and told us to keep pushing, Reido took a few snaps and before we knew it, the Braveheart car park was just around the corner. It's just over a mile from here to the finish. I looked at my watch and said to Butch to go and push on for sub 20, then Stevie said that I should also do the same as we had about 10 minutes to get there. It was all we needed to kick and start sprinting, I know it might sound hard to believe at this point as I almost wondered if I just felt I was going fast and not actually doing so, however my sub 7 minute mile confirmed this to be the case. I pushed on past Butch and he said he had nothing left, I know him and knew by telling him to do it for his father-in-law Pat who recently passed away was all he needed to here. Team Butch were shouting behind us to keep going. I approached the streetlights of Fort William and then the roundabout,

one more straight and then I'd turn into the finish. There was Jac and the team and I sprinted over to hit my timing chip for the last time and gain sub 20 hours, in a time of 19.57.32.

Butch came in a minute later, we'd both done it. I couldn't quite believe it.

Turns out my split time from Lundavra was second fastest overall to the race winner Rob Sinclair, he finished in 13hrs 41mins and set a new CR and ran that section in 58 mins, I did it in 1hr 11.

The final weigh in was had and I was down about 1.4kgs since Milngavie. Possibly carrying a few extra lbs in rain water. Tea, toast and Prosecco were followed by a shower and a massage before hitting the hay.

I woke again early morning to see fellow club mate Fiona Rennie finish and make it her 13th WHW race finish. That was special, I unfortunately couldn't share a celebratory whisky with her as dark spirits don't agree with me after an episode when I was 15 but a toast was had.

I don't think it sunk in quite what had happened. The whole race felt surreal, I felt better than I expected to throughout and finished the race feeling strong.

I was honoured at the prize giving to stand amongst the other winners and runners.

The goal had never been sub 21, that would only ever have been a wild dream for me and a podium was never in my thoughts, although Fiona had messaged me on Friday to say she felt that was a likely possibility.

Perhaps I don't give myself enough credit but that race was everything and more than I expected it to be. I think everything happens for a reason and Butch and I were meant to run together. James finished just ahead of us.

Until the next race!