



Nicola Hopkinson

**Name:** Nicola Hopkinson

**Born:** September 1962

**Date Joined :** June 2002, Bree introduced me to the club.

### **Personal Bests:**

Marathon	3:26:31	V40
20 miles	2:36:00	V40
Half	1:37:42	V40
10 M	72:15	V40
10K	43:01	V40
5M	35:04	V40
5K	21:15	V40

### **Favourite Race:**

The races with a sense of occasion so my journey to collect the six major marathons with all the holidays that went with them, and on the Marathon du Medoc I got to drink wine all the way round ☐ A few select pictures, see if you can recognise the marathons – don't look at the bibs. I also have a habit of falling over a couple of times a year, one of which was at the Paris Marathon with 8K to go, due to the adrenalin or shock, it was one of the fastest last five miles of all my marathons to get the finish line before I seized up – not a recommended race method though .....





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## My First Marathon:

For my first marathon I trained myself not being a member of Ilford yet, I remember following a Runners World Schedule and I had decided to aim for under 3:45 for some unknown reason. I followed it to the letter as I was convinced if I missed a session I wouldn't make it round. Shame I didn't read up on appropriate clothing as you can see from the pictures below, the first marathon followed by the second one six months later.





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I got under 3:45 and it was the last unchipped London, so it was probably quicker. Note to runners pumping your arms faster makes no difference in the last 200m of a marathon.

### **My Notable Performance:**

Working my way up to a 3:26 marathon and becoming a Six Star Finisher in the Abbot World Major Marathon series with times all under 4 hours - once I get my act together and get my second Boston time recorded on my certificate. My New York time as a V55 in 2017 was almost a minute faster than when I ran it in 2001 giving me 18<sup>th</sup> in my age group, so age does help sometimes.



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**Soaked, but  
smiling!** 😁

On the topic of series, Carlie, Steve Parker and Alan helped me with my journey to get the London Classics Medal.



I have some Essex medals, the most notable was the V35 silver on the Roding Half Marathon and V55 seems to be the age category for me for the Essex League Cross Country Series with one first and two third places.

### **Typical Weeks Training at your peak:**

Unfortunately, my Garmin history doesn't go back that far and I think for my first marathon's it was a Polar watch instead. I do remember writing it down in a blue book and I am resisting the temptation to tear my home apart looking for it amongst all the boxes. The most intense training was for marathons and it followed the format below with a few 18, 20 and 22 mile runs thrown in on the



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Sunday.

*Monday relaxed run,*

*Tuesday track session,*

*Wednesday lunchtime road run,*

*Thursday road or hills,*

*Friday rest,*

*Saturday race during XC season or run,*

*Sunday race or long run on the roads.*

### **Favourite Sessions:**

I like training with other people so the track and Hainault forest but I am just as happy to put on a good audio book or podcast and get out there on my own.

### **Favourite race distance**

Now I wonder what that is .....

### **Favourite event - Track, Road or Cross Country**

Cross Country for the tea and cake, Road for the tea and cake, Track not so much – although I do enjoy being a field official, give me that score sheet and hooter and I'm happy providing the weather is good.

### **What advice would you give our current crop of youngsters**

I think you have to be prepared to put the work in during training and use it wisely when racing but above all enjoy the friendship and the days out.

### **Who is the most Famous Athlete you Trained with or would like to train with:**

I haven't trained with anyone famous but have some pictures with some, oh



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and I've been on two Mike Gratton 209 Event Holidays and the Davos one did involve some walking with him, does that count?







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### **What other sports do you follow:**

To be honest I don't really follow other sports, I like to do rather than watch. I like to ski and have now done two triathlons. As you can see from the picture below I am very keen to get there early with my bike.



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If you keep your Garmin on when you ski, the result looks just like a piste map.

## **Best Country Visited**

I am very lucky that I have been able to travel to all sorts of places and can never pick just one, but three highlights are a Norwegian Icebreaker in Antarctica & South Georgia (I love penguins), climbing Kilimanjaro with Sally and a sailing ship in the Arctic. There were dips in the ocean with the penguins and polar bears, a visit to Shackleton's Grave and a climb up to the crow's nest of our tall ship.





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**Favourite Food & Drink :** My guilty pleasure is mature cheddar cheese and pickle (or strawberry jam) sandwiches. I haven't a favourite drink but I can't drink gin, we had a bad experience together when I was young.

**Favourite TV Shows:** Bones, Big Bang Theory & NCIS (early seasons) and any nature programs.

**Last Film Seen :** THE RISE OF SKYWALKER - Star Wars Film



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**Last Theatre** - Cyrano De Bergerac with James MaCavoy

**Last Book Read** - Now You See Me by S.J. Bolton

**Favourite Band Singer:**

Anything to do with Nick Cave, Jack White and Gruff Rhys, The Clash & David Bowie. I go through phases with other bands/singers but these are the ones that are a permanent fixture.

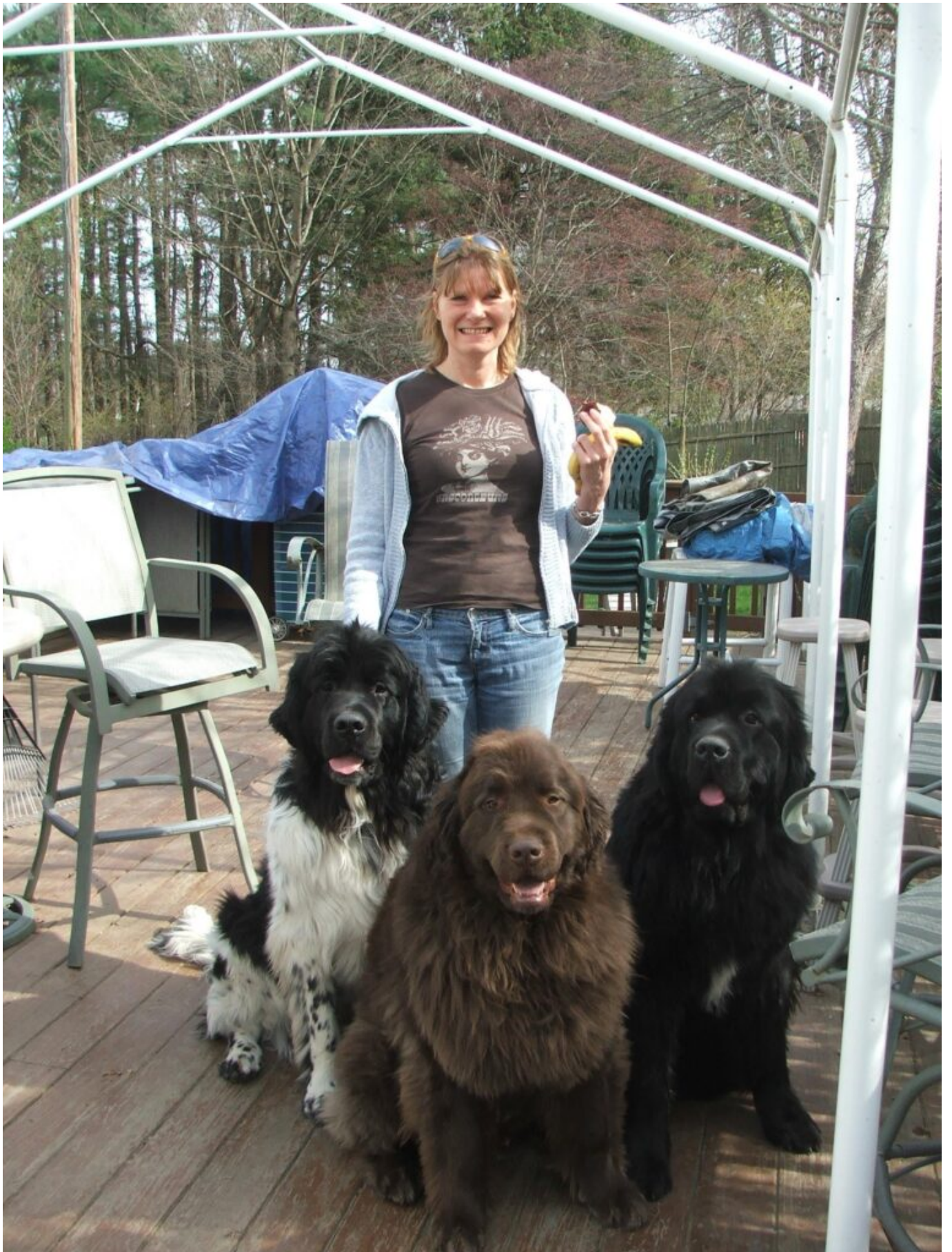
**Last Album Bought or Downloaded** - Punky Reggae Selecta - 19 punk club classics

**Last Concert Attended:** Eels in Barcelona

**Any Pets:** I don't have any pets but I love dogs and live vicariously through other peoples.



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### **What are your aims for next season**

I am not able to train for most of this year for reasons not related to running, so my aim will be to choose a challenge for next year or 2022 to prove I still can, either a triathlon or marathon. Watch out I am after companions.

### **You're 18 again and you can be the best in the world at anything. What would it be?**

I want to be David Attenborough.

### **Tell us a Joke:**

Man goes to the Doctor's - 'Doctor I think I'm going deaf'

Doctor - 'Can you describe the symptoms?'

Man - 'Yes, Homer is fat and Marge has blue hair'