



Danny Holeyman

Name: Danny "Steptoe Race Face" Holeyman

Born: 8 November 1973

Date Joined 1st time 2001-2003 (ish) 2nd time Feb 2018

Personal Bests:

Mile - 5.35

3K - 10.36.73

5K - 18.58 (or was until his incredible **17:48** at the Olympic Park Wednesday - Ed!)

Parkrun - 18.41

5 Miles - 30.33

10K - 38.00

10 Miles - 63.48

Half Marathon - 82.31

20 Miles - 2.20.07

Marathon - 3.09.53

First Club Race: Hatfield BroadOak 10K 2018

Favourite Race: Brentwood Half Marathon



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Notable Performances:

Hillingdon 20 (2019), London Marathon (2019) and Essex XC (Writtle 2019)

- 1. The Hillingdon 20 gave me real confidence for the marathon and was the first time I had “raced” over a distance longer than a half marathon. It went a lot better than I had expected and helped me significantly in my mental preparation for London in 2019. I also remember the race fondly as it was a horrible wet, windy and cold day but my Dad (who was 82 at the time) stood on the course for over 2 hours to support me – that will always mean a lot to me.
2. I always had a target of 3.15 for London and managed to dip under 3.10 – at the time this would have given me GFA for some other majors but 2019 must have been a good year for old runners like me as the GFA times then got lowered which meant I missed out. Nonetheless I was still chuffed with my time back then. Those that know me won't be surprised to learn that I want to improve on that time in the next marathon I run.
3. Essex XC – I managed to sneak into the scoring Vets V40 team which was populated by current IAC royalty (Malcolm Muir, Gary Coombes and Paul Grange) and so was able to sneak, I am sure, what will be my only ever Essex County medal.

Biggest Disappointment:

1. London Marathon 2011 (obtained a stress fracture in January 2011 and only started running again 2 weeks before – needless to say it was a disaster).
2. Having to stop for a wee in Hillingdon and London which cost me some time. Since then, I have been educated by the master Mr Terence Knightley (I am his learned apprentice) who has imparted his wisdom as to how I deal with that predicament in the future!

Why Did you join Ilford AC:

I re-joined in February 2018 (same night as Mr Coombes). I have my son Ryan to thank for that, as after 7 years of playing football, he had decided that he wanted to start running having dabbled at the local Parkrun where after a few months he was quicker than his old man (who had been running for over 30 years). I was keen to get some structure around my training again and I was really happy to see Ryan take an interest in running and want to join a club (I was never really a great football Dad although I always enthusiastically encouraged Ryan during his playing days – I was also the club treasurer). Ryan had a trial at Havering AC and Ilford AC and I am glad that he chose Ilford AC (especially as Havering AC had separately told me that I couldn't join as I wasn't fast enough (Ryan didn't know that at the point of choosing). The rest is, as they say. history.



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Joining the club again in 2018 has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life – it has transformed my running (after 30 years of trying) and enabled me to meet a great raft of inspirational and great people of whom many are now good friends.

Typical Weeks Training at your peak .

45 miles per week on average.

I tend to run most days. M – Easy, T – Track, W – Recovery, T – Intervals/Tempo, F – Easy, Weekends – whatever I can fit in and it varies – LSR or Hard Tempo/Efforts over longer distances (also depends on my alcohol intake).

Favourite Sessions:

I don't particularly like the Track but it is a necessary and vital part of training. My favourite runs would be long tempo/efforts (anything over 10 miles).

Favourite race distance: Half Marathon

Favourite event – Track, Road or Cross Country: Road

What advice would you give our current crop of youngsters:

I firmly believe that mental strength and self-belief is just as important as physical strength. I have seen so many people just give up in races – it is sad to see. If you work and train hard then you can achieve – it is there for the taking. In life you get out what you put in. Be good and kind, treat people with respect, be humble and unselfish and you will succeed (not just in running) and live life to your full potential.

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

Sir Andy Catton and Dame Pam Jones. Utmost respect for those two club icons.



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How would you improve the sport- I am not educated enough to comment on that but to have a stab I would say increase grass roots funding so that facilities can be improved.

Favourite Athlete or Sportsman: Tyson Fury. Paula Radcliffe.

What other sports do you follow: I used to be a boxing nut but so much any longer.

Best Country Visited: Maldives (Carla and I have been there three times but that was before Ryan came along - we will go back soon hopefully). Other than swimming with Whale Sharks in the Mexican Gulf in 2017, Scuba diving and snorkelling with a squadron Manta Rays in the Maldives is one of my most magical experiences.

Favourite Food & Drink : Steak, Red Wine and IPA

Favourite TV Shows: Difficult as I have a few. Sopranos, Breaking Bad, Handmaids Tale, Game of Thrones, Homeland and 24. My absolute favourite TV show - Curb Your Enthusiasm

Last Film Seen : Den of Thieves

Last Book Read: David Cameron Memoirs (before all the recent lobbying stuff came out!). I don't read much though - normally just the latest John Grisham book whilst I am on holiday.

Favourite Band Singer: That is an easy one - The Foals

Last Album Bought or Downloaded Hypercolour (CamelPhat/Foals)



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Last Concert Attended: George Ezra - Feb 2019

Any Pets: Two cats who rule our household and expect to be waited on 24/7 - Gus and Jinx

What are your aims for next season- not much just PBs over 5K, 10K, 5 miles, 10 miles, Half marathon and Marathon .I have run a mile, 5K and 10K faster in training than my current PBs so want the opportunity to get some updated times on the books.

Tell us a Joke: Why did the man cross the road? To get to the other side.



2011 London Marathon



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2012 Great North Run with the main man



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Ryan and I after a run in Central Park, New York, in 2018.



A Billy Green special at One Tree Hill 2018. One of my favourites.



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Happy Times - Boxing Day Handicap 2018



I'm behind you!!



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After the Hillingdon 20 in early 2019. A real confidence boost before London and great support from my dad on what was a filthy cold day.



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The finish is in sight - April 2019 London Marathon. It was touch and go if I was going to dip



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under 3.10. I made it by 7 seconds.



2019 London Marathon - Mile 21 - SFH cheering station. I lost some time, but I was always going to stop. Glad I did.



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My 100th Parkrun - May 2019



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Solitude !



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My first (and probably last County Medal!)



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Ryan and I at Hainault after the 10 miler 2019. The best moments for me in races where we have run together have always been when I can see Ryan out in front of me doing his thing. It makes me immensely proud.



The worst race face - Chingford League Victoria Park Feb 2020



Start Line - Brentwood Half March 2020 - some serious footwear on display

FOLLOW UP

Nice picture of your marathon finish. Who are the people with you in the group photo?

That was in 2011. My mum and dad, in-laws, sister and three nieces. Carla (the Mrs) must have been taking the photo.

For all our readers, What is the true story of the history of you and Terry Knightley at work at Save and Prosper in Romford back in the 90's and Why did you not start running seriously then ? Especially as Terry was training like a Complete Maniac in those days ?

Terry was my first ever boss. I was quite "wet behind the ears" having just graduated from



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University and so it took me a few weeks to get accustomed to Sir Terence. I did run a bit back then and went with Terry once or twice at lunch but he was in a completely different league and nearly killed me during those “easy” lunchtime runs. I remember him chastising most of us on the team most Friday’s when people went over the bakers for cakes and toast. He never partook and told us all that sugar was the “work of the devil”. I remember the day after one of his London Marathon runs where he ran a fantastic time – he had to give a work presentation and at the end he pulled out his medal and told everyone how great he was (only Terry could do that because he is of course). That first year in proper employment was a real experience and I am grateful to Terry for that. His Garry Glitter impression back in the day was legendary too.

Favourite and Least Favourite Park Run and Why ?

I haven’t run many different park runs and haven’t ran one for a very long time now. I have run most of my 100+ Parkruns at Raphaels. It is a fast course in my view but short! I tried to run one in Florida a couple of years back – set off with Ryan and my nephew at 5.30am from Orlando as they start at 7am. We never made it. Followed the satnav which took us in the wrong direction and after 30 miles we ended up in a slum neighbourhood with dubious looking characters sitting on their front porches. I also ended up driving briefly the wrong way on a freeway which was exciting. It was a complete disaster- although I never actually ran it I guess that was my worst ever parkrun.

Worst Running Injury ?

I have been lucky overall (especially over the last few years) but I used to suffer a lot with shin splints when I was in my 20’s until I had some carbon orthotics made. I wore them every day (in all shoes and trainers) for about 15 years and only stopped wearing them about 2-3 years ago when I switched to foam orthotics and I only wear them in training now – not races. The stress fracture leading up to the 2011 marathon was a real setback but thankfully not repeated since.

What is your ultimate Running ambition ?

I don’t really have one. My form has continued to improve over the last few years so I keep setting myself new targets. In 2021 it was sub 18 for 5K and sub 38 for 10K and I have ticked those off now. I would like sub 1.20 for a half and sub 3 for a marathon but I need to work a bit harder – perhaps in 2022.

Favourite Running Shoe and Why ?



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Next% vapourfly. These are controversial I know but everyone seems to race in them now. I think they have improved my times but I do wonder if it is just a placebo effect.

Biggest Rival in Running at Ilford AC and in the Running community ?

At the club I used to have some great battles with Diaurmuid during the 2018/2019 season – especially at cross country. More recently Steve Philcox and I have enjoyed some close battles which have helped us both to run better (I am no match for Steve when he is on top form though). In the wider running community I used to have a rivalry with Chris King at Harold Wood but he has now stepped up another level (he has youth on his side – well that’s what I tell myself anyway). Often in bigger races I have tended to find myself running with the leading lady and that has worked quite well for me in terms of pushing me on in those races.

Do you do any core/strength/plyometric training to help you with your running ?

Yes quite religiously for about the last 4 years. I do core work every other day. I have a set routine which takes about 20 minutes. I am a fan of body weight strength work. I believe strengthening your core is very important.

What is your occupation now and does it fit in with your training ?

I have been lucky to carve out a successful career in pensions. I have been in the industry for 25 years and for the last 10 years have served as Scheme Secretary to 8 large industry occupational pension scheme Trustee Boards. The schemes cover a range of industries from tech companies to a large global airline. It is a truly fascinating job as I have to deal with asset portfolios, negotiations between pension trustees and companies on funding, interesting discretion cases where I help the trustees decide who money should be paid to in the event of deaths (some people lead some very interesting and complex lives!), setting assumptions around things like future interest/inflation and mortality as well as making sure people get paid when they retire.

I work flexibly and so although I work long hours I can fit in runs/training around my work quite easily as I can work early morning, late evenings and weekends (which contrary to popular belief I often do).

My job is quite stressful and running is a way that I can switch off and relax and so in that respect it is an important part of my daily routine (especially as I am now home based



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mainly).

Do you follow any particular nutrition and what is your current weight/height ?

I am addicted to crisps and so my diet is quite poor but I do avoid bread as much as I can and like Terry with sugar, I believe white bread is the work of the devil. I also drink more alcohol than I should (I like real ale, red wine and vodka/lime/soda) a reason why I don't do early morning runs very often.

Do you think, barring injury, you will now continue to run for the rest of your life ?

Not sure - sometimes the training can be intense and consuming. I always like to run to the best of my ability and so when I start to get slower I may find myself taking a break.

Favourite Football Team And player?

Not really a big footie fan although I was season ticket holder at West Ham for one season at the new stadium. The Irons would be my team (I do have a fondness for Liverpool though as they were my boyhood team). Favourite player - hmmm. I'll pass that one.

What school did you go to and did you participate in athletics there ?

Local comprehensive - Chase Cross (now Bower Park). Yes I represented the school a few times over 800m and 1500m - not very memorable performances though. A very long time ago.

Have you ever dropped out of a race and If so, Why ? No.

Have you ever raced abroad ? No. I was hoping to run the Amsterdam Marathon this year (2021) but will now do it in 2022.

What is it you love about Ilford AC ?

The all inclusive attitude and friendliness. The support from everyone is immense.

Did you encourage Ryan to run, did he take it up because he knew you loved it or a bit of a combination?



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I think I had to nag him a bit to start with – the first parkrun was a little difficult but he got round! After a while though he realised he was good at it and it went from there.

Have you ever competed in any other sports?

I was an amateur boxer for about 2 years from the age of 13. My best friend was a very good boxer (he made national school boy semi finals twice) and he got me into it. I was fanatical about it too for many years – I still believe those years were the golden years for boxing in the UK (Bruno, Benn, Watson, Eubank, Honeyghan, Hearn, Tyson etc.).

Doctor Who approaches you and says you can go back and witness any event in history - What would it be?

The moment when Hitler realised he had been defeated.

If you could spend an hour just chatting to anyone, alive or dead, who would it be and why?

Probably a cliché answer but it would be my mum. She was profoundly deaf for most of her life and the last few months of her life were difficult- it would have been fantastic to have been able to communicate with her clearly during that time.

Eight fantasy dinner guests. Alive or dead?

Tyson Fury, Paula Radcliffe, Mick Jagger, Alan Sugar, Winston Churchill, Tony Blair, Mohammed Ali, Larry David.

I'm offering you 4 tickets for a Foals gig in the next couple of weeks. Standing gig, full capacity. Are you going, and who are you taking?

Definitely – I would be taking the boss (Mrs H), Billy Green (so he gets to listen to some proper music) and my cat Gus as he is a big Foals fan.

If you could witness a fantasy Ilford AC 4 x 400m of athletes in their prime, who is in your men's team and who is in your women's team?

Andy Catton, Wayne Hick, Tony Nixon and Terry Knightley.



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Sharon Honey, Pauline Tester, Pam Jones (MBE) and Breege Nordin

Favourite terrain for a race?

Definitely Road.



2019 Pleshey Half - Essex Champs with IAC royalty.



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2019 VLM – Carla, Ryan, Brother, Sister, nieces (and partners) and my Dad.



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Brentwood Parkrun - Ryan was starting to enjoy running. 2018 (age 13)



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Chingford League - Hog Hill - 2020 with Ryan. He ran a blinder that day.





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Great South Run 2010 (Ryan aged 5)



One of Ryan's first parkruns - 2016 (age 11)



Ryan at Hatfield Broadoak Fun Run 2014 (age 9)



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The three amigos - ELVis - Olympic Park - 2021