

PRESS RELEASE- COUCH TO 5K 2022

After a year away due to the pandemic, Deestridders Running Club will be (subject to covid restrictions) putting on another "Couch to 5k", starting in January. This 10 week programme is ideal if you're looking to start, or get back into, running in the New Year. The club will host two of the three weekly sessions on Tuesday and Thursday evenings at 6pm and "graduation" will take place in the spring at a local parkrun where you will run "The 5k". This year the club will charge £10 per participant and whilst there is no requirement or expectation to join the club at the end of the programme, those who do will get this sum deducted from their annual subscription fee.

And a lot of our graduates do go on to join the club- there's a custom-made group called Developers (or "Deevelopers") on a Tuesday night at 6.30 pm which is perfect for them to take the next steps of their running journey.

We asked some graduates from recent years, not all of whom did Couch to 5k with Deestridders, to share something of their experience of the programme and what they've gone on to do since.

Sarah Brown graduated in 2018, the first year the club offered the programme. Now a run leader for the 5 mile training group, she has worked her way up to the marathon, completing Chester this year in an impressive 4 hours 47 minutes. "Everyone was great and really encouraging," she says of her time as a "couchie". "I have been running ever since and I couldn't have done the marathon without the help of everyone at the club."

Couch to 5k really took off the following year, with the outgoing Vikki Foulkes glad of the company it offered early in her running story. "Dark nights had set in and it wasn't safe to be running alone. I enjoyed the company and the encouragement from more experienced runners. After graduating I knew this club was for me as an inclusive club to help less experienced runners. I carried on and a few weeks later I ran my 2nd 10k and felt confident to carry on."

Another 2019 graduate, Anwen Stevens, had tried to start running before but found it hard to motivate herself alone. The social side brought out the best in her and she became noted for arranging weekend sessions with other participants. "I've met genuinely nice people at the club and wouldn't have achieved what I have done without each and every one of them."

Darren Curtis is a more recent graduate and with Deestridders unable to offer a programme last year, he did it himself but, like Anwen, found self-motivation difficult. He came to the club in the summer keen to improve and though he found the Developers sessions tough at the beginning, he loved it and immediately found himself made welcome- and looking forward to Tuesday nights. A few months later, he is not far off being ready to move up to the 5 mile group. "I've come on so much running with you guys, which I never would have done on my own," he told the club.

At time of writing we don't yet have a confirmed start date but it is likely that Tuesday and Thursday night runs will start from Ash Grove public car park in Shotton, meeting from 5.45 pm for a 6pm start. Please email our club secretary Nige Parr at nigeparr@gmail.com or we have a Deestridders Couch to 5k public group on Facebook where more details will be posted as we have them.