

Experience of an WRN Organiser

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Sally Evans, who works p/t as Projects Co-ordinator for WASP and p/t for Age Concern shares her experiences of returning to running.

I thought my running days were over but discovered I'm not quite over the hill yet!!

Last year as part of my work with WASP, I organised a Women's Running Network (WRN) Organiser's course to get more people in Wiltshire running. Rather than just listen and watch the candidates on the day, I decided to take part in the course even though I hadn't run since having major surgery 10 years previously.

The following day I ached all over and a little voice in my head was saying 'I told you so' you're not fit enough to run – stick to walking, it's less strain on your joints. But the other voice in my head, my colleagues at work and WRN were saying – just stick with it, come on one of our beginner's courses and you'll love it. We have lots of runners over 50yrs who have caught the bug!

For months I held out but with a little more encouragement or some would call it pressure, I took part in the Race For Life in Marlborough and the Sport relief mile in Trowbridge.

Somehow I had to get into the habit of running instead of doing a run and then nothing for 3 months. The breakthrough came when Paula Phillips, a local WRN organiser invited me along to a 5 week beginners group in November. The thought of running on a cold dark night filled me with horror but I knew that if I could run with a group it would motivate me to keep going. I invited a friend along and we persevered for 3 weeks (one week I was on holiday and the other it was pouring with rain and I didn't have the 'right gear' – call me wet!)

We were given a runners log and encouraged to do some running/walking and cross training 3 times a week. During the course we did some Fartlek running (running and walking combined) some hill training and lots of fun exercises to build up stamina.

I found the training log was a real help in measuring progress and within 3 weeks I'd got the bug and was itching to get my running shoes on every other day. Little tips like wearing 2 bras for

support and advice on nutrition and running shoes also helped to get me going.

I still haven't run a half marathon yet or organised my own beginners course but I am planning to set up a group in 2009 leading up to Race For Life.

Knowing what it feels like to be a beginner, I hope to motivate other ladies out there too who would like to start running for the first time or start up again after a long break.

If you are interested in joining a beginners group please contact me, Sally Evans on 07789393280