**Who am I ???**

My name is John Lloyd (aka Cannonball) I am a PE teacher who has rediscovered my passion for competing in races. As a child I was the type of kid who loved all sport, who would never moan about the weather conditions and always gave 100 percent. At an early stage my school identified me as someone with a talent for athletics and suggested that I needed to go to a club to harness my potential. So I joined Rochdale Harriers.

I started training as an 800m runner and soon progressed to 1500m. Even at an early age I was known for my explosive starts and finishes to races (hence the name cannonball). In school I progressed up the ranks of the cross-country teams, representing my county at this level and had a top ten finish in the English Schools Cross Country Championships.

Following the death of my father I sadly stopped running and took up the sport that my father was good at, football. I had trials for various clubs but never quite made the grade. I had lost my passion for running – yet my fitness was still there, I still hold one of the highest bleep test scores at my University.

University life took its toll I lost all concept of a balanced diet, started drinking too much and gained weight. By the time I was 25 and finished university I had gone from 67kg – 12 Stone 2lbs to 99kg – 18 stone 1.5 lbs.

I was in a rut then I met my wife and everything changed for the better.

We joined a gym; I started running again, at first 1 mile and gradually building up to 5k. I started doing weights and found that I had a rapid drop in weight initially. However, at the age of 28 – my weight was dropping but I was not really making massive inroads. So I started setting myself goals and challenges.

Before I knew it I was feeling light and was 80kg. Having a bite to eat with my brother one day, he suggested that we should enter the local fell race – shepherds skyline (roughly 10k and over a 1100 ft of climbing of climbing). So we did I came 53rd (from over 300 competitors) and couldn’t believe it! This is what I was good at, and this is what I was meant to do. I entered road races, began training properly and smashed a PB virtually every time I ran.

I wanted to be part of a team so joined Todmorden Harriers. I was hooked. I began training with like minded people, entered Fell races (mountains/ large hills) of ridiculous distances and ascents, entered road races of different distances and took up my original passion once more, cross country races.

Just like me one race could make the difference for you ????

So come-on join in, have a go, meet others and let this be the day your running career changed for the better. Whatever your goals are be sure that cannonball events will be with you to praise your achievement. I will always award spot prizes and will have the added boost of PB percentage improvers prizes. This means that the top 5 most improved runs will achieve a prize in each race.

See you all soon , John Lloyd AKA the Cannonball.