

First and foremost, I would like to sincerely apologise for our absence from this year's event. We have whisked Mum away for a few days and we're doing everything possible to get her used to her new normal and see what our first Christmas without Dad will look like.

Although I obviously wish this day was in another 20 years, I would like to thank you all as individuals and a collective for the kindness and generosity you have shown my dad. It has been greatly appreciated by us all. Growing up as a Holmfirth Harrier, surrounded by like minded people of all ages, is something to be enjoyed. The bonds formed in a wet, muddy field in December are some that will last for a lifetime and must be cherished.

When I think of the Tinker Cup, I can't help but smile. It was the Burnlee races and the Tinker Cup that really got me excited about running as a child. A tough race, not taken too seriously. A diverse and inclusive field of athletes all trying their best, with varying results, followed by a couple of pints and a buffet!! What's not to like??

My dad had been involved with the Tinker Cup as either a competitor or timekeeper for about 30 years and he took his role as seriously here, as he did at any international timekeeping event. The joy of starting his watch at the Cricket Club, before hot footing across to Netherthong to cheer everyone on, prior to jumping back in the car and racing back with the leader generally hot on his heels, seemed to really get the adrenaline pumping. It was also at this race only a couple of years ago, that Dad gave my son, Oliver, his first glimpse at what timekeeping involved and taught him a couple of tricks of the trade. Dad's enthusiasm lit a little fire in an impressionable 7 year old, provoking him to ask lots of questions. That one small act stays with Oliver and generates the biggest smile when the Tinker Cup is mentioned, although I don't think it did enough to ever convince him to take part!

I know my Dad would be proud to have this event being undertaken in his name and once again, I would like to thank you all for honouring him in this way. I wish you good luck (if before the event), well done (if after the event) and I hope you all have a very merry Christmas.