

# **E-BULLETIN**

## **22 APRIL 2020**



# **GETTING CREATIVE**



# **UNDER LOCKDOWN**

## Chairman Chat

### Phil Reay

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*Phil joined the club in 2010 and from 2016-18 was the Men's Team captain. Outside of running he works in Marketing, Sales and Business development roles. Phil enjoys long distance running and has completed over 59 marathons, including the ultramarathon Marathon des Sables in 2016.*

*chairman@readingroadrunners.org*

How are you all doing Reading Roadrunners? There's no question that we're in a marathon not a sprint and I've continued to pace myself and focus on what I can do. Over the last week especially, there have been so many moments where I've stopped, smiled and felt a sense of greater appreciation of what we do have. Many of you will be familiar with Kendrick Road, the downhill stretch towards town of the Reading Half Marathon. It's my favourite road in town as it showcases each of the seasons in all their glory – currently it's relatively traffic-free and the leaves on the trees are turning greener by the day as spring blooms. My daily exercise has also been accompanied by a chorus from the birds, an acute awareness of the beautiful spring blossom and the clear blue skies above.

I continue to be impressed at the sense of community at the club. The thing that made me smile the most this week was the virtual shirt relay video. Many thanks to **Emma Caswell** for the idea, leading the project and producing such a fantastic video which has had over 9,000 views on social media – well done to everyone who took part.

We're fortunate to have good leaders throughout the club who are having such a positive impact on keeping us connected. Thanks to **Peter Higgs** for organising Sundays 'pack of cards' training session. This week our Captains, **Sam** and **Jamie** have organised another virtual event while our Social Secretary **Liz Johnson** hosts a sold out Virtual Bingo event on Saturday night.

I'm delighted to share we're have some new leaders in our volunteer roles. **Nicki Farrell** has been a second claim member for many years and has now switched to first claim. Nicki is a Certified Mental Health First Aider and has experience from her work place. She will work alongside Alexa as a Mental Health Champion at the club, as we work to increase our initiatives to help ensuring people are mentally supported – never more important than now.

As previously announced **Chris and Sarah Drew** have stood down from their role as Kit Managers after over 4 years. I'm thrilled to share that another fabulous couple will take on the role. Please welcome **Clive and Suzanne Bate** as our new Reading Roadrunners Kit Managers. They will be working with our new kit suppliers 2XU over the coming weeks to secure delivery of our first order.

A marathon is a long way, there are challenging moments in such a race, there are moments when the strength of mind becomes as important as physical fitness. Be the best you can be in the moment you're in, persevere, stay strong....586 of your Reading Roadrunners team mates are supporting you.

Phil

chairman@readingroadrunners.org

## Editor's Note

Ben Fasham

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Dear all,

Wednesday again and thanks as ever to the contributors who continue to make the weekly e-Bulletin as viable and worthwhile as it is. There appears to be no let-up in the number and standard of submissions, which is fantastic, and I would like to encourage anyone and everyone to have a go at writing something. I'd especially like to hear from new or recent members of the club, with their thoughts and reflections on the changes to their running since joining – and I'd especially like to hear from new runners if we have any on board!

The articles this week include a round-up of the action points that were agreed after the new joiners' survey last summer (!), many of which were actioned some time ago. Much of what appears in the survey is on hold for the moment but the chance for reflection is always one to be taken, so again, new members, please get in touch with your suggestions.

Meanwhile **Alan Freer** has a first go at compiling a running-themed playlist; if you would like the readership to judge your taste in music then why not have a go at compiling one yourself? **Dave Thornton** takes a trip to Sweden to visit the Volvo factory, and after that things take a literary bent with first a book review from **Sam Whalley**, and then a welcome return to **Kathy Tytler's** poetic stylings. **Coach Alexa** brings us yet more stretches (more of which can be found on her website, <https://www.ontherunhealthandfitness.co.uk/>) and **Mark Apsey** closes things off with another delicious-looking recipe. I've enjoyed seeing people's efforts appear on the club's Facebook page, so please do keep the photos coming.

On the subject of the Facebook page – there are some 200 Roadrunners or so who are not members of it, and there's obviously some concern that these folk may not be hearing absolutely everything that's going on around the club, be it more formal activities like the Virtual Relays or Bingo nights, or who may be missing out on the informal networks that regular personal interactions such as Track Wednesday offer. It'd be great to hear from anyone in that position who's reading the e-Bulletin (or who knows of club members in that position), and we can try to find a way of broadening the opportunity for those people to stay in touch. Likewise, if there are people who would like to take part in the club's social media activities but may be nervous about it, or approaching it for the first time, then now's the chance to let us know via the [newsletter@readingroadrunners.org](mailto:newsletter@readingroadrunners.org) email address and we can try to help out.

Anyway enough from me – enjoy your running and the sunny weather,

Ben

[newsletter@readingroadrunners.org](mailto:newsletter@readingroadrunners.org)



## Women's Captain's Report

Sam Whalley

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*Sam joined the club in 2015 just after her first marathon. She has 3 teenagers, 2 dogs and one husband; she works part-time as a secondary school teacher. She is a huge fan of XC running, doesn't mind swimming and is a fair-weather cyclist. When not running, she will quite often be baking.*

*teamcaptains@readingroadrunners.org*

Another week has gone by and I wouldn't say I am enjoying my new running routine but I definitely have one. I am starting to really miss some of the things I used to take for granted, like the occasional bought coffee and going out more than once a day. My dogs might even have forgotten there are other fields than our closest one. Having said that, we are also lucky to have other off-road options for when we have to go running with the dogs (we have a walking/running rota!), and very thankful to have dogs that like to run!

The support network on Strava is great, and I feel like I am keeping in touch with many people that way. I am not someone who goes out socially a lot, but I do like to chat with people, and going to the gym and track was a big part of that. I hope you are managing to maintain some kind of exercise routine that suits you. Hang in there!

Some of you have achieved great things in the virtual running world.

**Catherine Leather** ran the Boston marathon distance over 4 days - great work! **Rabea Hands** completed a virtual version of the Spartan Beast, getting a PB in the half marathon and smashing the obstacles afterwards - amazing! **Alice Carpenter** has not only been using her school's 3D printer to make PPE, but has also found time to train for and complete virtual Ironman events - impressive stuff! There was also a suggestion of a 'Rear of the Year' contest, following Higgys's pack of cards workout at the weekend. It was indeed a bit ouchy.

On the PB front, **Mel Shaw** has achieved a PB for the number of times she has said no to her children when they have asked to play on the iPad - well done!

Mel has also cut the hair of her whole family - what talent! **Zoë Browne** has also branched out from IT into hairdressing, and now lives with someone resembling a convict. She has also perfected her ninja skills, managing to pop to her workplace to collect a monitor without being accosted by someone with an IT problem - very slick!

**Nicola Gillard** has taught her son how to make a cup of tea, and ridden around the crescent with her daughter in a PB time - fantastic!

**Katherine Sargeant** has not only taught her cat, Gracie Fur, a new trick, but also rearranged her (Katherine's not Gracie's) wedding for 54 weeks later than originally planned.

I'm not sure **Katie Gumbrell** is taking these PBs seriously, as she reports that she counted 12,034,673 midges by the River Thames at Purley on Saturday evening, which is a PB for not-losing-count of 7 midges. This one may need to be verified.

PW of the week is a tie between Nicola Gillard, for her worst night's sleep since becoming a mother, and **Sarah Dooley**, who was reprimanded by the manager of Waitrose for moving too slowly along the meat aisle, during a socially-distanced conversation with **Mark Dibben**.

Keep those PBs and PWs coming in.

Over the next few days, on the week that would have included the Boston and London marathons, we have the bingo and 5k relays to keep us busy, with another event in the planning stages.

By the way, has anyone else created their own notparkrun? Mine is Southlake Wood, a one-lapper which incorporates a lap of the lake, a bit through the woods, and a lap of the football field. It is suitable for dogs but not buggies. Events so far: 4. Attendance record: 2.



## Thames Valley Virtual Relays

**Jamie Smith**

Don't put your club top away just yet!!! – Hopefully, everyone enjoyed the virtual relay, well we have more that everyone can get involved with!

Sam and myself have organised an interclub virtual 5km race versus the clubs we run against in the TVXC over the winter cross country season, only without the mud, rain and huge amounts of cake!

So far, joining us we have – Finch Coasters, Marlow Striders, Handy Cross, Sheen Shufflers, Burnham Joggers, Burnham, Metros, Tadley, Sandhurst and TVT

How it would work is that everyone has the chance to run a 5k between 00:01 on Wednesday 22nd April and 12:00 (midday) on Sunday 26th April.

Times would be submitted with a Garmin/Strava screenshot as comment on the event Facebook page.

Times from the fastest 6 male runners, 6 female runners, and a mixed 12 runners overall from each club would count towards the team scores. As well as the first 4 males and 4 females for each club in the V40, V50, V60, V70 (and V80) categories, and the first 6 vets overall.

There is no limit to the number of runners who can participate, and it is a good opportunity for everyone to see what their best, flat, road, 5k time would be. Only one attempt per runner should be submitted. Any run with a negative elevation of more than 30ft will incur a time penalty.

Obviously, in line with current government guidelines, all runs must be completed solo, and as part of the allowable daily exercise. Should these guidelines change before the race start date, the event will be reviewed.

So, let's see that green vest out pounding the pavement once more – and show those local clubs how proud we are to run for such a great club! – Jamie

## New Joiners' Actions

Alexa Duckworth-Briggs

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Back in August, in my role as Mental Health Champion, I asked club members to give their thoughts and ideas on how we could improve the experience for new joiners to the club. I know it can be a bit nerve wracking for people to turn up for the first time so I asked what we could do to make this first step easier.

I got loads of great ideas back from our brilliant runners, which in the end covered all aspects of the new joiner experience; from finding out more about how to join on the website through to their second session with the club and beyond. Many of the ideas have a more broad positive impact on our club too. A huge thank you to everyone who replied for taking the time, it's been so useful!

I then unleashed my former life as a Project Manager and took all the suggestions and grouped them into categories, the brilliant RRR hive mind came up with lots of great ideas so I've ordered them by the number of people who suggested the same or similar ideas. I've then put every idea that got more than one person suggesting it below and have been tracking actions against them.

It's high time I gave you all an update on progress, so here it is!

If you have any questions or further thoughts let me know on [coachalexa@readingroadrunners.org](mailto:coachalexa@readingroadrunners.org)

Idea	Number of Runners who suggested	Action	Status	Owner
Introduce a Buddy System for first few weeks with the club	15	Buddy system being set up	Open	Katie and Alexa
Pairing people with a buddy within the coaching group they join		Coaches asked to do this within their groups at last coaches meeting	Completed	
Ask about goals, and advise new joiners on coaching groups to try	10	Easier to advise now we have goal based coaching groups	Completed	
Given an introduction to the different coaching groups and what their goals are for all new runners. Include info on the website	9	As above - information clear on the "training session" webpage	Completed	
Meet and greet had great feedback, further suggestions were to make it more visible and have someone to meet outside of barriers at Palmer Park	4	Buddy system being set up	Open	Katie and Alexa

Idea	Number of Runners who suggested	Action	Status	Owner
Introduce new members who join coaching groups for their second session. Introduce them to someone to talk to in the group, it can seem “cliqey” and lonely	4	New induction set up introduced and coaches asked to provide buddies in their groups	Completed	
Meet and greet - accompanying runners from arrival through to the start of the first session as this time is awkward for some runners who don't know anyone	3	Buddy system being set up	Open	Katie and Alexa
Opportunity to meet other runners in clubhouse after the session - specific area or contact in the clubhouse to look out for people and welcome them	3		Open	Alexa
Rotate inductions between coaches	2	New induction set up introduced to include this	Completed	
Track notices can increase anxiety and nerves - it's a big group	2	Buddy system being set up which should help here	Open	Katie and Alexa
New joiners area on the website; Information on how to join, the first session and what to expect	2	New information for the new joiners area of the website - Action with Alexa	Open	Alexa
First session is very athletic focussed and not suitable for runners just starting out	2	Action taken with new induction set up	Completed	
Printed sheets for new joiners. Ideas to include printed photos of coaches and all the details of races, events, outruns etc	2	Post induction email now sent out - pointing to key info that already exists on the website	Completed	
Non-running visits. People can watch a session and ask questions	2	Not yet started - Action Alexa	Open	Alexa
Induction session is one size fits all	2	Action taken with new induction set up	Completed	
Induction too technical and can be off-putting to new runners	2	Action taken with new induction set up	Completed	

## Roadrunners' Jukebox

### Alan Freer picks out some running-themed songs

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**For all Roadrunners:** The Spencer Davis Group - Keep on Running  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pK0DbgovWZo>

**Reading parkrun:** Tom Jones – The Green Green Grass of Home  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j64H2aWWU0E>

**Handy Cross XC:** Kate Bush – Running Up That Hill  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wp43OdtAAkM>

**Metros XC:** Ike & Tina Turner – River Deep Mountain High  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uj0wPrN\\_Y\\_4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uj0wPrN_Y_4)

**Endure 24:** Billy Ocean - When The Going Gets Tough,  
 The Tough Get Going  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-n3sUWR4FV4>

**London Rejection Slip Received:** Jimmy Ruffin –  
 What Becomes of the Broken-Hearted  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cQywZYGB1g>

**London Start Line:** Barbara Pennington – On A Crowded Street  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zPwlht9FR24>

**Mile 22 When the Minutes go faster than the Miles:** Cher – If I Could Turn Back Time  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Grdev5ktOGw>

**Embankment:** The Human League – The Sound of the Crowd  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oZ2XOSGuzyo>

**When the Race Photographer is in the last Kilometre:** The Isley Brothers - Behind a Painted Smile  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8g6Ov67VDQM>

**London Finish Line:** Frankie Goes to Hollywood – Relax (Don't do it)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oh4tHpUfIDA>

**DOMS Day after London:** The Boomtown Rats – I Don't Like Mondays  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?gl=PL&hl=pl&v=-Kobdb37Cwc>

**And finally, dedicated to 2020:** Marta & The Vandellas – Nowhere to Run  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ABbc-O\\_3\\_Ac](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ABbc-O_3_Ac)



## Skatås parkrun

Dave Thornton

*2020 is/was going to be a year of many short trips abroad for Dave for parkruns. With the Copenhagen NYDD and Portrush under his belt, could he surpass the £15 return flight to Ireland for Inch Beach?*



I confess to liking good value. And I confess to being OK about flying with Ryanair – somebody once said to treat it as a ‘bus with wings’ and you won’t be disappointed. So when it came to one of their January sale emails, it wasn’t long before I overlaid their route maps with the parkrun event maps, then booked a return flight to Gothenburg for ten pounds! One of my work colleagues engaged mouth before brain and asked whether that was where batman lived, but I tactfully advised it’s a city on the west coast of Sweden.

It was the last weekend of February, the same as Tom Harrison and crew were in Toulouse for parkrun. It was cold, but above freezing, with just a little snow. A cursory glance through their event history showed they rarely cancel, so it was a £10 bet with good odds. Skatås (pronounced Schottosh) is a stunning single lap

course through the woods around a lake. Firm enough for road shoes all year round and wide enough to drive a Volvo around, with a couple of gentle hills.



We stayed on the outskirts of town at a cheap but good hotel with an amazing breakfast, a 25 minute walk to the start. I’ve run at over 50 different events and I don’t rank them, but this was the only one where I have momentarily stopped to take pictures of the views whilst going round. There were about 50 runners, with a briefing also in English as about half the field were expats or tourists. It was a shame to turn down coffee with them, but hotel checkout was 11am and we had the day ahead in Gothenburg.

Their public transport is nothing short of amazing. Download the app, buy an all-day ticket and you have full use of the punctual and frequent trams and buses. We headed for the Saluhallen, a stunning indoor food market where you really could spend all day eating and drinking. Not only is English well-spoken but they prefer card to cash. We did the entire trip cashless. For those who like a bit of history, there’s the maritime museum and Sweden’s answer to the HMS Victory. But being accompanied by a friend who likes parkruns but is also a fellow petrolhead, *the* place to go in Gothenburg is the Volvo museum. How Swedish can you get? It’s one of the best car museums I’ve visited. We wrapped up the day by being even more

Swedish and enjoying the local delicacy (meatballs) in a nearby restaurant. I forget the name, but they have a branch in Calcot.

I can't wait for the resumption of normality and it won't be many months before I'm planning my next adventures.



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Details:

- Friday 1845 Stansted – Gothenburg (2 hour flight)
- Flygbussarna airport coach transfer (ask driver for free Vastraffik (local buses and trams) extension to get to the hotel) – 30 mins - £16 return (book online in advance)
- Hotel Örgryte – about £60 B&B for 2 people
- Vastraffik one day bus/tram pass £8 (download the app)
- Saturday 2205 Gothenburg – Stansted



## 26.2 Miles to Happiness – Paul Tonkinson

Reviewed by Sam Whalley

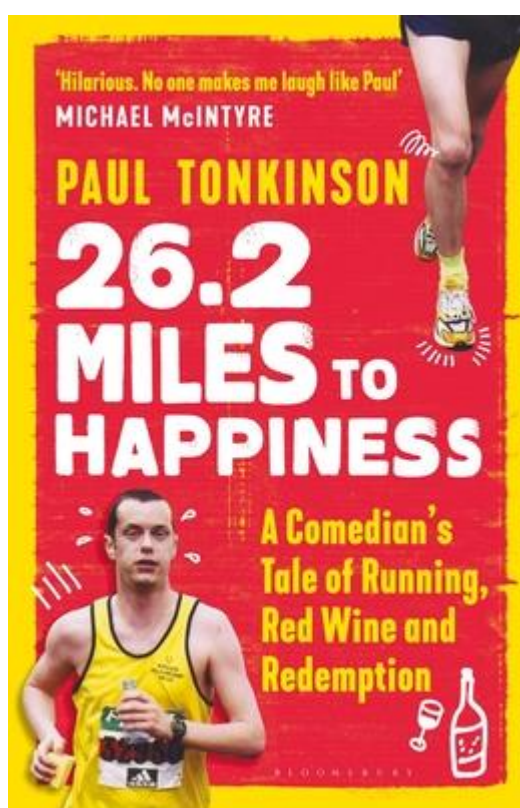
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I am a big fan of Running Commentary, the podcast Paul Tonkinson records with fellow comedian, Rob Deering, while out for a weekly run together. They talk about where they are with their training, of course, but also a good chunk of it is about general life events, all relatable stuff, which often has me laughing out loud to myself.

In 26.2 Miles to Happiness, Paul tells us about his journey to the sub-3 marathon he ran in London in 2017, which we had heard all about during the podcasts leading up to the event. He uses chapters covering separate sections of the marathon, and how he was feeling at each point, interspersed with memories of his childhood, of marathons past, and the lessons learned along the way. The constant battle between wanting to run his dream time and wanting to live his best life as a middle-aged man, is hinted at in the subtitle - A Comedian's Tale of Running, Red Wine and Redemption.

I'm by no means a sophisticated reader. I am usually in need of something fast moving and light-hearted. Needless to say, I really enjoyed this book. It had enough about running to make it useful to me, as a marathon runner (gulp), and plenty of entertaining, and sometimes emotional, stories. I made myself slow down when reading it, to make it last longer, and for me that is the sign of a good read.

To order from the publisher: <https://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/262-miles-to-happiness-9781472966261/>





## Mobility for Runners Pt.2

### Alexa Duckworth-Briggs

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This is an equipment free mobility session for runners; focussed this week on hip and ankle mobility.

For the stretches where you hold position aim to hold them each for at least 15 seconds, longer if it's an area that feels tight. For the moving exercises do them for 30 seconds for each exercise on each side.

#### Hip Mobility

Lie on your back on the floor with feet on the ground and knees bent. Pick up one leg and place it on the opposite knee resting it just about the ankle. Wrap your arms around the leg still with the foot on the floor and pull it towards you to get a stretch into your bum. If you can keep the toes up to the shin on the raised leg and try pushing the top legs knee away with the elbow on that side.



Standing on one leg, and using a hand on a wall for balance, draw big, slow circles with one knee. Make sure just the knee and leg moves, nothing else. Try in the opposite direction and repeat on the other side

Lying on your front, bend a knee, reach back with the arm on the same side and grab the top of your foot. Push into the hand with the top of your foot, the knee will raise slightly off the floor and you'll get a good stretch across the front of that hip. Repeat on the other side.







Drop into a line position with the back knee on the floor directly beneath your hips and the front knee at right angles. Tuck the tail bone under the tilt the pelvis and flatten your lower back, then shift your weight forwards from the hips to get to a stretch point across the front of the hip of the leg whose knee is on the ground.

### Ankle Mobility

Standing on one leg, and using a hand on a wall for balance, draw big, slow circles with one ankle, making sure just the ankle and foot move, nothing else. Try in the opposite direction and repeat on the other side.



Stand facing the wall with your toes touching the wall, push the knee to touch the wall to stretch the calf. Move the foot back an inch and touch the knee to the wall again, repeat until the knee can't reach the wall and start again on the other side.

## ***Kathy's Poems***

**Kathy Tytler**

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### **Prospect Park on Easter Morning**

*In praise of my local park*

With my local park, I am blessed,  
My early morning run,  
Up with the new day's sun,  
And my own unofficial Corona test ...

As I run along the paths in the wood  
The bluebells embrace me with their delicate perfume  
Enhanced by the morning dew,  
The scent of the earth and the grass too,  
I know I still have my sense of smell,  
And re-assurance that all is still well.

Although the park is familiar, I feel content,  
I will never think of this park with contempt  
As I run, I believe that Prospect Park  
Is, today, by heaven sent.

*Kathy Tytler 12 April 2020*



*Kathy has also produced a booklet of poems to keep spirits up and make people smile during lockdown, Poems in the Time of Corona. The Poems will appear here over the next few weeks but if you'd like to receive the booklet in one go then please get in touch.*

## Apsey's Recipes

Mark Apsey



*Mark is a self-employed chef specialising in high-end dinner parties, and a former Head Chef at L'Ortolan Restaurant in Shinfield – so not only is he one of Berkshire's top runners, but also one of its best culinarians. In a semi-regular series for the E-bulletin, Mark brings us a delicious, healthy recipe. Do let us know if you've tried any of them, and enjoyed them!*

Hi All,

Another week and another recipe. This week is the turn of what is genuinely one of my favourite things to eat of all time. It's perfect on a hot day, and (relatively) easy to prepare.

This recipe is slightly different to some of the others as this has more of a concentration on your rest days. Whilst we hopefully are all familiar with refuelling after a run, it's also important to realise that you do not need anywhere near the same level of intake when you're taking a rest day, or recovery run. If you refuelled correctly after your last run, your glycogen stores will already be topped up so there's less need to take on heavy any carbs.

Today's recipe focuses on my version of a Vietnamese dish, **Nuoc Cham**, that goes great with oily fish, e.g. mackerel, sardines, etc. (something we should all have in our diets). Cooked simply under the grill on a medium heat until cooked all the way through, they go stunning here, but as that's not much of a recipe, I'm also sharing my recipe for Asian inspired Fish Cakes, packed with protein, and not the British potato and bread heavy option. This can all be done in advance or last minute.

For the Nuoc Cham - the star of this show;

- 1 whole cucumber
- A generous handful of mint
- 1 whole bunch of spring onions
- 30g salted peanuts - lightly crushed
- 1 red chilli - diced - seeds in or out (your choice)
- 1 clove of garlic - finely minced
- 25g Lime juice
- 25g rice wine vinegar (if you don't have this use more lime)
- 50g water
- 30g palm sugar (caster sugar works fine too)
- 20g fish sauce - nam pla. This is a bit pongy but trust me, it's worth it!

Peel the cucumber and slice around 3mm thick. The side of a grater or a mandolin works well to ensure these are even. Chop the spring onions and the mint.



Stir the lime, rice wine, water, sugar and fish sauce together until the sugar has dissolved. Stir in the peanuts, minced garlic and diced chilli. Then toss the cucumber, mint and spring onion through the liquid. Serve this as cold as you can make it.

For the fish cakes:

200g of good skinless unsmoked fish (tuna, cod, salmon etc)  
50g prawns  
20g ginger  
1 lime, zest and juice  
Handful of coriander, basil etc  
20g sweet chilli sauce  
1 whole egg  
10g fish sauce  
10g light soy sauce

Place the fish, prawns and egg into a food processor and blend to a paste. If you don't have a food processor, finely dice the fish and prawns, then haché through as if you were chopping herbs, then mix in the egg.

Chop the coriander and mince the ginger. Mix all the ingredients together to a sticky paste.

Heat a pan to a medium heat and using a little oil, put small dollops of the paste in and flatten down to make the fish cakes. Using wet hands helps to stop them sticking to you. When they are turning golden around the edges, turn over and cook until golden on both sides.

To serve, serve the cucumber cold, the fish cakes warm and something like rice noodles make a good addition.

As always, I look forward to seeing your creations this week!

Happy cooking!

