

# Mountain GOAT back down to earth – but no running this week!

**A biography on the University of Edinburgh website pays tribute to their veterinary lecturer employee and also describes Jasmin Paris as “a keen hill runner”.**

This is a bit like saying Roger Federer likes to knock a tennis ball around or Rory McIlroy enjoys a Sunday morning fourball. (And by GOAT we mean Greatest Of All Time).

For context Jasmin, from Midlothian, is the archetypal woman of steel as evidenced by the fact she has just become only the 20th competitor and first woman to complete the race in the 35 years of the ultra gruelling Barkley Marathons in Tennessee with 16,500 metres of elevation, ie twice the height of Mount Everest part of a five lap circuit.

Within 24 hours of returning home Jasmin, 40, kindly made time to speak with The Edinburgh Reporter and revealed that, no, she wouldn't be going out for a run this week albeit she had already walked the family Border Collie and, yes, she had enjoyed a glass of wine having abstained for two months going into the event.

The latter surely confirms a relatable aspect albeit, by contrast, few of us can compete with the 26 – yes 26 – initials this Doctor of Philosophy has lined up after her name.

(For the record we were actually talking with Dr Jasmin Paris BSC, BVSc, DipECVIM-CA, MRCVS, PhD, RCVS).

Presumably such a level of qualification requires plenty of thinking time – such as during a race that had to be completed within just the 60 hours (she made it with 99 seconds to spare).



She said: “Actually thinking time in a race like the Barkley’s was taken up by having to focus on navigation etc and there wasn’t much left to distract myself.

“But in dark times when I’m running I mostly think about my kids.”

The family are also what have helped Jasmin cope with suddenly being thrust into a sporting maelstrom, her win reported far and wide.

It wasn’t quite a case of overnight success taking years to achieve but not far off it.

“It has been crazy (the reaction) but I did have a taste a few years ago when I won a race during which I breast-fed while

managing to set a course record.”

Actually that registers as typical self -deprecation as Jasmin smashed that race record by 12 hours.

She adds: “The kids have been a great antidote to the current craziness though. To them I’m just mum!”

And now a secret of Jasmin’s success – she and husband Konrad do not own a television set.

“It’s true although we do occasionally watch a film or a drama but there is generally no need for a television and it frees up a lot of time.”

Surely there must be a vacuum when major sport is broadcast and wouldn’t it be natural for such a talented individual to crave, say, an Olympic spotlight for her endeavours?

“Finishing the Barkley Marathons, especially when the first three of the four laps left me really having to push on and sprint at the end, was my Olympic medal. For me there was absolutely no difference.

“It is fun, though, to watch amazing sport from afar.”

News of Jasmin’s performance was filtering through at roughly the same time as Andy Murray was pushing the boundaries of endurance with two wins followed by a three hour plus epic at the Miami Tennis Open.

Is Murray the type of sportsman, with his phenomenal will-to-win Jasmin could relate to most easily?

“I don’t tend to look to other sports, I do it for myself. But, yes, I admire persevering attitudes” says the lady who remains grateful for help and support at important times from fellow members of Carnethy Hill Running Club.

While never-say-die Andy is rightly celebrated for extending

his career beyond hip surgery Jasmin's claim to being 'bionic' – if there is one – concerns the fact she has achieved her successes minus an anterior cruciate knee ligament.

"It's amazing what you can do through strength work and with the Barkley being run on the roughest of terrains that showed up in the race" she says.

So, a week that started in exalted circumstances saw Jasmin quickly return to the day job as a Senior Lecturer in Small Animal Internal Medicine delighted that one bonus will be the chance to promote something that is close to her heart – the Green Agenda.

She is a co-founder of 'Green Runners' which, according to the website, encourages "putting the planet first when making decisions."

"If I have a better platform now for putting that message across so much the better.

"I have a real love of the natural world and that is part of the reason I run."

And, boy, is that platform expanding.

While the University's biog outlining Jasmin's sporting exertions may have been slightly understated there is no doubting the pride within their subsequent social media post on X, formerly Twitter.

It reads: "Our colleague Dr Jasmin Paris, senior lecturer @TheDickVet has become the first woman to complete the #Barkley Marathons, one of the world's toughest sporting challenges. Huge congratulations from the whole University community."

And doubtless the dogs and cats were singing her praises, too, as Jasmin returned to work at the Dick Vet on Wednesday.

