

# The Human Race Reaching our Potential

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### Post Race Report



Connectwell 31<sup>st</sup> August 2008, Wembley Stadium, London

## 'The Human Race' – Connectwell Team Post Race Review

**Q.** What do you get when you combine the winding turns of Cornish lanes with some new trainers and a dedicated coach giving sound advice? Team Connectwell's Human Race.

Picture the scene - 20K people packed into a fresh, cool Wembley Stadium waiting for the pre race concert to start. We started to ponder how well prepared we actually were now it was 'show time'. Each of us had very different experiences having all been on holiday over the summer. Whether we were abroad or in the UK, took a structured or spontaneous approach to training, we all had a common goal in mind - To race together for 3 worthy causes and connect with 1 Million People worldwide.

So back to Wembley and we were off, Wave 1, then Wave 2 took to the streets streaming out of the stadium. We watched on the big screen as the other participating cities took to the streets across the planet. As we went down ready for Wave 3 the heavens opened again! How quick things change – we managed to retrieve our old discarded T-shirts and caps to try to keep dry.

..and then we were off! What different races we ran. Isabel was nervous; for her, the first 1K was the hardest with a stitch confirming her worst fears. Kim and I were simply trying to stay on our feet in the crowd. The poor weather and route kept the spectators away but we battled on hoping for a glimpse of our support team.

Without too much encouragement we joined in a rendition of 'Bohemian Rhapsody' with some other runners. It was mad! It shifted the whole atmosphere for all those around us. Suddenly there were smiling faces and some humour in the face of adversity.

Just past the halfway mark the unexpected happened – Paula Radcliffe, just back from a disappointing Beijing came flying past with a polite "excuse me guys." We gave chase to tell her what an impact she'd made on us. She said thank you and sped on her way up the field. Amazing! This was in stark contrast to the rudeness of some of the lesser runners that night that ran with their elbows!



So as the end approached we were encouraged by the 8K and 9K markers coming up. Kim was fighting her own battle with a big blister. Turning towards the warm glow of the Wembley Stadium Arch, we finished together with a flurry of speed at the end right up to the line. We did it! The excitement and exhilaration we all felt at the finish line was palpable. One of the best moments was the post race hug and our "cheers" celebration with three bottles of mineral water -better than the finest champagne!

## **Lessons on moving beyond potential that we'd like to share:**

**Humility** – You can reach out and explore your potential and still do it with grace and humility. *(Paula Radcliffe came from a difficult Beijing to run with Wave 4 from the back). An amazing athlete who has reached out and explored her potential and still retains her humility, grace and manners.*

**Diversity** – Diversity is OK. You can embrace different approaches and methods and still achieve great things as long as there is respect for difference, feedback and a common purpose. *(We had different preparation for the event but all with a common purpose. Having to find our own personal route to the finish, both what we had to overcome and what resources we called upon).*

**Spirit & Connection** – Creating the right spirit and energy in any situation can have a massive impact. The right connection amongst people is powerful. *(The spirit during the race was vital. How a couple of lone voices were able to start a 'movement' that changed the feel of the race that carried many people further than they ever expected. This was achieved against a backdrop of pouring rain, the dark night and lack of spectators).*

**Context & the changing value of things** – When the context shifts it is important to notice that and decide how it might impact your goals and activities. Ignorance is not always bliss. Look at the perspective you hold – is it the right one? *(Suddenly a pile of unwanted T-shirts and caps became the new currency when the rain came down before the race. The context of what you are doing and what is happening around you is so important and it can shift just when you least expect it).*

**Support** – A little support can go a long way. Being encouraged and championed by one or just a few is very powerful. Receiving support can make you wonder who you champion in the world! Equally doubt from others can be amplified by you if you don't challenge it. *(How much it really means to know you are being encouraged or championed. Whether it is as specific as being coached by an elite athlete or simply knowing there is a friendly face out there in the dark looking for you).*

**The 'Inch beyond the tape'** – Reach for the stars! You never truly imagine you could achieve so much. Sometimes having the courage and imagination to dream just that little bit higher is the right thing to do. Top sprinters visualise just ahead of the finishing tape not the line itself! *(How much Team Connectwell achieved. Isabel had never run that far – ever. Kim didn't think she could run at all. The team hung together and actually got faster as the race went on! What would we have done if we'd set our ambition that little bit higher? Knowing that there is always more that can be achieved with the right motivation).*

Steve, Kim & Isabel completed the 10K circuit in a respectable 67 minutes, raising important funds for the Lance Armstrong Foundation and the UN Refugee Agency.

**Discover more about your potential and you might put these lessons into practice by talking to the team.**