

A mad fitness fans life through the pandemic in the UK, in Edinburgh

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At the start of writing this reflection I thought the best way to collect some ideas will be to look through my pictures made at the time of the pandemic on my phone. I opened my camera album and started scrolling straight away, the hundreds of pictures I made in the last couple of months made me smile; it still was not what I would call an average summer, but I had the chance to travel within the UK and go to concerts with my friends. However, as I approached the timeframe of the pandemic, I came to the realisation that for months I took barely any pictures, even though these months included not just summers, Christmas and Easter buy my birthday as well. This tells more than anything; nothing happened apart from me waiting.

I picked up the habit of cooking and baking which served as some enjoyable way to spend my time and helped me develop some exciting skills in the kitchen. But what made me truly me before the pandemic was training and competing in obstacle course races, none of which was available. Every day I woke up with the fear that this day will be the day I give up training as there was absolutely nothing to motivate me. There weren't any races in sight, let alone the day when I knew I can finally return to the gym. I know these might sound extreme but as a Health Sciences student, fitness was not only my passion, but it involved my studies as well. One could also argue that you can train outside, but that person surely never been in Scotland. If it is not raining it is cold. However, living in a small flat I was left with no other choice but to train outside. Sometimes, after a 30-minute session I had to hold my hands under the tap in order to feel something in my fingers again. Comfortable gym clothes quickly got packed away and clothes that me look like an eskimo emerged.

As time went on, I finally started to build a routine. I entered virtual races, trained with fellow gym members who understood my suffering and took up running as a new hobby. This not just allowed me to see Edinburgh's most busy shopping street empty, but to eventually learn about my own limits and what my mind was capable of.

Spartan Virtual Race



In some instances, I even learned to just laugh about the situation. During these months I had to submit videos about myself talking through certain exercises (this was an assignment for one of my courses), but in the absence of a gym I ended up using a broom stick to replace a barbell. It definitely gave me some challenging times, but it also taught me that I can push through anything even if I feel like I have absolutely no motivation. In addition, it made me appreciate the gym so much that at the first few days when it opened back up, I seriously considered hiding in a locker for the night so I can make sure they will not close it again. Or if they do, they close it with me in it.

