



Dan – GB 24hr Runner, European Champion, World Team Champion

“I first met Shane Benzie last year when he gave a presentation at the GB 24hr squad meet up. He talked about running elastically and fast slowly !! But his energy and enthusiasm for his subject gave me a real sense of excitement and eagerness to go out and run slowly but fast. A few months later Shane and I met up in Goa, India. Shane came for a flying visit to have a good look at my running shape and form and also to meet Pem, a good friend of mine that literally moves like water. I think the calculation is that in a 24hr race most runners will take around 300 000 steps. So imagine if you were able to increase your stride by a few cm. The gain would be in kms! By watching me run and connecting me up to the Garmin this is what Shane set out to do. I use my watch usually to keep an eye on pace and mileage and had no idea about all the other insights it can tell you. During one session Shane rode alongside me with the watch attached to the handlebars, close enough to still pick up the signal from my strap. The information he was able to relay to me was amazing. We could pinpoint exactly what movement in my body would increase ground contact time or stride length etc. The information was what you might imagine you'd get running in a lab with lots of wires stuck on to you and screens beeping. But we were on a dusty road in India with a watch and chest strap. Wow ! I've carried on this practice without Shane, just referring to watch whilst on my wrist. I think if you would have asked me about this kind of technology before I might well have been a little sceptical. It's not really the essence of running eh ! That freedom and stillness we receive from flowing in the moment. But strangely enough it has brought a much stronger mindfulness to my running. I'm running now with a bigger than ever awareness of my body and how beautifully it all moves as one. The feedback from the watch has shown me how a quick body scan and a subsequent letting go of any tension can effortlessly improve my pace. There is an experiment in quantum physics that shows us particles behave differently when observed. And I think our bodies behave in the same way. One of my hands flapped about like a salmon swimming up river, but what I found was simply observing it started to correct the fault. I love it now when I feel my body lean that bit further and my stride length and pace begin to surge before pulling back slightly. It's like having an accelerator pedal. So rather than technology taking me away from the joy of running in fact it's brought me closer. When you start to feel your body so intricately it's almost impossible not to be in the present.”