



FIT FOR LIFE

Sock it to 'em

Carol Westmorland on why August is a month for really putting on a show

How do you feel about knee-high socks? I have been taken in by a pair of cable knit - barley in colour - by Wigwam and seem barely able to take them off, such is their comfort - and this as we experience a heat wave. What is it that is so comforting about a knee-high?

I also confess to wearing calf shields whilst time trialling. They look ridiculous but I gain - the manufacturer says - an extra 10 watts of power for my trouble.

August is show time - a month that gives you the chance to show your wares and I don't just mean your legs in knee-high socks. It could be your curvaceous courgettes, of which more later, or it could be your delicious dog.

We expect a lot when we enter competitions and yet, in return, receive so little. Losing can cause deep-seated and bubbling resentment, but should it? Everyone loves a gracious loser. I am not one of those. - I am not a gracious loser. My advice is this: ignore the results. Be distracted and look away. Then, should you win something/anything, the genuine surprise - "who, me?" - makes you appear endearing even if that is exactly what you are not.

Anyone entering a competition expects to win. Anyone who says they are



EVERYONE LOVES A GRACIOUS LOSER. I AM NOT ONE OF THOSE - I AM NOT A GRACIOUS LOSER

just taking part is lying.

It is never about your produce. It is about who you know; who you have ingratiated yourself with; and whether your winning will mean you join the organising committee next year ie Mrs W - winner of the largest courgette (2018) and now the newly appointed courgette secretary. Remember AGMs are always autumnal and flattery always works.

Can I suggest an idea for the Best in Fancy Dress in the dog show? Arm yourself with a supremely ventilated cardboard box - stuff the dog in after making holes for its legs, head and tail. The box needs to walk.

Fashion it in the style of a biscuit (before you put the dog in it) - a custard cream, MAYBE. Then you have a dog biscuit. Winner. Guaranteed. Just avoid being at the AGM. Smile and give your apologies.



Carol Westmorland lives in the Eden Valley. She is a Cycling Time Trials national champion, clocking up 445 miles in 24 hours. She also teaches pilates. www.pilates-cumbria.uk