IN THE DARK

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In which I go running in the woods with a new head-torch and write a review.
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Regular readers of this blog will know that I enjoy running fairly long distances on paths, trails and hills. However, I don't particularly like running on roads; my knees and ankles are getting old (as is the rest of me, funnily enough) and they don't enjoy the regular pounding of hard surfaces. Not only that, but hills, woods and fields are infinitely prettier than the streets of High Wycombe.

However, that gives me a bit of a problem at this time of the year because the hills and woods are rather dark. Thankfully, my work is oftenÂ flexible enough to allow me to go out for a run during daylight hours, but not always. I was delighted, then, when the nice people at Unilite asked whether I'd be prepared to test their Prosafe PS-H8 head torch. This meant I could run in the woods at night!



The torch is light enough that I wasn't particularly conscious of wearing it and the headband held it securely without the irritating constant adjustments that other torches have called for. The main light has three brightness settings as well as a flashing setting. There is also an easy touch focus ring, but you are unlikely to want to change focus while running. The battery pack which sits at the back of the head has a neat flashing red light, ideal for running on country lanes.

So, I've been running with this headlight in grotty, rainy weather, in January, in woodland on muddy trails and it was perfectly adequate. It did the job and it didn't irritate me;Â I couldn't really ask for more. I'll be using it again.

Being a little more analytical; the light is 250 lumens (though there is an updated version which is 350). Now, I'm not sure what a lumen is, but 250 of them was enough for me to see far enough ahead to feel comfortable, but (crucially) not enough for me to film a dramatic video to post here so as to make myself look cool. For what I wanted, the PS-H8 was fine. That being said, I suspect that were I a faster runner, I might have wanted a bit more illumination ahead of me. On the half mile of road between my house and the footpaths, I used the light on a low setting with the rear red LED switched on. I'm all in favour of anything that makes me more visible to car drivers.



Avoiding a muddy patch

I'm not sure how well this light would work with a bike helmet, but the arrangement of the front facing lamp and rear red LED would be a great addition to any cyclist's visibility.

I've not tried lots of different head torches, so I can't honestly say how well this one stacks up against the competition. However, it does what I need. I'll be using it for winter training runs and including it in my pack for the theÂ summer mountain-ultras which require you to carry full kit. It will also come camping with us and undoubtedly be called into use when I lose stuff in the garden.

I am very grateful to Unilite for providing me with this excellent torch in exchange for this review. However, I have not allowed the fact that I was given the torch to shape the content of this blog post. If I thought it was a stinker, I'd have said so! If anyone needs a review of lightweight waterproof trousers, give me a shout!