



Roadrunner

The Journal of the Road Runners Club



1952-2022



Colin Youngson winning the BVAF M45 Cross Country Championships at Irvine in March 1995.



Peter Speake, one of our current Champions.

OFFICERS OF THE RRC 2021-22; Elected at the AGM, Sept. 30th 2021

All posts are honorary (we are all volunteers)

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Contacting members who have specific jobs

*It is a very great help if you can send an SAE with any letter that needs a written answer. MUCH better still, **use email!***

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Road Runners Club medical officer; Dr. Mahnaz Alsharif (sports physician) with multiple qualifications including MSc in Sport and Exercise Medicine and 15 years of experience is available to give advice on those particularly difficult injuries that your own physio is just unable to rectify. She has that in depth understanding of running that usually is unavailable from most physiotherapists. Contact her by e-mail; mahnaz.alsharif@circlebath.co.uk

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Road Runners Club 1952-2022

Yes, it is not only our Queen who this year celebrates a glorious platinum anniversary. Road Runners Club was formed in 1952 to bring together the wise heads of road running to form a club that would exercise some regulated control over a sport rapidly growing in popularity. To our oldest members the most famous President will always be **Jim Peters in 1955-56**. He held the world marathon record of 2-17-39 in 1954 when taking on the Commonwealth Games marathon in Vancouver. He led the field by 17 minutes when he entered the stadium but, not having taken on any water in a temperature of 28*, he totally collapsed just 220yds. from the finish and was carried off to hospital close to death. He recovered but never raced again. Our middle aged runners will remember as president **Ron Hill 1987-8**, a man of many world records in his prime and a runner to the end of his days. The running vests many of us wear still bear his name. Our young members will be most familiar with the name **Dave Bedford, 2003-6**. Not as I remember him floating around the track with long hair flowing behind him, quite a long way behind sometimes, as he trashed the opposition and set up a world record. In more recent years the spectacular moustache replaced the long locks and the moustache was there to stay and he became more famous as organiser of The London Marathon. Nearly all our members were first

claim members of other clubs but were proud to be part of Road Runners Club as well and so it is today and nearly all the articles and pictures in this Roadrunner are of or by second claim members of our club. They are all proud of what this club stands for which is equality of members whether their marathon takes sub 3 hours or 5+ hours. Nobody is frowned upon and we are always available to advise those wishing to improve, as the website clearly shows. Our stories may be exploits of the exceptional runners in our membership but you are all important and the stories are there to inspire, not intimidate.

Parkrun has become a very important feature of running as it has dragged out of the Saturday armchair hundreds of thousands of people who had not previously even considered running. To engage with these runners, the vast bulk of whom do not belong to any club, if any of you cares to **place by the finish line this Roadrunner, I will send 5 to you to see how it goes**. I tried it in Hove and did get some taken before my accident put a stop on everything. The irony of that incident is that during lock down I was running safely down the middle of the local streets but now covid19 danger is almost gone, I am not even safe from traffic on the pavement.

When I was tiny, being the youngest in a sibling pack meant it felt like my whole life was spent running, always miles behind the big ones who would occasionally pause just until I reached them then charge off again. Even when they were walking, my wee legs had to run to keep up. In Primary School though, once I met kids the same age, life was a joyous race! Round the playground, between lampposts on the way home, any chance I got, anyone willing to race. I was proud to be the best 'catcher' in the class and NOBODY could catch me if I didn't want them to. I didn't really notice that all those other racers were boys. The first couple of years of Secondary were great, with Cross Country in winter and Inter-School sports in summer. I even, inspired by Zola Budd, ran the Regional Cross Country race barefoot, coming 2nd, and imagined it'd be like a story in 'The Bunty' where a coach (other towns had them) would be astonished by the sheer raw talent in that curly-haired girl and whisk me off to train for the Olympics...alas, it was not to be!

Without a club or a group to belong to, running was just too uncool for a shy young teen. Running made you ugly and sweaty with a beetroot face, which teenage boys found humiliatingly hilarious. And anyway, girls couldn't run. Except against other girls, which everyone knew didn't really count. 34 years and 3 children later, non-running spouse and non-running self signed up to run a 10 mile road race in his home town. We worked up to it over half a year and that day he beat me by several minutes. But I wasn't tired. The next race I ran a bit faster, and the next, and the next... I'd somehow

forgotten, from running as a child, how great it feels to be out of breath and still running. In a still scarcely believable display of maturity, I managed to bring myself to join the local running club, even though the strip is the EXACT SHADE OF BEETROOT that my face goes when running. I discovered that I still hate when a group of runners stops to wait for the slowest member (even when it's not me!), then starts up again the minute they reach the group. It was a wonderful bonus though, to discover that races in the modern world have gendered age group categories. And prizes! And trophies!

I also discovered that my father - who had been a bit of a stranger growing up as he left the raising of his 6 children to his long-suffering wife - had been a keen runner in his day. He loved to hear the blow-by-blow gory details of every race, and we got to know each other sharing and laughing over race tales.

Through the dozen years since that first race, the road has been undulating. Sometimes fast and flat through sunlit woodlands, sometimes a terrible, relentless uphill slog in foul weather. Sometimes superhero fit, sometimes gaspingly unfit. We've made running friends, found races on holiday and built holidays around races. The one thing I can say of every single race is that it IS a race, wherever you are in the field. You race the person in front of you (trying to catch them) and the person behind you (trying not to be caught). And it's exactly like Catch in the playground, the joy is in the chase!

Editor; Anne's father was Duncan MacFarlane who was one of our earliest members being number 949.

A.G.M. notice

We were hoping to hold the 2022 A.G.M. in person but this is not now possible.
Postal or e-mail votes can be recorded as detailed on the voting form page in the last Roadrunner.

Road Runners Club extends the most grateful thanks to auditor Don Turner, member no.906 and who joined in 1958, for his many years of efficient service to our club.

Don is still in good health in his advanced years and assisted Pam Storey earlier this year at the Crawley Ultrafest but has indicated it would now be a good time to pass the duty of auditor on to a younger man. The position involves checking the figures and accounts submitted by our own accountant, Elaine Oddie O.B.E. who is also a professional accountant, and confirming the figures are correct as listed and allocated. This is not a complicated task because our finances are not complicated but it does require some limited experience of accounting procedures. All information is supplied electronically by Elaine and returned to her. Please respond to Elaine at the e-mail address on the inside front cover.

To potential new members reading Roadrunner for the first time.

Our annual fee for membership is still only £12.50 for one member or £15 for two living at the same address and sharing the magazine. The magazine, under normal circumstances, is reckoned to be the best club magazine in the country and is posted out 3 times a year. Your membership gives you access to the training sheets on our website which give the practical hints that you just do not hear elsewhere. Our annual championship allows participants to record a time anywhere, any day, provided it is a properly measured and timed race. The subscription can be paid in the following ways; **By bank transfer** to the account as detailed above. **By credit card** via our website facility "renew your subscription online" **By cheque** payable to Road Runners Club and posted to 7 Bellway Court, Grosvenor Road, Westcliffe, Essex SS0 8EP; Joining in October will pay up to the end of 2023.

From details provided by RRC member Mick McGeoch

36th Annual Barry 40 Mile Track Race, Sunday 6th March, 2022

Official Result

1. Ollie Garrod M29	South London Harriers	4:01:03
2. Paul Martelletti M42	Victoria Park & Tower Hamlets	4:04:04
3. Grant Jeans M38	Unattached	4:18:49
4. Sam Richards M29	Pontypridd Roadents	4:42:01
5. Gareth Pritchard M42	Vegan Runners	4:44:20
6. Jen Coleman F47	Les Croupiers	5:03:08
7. Dave Coles M62	Les Croupiers	5:06:40
8. Simon Prytherch M55	Cherwell Runners	5:23:00
9. Emyr Morgan M50	Les Croupiers	5:25:02
10. Rachel Bowen F44	Lliswerry Runners	5:46:23
11. Izzy Cairns F43	Hunters Bog Trotters	5:52:37
12. Steven Battle M58	Clowne Road Runners	5:57:18

Retirement

Steph Wilson F43 Pudsey & Bramley AC 124 laps in 4:26:37

N.B. In addition to the above, the marks of Jen Coleman and Dave Coles improved their existing respective Welsh F45 and M60 records (set here last year). Dave continued after 40 miles to record 74.000 km in 6 hours, which constituted a new UK M60 6 hour track record (previously Ian Roy Thomas of Norwich 71.302 km at Crawley, 3 July 2021).

6th Annual Barry Marathon Track Race Official Result

1. Paul Francis M48	Les Croupiers	3:00:06
2. Gabrielus Stuokus M33	Swansea Harriers	3:19:51
3. Gareth Hill M51	Unattached	3:42:40
4. Lisa Cleary F57	Penarth & Dinas	4:09:36
5. Peter Gillibrand M25	Les Croupiers	4:52:39
6. Roshan Khan M66	Les Croupiers	6:19:50

Retirement

Ifan Lloyd M62 Swansea Harriers 92 laps in 2:39:49

With our event reverting to its familiar date of the first Sunday in March, plus the lifting of many of the Covid-related restrictions from last year, I had hoped that a degree of normality would be restored. Both the quality and quantity of entries this year was very encouraging. 21 entries for the 40 miles made it the largest field since 2015, and 8 entries for the marathon meant that there was never going to be any shortage of action. Unfortunately, there was a last minute spate of withdrawals, most of which were either covid or injury related. Eventually, 20 athletes faced the starter, 13 for the 40 miles and 7 for the marathon. The weather is also a variable which we can never control. The proximity of recurrent storms two weeks previously suggested that things could have been a lot worse. Seven degrees may not sound that cold, but the

persistent south-easterly wind made for another tough day.

Paul Martelletti (Victoria Park & Tower Hamlets), a 2:16:49 marathon performer had stated that he intended to run at 85 second lapping from the gun and this is exactly what happened, with last year's winner, **Ollie Garrod** (South London Harriers) tracking him. It proved to be a fascinating encounter, made considerably more difficult by the persistent SE wind. Whilst both were still on schedule for a sub-4 hour clocking at the 30 mile stage, both were to struggle in the closing miles and both finished agonisingly close to that mark, with Ollie prevailing in 4:01:03 to Paul's 4:04:04. The 2012 and 2015 winner, Grant Jeans from Glasgow recorded a personal best in third with 4:18:49.

From details provided by RRC member Mick McGeoch

The ladies race resulted in a most impressive gun-to-tape victory for Jen Coleman (Les Croupiers) in a new personal best of 5:03:08, more than 6 minutes quicker than her previous quickest mark set in 2011. It also represented Jen's third Welsh Ultradistance gold medal and improved her Welsh F45 record set last year. Following Jen home was the ever-consistent Rachel Bowen (Lliswerry Runners) in 5:46:23, only marginally slower than last year. Rachel now has two gold and two silver medals in this championship. Third lady to finish was another of our regular Scottish visitors, Izzy Cairns (Hunters Bog Trotters) in 5:52:37.

The Welsh Men's Ultra Championship resulted in even more drama. Sam Richards (Pontypridd Roadents) was ahead from the gun and led Gareth Pritchard (Vegan Runners) by almost 13 minutes at the halfway stage and was still 9 minutes ahead at 30 miles. Gareth, who makes his Welsh debut in the Anglo Celtic Plate 100 km in 4 weeks time, has

considerable experience at 24 hours, and that strength began to show. With 11 laps remaining the gap had dwindled to 30 seconds, before Sam rallied to prevail for his first Welsh ultra title in 4:42:01 to Gareth's 4:44:20. In third place in the men's Welsh Championship was the ever-consistent, Dave Coles (Les Croupiers) Dave surprised even himself with his final time of 5:06:40, which was 8 minutes faster than last year and hence another revision of his Welsh M60 age record. But more was to follow – Dave continued to run to the 6 hour mark and registered 74.000 km - a new UK M60 record for 6 hours. 12 of the 13 starters completed the 40 miles, an outstanding achievement, whilst 6 of the 7 marathon starters also finished, with Paul Francis (Les Croupiers) winning in 3:00:06 from Gabrielus Stuokus 3:19:51 (Swansea Harriers) and Gareth Hill 3:42:40 (Unattached). Very many thanks to a brilliant support team, all the volunteers, Vale of Glamorgan Council and Welsh Athletics.

40 Miles – Split Times Analysis

Athlete	5 Miles	10 Miles	15 Miles	20 Miles	25 Miles	30 Miles	35 Miles	40 Miles
1. Ollie Garrod	28:20	57:03	1:25:44	1:54:22	2:23:29	2:53:31	3:25:31	4:01:03
2. Paul Martelletti	28:20	57:03	1:25:45	1:54:55	2:25:21	2:56:41	3:29:12	4:04:04
3. Grant Jeans	29:55	1:00:00	1:31:30	2:03:04	2:35:29	3:09:32	3:44:45	4:18:49
4. Sam Richards	31:20	1:03:27	1:35:33	2:08:05	2:43:15	3:22:02	4:04:15	4:42:01
5. Gareth Pritchard	35:28	1:11:02	1:46:08	2:20:58	2:56:02	3:31:07	4:06:43	4:44:20
6. Jen Coleman	36:16	1:13:35	1:51:27	2:29:24	3:07:16	3:45:03	4:23:41	5:03:08
7. David Coles	36:14	1:13:04	1:50:05	2:27:42	3:06:30	3:45:13	4:25:03	5:06:40
8. Simon Prytherch	40:23	1:20:06	1:59:54	2:39:47	3:20:15	4:00:22	4:41:24	5:23:00
9. Emyr Morgan	41:58	1:22:13	2:02:18	2:41:40	3:21:45	4:00:10	4:41:00	5:25:02
10. Rachel Bowen	42:45	1:25:44	2:08:12	2:51:05	3:33:55	4:17:22	5:01:55	5:46:23
11. Izzy Cairns	43:21	1:27:15	2:09:23	2:53:10	3:36:20	4:21:40	5:07:00	5:52:37
12. Steven Battle	38:29	1:18:52	2:00:35	2:45:18	3:31:43	4:20:35	5:10:22	5:57:18
Steph Wilson	42:45	1:25:22	2:08:11	2:51:15	3:34:18	4:18:54		

21 Entries accepted 13 Starters 12 Completed the 40 Miles

Marathon – Split Times Analysis

Athlete	5 Miles	10 Miles	15 Miles	20 Miles	25 Miles	Marathon
1. Paul Francis	36:08	1:11:34	1:46:12	2:18:55	2:52:04	3:00:06
2. Gabrielus Stuokus	36:20	1:12:35	1:50:15	2:30:20	3:10:34	3:19:51
3. Gareth Hill	39:24	1:19:40	2:00:46	2:43:01	3:30:21	3:42:40
4. Lisa Cleary	42:48	1:27:02	2:15:21	3:05:11	3:58:34	4:09:36
5. Peter Gillibrand	55:10	1:52:31	2:47:14	3:44:46	4:40:28	4:52:39
6. Roshan Khan	54:51	1:54:26	3:07:14	4:31:02	5:59:50	6:19:50
Ifan Lloyd	36:08	1:11:32	1:46:10	2:19:56		

8 Entries accepted 7 Starters 6 Completed the Marathon

From details provided by RRC member Mick McGeoch

Welsh Ultradistance Championship

The race incorporated the 33rd edition of the Welsh Ultradistance Championship, and proved to be one of the strongest and most exciting ever. This time there were nine entries, seven starters and everyone finished. Sam Richards (Pontypridd Roadents) was a last minute and very welcome entry. Sam had made a spectacular ultra debut at the Brecon to Cardiff 70 km two years ago which he won in appalling weather. He came to Barry three weeks later and took silver in the Welsh Championship in 4:34:54. Gareth Pritchard (Vegan Runners) had shot to prominence with a superb 237.296 km at the Gloucester Elite 24 hour race last October, so a good race looked in prospect. Sam was ahead from the gun and led Gareth by almost 13 minutes at the halfway stage and was still 9 minutes ahead at 30 miles. Gareth, who makes his Welsh debut in the Anglo Celtic Plate 100 km in 4 weeks time, has considerable experience at 24 hours, and that strength began to show. With 11 laps remaining the gap had dwindled to 30 seconds, before Sam rallied to prevail for his first Welsh ultra title in 4:42:01 to Gareth's 4:44:20. In third place in the men's

Welsh Championship was the ever-consistent, Dave Coles (Les Croupiers). Dave surprised even himself with his final time of 5:06:40, which was 8 minutes faster than last year and hence another revision of his Welsh M60 age record. But more was to follow – Dave continued to run to the 6 hour mark and registered 74.000 km – a new UK M60 record for 6 hours.

The Welsh ladies championship was dominated by Jen Coleman (Les Croupiers) and she led from the outset. A British F45 record for 24 hours track running last September of 227.715 km had further demonstrated Jen's ability, and this was borne out in an amazingly consistent run. Her final time of 5:03:08 was not only a PB by 6 minutes, it revised her own Welsh F45 record, completed a hat-trick of Welsh ultra titles, but perhaps most significantly signified a new championship best performance (previously 5:04:14 by Emily Gelder of Dulwich Runners in 2010). Rachel Bowen (Lliswerry Runners) had another superbly consistent run, clocking 5:46:23, just outside of her best. Rachel now has two gold and two silver medals from the last four Welsh Ultra Championships.

Welsh Men's 40 Mile Championship

1. Sam Richards M29	Pontypridd Roadents	4:42:01
2. Gareth Pritchard M42	Vegan Runners	4:44:20
3. Dave Coles M62	Les Croupiers	5:06:40
4. Simon Prytherch M55	Cherwell Runners	5:23:00
5. Emyr Morgan M50	Les Croupiers	5:25:02

Welsh Ladies 40 Mile Championship

1. Jen Coleman F47	Les Croupiers	5:03:08
2. Rachel Bowen F44	Lliswerry Runners	5:46:23

Marathon

The marathon event was of a significantly higher standard this year too. Eight entries and seven starters. And in a fascinating contrast to the 40 miles, the front runners were relatively inexperienced. Even the runners themselves weren't quite sure of what to expect. Ifan Lloyd (Swansea Harriers) was a particularly interesting addition. An elite M60 international athlete over a spectrum of shorter distances, and a renowned cross country specialist, marathon running is a new dimension. He made his debut at New York in 2019 with 3:02:53, and with Boston just 6 weeks away, this was essentially a learning exercise. Paul Francis (Les Croupiers) on the other hand, only began racing in 2018, and on joining Les Croupiers enjoyed a huge leap forward last October with a 2:56:35 clocking at Chester, with a negative split to boot. Just as Ollie and Paul had done, Ifan and Paul joined forces from the start, but in a totally different context – they intended to speed up as the race progressed. 5 miles passed in 36:08 and 10 in 71:32. Daylight between the two didn't emerge until around the 16 mile mark when Paul's pace increased to something close to six and a half minute miling. His fourth 5

mile segment increased to 32:43 and his 20 mile split time was 2:18:55, 61 seconds ahead of Ifan. Ifan decided to withdraw around 23 miles after a solid 2 hours 40 minutes. Paul continued to push on, and his increase in pace made a sub 3 hour time a possibility. Unfortunately, he finished agonisingly outside - his 3:00:06 time exactly matching the event record of Grant Jeans in 2018. Meanwhile, Gareth Hill, Lisa Cleary, Peter Gillibrand and Roshan Khan were steadfastly continuing towards their goal. It clearly wasn't easy, and the relentless wind and cold increasingly told its tale. At 66, Roshan's journey was a particularly poignant one. Beyond 20 miles he had slowed to a walk, but several of his army of helpers decided to take to the track themselves to accompany him home. With the clock registering 6:19:50, he'd made it. This event showcases the sport in its purest form – human spirit against the elements. 18 of the 20 starters in the combined events made it to the finish - a wonderful testament to their fitness and dedication, but most of all, their spirit.

Huge thanks as always to all our volunteers, notably Mike Humphry (groundsman) and Martyn Morgan (paramedic), John Elward (Starter), Vale of Glamorgan Council and Welsh Athletics.

From details provided by RRC member Mick McGeoch

The History of the Barry 40 – Race Winners

06 Mar 2022	4:01:03	Ollie Garrod (ENG)-2	5:03:08	Jen Coleman (WAL)
23 May 2021	4:00:53	Ollie Garrod (ENG)	5:07:27	Eve Bugler (ENG)
01 Mar 2020	<i>3:53:04</i>	Michael Taylor (ENG)	5:41:34	Helen James (ENG)
10 Mar 2019	4:30:42	James Elgar (WAL)	4:56:17	Sam Amend (ENG)
11 Mar 2018	4:13:24	Steve Way (ENG)-2	5:20:41	Tracy Dean (ENG)
12 Mar 2017	4:29:16	Alex O'Shea (IRL)	5:57:14	Natasha Farid-Doyle (WAL)
20 Mar 2016	3:54:52	Steve Way (ENG)	5:12:58	Isobel Wykes (ENG) – 2
08 Mar 2015	4:25:15	Grant Jeans (SCO)-2	5:16:58	Isobel Wykes (ENG) – 1
09 Mar 2014	4:24:57	Pieter Vermeesch (BEL) -2	5:56:33	Jayne Angilley (WAL)
24 Feb 2013	4:08:59	Pieter Vermeesch (BEL) -1	5:04:59	Karen Rushton (ENG)
04 Mar 2012	4:32:43	Grant Jeans (SCO)-1	5:50:44	Heather Foundling-Hawker (ENG)
27 Feb 2011	4:24:17	George Dayantis (GRE / ENG)-3	4:47:59	Adela Salt (ENG)
14 Mar 2010	4:31:19	George Dayantis (GRE / ENG)-2	5:04:14	Emily Gelder (WAL)
08 Mar 2009	4:22:57	George Dayantis (GRE / ENG)-1	5:41:19	Maria Zubizarreta (PAR / WAL)
09 Mar 2008	4:20:14	Colin Gell (ENG)	4:52:10	Emma Gooderham (ENG)
11 Mar 2007	4:28:02	Andrew Farquharson (SCO)	5:25:49	Elaine Calder (SCO)
12 Mar 2006	4:29:14	John Pares (WAL)	6:59:21	Loretta Daley (WAL)
06 Mar 2005	4:27:38	Stephen Pope (ENG)	5:12:46	Lizzy Hawker (ENG)
07 Mar 2004	4:08:16	Brian Cole (ENG)	5:15:35	Siri Terjesen (ENG)
02 Mar 2003	4:13:10	Brian Hennessey (ENG)	5:17:50	Samantha Bretherick (WAL)
03 Apr 2002	4:20:03	Mikk Bradley (ENG)	5:27:20	Hilary Walker (ENG)-6
04 Mar 2001	4:11:45	Alan Reid (SCO)	5:01:56	Jackie Leak (ENG)
05 Mar 2000	4:21:57	Chris Finill (ENG)	5:12:09	Hilary Walker (ENG)-5
07 Mar 1999	3:53:55	Simon Pride (SCO)-3	4:35:42	Carolyn Hunter-Rowe-2
01 Mar 1998	4:01:32	Simon Pride (SCO)-2	5:18:41	Hilary Walker (ENG)-4
02 Mar 1997	3:54:24	Simon Pride (SCO)-1	5:05:58	Hilary Walker (ENG)-3
03 Mar 1996	4:10:35	Stephen Moore (ENG)-2		No Lady Finishers
05 Mar 1995	4:17:46	Robin Gardner (ENG)		No Lady Finishers
06 Mar 1994	4:01:28	Stephen Moore (ENG)-1	4:50:11	Eleanor Robinson (ENG)
07 Mar 1993	4:00:20	Mike Hartley (ENG)-2	<i>4:26:43</i>	Carolyn Hunter-Rowe (ENG) -1
01 Mar 1992	4:04:01	Mike Hartley (ENG)-1	5:18:10	Hilary Walker (ENG)-2
07 Jul 1991	4:27:34	Paul Belcher (WAL)	5:14:12	Marianne Savage (ENG)
04 Mar 1990	3:55:21	Erik Seedhouse (ENG)	6:14:49	Kay Pritchard (WAL)
05 Mar 1989	3:59:24	Martin Daykin (ENG)		No Lady Entries
06 Mar 1988	3:58:40	Mick McGeoch (WAL)-2	5:04:30	Hilary Walker (ENG)-1
09 Mar 1986	4:11:32	Mick McGeoch (WAL)-1	4:47:27	Ann Franklin (WAL)

Road Runners Club members are in bolder type, record times in italics.

The first London Marathon by 'everpresent' Chris Finill



Chris Finill in the finish funnel and his 1981 medal below

I nearly didn't run the first London Marathon and how different my running career would feel now if I had indeed missed it. I had run my first ever marathon in the USA in 1979 having been abroad that year as an exchange student at Michigan State University. Fortunately, by the time the first London Marathon was staged in March 1981 I just happened to be back in England. Having seen how big city marathons could operate so successfully in the US, Chris Brasher and John Disley decided that London deserved a race equal in scope and stature. As a Londoner running for a London Club (Old Gaytonians which is now Harrow AC) it was obvious that the London Marathon was the race for me. In addition, having competed in the famous 'Goater' National Cross Country Championships at Parliament Hill Fields that Spring I was raring to go. In terms of the weather, 29th March 1981 was a very damp, gloomy day. However, it ushered in an event that was to become, over the years, one of the most important fixtures in the British sporting calendar.

At the time, I was in my final year at Surrey University aged just 22. My then girlfriend, Julia (now my wife of 37 years!) was a Student Nurse at Guy's Hospital living in Brockley, South East London. I was therefore able to walk to the start on Blackheath, a distance of about a mile for what was to be, aged 22, my third marathon. There were many rough edges to the organisation that day - too few toilets at the start being, quite literally, one of the more inconvenient features. Baggage buses were poorly labelled and controlled chaos in the finish area ensued. However, despite obvious teething problems, the course itself is remarkably unchanged from those early years although aspects of the surrounding landscape have altered beyond recognition. Most notably, the

Isle of Dogs, which in 1981 was a remote and rather desolate area has been transformed into a vibrant and glitzy extension to the City.



Despite the organisational shortcomings, that first race was a joyous occasion and the good natured spirit of the runners, officials and spectators prevailed. Proportionately, there were far more men runners whereas nowadays the split is virtually 50:50. Very few runners were running for charity and the high proportion of 'serious' club runners meant that there were very few novelty entrants - on the day nobody was attempting to be the fastest radish or stick of celery. Joyce Smith won the women's race beating the 2.30 barrier by 3 seconds. I came home a few minutes behind her in 2.32. The men's race was famously a tie in 2.11.48 with Inge Simonsen and Dick Beardsley choosing to come home side by side. Race starter and leader of the GLC, Sir Horace Cutler, (who like me attended Harrow County School) welcomed them home there on Constitution Hill - the only time the race ever finished at that location. That day 6,255 runners crossed the finish

line - an event sufficiently successful to see race finishers more than double for the 1982 race.

With 41 Londons behind me the race has been the backbone of my running career and in some ways my life as well. My parents, long since departed, used to come up to London for the weekend during the eighties to see me run. My children used to watch kerbside as toddlers - the youngest is now 29! Julia, who has been to every single race will once again be there this year and my daughter, Jo, will be running for Harrow AC just like her Old Man.

NEVER TOO LATE TO START – AND FINISH! Bushy Octogenarian Parkrun 2nd July

Amongst the forty-one young men and women aged over 80 celebrating their seniority, (or even their superiority!) when finishing the Bushy Park Parkrun on 2nd July, Marcus Palmer might have been the happiest, his finishing time of 56 minutes at his very first parkrun immediately setting himself a target to beat in the many future Parkruns we hope he will enjoy. Bushy Park played host to the 41 runners aged over 80 who celebrated with sparkling wine and cakes after finishing this successful fifth Octogenarian event, the brain wave of Road Runners Club member George Frogley. Top honours must go to the record breaking two first home in the oldest age groups, both having travelled from afar. Mary Astey, from South West Vets, set a new W85-89 age group best of 34:44 and Geoff Jackson, from Didcot, did the same in the M90-95 age group with 49:48.

Excellent times were also recorded in the other three age groups. First W80 was Eve Osborne in 29:56 and a top Age Graded score of 93.54%. For the men Martin Gillett was first M80 in 26:45 and Raymond Aaiz topped the M85 group with 36:54.

George Frogley and **Richard Pitcairn-Knowles** hope to be there in 2023 to see you all again at Bushy Park and, to ensure a record number of more than 50 finishers aged over 80, suggest you **note this date in your diaries now – 1st July 2023**

Editor; I take my hat off to these runners who record astonishing times. George Frogley holds one RRC club record being the oldest runner at the time of joining and we should be proud of his achievements with this annual race. Long may it continue to illustrate the benefits of running in older people.

BUSHY PARK PARKRUN 2ND JULY 2022 – 39 Octo & Nonogenarians Finished

Place	Name	Time	Age Grade %	Club
W85-89				
914	Mary Astey	34:44	92.42%	SW Vets
1049	Lilian de Lacey	44:27	72.22%	
W80-84				
703	Eve Osborne	29:56	93.54%	Wymondham
987	Angela Duncan	37:46	72.24%	Hillingdon
1037	Dianne Hesford	42:41	66.44%	
1046	Rosemary Stenning	44.18	60.16%	
1071	Anne Middlemiss	47:38	60.50%	Stragglers
1091	Shelagh Allen	53:42	55.13%	
1093	Ann Eardly Wilmot	54:33	48.85%	
M90-95				
1081	Geoff Jackson	49:48	63.12%	Didcot
1083	Albert Yee	51:05	58.43%	
M85-89				
967	Raymond Saiz	36:54	68.25%	Maidstone
1019	Ron Denney	40:27	62.26%	Sevenoaks
1033	Robert Winning	42:36	57.04%	Up & Running
1052	Tom Allen	44:42	60.96%	
1058	R. Pitcairn-Knowles	45:35	62.45%	Sevenoaks
M80-84				
467	Martin Gillett	26:45	78.57%	
485	David Moorkite	27:02	81.94%	Larkfield
491	John Isaacs	27:09	79.37%	Zero to Hero
653	David Carter	29:17 PB	77.80%	Wymondham
733	John Blakey	30:32 PB	72.54%	
741	Chris Ford	30:38	68.61%	Road Runners Club
758	Robert Smith	30:37 PB	69.63%	

NEVER TOO LATE TO START – AND FINISH! Bushy Octogenarian Parkrun 2nd July

Place	Name	Time	Age Grade %	Club
M80-84				
780	Doug Milsom	31:22	72.64%	Hillingdon (and RRC)
827	David Browning	32:32	64.60%	
995	Ernie Clutton	38:44	54.26%	
999	Allan Lang	39:28	57.73%	
1015	Mike Bangham	40:19	55.51%	Stragglers
1024	Len Voralin	40:50	51.47%	Up & Running
1037	Peter Stevens	42:53	51.65%	
1039	Mike Norwood	43:24	51.04%	Cheddar Running Club
1050	Michael Meagher	44:35	52.71%	
1053	Lionel Mann	44:54	48.00%	Ampthill & Flitwick Flyers
1057	John Wilkins	45:43	48.99%	
1065	Rodney Freeburn	46:39	50.38%	
1078	Tom Richards	48:26	45.75%	
1084	Les Brown	51:28	45.66%	Stragglers
1092	David German	53:43	42.41%	
1094	Rob Engel	54:39	38.36%	
1104	Marcus Palmer	56:00	37.55%	
1109	Mike Bryant	61:54	34.81%	

(41 finished)



Isle of Man marathon, August 2022

Celia Findlay

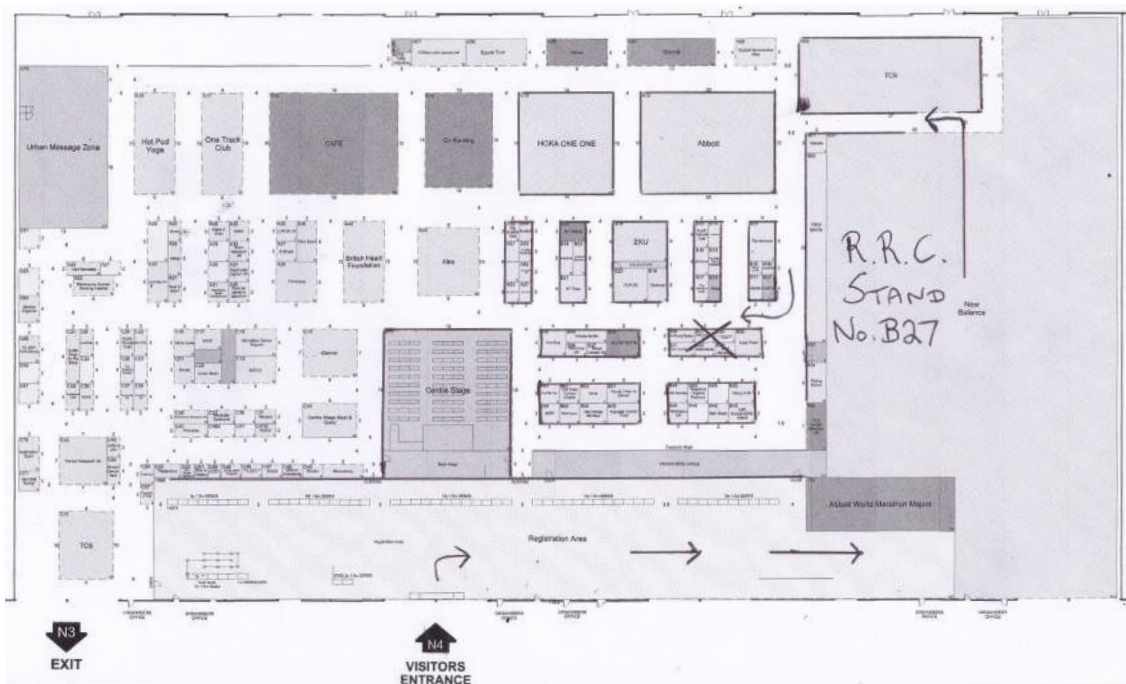
So my next challenge this year was the Isle of Man marathon in August incorporating the BMAF Championships. I was going to take the camper van driving to Upton, Liverpool and taking the ferry but it was a lot cheaper to fly and get a b&b! I arrived on Saturday afternoon for an 8.30am start in Ramsey about 30mins drive on the provided bus out of Douglas. I met up with fellow runners on the bus and chatted with Walter Hill our Club President! The course was 2 laps, run over the Manx Northern course starting and finishing in Ramsey. The first 5 Mike's were undulating, the high point of 259 feet being reached at approximately 4 miles (and 17 miles) with the remainder of the course flat to undulating. Very well marshalled and friendly with free buffet and showers at the end!

I started well but by 12 miles started to slow and found the hill on the 2nd lap tough but seemed to get second wind at 18 to 23 miles where the heat got to me, but I dug deep to finish in 3:55 and **3rd lady overall and 1st V60**.



The London Marathon Running Show Wednesday 28th September to Saturday 1st October

Our stand at this event is run solely by volunteer members who are prepared to spend some time handing out the latest edition of Roadrunner and being enthusiastically helpful should anybody be interested in joining. For several years previously, I (John Trory), have been on the stand practically every day with other members drifting in and out according to the agreed schedule. Last year we gave away around 1000 of Roadrunner but the difference this year is that, at the time of writing, I have no idea what part I can play in this. I am waiting for an operation on my leg which will then require a large skin graft followed by at least 1 week immobile and another week gentle activity. I have 3 men in my immediate family who will load up for me in Hove but I also need someone in the Excel Centre to unload onto a trolley and pull this to our stand while I shout instructions.



Each box of magazines weighs just under 20kg, which is not a lot, and the job will be done between 3pm and 5pm on Tuesday 27th September whilst I supervise the setting up. Then we need a few lively members to assist in giving the magazines away. We took very little back home last year and hope this year will be the same. Please e-mail me direct as per the list inside front cover.

Crawley 6hour, 12hour and 24hour track races, April 2022

24 Hour					laps	km	miles	time
1	34	Wendy Whearity	f		552	221.077	137.366	23:58:21
2	23	Simon Prytherch	m	Cherwell Runners & Joggers	538	215.421	133.851	23:58:44
3	1	Allan Anderson	m		531	212.614	132.107	23:58:44
4	16	Sinead Kane	f	Le Cheile	524	209.704	130.299	23:59:33
5	9	Nichola Duffy	f		506	202.586	125.876	23:58:11
6	8	Mert Derman	m		493	197.310	122.598	23:59:19
7	24	Joanne Rice	f	Navan A.C.	481	192.757	119.769	23:57:21
8	20	Daniel Masters	m		428	171.500	106.561	23:58:25
9	10	Mylene Elliott	f	100 Marathon Club	426	170.467	105.919	23:59:41
10	26	Zoe Salt	f		421	168.400	104.635	19:22:42
11	25	Brian Robb	m		412	165.079	102.571	23:58:20
12	30	Magdalena Strycharska	f		408	163.461	101.566	23:58:34
13	28	Tom Sawyer	m		403	161.200	100.161	16:31:31
14	12	Elizabeth Hilton	f	Lewes A.C.	400	160.159	99.514	23:59:03
15	2	Steven Battle	m	Clowne Road Runners Club	391	156.800	97.427	23:58:00
16	15	Peter Johnson	m	Thanet Roadrunners A.C.	364	145.908	90.659	23:57:00
17	35	Kunal Yadav	m		353	141.498	87.919	23:55:09
18	27	Richard Sams	m		335	134.326	83.463	23:56:24
19	11	Roz Glover	f	Great Western Runners	310	124.172	77.154	23:58:37
20	6	Adrian Busolini	m	Fairlands Valley Spartans	292	116.800	72.573	14:29:10
21	17	Otto Karhunen	m	Southville Running Club	268	107.200	66.608	18:32:54
22	19	Paul Maskell	m	St Austell Athletes R.C.	250	100.000	62.135	7:46:06
23	33	Alison Walker	f		227	90.800	56.418	10:52:38
24	32	Sarah Thompson	f	Burgess Hill Runners	176	70.400	43.743	12:01:21
25	18	Lorna Maclean	f		170	68.000	42.251	9:59:09
26	21	Ray McCurdy	m		135	54.285	33.730	23:56:56
27	7	Neil Dawson	m	Burgess Hill Runners	113	45.200	28.085	5:55:36
28	3	Phil Bradburn	m	Serpentine Running Club	87	34.800	21.623	4:24:50
29	29	Charlotte Smith	f	Serpentine Running Club	86	34.400	21.374	4:05:03
30	31	Simon Thompson	m	Burgess Hill Runners	73	29.200	18.143	4:15:58

Crawley 6hour, 12hour and 24hour track races, April 2022

12 Hour									
1	61	Mark Bissell	m	East Hull Harriers & A.C.	324	129.996	80.773	11:58:28	
2	73	Gordon Mead	m		309	123.755	76.895	11:59:16	
3	72	Lorraine McMahon	f	Wexford Marathon Club	304	121.880	75.730	11:58:35	
4	77	Jeevendra Singh	m		276	110.736	68.805	11:57:02	
5	80	Colin Jones	m	Barking Road Runners	250	100.000	62.135	11:56:24	
6	75	Emily Plummer	f	Harvel Hash House Harriers	212	85.068	52.857	11:57:59	
7	63	Susie Bradburn	f		197	79.008	49.091	11:58:20	
8	79	Daniel Williams	m	Isle of Wight Road Runners .	185	74.000	45.979	8:00:18	
9	76	Josh Rothwell	m		167	66.807	41.510	11:59:58	
10	64	Marc Bromwich	m	RunRecover	142	56.800	35.292	5:37:43	
11	71	Chris Lobodzinski	m	Saints & Sinners R.C.	78	31.200	19.386	2:59:38	
6 hour									
1	44	Ben Carroll	m		200	80.043	49.734	5:59:49	
2	48	Paul Gilbertson	m	Clapham Pioneers	160	64.259	39.927	5:58:07	
3	49	Francis Graham-Dixon	m	Lewes A.C.	157	62.958	39.118	5:59:12	
4	46	Fiona Davies	f	Pontypridd Roadents A.C.	143	57.422	35.679	5:57:36	
5	54	Giannis Savva	m		141	56.720	35.242	5:58:32	
6	55	Chloe Sellwood	f	Clapham Pioneers	134	53.758	33.402	5:58:08	
7	59	Robert Woodward	m		122	49.119	30.520	5:58:22	
8	78	Melvin Trundley	m	Collingwood A.C.	99	39.884	24.781	5:57:04	
9	57	Ria Trundley	f	Collingwood A.C.	82	32.892	20.437	5:59:19	



Crawley 6hour, 12hour and 24hour track races, April 2022



1 Allan Anderson



23 Simon Prytherch



44 Benn Caroll



34 Wendy Whearity



48 Paul Gilbertson



61 Mark Bissell

Crawley 6hour, 12hour and 24hour track races, April 2022



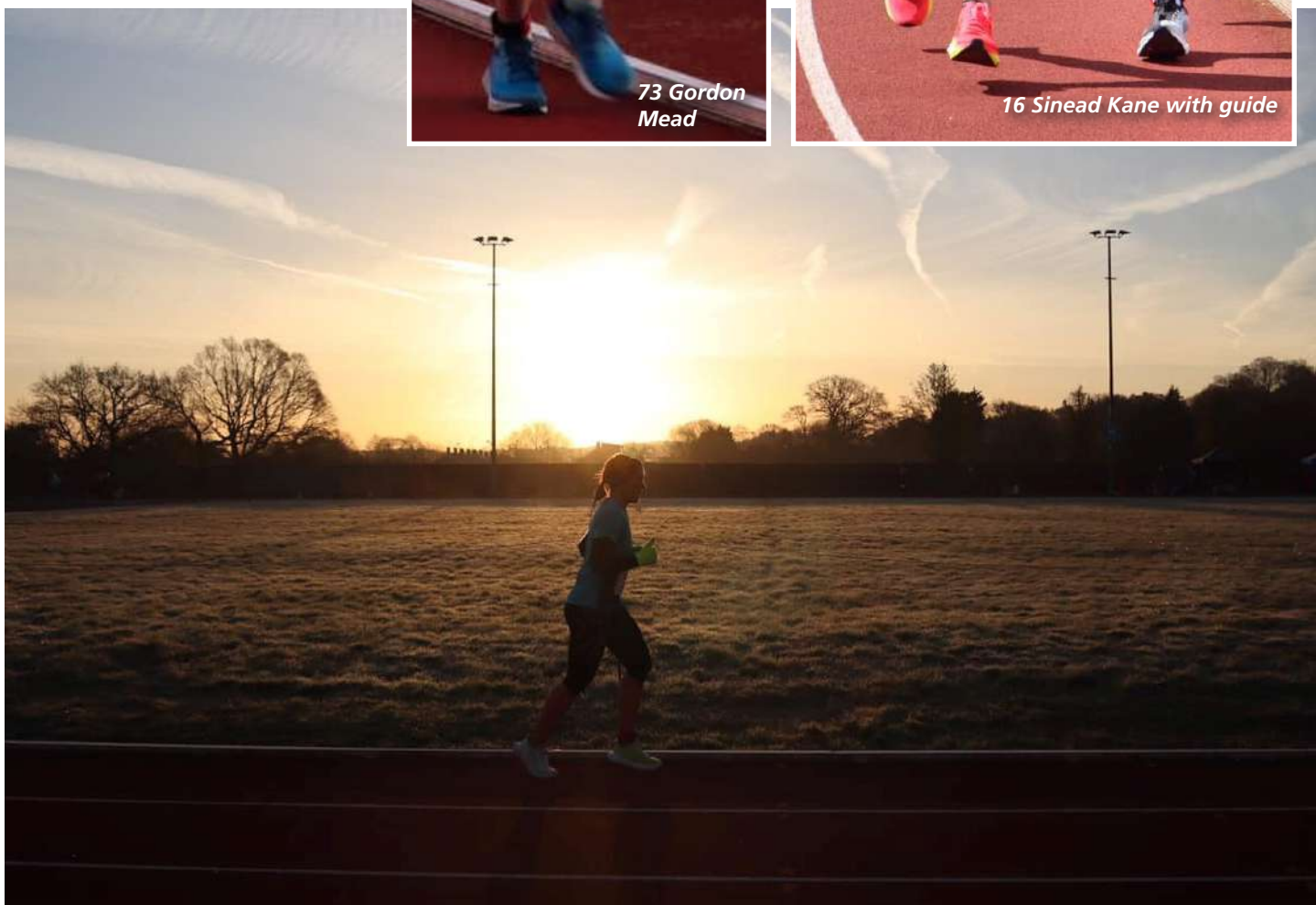
72 Lorraine McMahon



73 Gordon Mead



16 Sinead Kane with guide



Club memories by long term member Dave Catlow

The Road Runners Club (RRC) was established in 1952 as a result of the success of the inaugural London to Brighton race of 1951 which was held as part of the Festival of Britain celebrations. The purpose of RRC was to promote and encourage running in the UK and further afield. It is apt that the year in which RRC was born coincided with the year of Jim Peters astonishing world record 2hrs 20: 42 run in the Polytechnic Marathon which demolished the previous record by almost 5 minutes. Jim Peters cemented his affinity with the "Poly" by breaking his world record in each of the following two years (this despite the 1953 course proving to be 150 yards over distance!). In June 1954 the world record alongside Jim Peters name was 2hrs 17:39.

Jim Peters went on to serve as RRC President in 1955 / 56. He was one of many noted distance, marathon and ultra distance runners who have served as President, including world record holders David Bedford, Ron Hill and Don Richie. The RRC/Road Runner members owe a huge debt of gratitude to all past Presidents, Vice Presidents and the legion of other committee members who have served the club so well over

the decades and continue to serve selflessly now. I trust that the reader will excuse my exclusive road running slant during the coming paragraphs.

In 1964 Basil Heatley emulated Jim Peters by running 2hrs 13:55 on the Polytechnic course. Nonetheless running remained very much a minority sport. However, It seems to this observer that gradually the standard of running at club level improved and the pool of high performers grew. Runners are usually by nature competitors and each runner within a club wishes to be "top dog". The deeper the pool of talent the more competition there is to be the best and the inevitable consequence is a raising of standards. Many clubs in my era (mid '70s to 1989) had international runners amongst their number e.g. Gateshead had Foster, Spedding and others. It was reputed that their club runs included 10 men who were sub 50 minutes for 10 miles. Another feature of races during my era was that it was commonplace for international runners to compete in local road races or road relays. A notable example of the close interaction of international runners was the Tipton 10, a Black Country feature race for many years. I list below the first 5 finishers in two renewals of this race ten years apart :

1977		
1st John Wheway	47:00	multi running event international
2nd Ian Stewart	47:10	World cross country champion , European and Commonwealth Gold medallist
3rd Brian Cole	47:52	
4th Andy Holden	48:45	Uk Steeplechase Champion , Cross Country and track international
5th Paul Haywood	48:59	
1987		
1st Dave Lewis	47:20	England Junior cross country champion and International runner
2nd Dave Long	47:22	Marathon Olympian
3rd P Tootell	47:43	
4th A Royle	47:55	
5th. Karl Harrison	47:57	

The above results demonstrate the exceptional ability of club runners to " mix it " with international runners at this time. There is evidence that, at the 10k distance there are a number of British athletes capable of running sub 5 minute mile pace. However, the appearance of these runners seems to be restricted to elite races. In the local road races performances are of a different class. For example the Thirsk 10 with over 850 finishers produced a first three as follows;

Thirsk 10		
1st	Rob Scott	52 :03;
2nd	Liam Aldridge	52 :19;
3rd	Jake Stephenson	53:43;

It seems clear that the gap between the elite / international runner and the top quality club runner has widened during the past 30 years. On a personal note I ran 66:24 in the Reading half marathon of 1986 and finished 20th in a bunch sprint - the field included such luminaries of the day as Kevin Forster (the winner) Paul Davies-Hale and Keith Penny. My time of 1986 would this year have placed me a comfortable 2nd, perhaps the course has changed. Again on a personal note I ran 2 19 ; 34 in London 1985 and this time remains the Cheltenham Harriers record . The astonishing thing to me is that no one has ever got particularly close to that time. The Virgin one in a million records took my name from the programme of London ' 85 where it is misspelt and I appear as David Catlon which is a bit annoying. Perhaps mass participation in running has been an unwitting cause

Club memories by long term member Dave Catlow

of the decline in club runner standards. Many running events have become charity fund raisers. As a result hundreds of millions of pounds have been donated to grateful charities. Hundreds of thousands of people have achieved a goal in running a distance, be it 5k , 10k , half marathon, marathon or whatever. People who had no interest in our sport have made an effort have probably made sacrifices and achieved their goal for a good cause. This self sacrifice can be seen as more laudable than those of us who ran with the goal of being a better athlete / of being the best their ability would allow. Perhaps it is too simplistic to say one motivation is selfless and the other is selfish. Better to allow that each approach has merit .

What is not in doubt is that running is a very fine, worthwhile pastime. It is proven to improve physical and mental well

A year in the running life of Jeremy Mower

This year has been quite stressful due to long working hours and caring for my 80-year-old mother who has been unwell. It's meant my training and racing has been disrupted at times having to miss some long runs which is not good for an ultrarunner. Apart from that my fitness has been excellent and I have raced frequently with good results. Out of 20 races from 5km up to 100km I've been first in my age group 18 times and second twice. The year started off well in January where I ran 120km at the Flich Way 12-hour race which counted as a qualifier for Spartathlon. I was fortunate to get a place through the Spartathlon draw but I later took the decision to pull out as I felt my lack of training mileage was setting me up for failure and I would rather someone took my place who had trained properly for this bucket list race.

On April 3rd I ran for Wales at the UKA National 100km and Anglo-Celtic Plate in Perth, Scotland, which was my 17th appearance and a record number of times for any country. The first 50km went well in a time of 4hrs: 8 min but after this I tired badly probably due to the missed long runs in training and finished in 9hrs: 5min: 49 secs. After the disappointing run at the 100km I decided to run the Sheperdine Marathon in Gloucestershire only 3 weeks after. The race is a small event, but you do normally get some decent marathon runners and a strong contingent from Wales as it's a short trip across the Severn Bridge. I used four energy gels and water during the race and ran each mile at even effort** (I do not say pace as it was a 5-loop event that had some gradients and strong winds) for a finish time of 2hrs: 56 min: 40 secs. I was 7th out of 49 finishers but I did have the best age graded time. About the only advantage of being older I'm enjoying is being the best age graded time in most races I do.

My key race for the year has always been the British Masters 30km Trail Championships but before this I had agreed to pace a friend around the South Downs Way 100-

being. The running fraternity I met was of friendly and amiable disposition. It was customary to be congratulatory of a rival's improvement and to commiserate with another's loss of form. If I may I will close with a personal memory of a fellow runner's generosity of spirit. A couple of weeks after my 2 :19 in London, I was amongst the field for the Evesham half marathon> Also taking part was the Worcester stalwart Eric Austin who many readers may recall. Eric's marathon pb was 2 15 : 59 and he was akin to a legendary competitor locally. However, he stood before the assembled runners and asked them to give me a round of applause for my London run. What kindness! I am sure that this camaraderie and generosity of spirit will continue in all levels of our wonderful sport. Best wishes for the future to Road Runners Club.

mile race. A few weeks before the SDW 100 the person got injured so what should have been an easy 100 mile ultra, I decided that I'd run it hard and see what happened. The day turned out to be very hot and I went through 50 in around 9hr:30 min but I was feeling sick due to the heat and eating was a problem. I should have pulled out of the race here, but I managed to walk the next 25 miles and hoped the sickness would pass. Unfortunately, the sickness did not pass and I basically had no energy left and was getting bored with walking. With my goal race only 15 days away I decided to pull out of the race as I did not want to ruin my chances in that.

The British Masters 30km Multi-Terrain Race was run over the North Downs from the Gravesend Cyclopark. I had done the race twice before and had a Vet 50 silver and Vet 55 bronze in those age groups. My last race I'd run too conservatively at the start and was about 30 seconds behind the M55 winner and 20 seconds behind silver which is nothing when you've been running for over 2 hours. This year I went in knowing I was in good shape and again it was hot, but I was getting used to running in the heat for a couple of hours, so I was confident. I had studied my competition and although my road times were not quite as good as my nearest rival that did not matter as I consider myself better off road. I went off hard from the gun to establish a lead on the other M55 as I did not want to make the same mistake as previously. I remember Kilian Jornet saying if you are in front you know where the opposition is, this I took as sound advice. Occasionally I could see the runners behind me as I got to the top of some of the hills, the last 5km is flat so when I hit this I gave it everything I had left to finish in two hours, eleven minutes, 12 seconds which was 6 minutes quicker than my previous time and finished a surprising seven minutes ahead of my nearest rival Christian Poulton (Southern Counties Veteran). A lot of the runners had struggled with the heat which is what I normally do but I have learned a lot this year with regards to training in the heat and in this race, I was clearly unaffected by it. At

A year in the running life of Jeremy Mower

Jeremy
Mower in the
Sheperdine
Marathon 2022



the awards ceremony the race organiser even congratulated me on my fast time, which was nice, and my wife Sylvia watched the race which she rarely does unless it is a track race. I was so pleased to get the age group win at the third time of asking. Eight days after the 30km trail race I managed to run the Frampton 10km race in 36:49 which proved to be more important than I thought as later, that time gained me selection to represent Wales in the Masters International Match against England at the Bristol 10km on Sunday, 25th September 2022. The funny thing was England had a selection race at the Bourton 10km race back in February where the first three in each age group gained selection and I ended up finishing second M55 in the race, so I had to tell the other runners that I was not England qualified!

Five days after the Frampton race on the 9th July I made an attempt to break the UK M55 50km track record at Gloucester. I was on target at 30km but the extreme heat was wearing me down and I realised I was going to narrowly miss the time, so I backed off the pace to finish in a respectful time of 3 hrs: 50 min: 48 secs. My next race will be the Severn Bridge Half Marathon on 28th August and I ran the Severn Bridge parkrun recently in 18:32 to get used to running over the bridge. It was a great experience and I'd recommend to anyone doing this parkrun. Three days before this parkrun I ran 17:42 at the Gloucester 5km which was my best 5km over this undulating course and gave me another Gloucestershire Championships age group gold medal to add to the collection. The best news is my mother had a major operation which hopefully will give her a better quality of life, but she will need continual help from family with her various ailments. I'm now in training for the Masters International 10km and my other key race the Snowdon Marathon on 29th October 2022.

Editor** It is often wrongly stated that you should run a marathon at an even pace. This advice is simply because most marathons are run on fairly level terrain. The real plan is, as Jeremy shows, to run with an even expenditure of energy thus slowing a little up hills and letting go down them.

Ernest Neville, founder and past president of Road Runners Club

Ernest was attracted to athletics when he saw the late Teddy Knott walking to Brighton and when he was only fourteen years old, he walked over those familiar 52 odd miles. The roads in those days were rough and dusty. His parents did not approve, but when he accomplished the feat, duly checked by reliable people, they let him follow his athletic pursuits. Four years later, he walked to Brighton, had a bath, a meal and a rest and then walked back to London all within 24 hours. In 1902 he promoted the first London to Brighton and back walk, on behalf of the Surrey Walking Club (formed in 1899 by some members of South London Harriers who

were interested in walking). In the following year, he promoted another race, and took part himself, finishing third in 21 hours, 13 minutes, 50 seconds. In 1911 he and other long distance enthusiasts formed the Centurions, confined to those who, as amateurs, had covered 100 miles within 24 hours in a walking event. He himself became No. 7, and at the time of his death was Life President.

His interest in sport was wide and he took part in many sports, but his main interest was athletics. He competed for a number of years in running (from a leg in a medley relay

Ernest Neville, founder and past president of Road Runners Club

to the marathon) in the colours of Blackheath Harriers and also in walking (1 mile to 100 miles) for Surrey Walking Club. He was a formidable opponent and believed and taught that speed was essential to the long distance exponent. He covered 100 miles a week for many years. His last race was in 1924, a seven mile walk.

In addition to these activities, he was busy organising events, serving on committees, helping to form new clubs and, no doubt, writing many letters in the process. His business activities were as varied and busy as his sporting ones. These included the Law, Insurance and Finance. He was able to get by on very little sleep and when most people were abed, he would be writing letters or making trans-Atlantic phone calls. With the growth and development of amateur athletics, his services were much in demand by the governing body, as well as by the clubs and, of course, by Surrey County A.A.A. of which he was a Past President. If there was a set of Rules to be drawn up, Ernest was the man to do it. Right up to the present day, whenever the A.A.A. had a question connected with long distance running or walking, they would invariably ring Ernest. In his earlier days he had been an official, judging, timekeeping and in the days before amplifiers, he would do the announcing. He was a well known figure in the world of race walking and a stalwart of the Race Walking Association being their President in 1920-22. He was largely responsible for the inclusion of walking events at International level, for example the 50 kilometre event in 1932. He was chief walking judge at the 1936 Berlin Games and, thirty-six years later, the West German Government invited him to be their guest at the Munich Games, an offer he was unable to accept.

It is, however, in connection with long distance running that most of our members will remember him. In 1951 as part of the Festival of Britain, a London to Brighton Running Race was held with Ernest as the organiser. The race was a success and at a subsequent meeting of long distance runners, Ernest conceived the idea of forming a Club of second claim members to foster long distance running.

Thus the Road Runners Club was born. Ernest became R.R.C. No. 1, and members from numerous athletic clubs soon joined. The first President was Rex Cross of Blackheath Harriers, a club which played a large part in the formation of the R.R.C.

The growth of the R.R.C. was phenomenal, and the membership soon passed the thousand mark, one of Ernest's ambitions. Runners from Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the U.S.A. joined us, in fact the U.S.A. formed its own R.R.C, a move which Ernest regarded as a compliment to our own organisation. This growth was not accomplished without much hard work, notably by the Council, which met every month, with Ernest in the key role of General Honorary Secretary. He was always on the lookout for new members of the Council and he made them feel they were doing a good job and he gave them every encouragement. The London to Brighton race had become a regular fixture with Ernest as

Race Hon. Secretary, and doing a lion's share of the work. Another annual event was the long distance track at Walton over varying distances. These races have dramatically lowered world records and best performances and once again, the organisation was largely in his hands for many years. The R.R.C. marathon owed much of its early impetus to Ernest and he produced a pamphlet on the organisation of road races.

He always insisted upon keeping the Police informed of race arrangements for he realised the value of their help. After an event, he would send letters of thanks for all who had helped. The thousands of letters he must have written, have certainly created goodwill between the R.R.C. and other sections of the community. He was always concerned over the safety of competitors. Fortunately accidents have been few, but the Club's Insurance scheme, another of his ideas, was acclaimed by all. He established with the Ministry of Transport that a road race constituted a "moving body of men," and should conform to the flow of the traffic, i.e. runners should keep to the left.

Many members at some time or another were encouraged by, or profited from his kindly advice. Indeed he was interested not only in their athletic problems, but showed great understanding and sympathy in their personal affairs. If somebody was ill, he would unfailingly send a letter of cheer. Lately he had found others to take over the many jobs he did for us, but he remained a regular attender at Council Meetings and played a full part. He was at the October meeting before he went into hospital.

His last promotion, that year's London to Brighton was a joyful occasion. It was a great race, a new record and there was a surprise presentation to him by the Mayor of Brighton, a plaque to commemorate his seventy years of promotion on the Brighton road.

Those who have had the privilege of working with him over the years, will testify to his forthrightness and integrity, the force and clarity with which he would present his case, and the goodwill he displayed towards those of an opposite opinion. He loved those get-togethers at the bar, when the proceedings were over and with talking was informal; he could hold an audience, young or old, spellbound with tales and happenings of former years, his memory was fantastic. We, the inheritors of the R.R.C., which Ernest Neville founded, salute him with a hearty "thank you" for all that he has done for us, for his example, his inspiration and hard work, and for his abiding friendship.

ERNEST NEVILLE, Founder and Past President of the R.R.C. died in his ninetieth year, a few days after a stomach operation at St. George's Hospital, Tooting, London, on Wednesday, 1st November 1972. The general reaction to this sad news was that there will never be another man like him; nobody will surely disagree with this.

From a tribute written shortly after his death by Gordon Doubleday.

CLUB MERCHANDISE CURRENTLY AVAILABLE

Our sizes for vests are;

XS 31"; S 33"; M 37"; L 38"; XL 40"; XL+ 42"; XXL 4

These measurements are the actual chest size of the unwashed vest and may be liable to washing shrinkage.

Availability;

Blue vests with white printed club badge; all sizes except XL+

White vests with blue printed club badge; all sizes

PRICES INCLUDE INLAND POSTAGE AND ALL ABOVE ITEMS ARE AVAILABLE FROM John Trory, details inside front cover, **price £13.00.**

Most of our members are first claim with their local club and wear their vest, but it would be nice if all our members additionally wore our woven sew-on club badge. We have redesigned the club badge which is now essentially the same as the old but includes the words Road Runners Club in place of the initials RRC.

The woven sew-on club badge is available free of charge on request.

Note; new members will be sent a badge in their welcome pack.

We are not as famous as we were 50 years ago and the council feels this would be more explanatory and help to publicise our club to other runners.

As we have a large stock of vests at the moment, it will be some time before this is fully revised.

THE NEW PRINTED DESIGN CLUB 'TECHNICAL' T SHIRT IS AVAILABLE WITH THE NEW CLUB BADGE ON IT.

The actual shirt size, **which should not be taken as chest size**, is M 40"; L 42" and XL 44".

To allow freedom of movement around the shoulders, I recommend you order a size that is 2" larger than your actual expanded chest measurement. This is more important with a T shirt than a vest which does not embrace the shoulders. A tight T shirt inhibits arm swinging. T shirt manufacturers seem to have developed their own ideas of what constitutes S, M and L and this varies widely from brand to brand.

Price is £10 including inland postage.

We now also have available

SMALL SIZE WHICH MUST SURELY FIT EVEN OUR MOST SLIGHTLY BUILT RUNNERS.

Please note the large difference in measurements between the vests and the T shirts and be careful and specific when ordering.

A no fun run

Grant du Heume

It's been an interesting year of running so far; it started with a track series of 10k, half marathon and a marathon, the marathon being my 3rd fastest at 4hrs 12 min which included a bit of walking due to poor pace management. A couple of weeks later I then had a disaster at the Brighton Marathon and ran a personal worst of 4:40 (PB 3:49). Normally I'd have a sulk but all was prep for my first 100 mile attempt and so, at the beginning of June, I joined the hopefuls at the start of the South Downs Way 100. 100 miles, to be honest it still hasn't sunk in, my time of 28hrs 10 Mins won't phase the likes of Jim Walmsley, Courtney Dewaulter and RRC's Jeremy Mower to name a few but the distance isn't lost on me – it's pretty far isn't it, it hurt, I sulked oh yes I sulked – my pacers can vouch for that. My youngest son was my first pacer as he is an ultra runner himself and a self confessed hater of running. He was lucky he just had to endure 15 miles, fellow RRC member Mike Lewis-Copeland had to keep me entertained for 30 miles and at a time when I was experiencing a serious loss of sense of humour, but their contribution enabled me to griz it out and finish - throughout the event they were invaluable. Moving on to end of July and despite the 100 effort still lingering, I was on the start line for the Strathaven Striders John Lucas Memorial Ultra, 46.5 miles of hard work, this was my 3rd go at this Ultra, this is an excellent event with an old school club race vibe and this year I ran a PB knocking almost an hour off my previous time but, more importantly, beating my son's time from last year. I've just got a sprint of a half marathon in October and that's 2022 over. At times I really do hate running!



Grant still smiling

From Mark Pickard, a leading ultra distance racer of the early 1980's

I have been asked to write about my memories of the RRC, which I joined in 1979. I am very grateful to it for the organisation of races which, in 1981, saw two of my best performances. In fact, I took part in three RRC races that year, but in the RRC Marathon, held at Milton Keynes on July 4th, I had a terrible run for my level of fitness at the time. Having recently recorded a PB of 2:21:24 at Sandbach on a hot day, which had felt easy, I was hoping to go under 2:20 at Milton Keynes - however, I felt bad all the way and finished third in 2:29:19, behind Malcolm Mountford (2:24:09) and my ultra-distance idol, Cavin Woodward (2:28:06). I never did improve on my Sandbach time.

I was better at longer distances, and I managed to win the Two Bridges 36 and the SLH 30 before running in the RRC London to Brighton on September 27th. Here, I came up against Bruce Fordyce and I began to struggle after reaching Bolney, eventually finishing the 53 miles 856 yards in 5:24:55, second to his 5:21:15 (he described the wind as awful). The question was inevitably asked whether I could have won if I hadn't run the Reading 10 the previous afternoon (in 50:03, a failed attempt to break 50 minutes), but I don't think so – he was too good. I actually managed to win the London to Brighton in 1988, but in a very slow time – it was an unusual

race, with a relatively weak field and poor weather. Ron Hill, who was then president of the RRC, greeted me at the finish, and as I sat chatting to him in the changing rooms afterwards I could hardly believe what had happened.

Anyway, back to 1981, and I lined up for the RRC 24 Hours Track Race at Cophthall Stadium, Hendon, starting at 9am on October 10th, with a field which included Don Ritchie, Mike Newton and Martin Daykin. Don wasn't at his best, and the continual circling of the track (anti-clockwise all the way) gave Martin trouble with his legs. I led at 100 miles, which I reached with relative ease in 13:03:51, and, although I struggled from about 110 miles onwards, I managed to stay in front, reaching 200 kilometres in 17:01:47 and 150 miles in 21:35:40, before winning the race with 163 miles 1249 yards, ahead of Mike Newton in second place with 158 miles 1622 yards. At the time, my distance was a UK national record and put me second on the world all-time list behind Jean-Gilles Bousquet of France who had had two longer runs, the better one being 169 miles 705 yards. (The following May, David Dowdle of the UK ran 170 miles 974 yards.) Looking back, I was 21 years old and it seems almost surreal that I had the opportunity and privilege of running in such races against some outstanding athletes.

Harp 24 hour trail race 18th /19th of June 2022

Pam Storey

This is an annual charity event taking place around a 5 mile circuit near Southend on Sea, Essex, at the Westcliffe Rugby Club ground. There are numerous teams competing in a relay race, teams of between 3 and 12 runners and also 'solo' runners, a total of 230 participants. There are camping facilities, the usual snacks, drinks and an evening barbeque. And, of course, a row of portaloos... HARP charity provides essential services to support local people taking steps to overcome homelessness.

Elaine Oddie and I had both taken part in this event as 'solo' runners several times so we knew what to expect. The weather forecast was showing some rain so we came well prepared. As Elaine lives nearby she did not bother with a tent but I took a small dome tent. However she did put her kit bag in the tent which proved to be a good move! I had planned to walk this time but Elaine was hoping to run some of the laps. We set off together at 12 noon in nice weather walking a small section on road then along footpaths through the Cherry Orchard Country Park. After each lap I stopped for a rest and a drink and Elaine carried on but we did walk a few more laps together. During the night around 10.00 pm it started to rain and it turned in to the worst thunder

and lightning storm I have ever experienced in my life. It was really scary so we decided to take shelter in a wooded area where we were soon joined by a few other runners. We were of course wearing head torches and, fortunately, waterproof gear. After a while the rain started to ease off but the paths had become flooded and slippery.

However, we completed the lap only to find that the race had been abandoned for safety reasons and that they would 'recce' the circuit a few hours later.

Elaine decided to return home as it would be a few hours before we could continue but I had a hot drink and retreated into my tent. I didn't actually get any sleep as there were noisy 'neighbours' clearing out there large flooded tent! After a few hours I decided to have another hot drink sheltering in the main marquee but began to shiver so the St John Ambulance folk invited me to sit in their ambulance which I gratefully accepted and I was wrapped in a foil blanket. Eventually I was able to message Elaine that the route had been inspected and the race restarted. So, it turned into an 18 hour race instead of 24 hours! We were satisfied though.

Our final results were Elaine 8 laps = 40 miles and me 7 laps = 35 miles



At the Harp 24hour, Pam and Elaine with friends

Running over the years for RRC

John Pares

John asked me to write an article about how running has changed over the last 70 years. As a 56 year old, I can't cover the full span, but have some memories of the early 1970s.

Running in childhood. My earliest memories of running were in the Lincolnshire countryside when I was a kid. Running was a means of transport, before I had a bike, and also a means of escape. I can remember running through the snow and falling into ditches obscured by the snowdrifts; running terrified down the fen road because the fire we started got out of control and we thought the farmer was after us. In my memory, running had a lot of freedom then, and touched the emotions.

Running as a teenager. You were supposed to hate school cross country, but I loved it. Kev and I used to even get an extra lap in while they were picking teams for hockey, it took about 17 minutes and we just joined one on each team when we got back. I also remember being inspired by Coe v Ovet at the Moscow Olympics in 1980. Many years later, on my first trip to Moscow, I got up early and ran to the stadium. It was January and -20°C, but it was worth it! I did my first organized races then, including a half marathon at 17. One of the memories is all the people having a last cigarette before the gun. That has certainly changed! I was picked to represent the school at the county championships in 5,000m. The top six scored points for the school and I passed another runner for 6th on the line. There was a big cheer from my school mates, followed by an even bigger cheer as I immediately threw up next to the track. It's actually my only ever vomit while running and there are not many 24 hour runners who can say that! My first marathon was in Leeds at 19. I thought my 3.12 was quite good. It reminds me that I have run a marathon in every decade except my first, I've got less than four years to add one for my 50s. One very big difference then was that I had (lots of) hair. Now I'm a bit more 'streamlined'.

Running in my 20's. My 20's were all about rugby. Running was a way to get fit, rather than an end in itself. In fact, one of my favourite memories was a training run along the beach at Clacton, in the dark, hurdling the breakwaters. I can still hear the sound of the waves.

Playing at Stockwood Park, St Albans, then Hillfoots in Scotland, where I was talked into doing the Dumyat hill race on the promise, "you won't be last". I came in second last. Bloody hell it was hard – I decided to stick to the front row, it was easier!

After Rugby. I was quite robust and finished every game I started and never missed a game through injury. It all changed in 1999, when I was 33 years old, playing for Folkestone, and I dislocated my shoulder quite badly. I decided it was time to stop and, standing on the scales at 95kg, decided to go back to running to lose some weight. 10 years later I was only 65kg and quite a lot had happened in that time. I started with a couple of triathlons involving first a 5k then a 10k. These were the Unilever triathlon, sponsored by the company and,



John Pares at the Leeds Marathon

I think, part of the "olden days" of company policy. I'm not sure many companies do this anymore.

I was talked into three marathons in three months as a charity fund raiser and enjoyed them, it didn't seem too hard, and I started to think about going further. I was inspired to another charity effort by the amazing Rosie Swale-Pope who did three marathons in three days – Seven Sisters/ Eastbourne, Snowdonia and Dublin. I did the same the next year, with a couple of friends driving me, and raised £8,000 for charity. I took it easy, around 4 hours per marathon, and felt amazing at the end I had so much energy. After a recovery Irish stew and Guinness in a pub in Dublin, I had another Irish stew and Guinness, and then started plotting my next adventure.

It was also at this time that we put a company team into one of the new breed of races, the "Tough Guy" cross-country and assault course in the Midlands. The combination of my endurance, and remaining rugby strength, helped me immensely and I had a good race. We were the first company team. "Tough Mudders" are now a standard in the racing calendar.

Running in, and for, Wales. We moved to North Wales in 2002. While I was commuting I joined the "Village Runners", a mix of fun runners and some good quality runners. It was my first taste of a club and I then joined Buckley Runners after meeting Les, their coach, while on jury service. This was my

Running over the years for RRC

introduction to the Borders road running and cross country leagues, as well as some more serious hill running. I had some heartbreak trying to break 3 hours in Amsterdam (3.00.02!!) and Les's 10km training helped me move up a level. I also had the great joy of running as a team and winning the border league with the club. This was old-style running and I really loved it. I started to think about longer distances and had a go at the London to Brighton, coming 5th, and where I first heard about the RRC who organised the race as one of their flagship events. I soon joined. Several of my club mates represented Wales at different disciplines and in different age groups. I qualified for Wales on residency and put my name forward for the Anglo-Celtic Plate, based on the London to Brighton result. I was surprised to be selected and now I was an international runner, something I never expected.

International 24 hour running. Where to go from here? Well, I decided to have a go at a 24 hour race for charity – pay a pound to guess how far I can go. I ended up winning at Tooting Bec in 2006. At the end, Hilary Walker, Walter Hill and Norman Wilson wandered over for a chat. “Did you realise that you got the qualifying distance for GB for the World Champs. Well, I didn’t know there was a team, or a World championship, so “no”. My second 24 hour race was in a GB vest at the World Champs in Canada in 2007. That was unexpected. I think athletes have better longevity these days and the next few years saw me getting PBs in all my distances, all of them in my 40’s. 2009 to 2011 was my peak, with bronze in the Commonwealth champs in 2009 and gold in 2011. The meat in the sandwich was my PB of 252km at the World Champs in Brive in 2010 – 8th in the World’s, 5th in the Europeans. As there hasn’t been a Commonwealth Championship since 2011, I can still call myself the reigning champion!

My job has taken me around the world and I’ve been to, and run in, more than 50 countries. I’ve explored many great places, seen a lot of wildlife and met a lot of interesting people. It’s also international running, although not international running, if you know what I mean.

Decline and fall. 2010 to 2012 was also my busiest ever period of work when I was leading a project to build a factory in Hungary and we also moved to Switzerland. Most days consisted of: wake up at 4.45; run; eat; work; run; eat; phone home, sleep. The stress was too much and I had something of a breakdown at the World Champs in Katowice in 2012. I just stopped. In the middle of the night, my sub-conscious had decided enough was enough, stopped me dead in my tracks and I literally couldn’t move. I just started crying. I had to negotiate with myself to get moving again. I ended up walking the remainder of the race and supporting the rest of the GB team. Mental health is a big topic now, but not then. The next year in the Netherlands was almost as bad and I went for a sleep. This was also a time when there was less science in ultrarunning. My training plan was to do back-to-back 30 milers on Saturday, running each one depleted. Running tired was the norm and there was “vitamin I” (Ibuprofen) to deal

with the pain. Race nutrition was also a hit and miss affair and there were no fancy shoes. I’m not sure my racing and training regime helped me perform at my best or keep me fit and healthy.

I decided to get into the mountains and just run for “fun” and rediscover the joy of running. I did the Black Forest trail maniac 56km, Swiss Alpine 82km, Jura 100km and Eiger Trail 101km. I loved it but years of sport took their toll and I needed knee surgery in 2015.

What happens when the running ends? So, John Pares, GB and Wales international, ultrarunner, fell runner, cross country runner, mountain runner, what do you do when the running ends? Well, I bought a bike of course, and also took up mountain walking. I also took over as manager of the GB & NI 24 hour team, so was able to keep in contact with the sport.

The management of the GB team has brought in qualified coaches, professional nutrition advice and all sorts of expertise from different fields. Ibuprofen is no longer allowed during championships and we pay more attention to the long-term physical and mental health of athletes. They don’t always listen, but I think we are making some progress. This year we will take a strong team of 16 athletes to Verona for the European Championships. Now I just have to get the knees in shape to do that marathon in my 50s and 60s. Maybe as part of an Ironman...



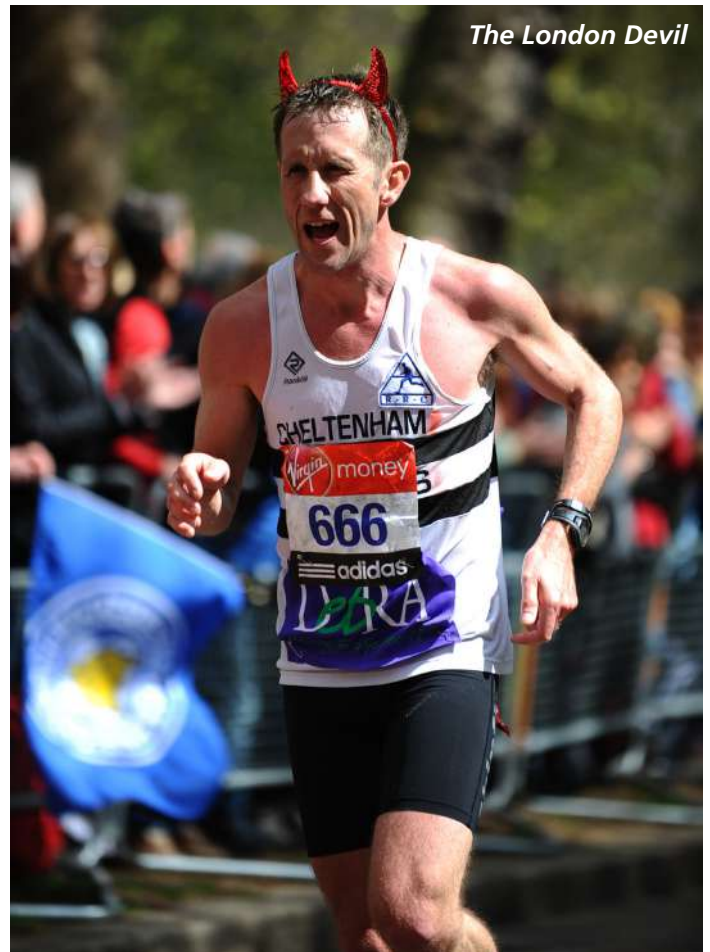
John Pares represents Wales in the Commonwealth 24 hour race at Keswick 2009

Why do I run? Where did I start?

Andy Gore

I have always been into sports and have taken part in many different types such as gymnastics, football, rugby, badminton, cricket, swimming etc. However, it wasn't until around 1984 when my friend Chris Lane introduced me to the local athletics club, Cheltenham and County Harriers. I am not sure what it was about athletics, but I was soon hooked. At first, I did not know how to race on the track or how to train. This was learned by trial and error and guidance from my coach, Keith Charles and my fellow teammates. My early memories of going to track and field meetings and having to run the 'B' string 3000m are painful when I look back. I used to go tearing off with no idea on pace judgement, only to get dropped and subsequently lapped! This, somehow, did not put me off? I seemed to be determined to try again and not be as slow and gradually I improved and then one day I was not last! This was the point where it also dawned on me, if I did more training I would get fitter! It sounds obvious, but for me at the time it was a lightbulb moment.

I never looked back and gradually started improving and getting involved in other distances, doing cross country, road races and relays. Being a member of an athletics club is great. You feel part of a team, yet your performances are solely down to you and the effort you put in on the day! There is also the social side of being a member of a club as well as meeting people from other clubs and forming new friendships, rivalries, and banter. Since I joined my local club Cheltenham and County Harriers, I have seen many people come and go but for some reason I have stuck at it and when not ill or injured still compete for them. Over the years I have competed on the track with highlights such as 1:58.1 minutes for 800m at Loughborough University, 15:38 minutes for 5000m at Alexander Stadium; on the road 31:50 minutes for 10km at Brighton, 52:14 minutes for 10 miles at Ballycotton and 2:30:51 hours for the marathon at London. I have also represented the club and the county in cross country, road, fell and track and have been lucky to travel to some lovely places to race. Now that I am 52, I have had to take notice of



the signs that my body is giving me. I am not able to train as hard or as often, neither can I race as frequently. That said, I still miss the buzz, the adrenalin and comradery that you get when you train and race. For this reason, I will endeavour to keep running until my body says 'Stop!' or when I no longer feel that buzz and enjoyment. Let's hope I can race again soon as I have not had a great year so far. As Arnie says, 'I will be back!'.



All three of our London Marathon Everresents will be on the starting line again this year, although in a somewhat different state of fitness as their widely varying ages determine. It seems that only 7 'everresents' will start this year and Road Runners Club is proud to have three of them as members. We wish all runners good luck and especially these three stalwarts of the London Marathon.

**Road Runners Club's London Marathon Everresents
with Bill O'Connor and 'Mac' Speake
with Chris Finill immediately behind them.**

London to Brighton 1980

Colin Youngson (RRC no.3882)

The running career of Colin Youngson exemplifies the golden age of Scottish road running like no other. Mainly in the 70's and 80's it just about made it to the 1990's. The work of Dunky Wright and Jimmy Scott in the Scottish Marathon Club had got the SAAA Marathon championship firmly installed on the big stage of the national championships, and the growing and thriving road running scene made for the best road relay of them all, the eight-stage Edinburgh to Glasgow. Every road runner of note took part in them both but Colin revelled in them. Ten medals in the Scottish marathon championship along with 7 golds in thirty appearances in the E-G. Quite remarkable. Like many other Scottish road runners, Colin joined the Road Runners Club. Joining in 1968 he is still a member which in itself is testament to how much he loves the sport and his club.



Shivering slightly in the cool morning air, I stood on Westminster Bridge with 136 other 'sight-seers' in summery beachwear at the unlikely time of 7 a.m. on a late September Sunday. Not a single Japanese tourist was present to photograph the scene. To the left of the towering mass of Big Ben, the moon was clearly visible. Its rays fell on me and my fellow lunatics.

Three hours earlier, startled from uneasy sleep by a piercing telephone alarm call, I had stuffed down toasts, jam, coffees and two slow sodium tablets, then made a silent exit from my friends' flat and hauled my rucksack down to Wimbledon Station for the 5.31 a.m. train. Having explained with difficulty to a pair of London Irish cops what a track-suited weirdo was doing at that hour, I joined the local dossers and grew increasingly worried as the train delayed its arrival. The need for an expensive unnerving dash by minicab became more likely. Eventually the diesel rumbled out of the gloom fifteen minutes late. By 6.10 I had navigated from Waterloo (to make preparations for a personal battle) to the G.L.C. County Hall, where all was light and bustle. Polite posters indicated the route to the dressing rooms as taxi-loads of more affluent or less tight-fisted competitors and supporters arrived. There were dozens of aged, incredibly pukka officials of the organising **Road Runners Club**. Otherwise, the place was packed by a posse of Yanks, most wearing the scarcely modest luminous orange vests of the Central Park Track Club, New York. They broadcast in 'foghorn' voices to their adoring female fans. Pushing pins through my number into a boring plain blue vest and tee-shirt and drink bottles into cardboard boxes, I jogged to the loo and warmed up twice round the luggage bus. Having established that my joints were functioning and thus relieving the tensions of a pre-race runner with rampant hypochondria, I relaxed on a bench for five minutes. A final glass of water was sipped, while I scanned the information booklet on this, the thirtieth running of the London to Brighton footrace. No wonder there was an abundance of blazered officials – not only a starter but also a referee, judges, stewards, timekeepers, recorders, police, a medical officer, an announcer, results staff, a rear

guard and even a pilot were required! There were to be 12 refreshment stations. Dangerous traffic and diversions might be encountered along the route and fatigued competitors were likely to become vague in thought and movement. So it was as well that umpteen road marshalls were prepared to help (mainly athletes and boy scouts).

This would be longest 'Brighton Road' at no less than fifty-four miles and four hundred and sixty yards. I tried to forget that stamina-sapping statistic while glancing at the list of participants – 170 entrants (including eight ladies). The majority, of course, were English, but countries represented include the USA, Canada, Australia, the Bahamas, Yugoslavia, Sweden, Finland, Holland, Germany – and Scotland (two runners). They were to proceed, two abreast or single file, on the left-hand side of the road, because the Highway Code considered them 'a marching body'. I hoped to avoid both marching and ending up a body. The time limit was to be eight hours, twenty-three minutes and, after that, 'all facilities' would be withdrawn. Anyone having to run for that duration would find that 'all faculties', both physical and mental, would have withdrawn of their own accord.

For a provincial lad, trotting casually up to the starting line in the heart of London did give a certain sophisticated devil-may-care feeling. En route I fastened on a Gloucester athlete called Dave Dowdle, whose consistently good ultra-distance form I had researched back home. He introduced himself, checked correctly that Dave would be going for a finish time of 5 hours 50 minutes at a steady rate and boldly expressed the hope that he wouldn't mind company for a few miles if things went to plan. As a mere marathon runner, I needed all the guidance I could get! Dave seemed agreeable and we lined up with the rest. A heartbroken harrier from Birmingham was moaning about his favourite football team losing a vital league match the day before – but since the time was a few seconds to seven, his self-centred audience had no time to share his grief.

BONG! On the first stroke, we all headed over the bridge and made for the south coast. Psychologically, distance runners have been described as introspective, independent, intelligent – and a wee bit mad. The latter seemed most significant to me at that moment. Trying to absorb the Thames scenery, I gave my weaker ankle one nasty little wrench (amazingly, the only one of the entire journey). The first two miles seemed uncomfortably fast, as I manoeuvred myself alongside the Gloucester man. Then the pace eased and we settled into a steady rhythm at something faster than 6 minutes 30 seconds per mile.

By now the previous year's winner Alan Rodgers from New York, bronzed legs shuffling along with a short jerky gait, had gone straight into the lead. He was defending his title in a most determined manner, despite having spent Saturday ill in bed (possibly due to lager-loading during Friday's reception in that ancient public house 'The Cheshire Cheese' in Fleet Street). A Finn was tracking him as he gradually moved away

London to Brighton 1980

from his major challengers. The main one was likely to be Ian Thompson. This was his ultra debut, but he had been an international marathon champion. Ian's light, even, deliberate stride did not falter – and Rodgers' lead never extended beyond forty seconds. Back with the pack, at first I felt a touch warm and took off my tee shirt, leaving the mesh vest in the patriotic dark blue of Scotland, but soon encountered a cold white mist which insisted that the tee-shirt went on again for the remainder of the race, in spite of the brighter conditions which prevailed towards the end.

During the first seven miles, apart from the first three thoroughbreds, an assortment of experienced ultra men (often noticeably chunkier than marathoners) and foolhardy optimists disappeared into the distance. Thereafter the traffic was one way only, as Dave and I edged slowly up the field. History records the first successful completion of the London to Brighton distance by a 'pedestrian' (a running, race-walking athlete) in 1897. I was resolved to do everything possible to emulate the pioneers. I knew that, as nothing more than an apprentice ultra-distance runner, I would have to pace my efforts very cautiously. A knot of serious-faced officials shouted out a time for Dave and myself of just over 64 minutes at ten miles (Croydon). This did seem over-timid so we decided to increase our tempo a little in an attempt to catch (by twenty miles at Redhill) the small bunch of competitors who were trotting along easily a hundred yards in front. We did not succeed despite a 63-minute stretch but overtook quite a few stragglers. My legs were just beginning to stiffen up, a process which continued inexorably throughout the event. Gradually increasing sunshine dispelled the mist and I was mildly annoyed that, just when an increase of fluid was becoming essential, the organisers forgot to hand me my bottle. I was to miss at least three precious containers along the way, including the two with a plastic bag of dates tied to the top! It was probably just as well I didn't get the chance of experimenting with mobile munching but luckily, I was given a share of one of Dave's drinks. (He was mainlining on a preparation known as 'Accolade'.) Not unexpectedly, maintaining our speed throughout the third ten required an increase in effort. I was gaining even more respect for this small but stocky 25-year-old partner, who was pushing on vigorously with a well-balanced mechanical motion. They were running well, but I was starting to wish Dave would slow down! We re-passed a suffering soul who had overtaken us much earlier and then the most elegant of the New Yorkers, his Christian Dior neckerchief less jaunty than previously. When he was still twenty yards in front of us, we heard his 'dying words' of instruction to his back-up car. The strangled grunt from his pain-twisted visage was 'The other shoes!' Desperation personified. (He later dropped out – surprise, surprise!)

I halted momentarily to siphon off excess liquid (the first pee of my racing career, but not performed using the non-stop system previously described to him by a World Record-breaking ultra expert!) Hurriedly I caught up with Dave and

passed the traditional checkpoint at Crawley at the unlikely distance of 31 and a quarter miles in three hours sixteen minutes (including a 62 minute ten). However, increasing tiredness informed me that I'd have to let go of this energetic new acquaintance before long. Dave stopped at 35 miles for a fresh vest and although I plodded on past a fading star and one Peter Hastings (of whom more later) he guessed correctly that the redoubtable Dave Dowdle would soon bowl past, commencing his planned run-in to Brighton beach. When this happened, I wished Dave luck, thanked him for the pacing and companionship and watched him vanish over the horizon, settling into a survival struggle to the sea.

At roughly the same stage but twenty minutes earlier, Ian Thompson, who had not actually drawn alongside Alan Rodgers until Crawley, had cruised away up a hill into a commanding lead he was in no danger of losing. In Ultras, the 'man-to-man stuff' tends to be over by about thirty miles and then individuals are left fighting on their own to complete the course. My problem was lack of adequate preparation and muscles unused to more than a maximum of three hours on the road. Averaging 66 miles a week for the previous ten months, completing two marathons and eighteen runs over twenty miles in length had given me a reasonable background – but it was hardly ultra-training. The real specialists tend to run 140 miles per week and frequently insert three or four hour efforts into their schedules. My only genuine attempt had been five weeks earlier when, without prior rest, I had completed the 'Two Bridges' thirty-six miles race as a steady training run. All had gone well for thirty miles and then I had 'hit the wall' and had difficulty in finishing fourth. However, the time was only 3 hours 38 minutes – over two hours less than this trial was liable to last.

Therefore, the final eighteen miles was to be a voyage into the unknown by a hopeful novice who feared the worst.

Symptoms of imminent collapse started to appear at Bolney (forty miles). At least my carbohydrate-loading pre-race diet, plus sensible tactics, had got me this far. Clinical assessment of my condition revealed that the fronts of my thighs were sore and becoming more so due to the switchback nature of the Brighton road. Also in danger of cramping up and consequently a comically stiff and straight-legged mode of progression, like an arthritic giraffe, seemed necessary; plus, a tendency to beg complete strangers for something, anything to drink. I even tried an eccentric piece of ultra 'wisdom' – rubbing Coca Cola on sore muscles to ease the pain. This made me very sticky but was otherwise a failure! A degree of mental angst was caused by the optimism (by two whole miles) of road signs and spectators – they both underestimated how far it was to the finish.

Peter Hastings tended to close on downhills and I stretched away on flat or uphill sections but wasn't particularly interested in other runners – just in keeping going myself. Fatigue was making my aching limbs heavy and reluctant and I found myself becoming increasingly prone to irritation

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(caused by minor things like sticky hands) and panic (about the likelihood of cramp and the whole stress situation). 'Stitches' and slight nausea did not ease my discomfort, yet there was no real chance of cracking mentally – just a danger of total leg collapse. Lack of a 'second' (i.e. a back-up car) meant isolation and insecurity. I had heard an anecdote about a supporting wife who, on seeing her ultra-running husband suddenly crumple to the verge, his legs knotted with cramp, had simply hauled the invalid to his feet. Then she spread-eagled him unceremoniously over the bonnet of the vehicle, yanked powerfully at his ankles, dumped him back on his feet and kick-started him on his way again. I yearned for the relief of similar loving massage. Passing Dave's fan-club van with eight miles to go, my scrambled brain didn't register the fact that the Gloucester man must have given up. (Due to, as I later found out, dehydration, leg pains and loneliness.) What a pity – he had really been going well until then, but I was sure there would be a next time for a man of such obvious talent. (Later, Dave became a World-Record-breaking 24 hours runner.) At the Pycombe checkpoint, the notorious Dale Hill signified that, in seventh position, I had seven miles to go and was in the finishing straight, but the worst part of the race, despite the fact that the road was mainly flat or downhill. The two pillars beside the sign saying 'Brighton' meant, as I had been warned, six whole miles left. The traffic was really heavy now, streaking past my right ear and blowing foul fumes up my nostrils. Fortunately, I wasn't 'wobbling' much, but was surprised more competitors didn't end up under passing cars. (In Victorian times, six-day events were popular, the winner being the 'pedestrian' who covered most distance. Such races were nicknamed 'Wobbles', for obvious reasons, but at least they were held indoors, away from the horse-drawn carriages.) A pavement appeared – a safer place to be than the road - and the ordeal (as it had become) continued. With two miles remaining, I realised I was being reeled in again and managed just a little extra to hold him off. Brighton Pavilion, that Turkish Delight of an architectural curiosity, was not even noticed. Half a mile to go and at the end of the prom, the Dolphinarium swam into the blurred sea of my vision. Suddenly it was all over – round a corner and the finish just a hundred yards ahead. No sprint for the crowd's benefit – just a dogged dream-like plod over the line and stop dead, holding onto a barrier.

Having reassured the guy with the blanket that of course I could walk unaided, I suddenly found that I couldn't! Temporary seizure of the front thighs. However, a tee-shirted beauty assisted the hirpling** old cripple into the breakdown van which carted him off to the Park Side Baths. An agonised hobble down some steps, backwards, a tired wriggle out of soaking gear and into the deepest hot bath (individual

tanks) I'd ever had. Ankle-deep I was compelled to scream for help – the water seemed close to boiling point! Sinking back, relaxing at last, I drank two cups of water and one of tea, but couldn't face a biscuit (unusually for me). Yet within five minutes the sick, totally drained feeling passed and I was on the mend – legs helped by the heat treatment and liquid intake gradually increasing. The steady pace meant that no real damage had been done and I found it possible to race in a short road relay only six days later!

The next couple of hours were spent sunbathing in a deckchair on the prom, as well as eating ice-cream, drinking coke and chatting to a number of early finishers, while watching slower runners wending their weary way home. My time ((5 hours 52 minutes) had been 37 minutes slower than the record pace of Ian Thompson, whose opinion of his fifteen-minute victory was "Apart from the sore feet, quite pleasant." He was awarded the Arthur Newton Cup, and the winning team (runner-up Alan Rodgers' New Yorkers) won the Len Hurst Belt, both old trophies named after famous ultra runners of the distant past. The ever-lovely Leslie Watson***, masseuse of most marathoners' dreams, who had run more than 150 races of 26 miles or over, arrived only an hour after myself but well ahead in the Ladies' competition. As she strolled up to receive her prize from the Mayor of Brighton, she looked cool, composed and elegant. By contrast when, trying not to limp, I stotted** onto the stage to collect a tiny but treasured first class standard medal, my main worry not appearance (more rumpled than ever) but, during the descent of the steps, avoiding a prat-fall because of buckling knees.

A truly amateur affair and, apart from Thompson versus Rodgers, not really about competitive sport but personal challenge and self-esteem. Having read the pessimistic pre-race comments in my training diary, my exasperated partner had written "Into the Valley of Death! What about REALITY?" And indeed, I recognised that ultra distance running was worlds apart from the 'normal' stresses of domestic and working life. However, this did not make the experience of completing the London to Brighton race unreal. 'Ultra' meant beyond – beyond the marathon, testing stamina and determination beyond previous limits achieving physical potential, living on the edge for a few hours and it had been vividly and intensely real. Ultra-distance running might be ultra-eccentric, or painful, or even farcical – but also ultra-satisfying!

**Scottish – hirpling - walk with a limp; stotted – bounced;

*** Leslie Watson, RRC ladies member no 9 is still a member of our club and was, in those days, a leading light in the fight to accommodate ladies in long distance races.

The Ten-Mile Tradition Continues at the Heckington Show

John Walshe (RRC 4490)



In the summer 2018 (number 216) issue of Roadrunner I wrote about a race I had run in, the Winterton '10' held in conjunction with the Lincolnshire town's agricultural show. Mentioning that once upon a time such races were an integral part of the summer schedule, but now many had vanished, somewhat like the ten-mile distance itself. One that still remains and which I had the privilege of running in back in July for the second time (the first was in 2009) is the Heckington '10' which is well over a half-century in existence. The show itself goes back much further – this year's two-day event was actually the 154th edition of what is acknowledged as the largest village show in England. According to the show programme, the race first took place in 1965 but the report in Athletics Weekly of August 6th, 1966, refers to that year's race as the inaugural event. Either way, it is regarded as the oldest road race in the Midlands. That 1966 promotion took place on Saturday July 23rd, exactly a week before a more historic occasion at Wembley Stadium which is still recalled whenever the fortunes of English football are discussed!

According to that report, the race took place in muggy conditions which many of the 62 starters found heavy going. The winner was Mick Price in 50:36 with his Bristol teammate Peter Lonnen second in 51:19 and David Eccles from Derby third in 51:55. Finishing 13th in 54:09 was Keith Angus from Sheffield who would go on to win the race in 1971. Five years later, Angus qualified for the 1976 Montreal Olympic marathon when finishing third to Barry Watson and Jeff Norman at the trial in Rotherham in a time of 2:15:55. The 1967 race saw victory going to Mike Bullivant in a course record of 50:18, leading a Derby & County clean sweep as Harold Leeming took second in 50:31 and Peter Calladine third in 51:05. It was Leeming's turn to set the record the following year as his 49:53 gave him over a minute to spare over Calladine (50:39) and he (Leeming) was also first across the line in 1969, two seconds inside the 50 minutes.

The following year, well-know international Tim Johnston** took part as a guest as his entry was too late and he actually finished in second position approximately 150 yards behind Trevor Wright who reduced the record to 49:04 with Roger Clark from Bristol the official second-placed finisher in 49:38. Twelve months later, Wright, of Hallamshire Harriers, would finish second in the marathon at the European Championships

in Helsinki. Those early results would feature many names familiar to older RRC members both as runners and race organisers, such as Brian Kilby, Harry Clayton, Malcolm Martin, John Flatters and John Burnley.

And so to the present day. The race is now organised by Sleaford Striders with their chairperson, Bill Rayner, the current man in charge after taking over the role in 2014. Although the race has always been held over a two-lap course starting and finishing in the main arena,

there have been a number of slight changes to the route around the flat Heckington Fen over the years. Just short of 200 took part in the latest edition which was held in overcast and warm conditions, although thankfully the record heat wave of the previous week had abated. First in a record for the current course of 52:28 was William Strangeway of Lincoln Wellington with the women's race going to Emma Hodson from Cambridge University Hare & Hounds in a time of 58:02. Emma, who has local connections, had also won the 2021 race along with a second-place finish from 2019.

The early races, as was the norm back then, started at 3pm on the Saturday afternoon but now the starting time is the earlier hour of 9am and it is the first event of the 36-event programme in the main showground ring. Therefore, it gives the race participants plenty of time to enjoy such attractions as the exiting cycling competitions and jousting exhibition along with sampling the numerous food outlets, trade stands and vintage machinery on display. Next year's show is scheduled for the last weekend in July with the 10-mile again taking place on the Saturday morning. It's well worth a visit – not alone for a well-organised race with a good spread of prizes and this year a lovely T-shirt – but also for knowing you are keeping a tradition alive which now stretches back almost 60 years. Details from: www.heckingtonshow.org.uk

Heckington '10' 2022 results:

Men

- 1 **William Strangeway** (Lincoln Wellington) 52:28
- 2 **Linton Taylor** (Leeds City) 56:07
- 3 **Brian Corleys** (Bushfield Joggers, M45) 57:02

Women

- 1 **Emma Hodson** (Cambridge University Hare & Hounds, F35) 58:02
- 2 **Rebecca Gallop** (Newark AC, F35) 61:15
- 3 **Samantha Iliffe** (North Derbyshire RC, F35) 67:55

** A tribute to Tim Johnston is later in this issue of RR

Midnight Marathon 13th/14th August 2022

Tim Boone

The last time my scribbles appeared in this newsletter was when I reported on the Denbies vineyard marathon in December 2020. This event had popped up in a brief relaxation of the Covid lockdown and was my running-buddy Becky's first marathon. Since then, we've run six marathons/ultras together, including the Serpent Trail 50K, Beachy Head, Steyning Stinger, and the Centurion SDW50 in April of this year. We prepared with long training runs for all of these events. Not so this time. Work and family commitments for Becky and a hamstring injury for me, meant that we were both lamentably under-trained for this Seriously Tough Event. And lament we did.

The Midnight Marathon starts at the Queen Elizabeth Country Park, near Petersfield, and follows (mostly) the South Downs Way eastwards to Cocking, where you turn round and run back again. "Is there a lot of climbing," Becky asked, as we drove down. "Over 3500 feet," I replied, having looked up my Garmin records from the last time I ran this race. "Oh."

Restricted to 200 runners, this small friendly event in its seventh year (not 2020) is most excellently organised by Phil Hoy of Second Wind Running. The main start is at 9 o'clock, and although earlier starts are allowed (for those expecting a six hour finish) the emphasis is on a night marathon. As Becky and I joined the starting line assembly, it was already gloomy enough for some runners to have their torches on. "We'll be fine," I said, already panting in the warm breeze (like the hot air from a hand drier in a public convenience). And we hadn't even started running yet. "Yeah." Clearly, Becky didn't share my fragile optimism.

"two... one... go", Phil shouted, and off we all set. Uphill. Daytime temperatures had been in the mid-thirties and although the sun had gone down, there was a noticeable residual heat radiating up from the flinty track. Airborne dust, reflected in our headtorches, looked like drizzly rain at times. Bats flitted overhead. There wasn't a whole lot of chatter, around us, in the ominously silent gloaming. Two weeks before, I'd managed to run three miles. Without stopping once! Discomfort from my hamstring was, I'd decided, no more than 'Three' on the injury pain scale (with 'Ten' being a sticking out bone). Running (I use the term loosely) up that first hill in QECP, my legs felt like a string of sausages, but at least Hammy was behaving... for now. Becky was skipping along beside me, no sign as yet of the inner Zombie that can emerge after an excess of twelve-hour shifts in A&E... or, I feared, a long and gruelling night marathon? The dream was to complete an achievable, sort of enjoyable moonlit challenge, not break ourselves in some nightmarish

hell out in the dark. "Let's slow it down, just a bit", I suggested. "Long way to go". "Sure!" Okay, the bottom line. From the photo (assuming editor prints it, in all its misty-lens blurriness) you can see we both finished. Smiling, too. But, as all gnarly old ultra-runners say, we had to dig deep. Very deep. I don't know about Becky, but coming down stairs was a definite issue for me, the next day.

The SDW is pretty rough in places, with some perilously steep and stony descents.** Phil advocated carrying a hand torch (in addition to a headtorch) for these places, to break up the shadows and better illuminate the plethora of trip hazards. This I did, for the first time in a night event, and what a difference it made! Both Becky and I survived the run in a (more or less) vertical position. Something else I did differently was to carry just one small container of water. I knew I could rely on Phil's promise of water (and coke, sweet and savoury biscuits, fruit and chocolate) at the aid stations every 7 kilometres. There was even hot coffee and tea on offer at the halfway point. It felt good not to be weighed down with litres of fluid. I drank a lot. Temperatures, apparently, stayed in the low to mid-twenties. The air was mostly really warm and heavy, though occasionally cool (but never what you'd call 'deliciously cool'). We were caked in dust, skanky with sweat, but what a marvellous feeling it was to be running along beneath the stars, an almost full moon climbing above us into a cloudless night sky.

Our routine became to briskly walk up the hills, every hill, followed by some purposeful jogging/steady running where it was level or downhill. We stopped for a minute at each aid station to refuel on whatever we felt we could stomach, then pushed on. The miles started to fall away and I was surprised when we reached halfway in 2:22 – I'd predicted a finish time the wrong side of five hours. And

would have been very happy with that. As it turned out, we maintained our steady pace and finished in 4:47.26. Our positions were 33rd / 34th (4th lady for Becky and 1st V60 for me) but the splits make for interesting reading, (mine) moving from 72nd to 61st to 51st to 45th to 38th to 33rd at each of the evenly spaced aid stations. Lamentations aside (for our extensive aches and pains) we had, amazingly, possessed enough underlying fitness (and common sense/experience) to pace ourselves sensibly. So, onward to the next Big Challenge. And that one will require some proper training!

Editor; **no exaggeration there – flint stones embedded on slimy chalk ruts! As I said in one of my articles years ago, the South Downs Way is one gigantic cheese grater.



D.I.Y. for Steeplechasers

Paul Smith

My forty years of running (albeit with a 10 year lay off) has consisted of numerous road and cross country races but just one track race, which was the 3000 metres last year. But there is one track event that has always fascinated me, possibly because it never lacks drama. The steeplechase is often referred to as the hardest track race, the challenge being to get over thirty five barriers including seven water jumps, with it's sloped landing area, whilst you cover the three kilometres distance.

My 3000m time was eleven minutes exactly, which is reasonably good in my age category (M55-59) so I figured it must be possible for me to run the steeplechase in less than thirteen minutes. I am also six feet two inches tall, which is similar to most 'professional' steeplechasers I see on the TV.

In the M55-60 category, there are less than twenty people in the UK listed on Power of 10 for the steeplechase each year. I wanted to join them. But training for my new event is far from easy. The local track never has the barriers set out and meets with a steeplechase race are few and far between, especially here in Northern Ireland. I needed to improvise. So using old fence posts, I built a jump at the bottom of my garden. It measures 94cm high and has a 4 inch post going across the top. The same specifications as a steeplechase barrier. The only problem now was that it seemed so high. My legs were not used to jumping. I wouldn't even attempt it, quite possibly because of the thought of a serious shin injury at the back of my mind. I decided instead to stack two piles of bricks with a cane across the top of them. then set the height to 50cm, then 60cm, 70cm and finally 80cm over the course of the next few weeks. Crashing into a cane is so much easier on the shins.

I continued to practice a couple of times a week, usually after my run, then, having got efficient jumping over 80cm, I had another go at the fence post jump I had built. This time though, I decided to step on it as I went over it. This is quite common in the steeplechase as the barriers do not fall over like they do in the hurdles.



Success, and as I got the confidence to approach the barriers faster, I got more efficient and it got easier to get over them. I continued to practice over the winter and spring months to keep the leg memory and waited for the track season to start. The Northern Ireland Masters Athletics championships doesn't have a steeplechase but it does have a 400m hurdles race. As I was feeling reasonably confident about hurdling now, I decided to enter.



D.I.Y. for Steeplechasers

When arriving at the Mary Peters Track in Belfast on race day, the hurdles were already set up. They looked huge, even though they were only supposed to be 84cm high, slightly lower than the steeplechase height. But I warmed up and decided to jump one. It went ok. I think it was because these hurdles were so much narrower than my one at home so they looked taller. I was feeling much more nervous than usual, possibly because it was my first time at the new event. I lined up with two other athletes who both used starting blocks. I wasn't sure how to so I just crouched down.

The gun went and 76 seconds later I had finished. Ten hurdles successfully cleared without any issues and a gold medal won. The Northern Ireland Athletics president presented me with my medal and I was absolutely delighted. My time ranked me 7th on Power of 10 in the UK for 400m hurdles in my age category (sounds great, but there aren't too many of us 'older' hurdlers!). I can definitely recommend moving out of your comfort zone and training for a new discipline. On to the steeplechase!

On a blistering hot day in mid August, I made the 315 mile round trip to Tullamore in County Offaly for the Republic of Ireland's annual Masters Championships. Five entries in the steeplechase but only two would finish. The race was really hard in the 28 degrees heat. Each jump zapping the strength from your legs and each water jump leaving your shoes waterlogged for the next half lap. But after seven and a half



laps and 35 jumps, including seven water jumps, I finished in exactly 13.00 minutes. It was good enough for gold and it made the long drive worth it. It puts me 10th in the UK age group rankings. This is one event I shall definitely return to. I can wholly recommend moving out of your comfort zone and training for a new discipline. I think I may try the high jump next.

Editor; my heartfelt congratulations to Paul for his ingenuity and determination. His gold medals were well deserved.

Robin Campbell (RRC no. 531)

by his son Robert

Robin Campbell joined Road Runners Club in March 1956 and was also a member of Essex Beagles for nearly 70 years. Robin would post still impressive track times for 3 and 6 miles of 13.49 and 28.46 respectively and a very nimble 3.55 for 1500m. He also won the Southern Junior Cross-Country and finished 2nd in the National Junior in the same year (1958). He did his National Service in the RAF and enjoyed a running-focused two years in the blue RAF vest. Robin was a prodigious racer and took pride in representing Essex Beagles in Essex and other road relays, including the London to Brighton, (organised by RRC), always a favourite race of his. Arguably his greatest performance was his 2:20:20 marathon in finishing 2nd to Ron Hill in the 1964 Beverley Marathon. He also finished 3rd in the AAA Marathon that year on a stinking hot summer's day and missed out on selection for the Tokyo Olympics.

Robin was introduced to orienteering by other fellow athletes, Gordon Pirie, John



Disley and Chris Brasher and was selected to represent GB in an international competition behind the Iron Curtain in Bulgaria, where oddly the British athletes found themselves starting late in the evening in failing light. He was mostly at home in runnable southern forests and never got to grips with contoured and rocky terrain. He enjoyed a second running career as a Vet, finishing 4th in the World Vets Marathon, running sub-50 for 10 miles (at Cambridge in 1979) and completing the first London Marathon in 2:35. He also returned to orienteering in the 2000s with the introduction of running friendly urban events. Health scares curtailed his competitiveness and he became more content to be a Parkrun tourist, getting to 242 venues and 346 runs in total, with a final one in March at Castle Park, Bishop's Stortford. He passed away 2022 and was cremated in his 250 Parkrun Milestone t-shirt.

Robin Campbell on the London – Brighton Road

SRI CHINMOY 100KM RACE INC. ANGLO CELTIC PLATE HOME COUNTRIES INTERNATIONAL

COURSE RECORDS BROKEN IN PERTH AT THE BRITISH AND SCOTTISH 100KM CHAMPIONSHIPS, APRIL 3RD 2022

The Sri Chinmoy 100km race, which incorporated both the British and Scottish 100km Championship together with the annual Anglo Celtic Plate home countries International, was held in Perth on April 3rd. In what were near perfect conditions and one of the most competitive 100km races ever seen in Great Britain, no less than 7 men broke the magical 7 hour barrier and 3 ladies the magical 8 hour barrier with a string of personal bests throughout the field.

England's Matt Dickenson (Clapham Chasers) and Scotland's Jo Murphy (unattached) claimed the British 100km championship titles in Perth.

Running his first 100km road race, Dickenson was content to sit in a large lead pack of runners who together set a healthy pace. At 50k, reached in around 3 hours 18, no more than 2 minutes separated the top 12 men. As always as a 100km race approaches the 40 mile mark, things get interesting. As some slowed or faltered, the Clapham Chaser just maintained a steady pace to ease into the lead and achieve almost even 50k splits to win in 6:39:34 breaking Charlie Harpurs 2019 course record by almost 4 minutes. Behind him, England's Ollie Garrod (South London Harriers) and the 2 Scots from Metro Aberdeen Jason Kelly and Chris Richardson looked strong along with Northern

Ireland's Gareth King. Kelly was to come home the stronger in 2nd in 6:42:23 with Garrod taking 3rd in 6:46:50 and King forth in 6:47:33. King's time was a new All Ireland and also a Northern Ireland 100km record.

Former champion Sam Amend and her English team partner Caroline Turner led the ladies race through 50km in 3:46 with Scotland's Jo Murphy running at her own pace a



few minutes further back in 3:52:29. Murphy, the victor in Ireland last August, was to prove the stronger again, showing in-credible pace judgment to run a negative split, coming home in 7:41:12, a pb by almost 10 minutes and obliterating the long held course record of 8:00:30 set by of former GB international Emily Gelder in 2011. Amend took second in 7:48:39 a pb, with Turner running her first 100k 3rd in 7:51:39.

The Norman Wilson Trophies for the best newcomers were taken by Dickinson and Turner.

In the Scottish Championship, Kelly turned the tables for 2021 on his Club mate Chris Richardson. The Scottish title and the Don Ritchie trophy will remain in the North East but in a different household. Richardson had the satisfaction of improving his PB by almost 10 minutes but in this high quality field it was only good enough for 7th overall. Rob Turner took Bronze in the Scottish Championship. Murphy retained her women's title, and the Don Ritchie Trophy. Behind her, Fife AC's Alison McGill made a huge breakthrough, finishing 5th overall and 2nd Scot in 8:02:34 just missing the GB team standard. Lynne Allen (Kirkintilloch) was 3rd in 8:41:40

In the Anglo Celtic Plate Team Competition, it was England who ran out victors in both the men's and women's races. Scotland took 2nd place in both categories with Northern Ireland taking third men's team and Ireland third ladies' team.

Scottish Mens Masters 100km results

1. Rob Turner (Musselburgh)
2. Peter Tucker (Inverclyde)
3. Dave Andrews (Metro Aberdeen)

Scottish Women's Masters

1. Alison McGill (Fife AC)
2. Jo Newens (RRC)
3. Fiona Gibson (Dundee Hawkhill).



The 100 x 100 miles list

taken from an article by Davy Crocket

The 100 x 100 list now includes 21 accomplished athletes who have finished 100 or more races of 100 miles or more. This article will introduce Road Runners Club members Sandra and Richard Brown, both on the list, and highlights their amazing 100-mile careers and some of the events in Europe unfamiliar to American ultrarunners. Sandra was the very first person in the world who finished 100 100-milers and the first to reach 200. By the end of July 2021, Sandra Brown, age 72, of England had accomplished a world-best, 208 100-milers, walking and running on tracks, roads, and trails in various event formats. About 160 of her 208 100-milers were accomplished in less than 24 hours, also a world best. Yes, Sandra Brown reached 100 miles 200+ times in organized events, more than anyone in the world. Ed Ettinghausen (The Jester) has been working very hard to catch up and exceed that number. (He passed that number in 2021).

Sandra Brown is the world's greatest woman ultra-distance walker ever, but she was also a world-class ultrarunner and still is for her age-group. In 2018 she was 69 years old and completed eleven 100-milers that year, including some sub-24-hour 100-milers.

Her 208 100-milers came in several different types of walking and running events on tracks, roads, and trails. These types of events will be described in this article. She is the holder of current world records and it is time that the ultrarunning community learn about Sandra and her amazing accomplishments.

Also on the 100 x 100 list is Sandra's husband, world-class runner and walker Richard Brown, who delights in being overshadowed at times by Sandra's accomplishments. They are inseparable and have been married for nearly 50 years. Richard has finished about 140 100+ mile events.

Does it matter that most of Richard and Sandra's 100-milers were performed walking? Not at all. For today's ultrarunning events that reach 100 miles, they are "go-as-you-please." You can walk or run, it does not matter. What matters is reaching 100 miles. World ultrarunning historian, Andy Milroy agrees, "covering a distance on foot is valid, whether walking, running or a mixture of both." Among her 208 100s, Sandra has completed about 130 100-milers in events that were judged with racewalking rules. But she also completed 100 miles in more than 30 running events and usually she finished at the top. Other 100s were walking events where you could walk any way you wished to reach 100 miles.



Dublin St James to Belfast, starting line-up

Piling up 100-milers while living in England is very impressive because there are far fewer events compared to the US. Sandra wrote, "I've always envied athletes in the USA where there are so many ultra-distance and 100 miles events! In the UK there are now several, mainly off-road, 100s, and a couple of 24-hour events. On the Continent, events are mainly 24 hours, though our Dutch and Belgian friends share our love of 100s."

Ultradistance Walking (or Ultra Walking), is the practice of walking in competitions of distances more than the marathon length. They have existed for centuries and truly have roots in 19th century Pedestrianism. "Heel and toe" walking rules were established for these foot races that became a popular wagering venue. Walking competitions were conducted for many distances short, long, ultradistances, and eventually for six days or more. By 1880 walking rules were further established and amateur competitions started to be held. In general, rules required that the walkers' back toe could not leave the ground until the heel of the front foot has touched. Rules would change over the years. Accusations of cheating by running were common and soon "go-as-you-please" events were also established that allowed walking or running. Racewalking first appeared in the Olympics in 1904 as a half-mile walk as part of the decathlon and expanded to other distances up to 50K in later Olympic games.

In 1907 the Southern Counties Road Walking Association was established in London, the first governing body in the world for racewalking. In 1911 it became named the Road Walking Association. This association established national road walking championships and helped promote and keep alive the sport in England. In 1954 the association took over responsibility for track racewalking and was renamed the

The 100 x 100 miles list

Race Walking Association (RWA). The RWA established the Long Distance National Championships involving 100 miles or 24 hours fixed-time races.

Sandra was born in 1949. In her childhood she participated in many family walks "off the beaten track." During her school years, she was not inclined to participate in field sports, so she took up Greek and became skilled in languages and history. At University College London (UCL) she met Richard Brown. Richard was born in 1946 and raised as an only child in Beckenham, a district of London. His father was a banker. Richard was a talented singer which allowed him to attend the City of London School. Eventually he had interests in sports and became a successful oarsman at Oxford University. It required him to train hard each day, After moving on from rowing, he didn't really know what to do athletically next because he was useless at ball games. Because he was "useless" in languages with required tests at Oxford, he transferred to UCL.

By 1982, when Sandra was 33, they both started entering long distance races. Their first marathon was in 1982, at the Winchester Marathon on a frigid March morning. Richard thought that Sandra had entered them in the half marathon, but no. At the start as they were preparing to run Sandra said, "Oh didn't I tell you we are in for the full thing." They finished in under four hours but Richard vowed that he would never do it again. They quickly entered their first 100-miler later that year, the LDWA Pilgrims Hundred from Guildford to Canterbury along the route taken by many pilgrims to the shrine of the murdered Thomas A'Becket. The event started around noon. They carried haversacks (day packs) and walked and ran in boots. By the next morning, they reached a breakfast stop at about mile 65. Richard took his time there and said he "slumped down and looked at corn flakes for about two hours which was the maximum amount you were allowed to stay at a checkpoint. Sandra meanwhile was kind of bounding around, 'well I'll see you at the finish' and got up and charged off to the finish. I staggered out with about one minute to go." He slowly made his way to Canterbury.

By the time Richard got to the finish, Sandra had showered, changed and had been sight-seeing around the famed cathedral. They headed home on the train. Getting off the train at Victoria station was a problem because it was so painful stepping down getting off to the platform. They walked so slowly that they were "overtaken by old grannies pulling their suitcases." That was their first 100-mile finish. Little did they know what they had unleashed.

Summing up both their walking/running careers thus far is an impossible task. Here are just some of their accomplishments as of the end of 2018.

Sandra:

- was the first person in history to reach 100x100.
- has finished the most 100+ milers ever (200+).
- is the only person in the world to be awarded all seven Centurion medals from the seven Centurion clubs.
- has finished the most British Centurion races in the world in under 24 hours with 33.
- has finished 30 Centurion races in less than 20 hours.
- has finished 54 Centurion events, a world best.
- has reached 100 miles in less than 24 hours about 160 times, a world best
- has reached 100 miles in less than 20 hours about 45 times.
- still holds the World Walking Records on track for 100k, 100 miles, 12 hours, and 24 hours.

Richard:

- holds the best ever British 100-mile walk time of 16:50:28.
- was the sixth man in history to go over 400 kilometers in a 48-hour race.
- held the British record in the 6-day running 517 miles.
- held the 48-hour indoor record of 221 miles.
- still holds the world record in the 1000 km run in the age class M45.
- was the overall winner of a record 10 British Centurion races.
- has at least 110 sub-24-hour 100 has about 50 sub-20-hour 100s, perhaps a world best On March 30, 2019, Sandra accomplished her 200th 100-miler finishing Dublin to Belfast 107-miler. Two days later she turned 70

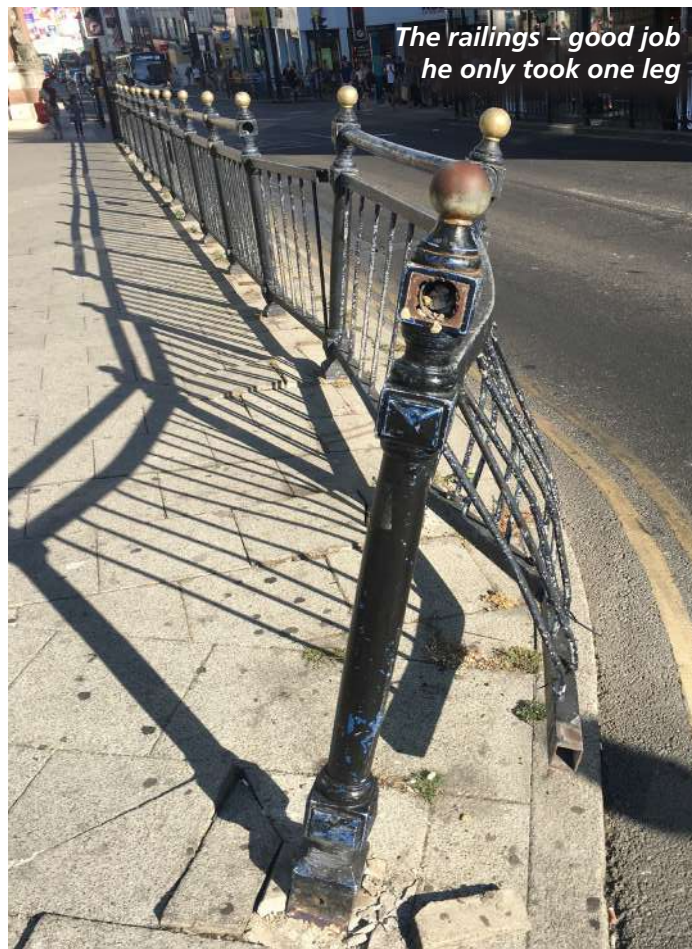
years old. Sandra reported about her 200th. "The journey along the old roads between the two cities takes you through historic towns and villages, past castles and crofts, megaliths and monuments, along the coast and through the lovely rural landscape of the Mountains of Mourne. It's quite a tough event, far from flat, and [for those like us without a support crew] you need to carry a pack with all necessary gear including clothing, torches, food and enough drink etc. for some longish distances. The time limit was 36h and Richard and I walked all the way in about 27h50m"

The complete article can be viewed on the website [www.https://ultrarunninghistory.com](https://ultrarunninghistory.com)

London Marathon training – the last chapter

John Trory

I really did think that this year I would be able to lay the bogey of training injuries ruining my London Marathon run, the only problem so far being repaired shoes being unbalanced and hurting my ankles. Cataracts and covid19 caused temporary but not too damaging pauses in training and even boiling hot weather did not bring it to a total halt. I can now vouch with professional certainty that during run ice-creams are extremely beneficial and taste a lot better than gels. I have never been too keen on straightforward out and back runs as, although places do look slightly different from the other direction, it encourages stopping short because you think you may not get back if you go too far out. Well it does for me anyway! The seafront between where I live on the Western boundary of Hove to the centre of Newhaven has a very varied surface to use and landscape to admire. It will be no surprise to hear that the first 4 miles are crowded promenades where one is continually stopping and starting but then it opens out to a less crowded area and then a 1 mile boardwalk along the beach followed by 2½ miles along the cliff tops and a further 1 mile along the famous undercliff walk. After that, there is a stark choice between an undulating and variable cliff top path or the roadside pavement. The traffic is relentless but the cliff tops are more hilly. The bus stops on the roadside path are frequent, as are the side roads to cross, but you can just keep saying to yourself 'Just one more then I catch the bus home'. On Wednesday, the point at which I had given in was 12 miles and I was satisfied enough to return home so I waited at a bus stop and waited and waited. Half an hour for a service usually every 5 minutes but it took me to the centre of Brighton where I got off and walked towards the bus stop for the final part of the journey. At this point, on the pavement, I got hit by a taxi whose driver thought he could go downhill without switching on his engine. No engine – no brakes, steering or horn. What an idiot! He massacred my left leg then smashed into railings then told police that no-one was injured. I have had multiple hospital visits and have no idea if or when I will run again and still he has not



The railings – good job he only took one leg

provided insurance details. My left leg is twice the size of my right leg and has bruising that will need surgery and skin graft but no bones broken because of the strong calf muscles. A little further over and I would have been crushed against the railings instead of tossed aside, so was I lucky or unlucky?

Club news

From Celia Findlay; This North Downs Run is an annual 40km Trial Race through the beautiful North Kent countryside and now in its 38th year. This challenging multi terrain course is not to be taken lightly**. The route takes runners on undulating paths and established tracks and lanes over the North Downs threading through woodlands, fields and parkland. So my 3rd time of competing in this event and my fastest time by 5mins! Really enjoyed this run and a nice distance, good preparation for my Isle of Man Marathon in August! I ran 2:50:18 so a silver medal in the V60 BMAF Championships. A lovely well organised event with plenty of marshalls and great T-shirt!

Editor** both Ann Bath and I will confirm that, from painful experience.



Peter Speake has been in great form this year and won the Chester half marathon VM45 group with an excellent time of 1-11-55. He was 5th overall for England and 9th overall in the whole race.

Hideo Takano has just completed his 20th 55 mile Comrades Marathon in South Africa. No further details but hopefully some stories in December.

Norman Mawhinney has finished the Isle of Man marathon as 1st 60+ in 3-10-13.

left: Peter Speake on his way to 45+ victory

A Tribute to Tim Johnston (1941-2021)

Alastair Aitken

Educated at Bedales School and Trinity College Cambridge, he was a fluent and majestic looking runner. In 1963 while still at Cambridge University he said to me "I will continue running as long as I can, if I can find a suitable employer" He certainly did that as after that he was employed as a Lawyer linguist with the Common Market. In 1985 he spoke about his friend Mike Turner, the Captain of the strong Cambridge university team he ran with. "Mike ran several times for England in the cross country team but he never did himself justice. He was as good a runner as Ron Hill. I felt he was better than Mike Freary, Jim Hogan and Jim Alder but, he never really gave himself the chance. He never believed in himself as a track runner". Mike Turner certainly felt Tim had the tremendous determination to get to the top. Tim's mother pointed out that, when Tim was young, a snowman was built in the garden. Tim waited, went out later determined to build a larger one. That was his type of ambition. His Olympic Gold quest!

It was in 1963 when I saw him win the Southern CC from Herne Harrier Don Taylor in deep snow at Parliament Hill. The same year he won the British Universities cross country in the snow, the Inter-Counties cross in the snow and an international race at Hannut in the snow, so it was not surprising he was called the 'Abominable Snowman' That year he was ranked 3rd UK steeplechaser. In 1967 he was 2nd in the International cross country in Wales (The old style World cross) and did a World Best 30,000m time 1:32.34.6.

In 1968 he won the AAA's 6 miles in 27:22.2 and the AAA's Marathon in 2:15.26. Come the Olympics, Tim, knowing he had done enough altitude training as preparation for the

Mexico Olympic marathon, set off in the race in the lead in Mexico and was still in that position at 20k then gradually he started to fall off the pace at the front. He did eventually finish in 2:18:42. He told me afterwards at the training track in Mexico City "It is a complete 'B' waste of time trying to race a marathon at altitude, like it was in Mexico. You can imagine what Ron Clarke would have done to the opposition in his races, if it had been at low level."

Tim did not sit back. The very next year on the 10th of May in the Karl Marx Stadt Marathon, in his first outing since the Olympics he won that marathon in 2:15.31.2 Tim Johnston did have problems with both his achilles tendons that certainly stopped him thinking deeply about another Olympics but at the same time, later, he became a World Class veteran (Master) over 40 runner. He won the Brugge 25k in 1982 and went on to have double success by winning a World Championship veteran half marathon and 10k in two consecutive days. Back in 1984 he won the European Vets Marathon Championships in Brighton. He won several road races like the Cheshunt half marathon in 1.07.47 in 1982 and won the tough Maidenhead 10miles race in a course record of 49:51 in 1975. The course in those days was a bit over distance with a steep hill in it. Johnston may not have won a Big Games medal but he still had an impressive career. His club Portsmouth AC had fine international athletes like Coventry Godiva had at the time and Tim enjoyed running into old age with Hash House Harriers.

Note; as a member of RRC Alastair ran the first 19 London Marathons and interviewed a great many important athletes, supplying the interviews to Roadrunner for our benefit. He regards Timothy Frederick Kemball Johnston well worthy of this tribute.

10K, or maybe not!

Anne Mac Farlane

Who doesn't feel like they've forgotten how to race? Not many of us, I'd reckon. And even in the old, racing days, who ever felt quite fit enough on the start line!?! Lockdown didn't stop us from running, but racing. Dunoon 10k is the proud scene of my all-time 10k PB. On a decent day, it's a lovely fast gallop out along the wonderfully picturesque seafront of the Clyde Coast and back again. In less favourable weather there's potential for fierce enough wind to push you backwards and the kind of biting, driving rain that you only seem to get off the sea or up mountains. This year it was a nice day and a beautiful run. Just enough wind to cool you a bit on the way out, and lend a wee push on the way back. The start is on the Pier and the first mile or so along the promenade (passing a cheery instrumental quartet playing 'Mairi's Wedding') then up onto the coast road. A couple of miles out with the sea on one side, pretty houses and woods on the other and lovely hills in the background all around. Toward the turning point you start to pass the runners on their way back in - unless you're currently in first place!! The second half of the field was a bit more spread out and it was a challenge to remember it was a race and not just relax, enjoying the views

and the environment...also, there were some slightly uphill stretches I would swear weren't downhill on the way out! The big shocker though, was the first distance sign I'd seen on the course which said '2 miles to go'. A glance at my (old-timer style stopwatch only) watch made my heart sink a bit, even slower than my most pessimistic predictions! I'd done a 5 mile race a fortnight earlier in about the time elapsed so far. Oh well, nothing to be done other than (time tested race strategy) keep running till you get there. The quartet was still playing, 'Westering Home' this time, and the last slog along the promenade was endless in the doing and brief in the memory. I still think it's magical printing off the slip with your time and place at the finish line timing van, even when the time was a mildly horrifying 53:47s. That's 10 minutes slower than the time before last, though 2 years of lockdown in between hasn't helped. And 2nd in the age group doesn't feel too bad when you're 59 and a half!

We try not to care too much about our times, but it is still a pleasant surprise to hear they'd accidentally used the wrong turning point and the race distance was actually nearer 11k.



The extended Allchin family, including 5 RRC members

Pencil, paper and Casio, that's all I thought I'd ever need to keep track of my running. All that changed about three years ago, unthinkable for someone who doesn't own a mobile phone and has just about grasped the concept of emails. During the past 15 years, I've slowly become a more serious runner, someone who initially ran a couple of times a week and kept a casual log of each run on a scrap piece of A4 paper, noting the date, an estimate of distance and the time it took to complete the run, although not quite at the level of my brother Vinny, fellow RRC member, who makes a note of the weather conditions and the wind speed! I am told by friends and family that once you start using a smart phone you can never go back and, amazingly, I feel the same way about my Garmin 35 and Strava account, my poor old Casio hasn't seen the light of day since. Running with family and friends has always been a hugely motivating and important factor to why I run, the local parkrun for instance is a perfect example of this. As many of you will know, parkrun is hugely important for the community, not only does it get people running, but beyond this, everyone gets involved in volunteering and before you know it, you are integrated into your local running scene. Parkrun is a constant. Before Strava, I'd await my wife Julie to get a ping on her phone with my time and placing for

the Parkrun, but now I trot home, upload my run and within minutes I am connected to my 'Strava friends' - the connection is immediate. A recent family parkrun had my sons 20 month old twin girls watching with their mum, cheering us on as we looped back and forth and my sister-in-laws evergreen father Dennis, who is in his late 80s adding to his already impressive hoard of Parkrun starts.

Kudos, segments and crowns are bread and butter Strava lingo and not a form of martial arts, part of an orange or something you visit the dentist for. I am a GPS watch owner, but one who just presses go, runs a route and only really looks at the watch when it beeps for each mile and that's always been the case. However, it is the next bit which has changed everything for me. I knew what facebook was, although have never had an account, and it was my son Jim who sold the Strava concept to me as a runners equivalent and something 'everyone was on'. Initially sceptical about the whole concept, I tentatively uploaded my first run, up it popped and immediately I was hooked. Although I knew where I had run, I now had access to a map view, could review my pace fluctuation and very quickly learnt about Strava segments, these being point to point routes someone had created. Within days I had twelve followers, and I duly followed back. Quite quickly I had established a little hub of friends, family and fellow runners who would pop up on my

If it's not on Strava, it didn't happen ...

feed each time they completed a new run. I'd go for a run, receive a virtual pat on the back via Kudos, a conversation might start up within the thread about my route or an up and coming race, it opened up a whole new world. Creating my account before the first lock down meant that although Parkrun, races and socials were not possible, like most of you will know and will have experienced, without a GPS watch and a Strava account I would not have been able to complete in virtual events. My son Jim and his partner Annie live in London and when on the phone I'd regularly ask how the running is going or where they had been and now I have a handle on what a Kent AC river run session looks like and could keep in touch at the click of a button. The routine of going for a run, getting home, stretching, refuelling and uploading to Strava has become a new norm.

We all know that us runners are a strange breed, running for fun in all weather conditions, getting up early and travelling half way across the country or Europe even to run 13.1 miles would be torture to most. Those of you who use Strava will understand the idiosyncratic nature of what Strava does to you. You reach the end of a run, reach your front door, yet continue past for another 50 metres or so to ensure you can round up to a whole number, or worst still, you check out your yearly stats New Year's Eve, realise you are 0.3 miles short of 1500 miles of the year, so off you go. It's all a bit of fun, as is club weekly charts and that's not forgetting how creative you can be when naming your run or creating some Strava art by running a route that kind of looks like a chicken. My every run for the past 1000+ days has been logged digitally, out of curiosity I can revisit runs, review the data, see the photographs attached to each run and motivate myself to repeat or do better next time. There are plenty of advanced settings you can use your GPS watch and Strava for, I know Jim, what with being a serious runner, one who regularly runs sub 15 for 5K, uses these settings as he'll complete two to three rep sessions a week, but for me, someone who doesn't do this, he made it possible. In my recent build up for my 'Project Sub 7', Jim drew me up a training plan to get my legs moving quickly so that I can finally break 7 minutes for the mile having previously missed out by seconds the past five years. Alongside the weekly football pitch strides, running a

hard length followed by an easy width, Jim went for a jog and created new 200m and 400m segments along the seafront running both East and West. This was so I could run a rep session, return home, check out my run on Strava and view the time it took to complete each rep, instant feedback. I completed the Westminster mile in 6m42s, the training had clearly worked, engaging with Strava had assisted me, it engaged me more than a sheet of paper. The following day, I ran 47 minutes for the London 10,000, another Pb, breaking my time from 13 years ago when I was 50. I seem to be getting quicker.

Even more recent than that of the Strava effect has been the Strength and conditioning effect. About 8 years ago, the council installed a line of public gym equipment along the sea front. I have never taken much notice of it all really, primarily as I didn't see how some of the equipment would help my running and secondly, I wouldn't know what I was doing either! It was only recently that Jim walked me and Vinny through some of the simple core and leg machines and additional leg strengthening step up exercises that I realised how much we have to gain, who would have thought that hopping on the ball of your foot 30 times before changing foot was so difficult! You can even log a workout like this on Strava, keeping a track of everything you do so not to forget. Running is primordial instinct, with the beauty of our sport coming from its simplicity, you bend down, tie up your laces, open the door and off you go. In an opposing article, one might target how running apparel, super shoes and GPS tracking and Strava is unnecessary and is diluting this purity, but for me, Strava has been a good thing. It has kept things interesting and kept me motivated on a Sunday Long Run, safe in the knowledge that later that day, Jim will check Strava, award me with Kudos, and I can check whether I have Pb'd over the final long drag up Scarborough hill, 'Death hill' as it is aptly named. Looking forward, having seen how specific training has enabled me to gain Pb's in 2022, coupled with additional strength and conditioning training, I really do feel that Strava has been a huge factor in my engagement. I am only a year off 65 and gaining good for age entry to the London Marathon would be a huge achievement for me, one that I am confident in achieving, I'll no doubt report back as and when.



James and Martin 'on the rack'

From our prolific contributor Neil Shuttleworth (member no. 2860)

To borrow a Norman Harris book title, I too was a "Champion of Nothing." That said, I have many memories of road races all over the country. In 1964 I ran five miles once a week with former R.R.C. President Ron Hill and a few other workmates on a Friday lunch-time. When the Hills' moved house in 1965 Ron had two copies of the R.R.C. newsletter and so gave me his duplicate copy. This was the era when the newsletter listed no less than one hundred road races in the country and organised internal championships as well as ran a standards scheme (as today). Veterans were then a new concept and the fledgling category had three members achieve the necessary standard: Stan Bradshaw (Clayton-le-Moors), Stan Jones (Polytechnic) and Dave Rosenfield (Manchester YMCA). Then both Stans were nearly 50, Bradshaw already a fell running legend and Jones a 1948 Olympian, and Rosenfield was just 50.

The R.R.C. organised a Comrades Marathon Appeal in 1964 to send the then two times London to Brighton winner Bernard Gomersal of the Leeds Harehills club to South Africa for the classic Comrades Marathon. He did the club proud as he graced the front cover of the April 1965 edition having won the race, wrote a thank you note in the newsletter: "It has been an experience I shall never forget" and also became the London to Brighton winner for two more years. The club hosted a celebration dinner at a Tavern on Fleet Street, London all for the princely sum of £1. [The club made a similar appeal for Ron Hill to go to Boston Marathon in 1970.] This was when a pair of 'Tiger' Marup shoes sold by Stan Eldon, the sole distributor then, for under £3. Ten-mile races cost about three shillings to enter, the R.R.C. subs then being five bob (5s.0d.) or today 25 new pence.

The first footwear I trained in was Dunlop pumps - Green Flash? As a trainee chemist I estimated the cost in pence per mile of a pair. In 1962 I began work as a laboratory assistant with Courtaulds Textile Research Division in Manchester and Ron Hill joined the company as a Research Chemist in January 1964. He obtained a foolscap notebook from the stores for me and encouraged me to list my runs, then after the Tokyo Olympic Games I entered a few races. My first year saw me run 20 races – road, fell, cross-country and track. In my third race, the Bolton United Harriers Club Winter Championships as a junior, under 20, I ran 7 miles and was last, the senior standard then being that Hill ran 49 minutes 43 seconds for ten miles on a cinder track in the middle of winter. (Even more awe-inspiring was the solo run club-mate and fellow international Mike Freary had when he clocked 48:14 in 1970.) Most well established clubs in those days had their Winter and Summer championships with named silver cups awarded going back decades.

As it was quicker than three buses, I ran to and from work and built up a fair endurance background but lacked speed. Nevertheless I made progress and realised my potential. It could be represented graphically as an inverted U. Although

I ceased competing last year I still run, albeit slowly. The camaraderie, competition, travel and enjoyment from all this running is perhaps best shown by a few medals in an old Quiggins Kendal Mint Cake tin which has a few 'gongs' with ribbons. The key ones are R.R.C. medals engraved after the 1971, 1972 and 1973 Maxol Manchester Marathons, which were their championships. All three are around 2½ hours with the last one being 11 seconds under this mark and some 17 minutes behind the East German winner. For local road races around then less than one hundred would compete and the results appear duplicated on a typed or stencilled sheet in two columns. In cross-country races several local clubs may amalgamate in a meeting they called a Monster Mob Match. Point to point road races like Exeter to Plymouth 44-miles, Woodford to Southend 36-mile or Liverpool to Blackpool 48½-miles became popular as the sport developed. Initially road traffic was 'quiet' but all had to be abandoned due to a great increase in traffic volume and hence danger. Alongside these ultra races club runners across the country vied for a place in their club team for the premier London to Brighton, Manchester to Blackpool or Glasgow to Edinburgh road relays, sponsored by the News of the World newspaper. On the athletic track the handicap system was just fading out as were these very competitive point-to-point road relays. First held in 1951, the London to Brighton road race was organised from 1952 by the R.R.C. member no.1 Ernest Neville (1883-1972), a past President who developed the race into an international event.

The Fell Runners Association was formed in 1970 and when asked to write for its "Special 50th anniversary edition" I noted that car ownership had altered dramatically over the previous half century, when public transport was initially the norm. Car ownership grew at about 3% per annum and in 1952 only 414,000 cars were shared between 50 million people, or 14% of households. In 1971 the proportion of car owners was about a third with 19 million cars shared by 56 million people. Today about 37 million own a car in a population of 63 million. Clearly cars are not now a luxury item. Seasons were quite distinct with shorts the norm from Easter to October then extra clothing was worn. Technological advances changed our concept of textile materials and synthetic fibres were introduced into tracksuits, vests and shorts. Ron Hill built his athletic clothing company, founded in 1970, on these synthetics like nylon and polyester and a multitude of companies followed suit. The introduction of synthetic fibres and composites dramatically altered shoes too. In the 1980s waterproof jackets began to include the revolutionary Gore-tex fabric, which later found its way into shoes and boots. Apart from Adidas and Puma on the world stage, Britain had Reebok and Walsh, based in Bolton, producing sports footwear; by 1974 a Shoeburyness sport-shoe company with the Hi-Tec label came into being. The R.R.C. newsletter had a few adverts for races until 1973 when Martin Evans Sports came along with with a photograph of the Adidas Gazelle shoe, (£6.75) in a full page advert to sell their SL-72 shoe (£6.95) and three Tiger shoes (Road Runner, £6.50 plus 14p post).

From our prolific contributor Neil Shuttleworth (member no. 2860)

During one week in the early 1970s I had tried to run 168 miles, the equivalent of one every hour, but not in the manner Captain Barclay (1779-1854) who did them back to back for a thousand hours in 1809. In all I managed 11 weeks in excess of 130 miles, a few miles short of my goal. This was the era of mega mileage by club runners. Even Arthur Lydiard and Garth Gilmour in their "Run to the Top" advocated "one hundred miles a week" to condition the athlete before getting down to specific schedules depending on the distance. In my medal tin I have one for the 1980 SAAB 10K in Manchester which I got for just running and completing the distance. In 1981 we had the first London Marathon which Chris Brasher and John Disley organised and such was its success that the following year they had to have a system to whittle down the entries to a manageable number because of the 6,418 finishers 1,294 broke 3 hours including 142 and Joyce Smith all under 2:30. It became a lottery to enter as the Running Boom had begun. How has the sport changed? With more people competing the base of the pyramid was bigger and the hope was that those at the top, the elite, would go faster and further. It seems that spread over a long period of time there are peaks and troughs – running booms. All this brought about innovation in many areas: new races, precisely measured, timed and monitored/tracked, although protocols were later necessary to ensure safety at races. In recent times we have seen the introduction of ParkRuns which increases the pyramid's base. Many ParkRunners though are not in any athletic related club and the athletic authorities may have missed a trick in not

capturing these 'rookie' runners. Nevertheless the interest in this new branch has to be welcomed if the nation is to reduce its proportion of excessively heavy people. At the elite end medical interventions and monitoring are now commonplace. For them, the pure out and out road runners have only one objective, the Marathon in the Olympic Games (or since 1983, the World Athletics Championships). Happily now they have a multitude of races across all terrains, venues and distances to help them achieve their aim. Such is the riches available to road runners now.

We each have a few years when we can achieve our optimal results. Some who come to running late may be over 40 and so the veterans' movement, in its infancy in the 1960s, can be a welcome boom. The two Stans mentioned earlier were in the vanguard of this new branch. So too was Arthur Walsham who in the same 1965 R.R.C. issue had just achieved the R.R.C. First Class Standard. In the 1971 Maxol Manchester Marathon the 41-year old Salford Harrier was first over 40 with 2:21:38, a life-time best; as a vet he would excel further on the world stage. A great advert for the sport as witnessed by his 300th ParkRun recently in Manchester as a 92-year old. New Zealand born Norman Harris (1940-2015) introduced his sixth book "Champion of Nothing" in 1965 by stating that "if this book is written for anyone, it is the people who would like to be champions but never will be." Thank you Norman, your fellow countrymen Arthur and Garth and Reg Jacobs, the R.R.C. Registrar and Secretary for the engraved medals.

The Midweek Road Racing League

by Peter Harvey

During late spring and early summer, running clubs across Hertfordshire, parts of North London and a little bit of Essex come together in the Midweek Road Racing League, MWRRRL. The League is a series of races each invariably 10k long. There are three divisions with six clubs in division one, six in division two and nine in division three with the latter division containing some small clubs. Each division has four scoring races and sometimes divisions two and three participate together in the same race. The four races determine the finishing positions of each club with two clubs promoted and relegated as appropriate to the division. My first claim club is Garden City Runners, GCR and for 2022 they were in division two. There is a final race where all of the clubs regardless of division come together in what is called the Mob Match, after which prizes pertaining to each division are awarded. The League is named as 'Road Racing' and so nicely fits with Roadrunners. However, the difficulties in getting a sanctioned course entirely on tarmac mean that some races are multi-terrain and the definition of 'road' is quite broad including dirt, track and path. The races are run during the week in the evening. Fortunately the worst of the rush hour is over making traffic bearable for me on my bicycle.

The first race in division two was on 18th May in Stevenage. The start finish is a scintillating lap of Ridlins athletics track. We toured cycle paths alongside main roads and Fairlands Valley Park which the hosting club was named after. The undulation was made more numerous by negotiating countless underpasses. I surprised myself with a 37.12 for the 10k on less than completely fresh legs in part due to a 17.54 5000m a few days before. Other races which helped me warm up for the MWRRRL included a weekend double header: the undulating Hitchin 10k run in 37.14 good for 7th out of 518 plus 1st MV50 and the next day the hilly Kimpton 10k comfortably under 40 minutes finishing 4th out of about 100. In the League race I finished 23rd out of 520 comprising runners from divisions two and three. I was third scorer for GCR in a team of 12 men to score and 8 women. There are also vets teams adding points to each club. GCR have 80 to 100 members turn out for each race which is most excellent indeed and great for socializing.

The next fixture was a week later at Wodson Park, Ware. This was just for division two clubs and was the first time Ware Joggers were hosts on a brand new course. I had been instrumental in trying to get this club to join the League and have made many friends there. The course was largely off-road, had a long steep gravel hill but was very pleasant

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Grim determination



compared to the urban raid in Stevenage. I ran well averaging 10.00mph, 6.00m over 5.89 miles finishing 12th out of 280 club runners. Another week, another race and this time I had a longer cycle ride with a round trip of 39 miles. This did not seem to take much out of me because I ran a new 10k PB of 36.43 over a multi-terrain undulating course finishing 17th out of 422 with divisions two and three taking part. Being close to the sharp end of the field was fortuitous because we had to negotiate a swing gate twice permitting only one runner through at a time. A big gate next to it across the road was supposed to be unlocked. Runners were clambering over it like primary school gymnasts attempting the vault. The last scoring race was on 30th June and so I had time to fit in some open races. I ran a new half marathon masters PB of 81.31 over a hilly course in warm conditions at St Albans finishing 17th out of 1600 and got 1st MV50. Interesting the person in front of me was Kate Rennie from Dacorum Athletics Club

who I just pipped at Harlow thanks to a testosterone fuelled mad dash for the line. Then I had another hilly 10k this time at Welwyn timing 37.51 finishing 8th out of 355. This race was a medal and trophy fest for me with 1st MV50, Hertfordshire MV50 champion, 1st open team with GCR and gold medal winning county team too. I had bought the trophies on behalf of GCR and been an integral part of the race organization since its inception in 2014.

Royston Runners hosted the fourth race for division two clubs in a beautiful location at the end of the Chiltern Hills. We all packed into a barn ready to tackle a brutal course mainly on road with a kilometre on loose dirt up a steep hill to finish. On my bicycle on the way to the start the heavens opened in such a deluge that I took shelter in a bus stop and befriended a chap on an ebike wanting to short circuit in torrential conditions. My stomach was playing up and so I did not run as well as the other races conceding my customary position as third scorer for GCR. I finished a bit down coming 33rd out of 472 but my time was reasonable at 37.46 for 10km. Then the race really began which was to get home without too many miles ridden in the dark. The round trip was 44 miles with about 135 in total for the four races. A few days after Royston I ran the Ware 10 Miler on tired legs. I managed a decent performance happy to clock 62.26 over a less than favourable but in places lovely course in humid conditions finishing 5th out of 262 and 1st MV50. This race is a favourite of mine and very well organized by Ware Joggers. This was the first race I wore my newly acquired Roadrunner vest.

The last race for all clubs in the League was the Mob Match in Welwyn Garden City, with GCR hosting. I had been Race Director of this fixture since the early to mid 2010s and on the orders of ex-chairman and fellow MV50 hot shot Bruce Judge, shifted the race to a new venue and course in 2017. In 2022 I handed over the reins to League Secretary and GCR stalwart Tim Cooke but was still a lynch pin acting as his assistant-cum-advisor. I wanted to make sure everything ran smoothly and so did not run. This race has a particularly good atmosphere which club runners naturally generate. After the race at the Presentation I picked up the MV50 prize for division two and had managed to beat everyone in my category in this division in all of the four scoring races. I was very surprised to be 6th overall in division two and chuffed to be third male Garden City Runner also going up against their seniors, MV40s, etc... and so am due a prize at the club's Award Ceremony scheduled for March 2023. Far more importantly Garden City Runners won division two and so we look forward to competing in division one next year.





Crawley A.I.M. Charity 24, 12 and 6 hour races

Saturday/Sunday April 15th/16th 2023

Start Times; 24 hour race at noon, 6 hour race at noon and 12 hour race at 21:00hrs.
A track ultra distance event open to experienced runners, novices and walkers.
Race entry limits; 40 for the 24 hours; 20 for the 12 hours; 20 for the 6 hours

Under UKA rules

IAU Bronze label event

The race will be held on the track at the K2 Leisure Centre,
Crawley, West Sussex, RH11 9BQ

This is easily accessible from the M23/A23 with substantial parking facilities,
free at the time of writing. Also close to Gatwick Airport and there is
a direct bus from Crawley bus station.

Camping facilities and meals for all 24 hour runners will be provided

**CHIP TIMING WILL BE USED AT THIS EVENT AND
ENTRIES ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE FROM**

www.entrycentral.com

race website: www.crawley6and12hourraces.com

Queries to: pamstorey@tiscali.co.uk 01342 717222

Mementos to all competitors and prizes to the first, second and third
Males and Females in each race.