

THE HARRIERS HERALD

No. 198, August 2009
Editor: Sue Francis

Contents, features, reports, results

- Thursday night schedules for August and September
- Correspondence received
- Race results: Long Wittenham 5K – Simon beats the first lady, then picks up an injury; Thames 10K – four Harriers run well; Inkpen Gibbet Challenge – Tom runs to the top; Fairlands Valley Challenge – an event which made Sus proud to be a Compton Harrier; Milton Keynes Half – Sus sets a PB; Downland Challenge Ultra – Lucy is 4th lady
- Webmaster’s article – Mo focuses on upper body strength-training exercises

- Thanks to Terry, Simon, Lucy, Sus and Mo for this month’s contributions
- Copy date for September’s Harriers Herald – 31st August

Thursday night schedule for August

Thurs 6th Handicap Race
Thurs 13th Romy to lead
Thurs 20th Pete H to lead
Thurs 27th Tom to lead

Thursday night schedule for September

Thurs 3rd Mo to lead
Thurs 10th Martin to lead
Thurs 17th Sally to lead
Thurs 24th Pete O to lead

| Correspondence received | | |
|-------------------------|--|--------|
| Sender | Subject matter | Action |
| SEAA | Info. Update #123; SEAA Road Relays, Aldershot (26 & 27-09-09) | File |

Race results

News from Compton Harriers’ Aylesbury branch

Simon

Hi guys. Just thought I’d bore you all stupid with some quick reports of a few events I took part (and nearly took part) in during the month:

Long Wittenham 5k Fun Run, 5th July

This was the second running of the event, organised by the ‘Wittenham Ways’ group in the village. It’s not massively advertised – they give out entry forms at the local Primary School and pin some notices up locally – but it still managed to attract over 150 entrants on the day. The route is flat and

off-road and surprisingly more difficult than you think it's going to be, as it's a bit twisty in places and very bumpy underfoot in others. Still, it was a very good event, quite well organised and very well attended.

First home was 16-year-old David Walter in a time of 18:11, with Thomas Hayward 2nd in 18:50 and John Peake 3rd in 19:25. But for having one too many Y-chromosomes I would have been 1st woman – that honour went to Zuzana Bencokova with a time of 24:12 and I had to be content with 17th place in a time of 24:08.

Other than the first three men and women (and possibly age category winners) there are no medals or finishers' mementos but if you fancy a little trot round some very nice countryside at an event which starts and finishes at a pub, I'll see you there next year!

I was hoping to also include a couple of short reports about the **Didcot 5 mile Road Race** and **Didcot 2 mile Fun Run on 12th July** but unfortunately, and much to my annoyance, I pulled a muscle in my left calf two days before the events and had to be sensible (makes a change...) so in the end I didn't run. Samara and Oliver did, though, and both completed the 2 mile Fun Run in 21:37 and 22:07, coming in 59th and 69th respectively out of 98 finishers. They were also a bit quicker than last year, when we all finished together in 23:26, so I can only surmise that I must have slowed them down in 2008.

I'm currently having (another) injury-enforced break from running, although I'm doing a bit of walking and cycling so that I don't lose too much fitness. I even got up to 34 mph on a downhill bit on my bike last week – it's quite exhilarating at that speed, but just a bit scary!

Thames 10k, Beale Park, 8th July

Terry (with results mailed in by Lucy)

I entered the Thames 10k on 8th July along with Lucy, Ryan and Pete O. I was not on good form, having been out of action for 2 weeks with 'flu' (variant unknown – pig, bird or man) but completed the race in 51:58. It was my first race outside the club and was flat but quite scenic with good support and organisation, just a pity I was feeling a bit 'dodgy' and slow.

| Place | Time | Name | Chip time |
|-------|---------|----------------|--|
| 1 | 0:35:44 | Mark Gittins | 35:43 (Reading AC - 1st man) |
| 8 | 0:38:44 | Ryan | 38:43 |
| 11 | 0:39:03 | David Wright | 39:03 (Newbury AC) |
| 24 | 0:42:06 | Andrea Leedale | 41:59 (Thames Valley Triathletes - 1 st lady) |
| 30 | 0:42:27 | Lucy | 42:23 (2 nd lady) |
| 72 | 0:47:01 | Pete O | 46:39 |
| 159 | 0:52:20 | Terry | 51:58 |
| 440 | 1:22:06 | Last runner | 1:21:18 |

Inkpen Gibbet Challenge, 12th July

Tom completed this event, now in its second year. Tom was pleased to report that he ran all the way up the hill this year, before pursuing and catching another competitor on the descent.

Fairlands Valley Challenge, Stevenage, 19th July

Sus

Doing the above mentioned challenge made me proud to be a Compton Harrier. Let me explain:

Peter L, Ryan and I thought we would do the Fairlands Valley Challenge. It is a mainly off-road race and you have the option of a 12, 18.5 or full marathon distance – we all went for the 18.5. It did say in the race info that you would be given a map before setting off - we were given a 3-page route description and informed that there would be no arrows or tape not even a drop of flour to guide us. 1 – 0 to our Compton Downland Challenge.

Peter brilliantly guided the small Compton team through the course, I had a bad patch at around 8 miles, but my team mates kindly waited for me while they were debating which way to go, thanks Peter and Ryan for being true Compton Harriers.

While we were enjoying a drink at one of the well-stocked checkpoints, the guy who was manning it, and also a regular Ridgeway Challenge runner – said it was always a pleasure reaching the checkpoint at the village hall in Goring – it was like a party - another one for the Compton Harriers!

We continued our run and reached a church, according to our route description we were supposed to follow a signed path but the sign was no longer there and had not been there for some time. This would not have happened in the Compton Downland Challenge, we check our route to see if any changes need to be made to our route description!

We had now reached app. mile 14 I think, and at this stage Ryan suddenly had to slow his pace due to a niggle. Peter, focusing on the map reading, did not see this so I called him and, as a true Compton Harrier, he turned around and came back – the last few miles were done in whatever speed Ryan could tolerate, and we reached the end having done 19.6 miles with a couple of detours in 2:43 hours. Despite finishing together Peter was recorded 1 min slower than Ryan and I.

The finish was a bit vague with no finish banner, and now I see the true reason why Dick always encourages us to go out and cheer the runners home despite rain and snow when they finish the Compton Downland Challenge - it does mean a lot!

I do not need to say any more other than I think we can be bl...dy proud of our Club and, despite our size, what we achieve to stage, and last but not least for our comradeship!

Milton Keynes half marathon, 26th July

Sus

Though it has had a lot of critical comments on the web site about dangerous bollards, the route not being flat with a lot of twists and turns and a “big” hill at the end I quite enjoyed this race. I later heard that the 1st man was so superior that the chasing group lost sight of him and the marshal on the bike, and they took a wrong turn and all 10-15 men did over 14 miles. One was apparently so angry that he took his chip off and threw it to the floor! Oh dear, we had better not introduce chip timing to our Compton Downland Challenge. Though a bit dear to enter (£20) you do get bananas and energy bars and a fine medal at the finish – and all the surplus goes to the NSPCC.

| | |
|--|---------|
| 1 st Man, Ezekiel Chebon | 1:08:36 |
| 1 st Lady, Penty Becks, Highgate Harriers | 1:22:40 |
| 8 th Lady, Sus | 1:31:05 |
| 1223 finished the race | |

Downland Challenge Ultra, 26th July

Lucy

This 30-mile race is mostly off-road and is run on the South Downs Way from Clayton (near Brighton), past two windmills, 15 miles to a turn-round point in a farm-yard and back. After seeing one of my brothers getting married the day before I was full of cake and ready to fly. As soon as the gun went off I was out at the front and stayed in 4th place until about 22.5 miles, when the reality of the situation sunk in, and I recalled that in actual fact the cake had had to go round two hundred of us, and there was no pasta at the wedding reception, only pommes et fromage au gratin, which I didn't like so Martin had them. Anyway, off came my wheels and my pace slipped from 8:15 min miling down to 10:40; people started to swarm past me like ants, and I eventually finished in about 13th place. Not a bad training exercise however, and I found out my latest hydration system gives me a nasty sore, so well worth the trip. Results are not yet out, but the 1st man finished in 3:55 – ish (he got lost), 1st lady in 4:06 and I was 4th lady in 4:27. The 'Haywards Heath Running Festival' also hosts a 5-mile Jack and Jill Challenge for the non-ultra runner. Either race is only 7 quid, and you get the choice of a handy canvas shopping bag or the ubiquitous blue T-shirt (of which I already have two) as a memento. 1st man and lady:

3:58:41 Sean Ketteridge

4:18:06 Emily Gelder

Website update... <http://www.comptonharriers.org.uk>

Mo

Notable web links this month ... <http://www.kilomathon.com> this new race series was pointed out by Richard Chalkley and will start next year in March so if you are interested, just visit the site and supply your email address for more info. If you are interested in athletic performances, rankings and records, then I suggest a visit to <http://www.all-athletics.com> which has been gradually developing over the past few months.

Now for the continuation of my series of articles on fitness which this month will concentrate on the second of the three components of fitness, namely strength. (The 3 main components of fitness are Stamina, Strength and Flexibility).

❖ As a reminder, take a look back to June's article about how strength training works. Strength training involves concentrating on various muscles and muscle groups over the whole of the body. For a balanced, well-proportioned body which functions efficiently, muscle groups across the whole body need to be targeted in a number of different ways.

A strong, well-balanced mid-section is essential to producing a good physical performance in most sports and is also crucial in maintaining good posture and preventing injury and a fit, strong **upper body** contributes to a much better sports performance. The muscle groups of the **lower body** are among the largest and include the gluteals, quadriceps and calves which provide the foundation strength for running and many other activities as well.

There is no need to spend hours in the gym honing your muscles to get results. The following exercises can all be performed with minimal use of specialist equipment. For each exercise there are easier and tougher options to suit your level of ability. This month, I will concentrate on **upper body** exercises and next month on the **lower body** exercises.

❖ **Upper Body Exercises:**

- ▶ **Press-ups** are a key element of physical training. To do them correctly, begin with arms approximately shoulder-width apart. Fingers facing forward, back straight and body in a straight line. Look slightly ahead, not at the floor. Lower your body towards the floor, elbows pointing back not splaying out to the side. Stop when your chest and hips are an inch off the floor, and then straighten the arms to return to the start position. That counts as one rep. (The exercise entails lifting roughly two thirds of your body weight).
 - ◆ **Easier variations**
 - KNEE PRESS-UPS; Starting on hands and knees, shuffle hands forward until your body forms a straight line from knees to shoulders then follow the usual press-up routine.
 - INCLINE PRESS-UPS; Adopt the normal press-up position with hands on a raised surface (the higher the surface, the easier the exercise) rather than the floor, then follow the usual press-up routine.
 - ◆ **Harder variations**
 - DECLINE PRESS-UPS; Take up the normal press-up position but this time with your feet placed on a raised surface, such as a chair so that your shoulders and head are lower than your hips then perform full press-ups as normal.
 - CLAP PRESS-UPS; Normal press-ups, but clap between each repetition.

- ▶ **Pull-ups** are another key aspect of physical training. Stand beneath a bar just above your head and with feet together, take hold of it with an underhand grip. Pull yourself up towards the bar, bending at the elbows, and keeping feet and legs locked together. Your chin must clear the bar for the rep to count. Slowly lower and repeat. You can improvise with tree branches or climbing frames.
 - ◆ **Easier variation**
 - BROOMSTICK AND CHAIRS; With two sturdy chairs close together place a broomstick over the gap. Hold the broomstick with an underhand grip and lift your body clear of the floor, keeping knees bent and feet on the floor. Then bend the elbows to bring the chest up towards the broomstick. Pause then lower and repeat. To make the exercise harder, straighten your legs.
 - ◆ **Harder variation**
 - OVERHAND GRIP; This will prove to be more challenging than the underhand grip and you can try it when you're comfortable with the underhand version.

- ▶ **Dips** are best performed on parallel bars. Hold the bars with palms facing each other and support yourself on straight arms, with legs slightly bent and ankles crossed. Next, lower yourself down to form a right angle at the elbow, whilst trying not to hunch your shoulders up, then push back up and repeat. If you don't have access to parallel bars, the following variations will provide good alternatives.
 - ◆ **Easier variations**
 - CHAIR DIP; Sit on the edge of a sturdy chair or bench with legs extended straight out in front and grip the edge of the chair with fingers pointing forwards and arms shoulder-width apart. Shuffle off the front of the chair, and bend your elbows to lower yourself down towards the floor until elbows reach a right angle. Raise back up and repeat.
 - KNEES-BENT CHAIR DIP; If the straight-leg dip is a little too challenging, try it with your knees bent.
 - ◆ **Harder variation**
 - DOUBLE CHAIR DIP; A more challenging version of the chair dip is to place your hands on one chair (or box) and put your feet on another chair opposite. Make sure both chairs are sturdy and placed on a stable surface. Shuffle off the front of the chair and lower yourself down until elbows reach a right angle. Try not to hunch your shoulders as you raise yourself back up and repeat.

- ▶ **Additional exercises** If you have access to a gym or weights, the following exercises will

compliment and enhance the above exercises and also provide more variety and challenge to your fitness regime.

- ◆ BICEPS CURL WITH DUMBBELLS; This exercise targets the biceps similar to pull-ups. Standing with feet slightly apart, a dumbbell in each hand and palms facing your thighs, bend your elbows to raise the weights up, allowing the arm to rotate so that when the weights reach the front of your shoulders, your palms are facing you. Pause, then lower and repeat.
- ◆ BENCH PRESS WITH DUMBBELLS; This is a good alternative to press-ups, working the chest shoulders and triceps. Lie on a bench or step with a dumbbell in each hand, resting just above your chest. Extend the arms upwards, keeping them level with your breastbone, in an arc-like motion until your arms are fully outstretched. Pause, then lower and repeat.
- ◆ STANDING FLIES; This is good for strengthening shoulders. Standing with feet slightly apart, a dumbbell in each hand and palms facing thighs, extend arms out sideways, raising weights to shoulder height. Pause, then lower and repeat.
- ◆ SHOULDER PRESS; This exercise works the shoulders, upper chest, triceps and upper back. Standing with feet slightly apart, a dumbbell in each hand resting on your shoulders, extend the arms outwards and move in an arc to meet fully extended above your head. Pause, then lower and repeat.
- ◆ SINGLE-ARM ROW; This is a good alternative to the pull-up if you don't have the right equipment. Kneel side-on to a bench, with a dumbbell in the hand furthest from the bench. Ensure your back is straight, stomach pulled in and neck in line with the spine. Start with the arm relaxed, hanging straight down holding the dumbbell then, keeping the back still, bend the arm at the elbow to bring the weight up to the front of the shoulder. Pause, lower and repeat. Swap sides between sets.

I think that's enough to digest for now ... as mentioned earlier in my article, I will concentrate on Lower Body Exercises in the next HH, together with core strength exercises which focus on the trunk muscles that provide a stable base from which to move your limbs ... but more about that in the next issue.

Mo – August 2009