

# THE HARRIERS HERALD

No. 202, December 2009

Editor: Sue Francis

## **Contents, features, reports, results**

- Thursday night schedules for December and January
- Correspondence received
- Compton Harriers AGM – this Thursday
- Handicap Race – don't forget the final race of the year this Thursday
- Compton Harriers Christmas Meal
- Race results: 'Marlow Half' – great event, shame about the weather; 'The Roaches' - Pete H reports on a "proper" fell race up north; 'Downton Half Marathon' – a good turn-out by the Harriers; 'Eynsham 10K' – prizes for Lucy and Sue
- Webmaster's article – Mo focuses on warming up and cooling down, and features 'Timeoutdoors' website
  
- Thanks to Sus, Pete H and Mo for this month's contributions
- Copy date for December's Harriers Herald – 4<sup>th</sup> January

## Thursday night schedule for December

Thurs 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Handicap Race – followed by AGM
Thurs 10 <sup>th</sup>	Lucy to lead
Thurs 17 <sup>th</sup>	Tom to lead
Thurs 24 <sup>th</sup>	No leader scheduled
Thurs 31 <sup>st</sup>	No leader scheduled

## Thursday night schedule for January

Thurs 7 <sup>th</sup>	Pete H to lead
Thurs 14 <sup>th</sup>	Handicap Race
Thurs 21 <sup>st</sup>	Martin to lead
Thurs 28 <sup>th</sup>	Gillian to lead

Correspondence received		
Sender	Subject matter	Action
England Athletics	Receipt of payment for England Athletics affiliation for Gillian & Alison	File
Berks County AA	Club affiliation fee due for 2010	Cheque sent
SEAA	Info Update #126	File
City of Lincoln Council	City of Lincoln 10K road race (21-03-10) – entry forms	Events Diary & notice board

## Compton Harriers AGM

The details of our forthcoming AGM are given below.

**Date:** Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> December

**Time:** 20:00 prompt (after the Handicap race)

**Place:** The Pickled Pig bar (the bar will be open for drinks)

Martin has circulated a copy of the minutes from last year's AGM, plus an outline agenda for this year's meeting. There are no special items scheduled for discussion, but we would like to encourage all to attend if possible.

Food is not served in the Pickled Pig but you are welcome to bring sandwiches, or something to heat up in the microwave in the kitchenette.

### *Handicap Race*

Don't forget, this Thursday sees the final Handicap Race of the 2009 Championship series. After eight races, competition is still very close. Pete O remains at the top, just one point ahead of Dick, while Terry, Sue and Phil are also in contention for top-three places. As it is an individual's best five scores which will be added to determine their Championship total, the final positions will all depend on the results of this final race. The trophy will be presented to the Championship winner at our Christmas meal.

### *Christmas meal*

Thanks to Gillian for organizing this year's Christmas meal, and to Terry for suggesting the venue and distributing menus. The meal will be at 'The Coach and Horses' in Beedon on the evening of Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December. More than 20 Harriers and partners will be attending this year, and Gillian will be asking for your menu choices about 10 days beforehand.

## *Race results*

### *Marlow half marathon, 1<sup>st</sup> November*

**Sus**

Ryan, Lucy and I had a go at this brilliant and well organized event. I was ready to give it a good bash but had to admit, as the rain was lashing in horizontally, I wondered why I could not have taken up an indoor hobby! The first mile or so was uphill and, as a pre-warming up was not really on the agenda in this weather, my left hamstring started to complain – gave it a good stretch at around mile 7 where I had a moment where I thought 'why on earth are 1000 people running up and down hills in the pouring rain on a Sunday morning and, more importantly, why am I one of them'!? Nevertheless I persisted, now reaching mile 8 uphill, upstream and into the wind. Upon reaching mile 12, I heard a marshal shouting "downhill from now on" and from then on it felt like the sun had come out. I will definitely be back next year but this time I will bring snorkel and flippers.

Ryan 1:31:21

Sus 1:38:45

Lucy 1:42:30

### *Roaches Fell Race, 8<sup>th</sup> November*

**Pete H**

Having survived the IoW Fell Running Series I decided it was time to tackle a "proper" fell race up north. The Roaches proved to be very different to the aforementioned race and significantly tougher. Surprisingly the hills were not the hardest challenge; that honour went to the mud and slurry.

The race starts on tarmac in a small hamlet but soon leads us into a farmyard. Significantly it's a cattle farm and, unsurprisingly, we headed into a field that had been severely trampled by the herd. Being near the start of the race everyone was attempting to run at speed which resulted in a big drain on the energy levels once we hit the deep stuff. I had to stop briefly as I felt my right shoe was about to be left behind.

Next came the first steep hill as we ascended the Roaches, a gritstone escarpment with fine all round views, not that there was much opportunity to appreciate them. Not, I hasten to add because of my

speed, but more to do with the fact that every step had to be carefully placed due to the uneven nature of the ground. There were many opportunities to twist an ankle as we jumped / ran from rock to rock. Next came open moorland. Unfortunately at this point a gap opened in front of me and I couldn't ascertain the exact route the guy in front took. I decided to take the straightest possible route through some mud. I concluded this was a big mistake when the whole of my right leg went straight down into the bog. Fortunately my left leg only went down as far as knee level enabling me to scramble out without too much difficulty. This explained why the race instructions stated that local knowledge would be an advantage. To emphasise the point a local ran past and pointed out the best way around the bog.

Undaunted, I headed for the next obstacle. After a fast descent through the woods there is a fast flowing river to cross. The knee deep water was actually quite refreshing and cooled my feet. Next up a steep ascent on a muddy path, and on to the halfway point, the near vertical 506 metre high Shutlingsloe. This is not just a hill you have to walk up; it's one where you need to use your hands to pull yourself up. Once at the top the marshal had difficulty reading my mud splattered race number. The descent was marginally less steep with the return route being over the same route as the outward leg.

As is typical of any race after 7 miles, you are running with athletes of similar speed but what was different here was that each had a speciality. One guy for instance pulled away each time we hit deep mud but once back on firm ground I would soon catch him. Others were strong on the descent and if you were prepared to take chances a lot of places could be gained.

I finally made it to the finish in 3 hours 21:56 behind Lucy in 2:55:13 (3<sup>rd</sup> lady vet) and Martin in 2:37:55. The winner, James Kevan, clocked 2:08:16. If you think you can run this particular 15 miles any quicker see you next November in deepest Staffordshire!

Next up was a bath in a nearby stream in a vain attempt to wash off the ingrained muck that covered just about every bit of my body. Finally to the pub and the chance to sample the local brew...the choice turned out to be Hobgoblin or Wychwood – was I back in Oxfordshire already?

On the same weekend, Dick did well to complete a tough multi-terrain *marathon on the South coast* in just under 5 hours.

### *Downton Half Marathon, New Forest, 29<sup>th</sup> November*

Sus

Ryan, Pete O, Jon (Pete's friend), Terry, Phil and I braved the wet and windy conditions but were greeted on arrival with a warm welcome, good atmosphere and friendly marshals.

Ryan and I ran together, Ryan had brought two small bottles of some highly strong caffeine drink he decided we should try which made our mouths feel tingly, I do think they were good - at least it made me think of something else or maybe it was the downhill section we were approaching which did the trick.

There were plenty of playful hills on route but this is a fantastic part of the country to come running. It has a smooth organisation, smiling friendly marshals all the way round and good company and a nice atmosphere, and afterwards you are treated to free tea and buns. Definitely one for next year.

Sus 1:34:10

Ryan 1:34:11

Pete O 1:36:45

Jon 1:41:04

Terry 1:44:13

Phil 1:50:16

## Eynsham 10K, 29<sup>th</sup> November

Sue

Lucy, Martin and I competed in this well-established 2-lap 10K which was, as always, well organised by Eynsham Roadrunners. On a weekend which saw some very heavy and blustery rain showers, we were lucky that there was only light drizzle and a light breeze throughout the race.

Shortly after the start, I found myself running behind Pete Stepney (V50 of Abingdon Amblers) pacing his son Owen (who was only just old enough to compete this year). They were setting a comfortable pace of around 4:00 per Km, so I decided to sit in behind them. By 4K we'd slowed a bit and, by 5K, I was a bit behind my 40-minute schedule but feeling far fresher than I usually do half way round a 10K. So I forged ahead of the Stepneys and gradually passed quite a few people, which was a good feeling, eventually reeling in FV45 Nicola Gomm at 7K. Nicola and I exchanged places several times over the last 3K, and she eventually beat me by one second. My time (40:33, 90<sup>th</sup>) was half a minute slower than last year, but at least I'd enjoyed it rather than hating the last 4K!

Lucy (43:17, 163<sup>rd</sup>) was also slower than last year, but she too said she had found it more enjoyable. Martin had finished a few minutes before us (38:18, 55<sup>th</sup>) and was waiting at the end with Mo, who had run one lap of the course in reverse while cheering us on and taking photos.

After a decent shower in the new leisure centre, we attended the race presentations. The race winner was Steven Naylor (Woodstock) in 33:16, while first lady was Reading Roadrunners' Sarah Gee who, at the age of 46, ran an amazing 35:50 and is training to compete in the British national veteran's team. Lucy received a medal for being 2<sup>nd</sup> FV45 in the Oxfordshire Champs category, while I received a trophy and voucher for being 2<sup>nd</sup> FV35 in the race (although two of the six ladies who finished ahead of me were FV45s). As heavy rain started to fall again, we finished off a successful morning with a good meal at 'The Queen's Head'.



**Martin races away from the start**



**Lucy stays ahead of the pack**



**Sue races 'Stepney & Son'**



## [Website update... http://www.comptonharriers.org.uk](http://www.comptonharriers.org.uk)

Mo

For a starter, my recommended link for this month will take you to an article on 'Cycling for Runners' on the Timeoutdoors website. The article is about the value of cross-training and covers the value and variety of cycling to help runners improve their performance. The link is <http://tinyurl.com/CHwmRep> Whilst on the Timeoutdoors website, it is well worth a good long browse of the sporting challenges, articles and information available. A brand new home page highlights all the most recently added, up-to-date outdoor sports information available including upcoming events, clubs and the latest gear offers, travel trips and advice articles. A link to the site has of course been available from our website for several years now and it is pleasing to see how the site has developed over the years into one of the best events reference sites around.

Secondly, I have updated Compton Harriers details and race information on the Timeoutdoors website for our 2 events next year (Challenge and Canter) so hopefully this will mean an increase in entries, especially for the Canter.

*My series of articles over the past 6 months has now covered the 3 main components of fitness; Stamina, Strength and Flexibility. The next step, before looking at prescribed fitness programmes (in the New Year), is to look at another essential component of any physical training programme ... Warming up and Cooling down.*

### ❖ **Warming up**

Thoroughly warming up not only prepares the body mentally and physically for the impending stresses you are about to put it under, but it also helps in optimising performance and reducing the risk of injuries such as muscle tears, sprains and strains. The exercises below are dynamic in nature ... should you feel the need to perform static stretches before starting, you should not hold them for more than 5 seconds as this can cause muscles to switch off and inhibit performance.

Warming up will:

- ▶ Raise heart and breathing rates allowing more oxygen to flow around the body
- ▶ Increase muscle temperature
- ▶ Mobilise and lubricate the joints
- ▶ Stretch connective tissue
- ▶ Awaken neuromuscular (nerve to muscle) pathways for more efficient movement

Generally about 10 minutes will be sufficient, but longer may be needed for harder exercise sessions. Scientific research suggests the following "dynamic" warm-up exercises will better prepare the body for physical performance than static stretching.

### **1. Joint mobility**

This part of the warm-up prepares joints to move more freely by gently bending, extending and rotating them. For about two minutes, work through all major joints from head to toe, performing each movement 4-6 times, with each arm or leg where relevant.

#### **Neck:**

Standing upright, tilt your head directly to the left and right sides alternately, and then turn it to the left and right. Next, tilt your head backwards and then forwards, dropping your chin to the chest and then finally, rotate from the left to right and right to left.

#### **Shoulders:**

Lift your shoulders up to your ears and then roll them backwards and down. Repeat the movement, bringing the shoulders forward this time.

#### **Trunk:**

Standing with feet just apart, place your arms on your waist and gently rotate your torso to the left and right keeping the hips centred. Next, drop your hands to your sides and slide the hand down the outside of the thigh, bending the trunk to each side alternately. Again, keep hips centred.

### **Knees:**

Whilst standing upright, alternately bring each knee up to your chest followed by alternately kicking your feet behind you up to your bottom. The movements need to be slow and controlled.

### **Ankles:**

With one foot raised off the floor, point and flex the toes and then circle the ankle in both directions. Repeat with the other ankle.

### **Hips:**

With your legs a little apart, make a big circle with your hips. Do this in both directions.

## **2. Gradually increasing pulse-rate**

Walking or gentle jogging is ideal to get the heart beating faster and raising body temperature. Simply jogging or marching on the spot will do the trick or walking forwards, gradually increasing pace up to a gentle jog will equally achieve the end result. This should be carried out over a 3-4 minute period.

## **3. Specific mobility**

Each of the following exercises should to be performed 6-8 times approximately two minutes.

### **Upper body**

- ▶ **Arm Circles:** Rotate arms in turn backwards in a large circle then repeat in the forwards direction.
- ▶ **Open and Close:** Stand with feet slightly apart and arms extended to the side, gently force the arms backwards, opening the chest, and then bring the arms to meet in front of your body, rounding the back in the process.
- ▶ **Elbows and wrists:** Bend and straighten your arms, clench and extend your fingers and circle your wrists.

### **Lower body**

- ▶ **Controlled leg swings:** Standing on one foot, swing the leg in a controlled manner from the front to the back, keeping the torso stationary and allowing the knee to bend a little as the leg comes to the front. Next take the leg out to the side and across the body. Repeat on the other foot.
- ▶ **Heels to buttock** Lift alternate heels to your buttocks, as in the first part of the warm-up for the knees, but add a jog between so that you are bouncing from foot to foot.
- ▶ **Hip rotations:** Bring one knee up to your chest and rotate out to the side before placing your foot back on the ground. Repeat with the other knee.
- ▶ **Knees to front:** Raise knees alternately in front of yourself, hopping from foot to foot.
- ▶ **Walk on toes:** Walk forward, rising up on your toes with each step.

### **Abdominals and back:**

- ▶ **Torso rise and fall:** Starting on hands and knees, slump your back down into a C-shape, letting your head drop down and neck relax, and then move your spine upwards into an arch, lifting your head and hips. Alternate between slumping and arching.
- ▶ **Trunk rotation:** Stand with feet slightly apart, clasp hands in front of the chest with arms raised to shoulder level, elbows pointing outwards on each side, gently twist your torso to the left, leading with your elbow and allowing your head to follow your spine. Repeat by twisting to the right.
- ▶ **Lying twist:** Lie on your back with knees bent and feet flat on the ground and arms outstretched at each side. Roll your knees left until they reach the ground and then roll them to the right until they reach the ground.

## **4. Final pulse raiser**

The final part of your warm-up raises heart rate, breathing rate and body temperature further, so you are then ready to perform your activity in earnest. Ideally, this should involve the actual activity you are about to perform - for example, running at race pace for short bursts with effort up to the level at which you intend to perform.

The warm-up needs to be progressive in intensity and should not cause undue fatigue. Ideally, your warm-up session should be so timed that there is no break between the pulse raiser and activity you are about to perform.

### ❖ **Cooling down**

This is more or less a warm-up in reverse and will assist in the process of returning the body to its pre-exercise state and reduce the chances of suffering from dizziness, muscle cramping and general malaise following a strenuous exercise session.

Cooling down is the most frequently neglected component of workouts. If you stop too suddenly once your activity is over, your heart continues to pump large amounts of blood to the body, but the absence of activity can make you feel faint or dizzy. Stopping too suddenly also slows the removal of waste products from your body, so hampering the recovery process and increasing the likelihood of cramping and sore muscles.

A cool-down should typically last 10 minutes but can range from 5 minutes to 20 minutes and should incorporate some static stretching to help restore muscles to their resting length. Tailor your stretching routine to the main muscles used throughout your activity.

The cool-down should follow on directly from your activity without a break and, as with the warm-up, it can be divided into stages if you prefer.

#### **1. Pulse rate reduction**

The first goal of your cool down is to allow heart rate and breathing to return to normal by significantly reducing intensity. For example, breaking into a jog or walk from running. Spend 2-3 minutes at this low intensity.

#### **2. Joint Mobility**

Next, repeat some of the joint mobility exercises as per the warm-up, focusing on those that target the muscles you've used most in your activity. You can maintain a slow walk or move gently on the spot as you perform these moves. Continue for approximately two minutes.

#### **3. Stretching**

As body temperature will remain elevated for a limited period, the post-cool-down period is the perfect time to perform your static stretching. Hold each stretch for approximately 20-25 seconds and remember to perform the stretch on both sides of the body or limbs where appropriate. Allow at least 5 minutes for stretching.

After a hard session, you should try to consume a carbohydrate-based food or beverage within half an hour. This will ensure replenishment of muscle energy stores.



That's all until the New Year ... Merry Christmas!

Mo! Ho! Ho!

Mo December 2009