

# **THE HARRIERS HERALD**

**No. 216, February 2011**

**Editor: Sue Francis**

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

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- Thanks to Simon, Sus and Mo for this month’s contributions
- Copy date for next Harriers Herald – 1<sup>st</sup> March

## **Thursday night schedule for February**

Thurs	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Sue to lead
Thurs	10 <sup>th</sup>	Handicap Race (note: swapped from original date of 17 <sup>th</sup> )
Thurs	17 <sup>th</sup>	Pete H to lead (note: swapped from original date of 10 <sup>th</sup> )
Thurs	24 <sup>th</sup>	Tom to lead

## **Thursday night schedule for March**

Thurs	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Martin to lead
Thurs	10 <sup>th</sup>	Mo to lead
Thurs	17 <sup>th</sup>	Handicap Race
Thurs	24 <sup>th</sup>	Pete O to lead
Thurs	31 <sup>st</sup>	Richard to lead

## **Correspondence received**

<b>Correspondence received</b>		
<b>Sender</b>	<b>Subject matter</b>	<b>Action</b>
England Athletics	Setting the Pace magazine	Circulate
England Athletics	Regional Council Elections	File
Handy Cross Runners	Marlow 5-miles (08-05-2011); Wycombe 10K (17-07-2011); Wycombe Half (17-07-2011)	Events Diary & notice board

## **‘Running Life’ series of articles**

Back in 1999 and 2000, the Harriers Herald featured a series of articles on the ‘running lives’ of the Club’s members. Each month, I invited a different member to write an article (1-2 pages, with photos if they wished) about their running life: When and why did they start running? What made them join Compton Harriers and what have they gained from being a member? What is their proudest running achievement? Do they have a long-term running goal? Eventually, many of the members of that time had written articles, and they made a great read – insightful, humourous, inspiring..... It’s been suggested that I reintroduce this feature to the Harriers Herald. The only remaining members who contributed to the original ‘Running Life’ series are Dick, Tom, Mo, me, Martin and Simon. So, starting with the March issue, I plan to ask you all in turn if you’d like to contribute such an article (feel free to say ‘no’ if it doesn’t appeal). With approximately 24 members, that will take two year’s worth of Harriers Herald’s! To get us started, later in this issue, I have reproduced the article that Mo wrote in September 1999: “Mo’s done a runner”.

## Running With Music

Simon

By strange coincidence last month's Herald landed on my virtual door-mat at just about the same time that I was about to sit down and write this, so this article is something of a codicil to Mo's article about running whilst listening to music.

A couple of months ago I finally got around to buying an iPod Shuffle. I think it's a 2<sup>nd</sup> generation one but it might be a 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> – I have no idea. All I know is that I got it off Ebay, it cost £25 and it was probably superseded within a matter of hours of my purchase, such is the march of technological progress these days.

My primary reason for buying it is so that I can take some music with me on holiday – I have yet to find an airline which provides 3-pin sockets for me to plug my CD player into on an aircraft – to alleviate the boredom of a flight to Egypt and to save having to play 'I-Spy' with Joanna for five hours. However, after it arrived and I'd charged it up and dumped a load of music on it, it seemed a shame not to try it out whilst running; especially as nearly everyone I see out running these days is plugged in/zoned out/whatever it's called. So I duly laced up the old running shoes and strapped on the iPod to see what happened.

It's damned tricky, running to music. Now, maybe it's just me – it probably is – but I ended up trying to run to the beat of each track and probably looked like a bloke wearing leg-irons going past a magnet factory. And as my musical tastes are, er, eclectic, the stuff I listen to just isn't really conducive to a regular stride.

A quick perusal of some of the tracks I have on my iPod will probably give you a fairly good idea of my taste in music. Apart from the obvious knock-out songs by the likes of Cold Chisel, Jimmy Barnes, Lynyrd Skynyrd and Bon Jovi I have some relatively unknown stuff too by artistes such as Matchbox 20, Hunters & Collectors, The Tragically Hip and Dashboard Confessional. And none of it is stuff you can run to. Not if you want to keep a steady pace, anyhow.

The only songs (out of 121 currently on the Shuffle) to which I have found I can actually run are 1) You're The Voice by John Farnham and 2) the last 12 bars of Go Your Own Way by Fleetwood Mac. Everything else just seems to cock up my cadence at which point I have to stop, concentrate and try and run again. It usually lasts about two minutes before I have to stop and try again...

I ended up turning it off after twenty minutes and doing what I was supposed to be doing in the first place – having an enjoyable run in the countryside away from the noise and distractions of modern life. I guess I can at least say that I've tried it, but having tried it I really don't know what all the fuss is about. Surely the whole point of running is to actually experience the run, not numb the brain and beat it into submission by distracting the senses?

So – have any other Harriers run whilst plugged in to their iPods/MP3 players, and if so how was it for you? I'm genuinely intrigued to know whether anyone else has had the same experience as I have whilst trying to run to music, or whether it's just a result of my musical tastes not synchronising with my legs. I'm sure it must work for some people, but having tried it myself I reckon the best way to listen to music when running is to buy a treadmill and set it up in the front room next to the stereo. And there's less chance of getting hit by a car as you cross the road to the sound of Summer Of '69 too...

My current 'top ten' favourite tracks are as follows: At The Hundredth Meridian – The Tragically Hip; Bow River – Cold Chisel; The Widows Peak – Dashboard Confessional; Gimme Three Steps – Lynyrd Skynyrd; Boomed My Last Hoo – The Twang Dragons; Working Class Man – Jimmy Barnes; Smooth – Rob Thomas and Carlos Santana; The Boys Light Up – Australian Crawl; Real World – Matchbox 20; and My Medicine – The Pretty Reckless. OK, so I'd put money on most of you probably never having heard of maybe eight of them, but I like 'em. What sort of stuff do other Harriers listen to when they're trolling round the countryside?

Ps. Never, ever try to run to La Villa Strangiato by Rush...

## *Race reports and results*

### *The 10<sup>th</sup> Somerly 10K, 3<sup>rd</sup> January*

Sus

I must have been the happiest lass finishing this race; not only did I come 3<sup>rd</sup> among the ladies (perhaps coming 2<sup>nd</sup> would have made me even happier, but that is being greedy!) apart from receiving a trophy and wine I also received a lovely big cake and ..... yes it gets even better.... together with the Liz Yelling!

The race is held entirely within the grounds of the private Somerly estate. The route itself is very similar to the Highclere 10K, a mix of gravel road, tarmac, grass field and wood path. It is very well organized by The Wessex Autistic Society and there is even free massage afterwards! Worth doing, but you will have to wait another 10 years to have a chance to win the cake again as this was only because of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the race, so put a mark in your 2021 calendar - I certainly have.

Results summary:

1 <sup>st</sup> Male	Robin Wood	34:41
1 <sup>st</sup> Female	Liz Yelling	35:17
3 <sup>rd</sup> Female	Sus	41:57

465 Finished the race



Sus and Liz compare cakes

### *Rough 'n' Tumble, 16<sup>th</sup> January*

Four Harriers did well in the Rough 'n' Tumble, a ten-mile multi-terrain race near Pewsey.

Results summary:

1 <sup>st</sup> Man	Barry Stoddart, The Army	1:04:53
1 <sup>st</sup> Lady	Annie Baumber, Bracknell Forest Runners	1:15:28
26 <sup>th</sup>	Ryan	1:16:44
2 <sup>nd</sup> Lady, 44 <sup>th</sup>	Sus	1:21:15
122 <sup>nd</sup>	Terry	1:30:48
233 <sup>rd</sup>	Hannah	1:40:53

493 finished the race

## Woodcote Lions 10K, 9<sup>th</sup> January

Sue

Five Harriers raced in this long-standing local road race on a bright sunny and still day. Conditions were almost perfect for racing, but there were frequent patches of black ice following a bitterly cold night. 'Scaredy-cats' like me, Martin and Richard, ended up running on the grass verge or in the gritty gutter to try to get some better grip. Others, notably Lucy (who Sus describes as a 'dear-devil'!), seemed completely unfazed by the ice and raced very well. By the 5K mark, Martin had disappeared into the distance, but Richard was just ahead of me, with Lucy and Terry quite close behind me. Lucy's downhill running skill came into play as she caught me at the 7K mark. We changed places a few times up the hill, and then Lucy made a break and started pursuing Richard. In what was probably her best ever 10K race, Lucy achieved a well-deserved 3<sup>rd</sup> lady placing, with me 4<sup>th</sup>. To add to the Compton Harriers celebrations, Martin's good performance earned him 1<sup>st</sup> MV50, Richard was 2<sup>nd</sup> MV50, and Terry set a 10K PB on a far from easy course. Mo had a good workout cycling round to support us.

After a well-organised race, the presentations got off to a dodgy start: the winner was announced as John Waters (race #384, who actually finished in 47:20 and had gone home), while the real winner (race #394) and his supporters looked confused! Once the mistake was realised and apologies made, the rest of the presentations went smoothly and the Harriers cheered as Martin and Lucy were presented with their trophies by Sir John Madejski.

Results summary:

1 <sup>st</sup> man	Chris Green (Reading)	35:14
1 <sup>st</sup> lady (9 <sup>th</sup> )	Samantha Amend (Belgrave H)	38:36
24 <sup>th</sup> (1 <sup>st</sup> MV50)	Martin	41:41
36 <sup>th</sup> (2 <sup>nd</sup> MV50)	Richard	42:59
39 <sup>th</sup> (3 <sup>rd</sup> lady)	Lucy	43:11
43 <sup>rd</sup>	Sue	43:26
60 <sup>th</sup>	Terry	44:31 (PB)
432 finishers – last finisher 1:20		



Above: Terry at 7K

Right: Woodcote 10K trophy winners



## Lakeside Canal Run 8.2 miles (by 2:09 events), 23<sup>rd</sup> January

1 <sup>st</sup> Man	Mark Ryall, Victoria Park Harriers	44:35
9 <sup>th</sup> Man	Ryan	51:09
1 <sup>st</sup> Lady	Sus	53:11



## Slaughterford 9 (by Chippenham Harriers), 30<sup>th</sup> January

Sus

It is a very well-established organized race with a lovely route incorporating wood, grass fields, tracks, a bit of road and tackling 900 feet of ascent/descent it should be right up a Compton Harrier's street. Yet I was the only one doing it, and this got me wondering why? It is only a short drive down the M4, it is neither too long or short for anybody in the club, it was well announced in our race calendar, and it was only 8 quid - for this you get a t-shirt, energy drink, a bar of chocolate, a bottle of water, and a free hot shower afterwards. So what could go wrong? You do not have to race it you can do it as a Sunday run. So come on guys make a note in your calendar for next year and I promise you will not be disappointed!

1 <sup>st</sup> Man	Tom Fisher, Avon Valley Runners	52:38
1 <sup>st</sup> Lady	Lynette Porter, Bitton Road Runners	1:04:47
3 <sup>rd</sup> Lady	Sus	1:07:10

## Handicap Race

Sue

The first race of the 2011 Handicap series saw seven regulars joined by new member Maggs, and also Peter L who was making a welcome return after a 6-month injury layoff. Conditions were good for racing, and there were good performances all round with a very close race to the finish. At the bottom of Shepherd's Mount, Pete O, Dick, Lucy, Steve and I were all together. I managed to open a small gap, but there was no scope for easing off. I won the race, very closely followed by Pete O, Dick, Lucy and Steve, all within 18 seconds. This was quite a challenge for Jan who was time-keeping: she said she couldn't tell the difference between Dick and Pete! Mo and Gillian, had they started at their correct handicapped time, would also have finished within this same time range. Peter ran a good relaxed race, without aggravating his injury, while Maggs said she enjoyed the race and set a good target for next month. Thanks to Jan for timing. The next Handicap Race is scheduled for Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> February (Village Lap route).

Finish Position	Position on handicap	Name	Start time	Finish time	Actual time	Handicap Beaten?
1	1	Sue	5:33	17:51	12:18	-0:09
2	3	Pete O	4:57	17:54	12:57	-0:06
3	4	Dick	4:57	17:55	12:58	-0:05
4	5	Lucy	5:05	18:00	12:54	0:00
5	7	Steve	3:40	18:09	14:29	+0:09
6	-	Peter L	6:05	19:31	13:26	New Runner
7	2	Mo	2:03	18:49	18:49	-0:08
8	6	Gillian	0:50	20:17	20:17	+0:07
9	-	Maggs	2:03	20:49	20:49	New Runner

As previously, championship points have been awarded accordingly to position on handicap. So, I get the 12 points, Mo the 10 points (not a fix – honest!), and Pete O gets 9 points.

Pos.	Name	Race points									Total
		Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Race 4	Race 5	Race 6	Race 7	Race 8	Race 9	
1	Sue	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12
2	Mo	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
3	Pete O	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9
4	Dick	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
5	Lucy	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
6	Gillian	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
7	Steve	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
8	Maggs	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
9	Peter L	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4

## Mo's 'done a runner'

It is usually a surprise to people I meet when I tell them I belong to a running club. I don't exactly look like a runner - wrong shape.... too heavy.... feet at a strange angle etc and when I mention distances such as 18 miles, marathon and 40 miles, then the look of disbelief is complete! How did it all start? As most of the longer-serving members will know, I didn't embark on my distance running career until I'd entered unknown territory (over 40 years old) when I couldn't do anything else I suppose! Not that I'm being at all disrespectful to those of you who run much better than me.... Thinking about it, that's all of you isn't it? Anyway, it's just that I was involved in other sports that were more suited to my build. That is football, rugby, badminton, cricket.... Tiddlywinks and darts have also featured in my sporting career!

OK, back to running.... Actually, I would first like to mention my early athletic career! It all began at primary school when I was particularly good at the 100 yards (I know those of you who were at the open meeting at Swindon a few years ago might find it hard to believe - more later!). Despite my speed in the 100 yards, I invariably finished in second place as there was another lad who always seemed to beat me by half a stride or so. I was desperate to win - what could I do? I had to find an event where my speed and running style were an advantage, but it would need to be unsuitable for my rival! I found the perfect answer.... the sack race! (Come on .... stop laughing!) I mastered the technique by placing my feet in the corners of the sack and running like mad instead of the more traditional hopping method. In fact I mastered it so well that I ended up representing the Newbury Schools at the Berkshire County Schools Sports .... And I won even after tripping and falling half way through the race!

My next success was at St Bartholomew's Grammar School, Newbury where I was again lucky enough to find an event that suited my short distance speed - the long jump. I managed to better the under 13's long jump record, which had stood for 20 years at 14ft, by recording a distance of 14ft 2½in. Unfortunately, 1 year later another lad extended it to 14ft 10in - never mind, I held the record once! From here on, my athletic career took a back seat, as I became more involved in rugby and cricket. It was also mandatory to take part in cross country, but I wasn't that keen on it at the time; oh to dream about what might have been! Outside school, I played football for Compton Minors (my sporting preference), as football was not allowed at St Barts!!

My first recollection of distance running was at College in Weybridge, Surrey when I was 18 years old. I was pretty fit at the time, playing football on Saturdays and rugby on Sundays in addition to circuit training and tiddlywinks in the week (not to mention the sessions in the college bar - another story!). The college needed volunteers to take part in a 6-mile inter-college cross-country event, so I accepted the challenge, especially as several all-women colleges were also involved - this was actually before the lure of Lycra! I can't recall my time for the distance, but I did actually finish in the top half - not bad, as I had not previously run that far.

After my enforced departure from College (alright ... after I failed the first year degree course exams ... ), for the next 15 years or so football became my main sporting passion as distance running again took a back seat. Running did however feature in many training sessions - I can remember running a 5-mile route from the Compton recreation ground, via the Red Lion and Crow's Foot to Lowbury Hill and returning via Brown's Firs and Wallingford Road. The session always ended in a sprint from the Swan Hotel and back through the recreation ground to the old wooden football pavilion. I invariably won this "race" although some of my teammates eventually realised that if they started the sprint from around Cundell's stables they had a better chance of running the finish out of me.

The next part of my story centres on a cold February day in 1991, whilst working as Clerk of Works at RAF Wroughton. I had been inactive in a sporting sense for about 8 years. I had given up football and concentrated instead on my career, which required me to work at weekends (I needed the money too!). My leisure time was taken up with my involvement in music and with the lack of any sporting exercise, my weight had ballooned to 15½ stones ( ... and rising!). I remember sitting down to eat my lunch and attempt the Daily Telegraph crossword when I became aware that my eyes were not focussing properly ... in fact I became dizzy and could see a circle of stars and blank spaces. Panic set in as I broke out in hot flushes ... I had to go outside for fresh air before I passed out! It was freezing outside and the cold air slowly brought me round ... what was happening?

To cut a long story short, I later found out that I had most likely had a migraine attack, but the incident was a turning point in my life. I made an appointment to see the doctor who advised me that I should have a full check-up at the well-man clinic. This is where my return to fitness began as the nurse "put the frighteners on"

by telling me that I was an excellent candidate for a heart attack! You try eating after that! Over the next three months, I survived on black coffee, dry toast and carrots with the occasional apple for good measure. The effect was amazing - my weight reduced from 15½ stones to 12½ stones ... a loss of 3 stones in 3 months! (Not an advisable dieting method by the way - I did look ill, although I felt fine). The next step was to get fit!

I set myself small targets such as walking up a 1-in-6 hill without feeling completely knackered, then running up the same hill without stopping jogging as far as I could before I had to stop. By July 1991, my weight had dropped to a little under 12 stones and I was starting to feel fit! Over the next 12 months, I jogged mainly off-road with my faithful Labrador as running partner and was able to increase my distances until I could comfortably jog for at least 5 miles before I had to stop. It was time for a new challenge - I entered my first running event on 6<sup>th</sup> September 1992 ... the Kerridge 10-mile road race! My aim on the day was to run at 9-minute per mile pace, with a target time of 1hr 30 min. My actual time was 1hr 26min 16sec ... and I did in fact raise £200 for charity. As I was unfamiliar with the particular demands of road running, I ran in non-cushioned trainers and managed to black every toe on both feet! There was also another significant happening as I sped towards the finish ... I met Dick (to his amazement!) and Fiona, both having completed the race a little before me! This is where my Compton Harriers running career began as Dick said he didn't know I was a runner (nor did I!) and invited me to join the club - so I did.

Since that memorable first race, I have entered races at many different distances both on and off road, from 4-miles to 40-miles - I'm still awaiting my first win ... but one day - who knows! As to the most memorable event ... that is difficult as I remember so many for different reasons. There was the Oxford ½ Marathon on the 29<sup>th</sup> September 1992 (my second event) when I ran as John Prentice ... and guess who was interviewed, whilst running, by the local radio station! The reporter must have thought I was an oddball (no comment please!) as when he asked me where I lived, I had to think very hard before replying "East Ilsley ... I think". He also asked me if I had run the event before, to which I replied that I couldn't remember. However, when asked if I was enjoying it and would I do it again I was able to answer immediately ... "you must be joking". I finished in 1:55:50 and I was pleased to beat the 2hr mark. The Weston Prom runs also provide happy memories of the mad dashes along the M4 and M5 on Thursday evenings once a month and the fun we had afterwards in the Captain's Cabin - particularly the night of Sue's birthday when I presented her with a tiny birthday cake and the landlord came out with a massive carving knife to cut it! Another enjoyable night in the Captain's Cabin was the night the landlord gave away 6 free oysters with every pint of Guinness.

Other memorable events for me are: - The regular Eynsham 10k when there has traditionally been a good turnout of Harriers. The Thatcham 10k when I failed to notice the 'sleeping policeman' at the finish and managed to go sprawling on the tarmac. The Bath ½ Marathon reminds me of the challenge I made to Sue - if only I'd realised I was just 2 minutes behind! And who will forget those immortal words from Fiona "Thank you Malcolm!" on our away-day at Aldbourne when I inadvertently caught her heel on a downhill track. The Grizzly is another event that has been memorable for me every time I have run it (4 times now) ... somehow the pain seems to fade from memory and before you know it, you've entered again! My first Compton 40 was also memorable for me, as I never thought I could possibly run that far. The Long Barrow round features in my favourites list, especially the balloon start and the day Sue Paulin entered only to be told that entrants had to be over 16 years old! Of course, there's also the Dursley Dozen and, for sheer fun, the Dauntsey horse-trials course takes a lot of beating. The Ridgeway Relay is another good fun day out, and I have to laugh every time I think of the open meeting at Swindon when I entered the 100 metres and caused havoc by stopping half way after hearing a whistle. I thought it was a false start recall ... when I stopped, everyone else did too and the starter was shouting at us to carry on running! I also entered the 3000 metres and was lapped by everyone once, with the winner lapping me twice. After all that, I ran the 1500 metres in a time somewhere near 6 minutes ... and finished with one person behind me!

However, I suppose the most memorable event for me has to be my first London Marathon on 17<sup>th</sup> April 1994. I can still remember how my friends and work colleagues laughed when, at 15½ stones in 1991, I told them that I would run the Marathon in the next 2 or 3 years! Well I did it, raising £520 for charity and finishing in 4:06:53, running non-stop ... not bad for someone who was considered to be a good heart attack candidate 3 years earlier!

Finally, I must also thank Tom for the encouragement he gave me when I trained with him at Inkpen for my first London Marathon, and of course thanks to Maggy too for the refreshments following the training sessions - I couldn't have managed without. For those of you who have managed to get to the end of this article, well done. I hope you found some interest in my favourite thoughts and memories.

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

Mo

*Links of interest this month:*

<http://www.rwtrailblazer.co.uk/eventinfo.html> Runner's World Trailblazer is a new 10k off-road trail event series in some of the country's most spectacular forest locations. The events all take place in May at the following locations:

**Sat 7 May: Sherwood Forest, Nottinghamshire**

**Sat 14 May: Bedgebury Forest Estate, Kent**

**Sun 22 May: The Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire**

The entry fee for each individual event is £29 but with a discount, if you enter all 3 races, the fee is £69. However, according to the race literature you get back more than you pay out, as the Tech Shirt and goodie bag etc for each event is more than covered by the entry fee:

- ❖ Professional chip timing
  - ❖ Finisher's Medal
  - ❖ Technical T-shirt worth £15
  - ❖ Goody bag worth over £15
  - ❖ Free parking worth up to £8
  - ❖ Free text timing
  - ❖ Entertainment and facilities in the Trailblazer event village
- ... you can't go wrong can you?

<http://www.abingdonmarathon.org.uk/> Lucy sent an email message recently to let us know that entries are now open for the Abingdon Marathon (16<sup>th</sup> October 2011) and I have also received a message from the organisers, together with an entry form. Entry can be made online at Runners World, but if you use the entry form and pay by cheque, you will save £3 over the online entry. The entry form can also be downloaded from the event website or I can email one to you if required. The organisers advised that the 1,100 entry limit was reached by early April last year so, if you are thinking of entering this year's Berkshire Road Racing Series (Wokingham ½ Marathon, Maidenhead 10M, Wargrave 10k and Abingdon Marathon), then you need to get your entry in early.

*Forthcoming Events as listed on the Website Events Calendar:*

Date		Time	Event
Feb-11	5th	8:30 AM	GB Ultra Thames Trot 50
	6th	10:00 AM	Oxford Mail X-C Race 4 (Cirencester)
		10:30 AM	Watford Half-Marathon
	13th	10:30 AM	Dursley Dozen
	20th	10:30 AM	Bramley 20/10 mile
	27th	10:30 AM	Meon Valley Plod 2011
		10:30 AM	The Terminator 2011 11 Mile
		12:30 PM	Dorney Lake 10k
Mar-11	5th	09:00 AM	The 21st Annual Belvoir Challenge (15 or 26 Miles)
	6th	10:00 AM	Oxford Mail X-C Race 5 (Swindon)
Apr-11	10th	8:45 AM	Paris Marathon
		10:00 AM	White Horse ½ Marathon
	17th	9:30 AM	London Marathon
	23rd	9:00 AM	Compton Downland Challenge
	24th		Easter Sunday