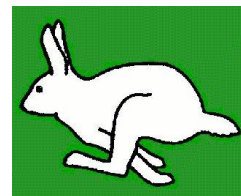


# THE HARRIERS HERALD

No. 227, January 2012

Editor: Sue Francis



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

- Thursday night schedules for January and February
- Harriers help with Father Christmas' visit to Compton
- Christmas Meal – a very enjoyable end to a successful year for the Club
- Race results: *Oxford mail cross-country* – Nine Harriers race at Culham Park; *Andy Reading 10K* – Fay and Dave do their first race as Compton Harriers; *Portsmouth Coastal Marathon* – Lucy and Martin race well on a chilly morning; *Aylesbury Boxing Day 5K* – Simon gets a nice memento from a fun race
- Running Life series – resumes next month
- Handicap Race – Debbie secures her first win, and the 2011 series winner is announced
- Should older runners be concerned about heart disease? – Sue summarises a report on exercise and atrial fibrillation
- Webmaster's article – Mo features a free online resource for injured runners, and lists forthcoming local races
- Thanks to Mo and Simon for this month's contributions
- Copy date for next Harriers Herald – 31<sup>st</sup> January

## Thursday night schedule for January

Thurs 5 <sup>th</sup>	Mo to lead
Thurs 12 <sup>th</sup>	Handicap Race
Thurs 19 <sup>th</sup>	Martin to lead
Thurs 26 <sup>th</sup>	Pete H to lead

## Thursday night schedule for February

Thurs 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Gillian to lead
Thurs 9 <sup>th</sup>	Handicap Race
Thurs 16 <sup>th</sup>	Sue to lead
Thurs 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Richard D to lead

## Correspondence received – none

## Harriers help with Father Christmas' visit to Compton

Dick, Mo and Sue joined members of Compton Village Hall Committee to accompany Father Christmas on his sleigh ride through the village, as he distributed sweets to Compton's children. Our role was to keep slightly ahead of the sleigh, knocking on doors to collect money for charity. It's quite a rewarding experience to see the children so excited by Santa's visit (only a few of them were scared of him!), and we collected £484.20, which was divided equally between the Air Ambulance and Compton Village Hall.

## *Compton Harriers Christmas Meal*

Sue

Seventeen Harriers and five partners celebrated the end of a successful and enjoyable year with a fantastic Christmas meal at The Swan in East Ilsley. The pub proved a very popular choice as we were made very welcome and served ample amounts of very tasty food, in a nice Christmassy atmosphere. Mince pies, coffee and mints were included at no extra charge – how many pubs do that nowadays? It was a bit of a shame that our four tables were separate rather than linked, but it's difficult with a large party, and I heard only positive comments from the members of our group.

During the first course, we were entertained by a troop of Medieval Mummers who were touring the local pubs performing a little play, the general gist of which was that someone collapsed on the floor and was then resurrected. All were dressed in colourful rags, and spoke in booming voices!

When all was quiet again, Sue announced the results of the 2011 Handicap Championship. The overall winner, Colin, was presented with the Annual Handicap Trophy and also with an engraved medal – many thanks to Nick Bull for the engraving and the medal. Runners up Sue and Mags received a Toblerone. (For full Handicap Championship results, see later in this issue). On behalf of the Club members, Pete presented Jan K with a gift to thank her for her ongoing support and interest in the Club, particularly with timing the Handicap Races.

During the interval between the main course and desserts, Martin presented his multi-choice nature quiz, which included questions such as 'How many species of bumblebee inhabit the UK?' and 'How high is Ben Nevis?' Colin's table, who did the quiz as a joint effort, shared the prize of a jar of Rowstock honey: two spoonsful each, then pass it on! Mo was runner up, and only has to share his honey with me! The evening was rounded off with Dick's competition, which involved pairing pictures of vehicles and vehicle logos, and was won by Richard & Ann.



The full set of Mo's photos of the evening can be viewed on our website.

## *Race Reports & Results*

### *Oxford Mail x-country, Culham, 4<sup>th</sup> December*

**Sue**

The second race of the series was held at Culham Park, near Abingdon. In contrast to last year, the course was remarkably firm underfoot for most of the route, despite its proximity to the Thames.

The ladies race, run over 2 laps (about 6.5K), was won Newbury's Sophie Crumley (26:03). Once again, the in-form Helen Preedy was first home for Team Kennet (7<sup>th</sup>), followed by Sue (13<sup>th</sup>, 29:09). A very good run by Lucy gave her 20<sup>th</sup> position (30:02), and she completed the 'A' team. TK's Jenny was 30<sup>th</sup>. Next home was Debbie, with a much improved run (35:04) in 79<sup>th</sup> – that's 38 places better than in the previous race. Fay Jones (Lee's wife) did well to complete her first ever cross-country race (147<sup>th</sup>), just one place ahead of Gillian (148<sup>th</sup>, 48:43). The 'A' team was 2<sup>nd</sup> in division 1 of the league, and the 'B' team 13<sup>th</sup> in division 2.

The men's race, run over 3 laps (about 9K), was won by Steve Naylor (Woodstock) in 29:42. A number of TK men took part, first home being young Michael Randall (28<sup>th</sup>) and Guy Watts (42<sup>nd</sup>). The Harriers participants in the TK team were Martin (135<sup>th</sup>, 38:00), closely pursued by Lee (138<sup>th</sup>, 38:12), our new member Dave (227<sup>th</sup>, 43:32), Colin (231<sup>st</sup>, 43:59), and Riky (240<sup>th</sup>, 44:37). The team was 3<sup>rd</sup> in division 2 of the league.

### *Andy Reading 10K, Bicester, 11<sup>th</sup> December*

Our new members Dave and Fay did their first race for the Club, finishing together in 47:00 (203<sup>rd</sup> and 204<sup>th</sup> respectively). Lucy reports that Dave wore his new CH vest back-to-front! Martin (41:14, 109<sup>th</sup>) and Lucy (42:40, 124<sup>th</sup>) also did well.

### *Portsmouth Coastal Marathon, 18th December*

On an icy morning, and still feeling full after the Harriers meal the previous evening, Martin and Lucy did very well to complete this multi-terrain coastal marathon in 3:22 and 3:33 respectively.

### *Aylesbury Boxing Day 5K, 26<sup>th</sup> December*

**Simon**

Ever entered a race and then forgotten about it?...

I originally entered the 2010 Boxing Day 5K but it was cancelled due to 'adverse weather conditions' (snow and ice to you and me – not that they ever stop me from running). I then pretty much forgot about it until a running number landed on my doormat for this year's event; the organisers had very kindly carried over all entries from last year. So on Boxing Day morning I duly strapped on the old running shoes and jogged up for a little trot round Aylesbury town centre.

The race starts at 9:30 by the clock tower (although there seemed to be a bit of confusion as to which way to face – that could've been fun!) and after a quick lap of Market Square heads off for two laps of (more or less) the centre of Aylesbury before finishing outside the Kingbury pub back in the town centre. I have to say that it's a compact little route, though being compact there are a number of tight turns which don't make for much of a PB-potential course. Add to that the constant changes from pavement to cobbled streets, chuck in a bit of grass and add a smattering of drivers who for some reason decided to take their cars out on the one day of the year when there's a race on and ... well, I could see why last year's race was cancelled.

Still, it was an interesting little race which made use of the only ‘hill’ in Aylesbury town centre. The entries were dominated by runners from the two local clubs, Vale of Aylesbury AC and Bearbrook Joggers – although in the results they were listed as either Bearbrook Joggers or Bearbrook Runners, which made me wonder whether there’d been a fight at the Joggers’ Christmas do which led to the formation of a splinter group.

The race was won by ‘local’ boy Anuradha Cooray in 15:41 (I say ‘local’ because apparently he’s pretty close to being picked to represent Sri Lanka in the marathon at the Olympics and Sri Lanka is not, according to my Boys’ Book of General Knowledge, all that local...) with Fabian Downs (unattached) 2<sup>nd</sup> in 16:15 and Laurie Probert (Tonbridge AC) 3<sup>rd</sup> in 16:19. First lady was Carolyn Bossey of VOAAC in 18:13, followed by Jade Leggett of Marshall Milton Keynes in 20:10 and Lucy Mayer of Bearbrook Runners in 20:13.

I finished in 122<sup>nd</sup> place in 25:25 out of a total of 191 finishers. It was quite nice to work out from the results that I was 6<sup>th</sup> in the MV50 category ... until Joanna asked me ‘out of how many?’ Well, seven, actually. But I was still 6<sup>th</sup> in my age group, so there.

All in all, a nice little race. Probably not worth going out of your way for, but nice enough if you’re local and you fancy burning off a bit of Christmas cake. And the medal – a die-cast and enamelled Father Christmas in running kit – is a very nice memento.

## Handicap Race

### Sue

A wild, wet and windy December evening greeted the seven Handicap runners, but at least there was a nice moon! Debbie led from start to finish and, despite the conditions, set a PB which saw her take the Handicap trophy for the first time with a clear winning margin. Colin did well to shave 8 seconds off his PB and take second place, with Sue, Meena and Lucy following in close succession. It was also nice to see Richard and Dick back in action again after enforced rests from racing. Well done Debbie, and thanks to Jan for timing.

Finish Position	Position on handicap	Name	Start time	Finish time	Actual time	Handicap Beaten?
1	1	Debbie	1:49	16:26	14:37	-0:34
2	2	Colin	3:18	16:59	13:41	-0:01
3	3	Sue	5:00	17:06	12:06	+0:06
4	4	Philomena	2:43	17:10	14:27	+0:10
5	5	Lucy	4:23	17:13	12:50	+0:13
6	6	Richard	4:09	17:35	13:26	+0:35
7	7	Dick	4:09	18:30	14:21	+1:30

Thanks to everyone who took part in the 2011 Handicap race series - 19 runners competed in at least one of the nine races. Only Lucy and Sue competed in every race, but Mo, Colin and Dick ran most of them. Race 5 saw a record 14 runners taking part. Grateful thanks to Jan who was there to time-keep for every race, come rain or shine. After the final race of the series, the top five (or fewer for people who ran less than five races) scores for each person were added to determine their Championship total. This year’s altered scoring system (12, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 for subsequent finishers) worked well giving an extra incentive for a win, and ensuring you are rewarded for each person you beat. The highest

possible total score would be 60, so Colin did very well to score 52 points and win the 2011 championship, 6 points ahead of Sue. Colin's victory was well-deserved, since he ran most of the races, with consistent good performances, and slowly but surely knocked time off his PBs for both the summer and winter routes. Mags and Peter did well to take equal third spot, as they were each only able to do half of the races, but in those races they scored highly.

The 2012 Handicap Championship will use the same format and scoring. The next race is scheduled for 12<sup>th</sup> January (Village Lap route), and will kick off the 2012 series.

Pos.	Name	Race points									Total of best 5
		Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Race 4	Race 5	Race 6	Race 7	Race 8	Race 9	
1	Colin	-	12	7	5	8	-	12	10	10	52
2	Sue	12	1	8	9	3	8	8	8	9	46
3=	Mags	4	-	12	12	12	-	-	-	-	40
3=	Peter L	4	10	-	-	10	9	7	-	-	40
5	Lucy	7	2	6	4	5	5	10	9	7	39
6=	Mo	10	5	4	3	7	7	5	7	-	36
6=	Dick	8	6	10	7	1	4	-	-	5	36
8=	Gillian	6	-	10	8	10	-	-	-	-	34
8=	Pete O	9	-	2	2	4	10	9	-	-	34
10=	Martin	-	8	1	6	2	12	4	-	-	32
10=	Philomena	-	-	5	-	-	7	-	12	8	32
12	Terry	-	9	-	10	6	-	6	-	-	31
13	Debbie	-	-	-	-	1	3	-	6	12	22
14	Richard D	-	3	4	-	1	-	-	-	6	14
15	Steve	5	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12
16	Pete H	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
17=	Stephen	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
17=	Richard C	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
17=	Dave R	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1

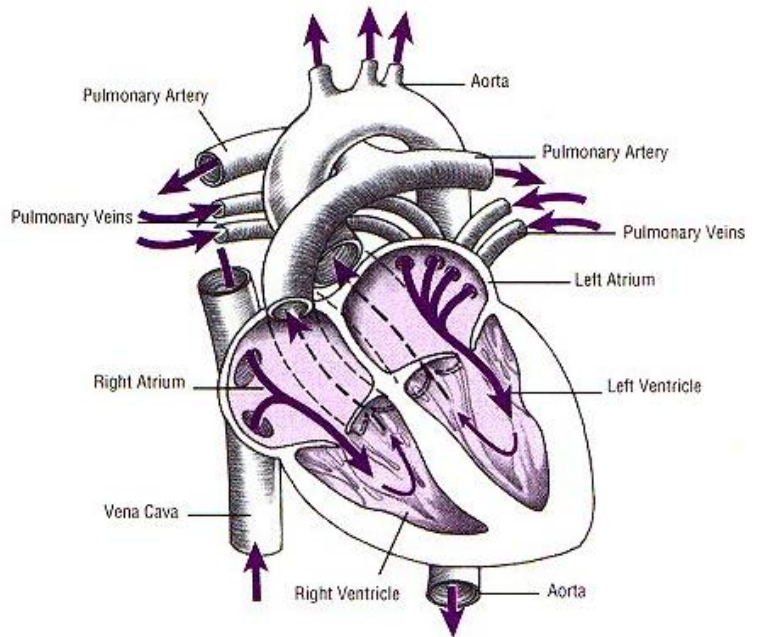
### *Should older runners be concerned about heart disease?*

Sue

I recently read a very interesting article in the magazine 'Masters Athletics', written by someone who has been both a runner and a research scientist for over 40 years. It clearly explained the functioning of the human heart, and what 'goes wrong' in people who develop the heart condition atrial fibrillation (AF). It also discussed the results of various long-term and short-term research studies which investigated whether strenuous activity could be linked to heart disease in the older athlete. Some of these studies seemed to link heart disease to vigorous exercise, while other studies showed vigorous exercise to be beneficial. I have summarised some of the particularly interesting sections below.

The heart is basically a small muscular pump with four chambers. Regular hard training, which increases the rate at which the heart beats, will over the course of several years result in some increase in heart size. The heart and body adapt to these physical demands. For most adults, the resting heart rate is 50 – 80 beats per minute (bpm). Hard exertion can raise the heart rate to 150 – 200 bpm, depending on effort and age. However, in an attack linked to atrial fibrillation (AF), heart rate can rise to 300 – 500 bpm. Many people with a minor AF condition may never have this sort of attack, nor know they have AF. Each side of the heart has an upper chamber (atrium) and lower chamber (ventricle). Veins deliver

blood to the top of each atrium via a non-return valve. The atrium squeezes, closes the valve and forces the blood through another non-return valve, into the ventricle. The ventricle squeezes, pushing the blood out of the heart into the arteries. The two sides of the heart operate virtually simultaneously. The right side collects blood which is returning from all around the body, and pumps this blood out to the lungs, where carbon dioxide is removed and replaced with oxygen. This oxygenated blood is returned to the left side of the heart and pumped out via a large artery (the aorta) to travel around the body. The powerful squeeze of the left side is what causes the sound of the heart beat (as the valves shut) and is the cause of our blood pressure and pulse.



The heart beat is controlled by the body's electrical activity. A natural pacemaker, in the top of the heart, sends regular electrical impulses which coordinate the contraction of the heart's muscle fibres. If the impulse doesn't start properly, different parts of the atrium squeeze at different times and this does not successfully push the blood into the ventricle. This irregular heart beat can be detected by an electrocardiogram. With AF, the pattern is erratic and can be very rapid. Because the ventricle has a back-up pacemaker it still squeezes normally so the heart registers a beat, but the surge of blood from the ventricle is less than it should be because the ventricle squeezed before it was full up. The ventricle has to pump faster to deliver the correct amount of blood around the body, so the pulse is irregular and varies in strength.

If AF is detected early, it may be treated by an electric shock to the heart. Long-term treatments use the drug digoxin. Warfarin may be used to reduce the risk of blood clots; however, the newer (and more expensive) drug dabigatran is considered much safer. AF may also be improved by surgical repair to leaky heart valves.

The author discussed the various studies on exercise and heart attacks, and drew the conclusion that there is no link between the two and that regular exertion is beneficial to health. He was very sceptical about the study which indicated the link between exercise and AF, since it did not use a representative group of subjects: they were all men, they were all medical doctors (so better able to recognise the early signs of AF), and they all did some 'jogging' (but not necessarily strenuously or regularly). The subject group would ideally be competitive veteran athletes of both sexes.

However a different (Russian) study did yield a significant, important and unexpected link. Of those very fit athletes who had suffered heart attacks, the majority did their training early in the morning, soon after waking up. The researchers concluded that the heart attacks were caused by putting huge demands on the heart before the body is fully awake – definitely something to keep in mind!

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

Mo

### *Links of interest this month:*

The feature this month concentrates on running injuries, diagnosis, treatment and recovery. This follows my receipt of an email recently from Gavin Burt, who is a club runner with the Serpentine and the Mornington Chasers running clubs. Gavin also runs a sports injury clinic in North London called Backs and Beyond, [www.backsandbeyond.co.uk](http://www.backsandbeyond.co.uk), which specialises in running injuries. However, Gavin is offering a **free online resource for injured runners** called the Running Oracle which provides injured runners with the advice they need to get back on their feet when suffering from an injury. It helps in figuring out what the injury is, and then offers expert instructions and videos tailored to the runner's specific injury that will aid recovery. The Running Oracle is an online service which is also featured on the Serpentine running club's website alongside the Virtual Sports Injury Clinic.

Links are: [www.runninginjuryoracle.com](http://www.runninginjuryoracle.com) ; [http://www.serpentine.org.uk/pages/advice\\_health.html](http://www.serpentine.org.uk/pages/advice_health.html) and [www.sportsinjuryclinic.net](http://www.sportsinjuryclinic.net) . Runners World also uses the site for their injury pages.

Gavin Burt created all the content and recovery plans based on 15 years' experience as a runner's Osteopath treating the numerous injuries that plague all runners. The website enables injured runners to quickly and easily get accurate, professional advice that can be trusted and help get them on the road to recovery, whether they are just starting out or have been running for years. Runners can access the site and all its content **absolutely free of charge**. However, for full access to all areas of the site including the videos, there is a requirement to register after ticking a box to agree to the terms and conditions of use ... i.e. a disclaimer to avoid any legal challenges no doubt, but the process is very easy to follow.

I have registered and tried the site out and have been suitably impressed so I have no problem in recommending [www.runninginjuryoracle.com](http://www.runninginjuryoracle.com) as another very useful tool in the running armoury. I will also add a link on the next website update.

### *Listing of forthcoming Local Events – see Website Events Calendar for full Listing:*

Sat 7 Jan	Berkshire County Cross Country Championships Weekly Free 5km Timed Park Runs
Sun 8 Jan	Goring, Woodcote & District Lions Club 10k Oxford Mail X-C, Middleton Cheney
Sat 14 Jan	Weekly Free 5km Timed Park Runs
Sun 15 Jan	Rough n Tumble - 10 mile MT
Sat 21 Jan	Weekly Free 5km Timed Park Runs
Sat 28 Jan	Weekly Free 5km Timed Park Runs
Sat 4 Feb	THAMES TROT ULTRA 50 Weekly Free 5km Timed Park Runs
Sun 5 Feb	Oxford Mail X-C, Ascott-under-Wychwood
Sat 11 Feb	Weekly Free 5km Timed Park Runs
Sun 12 Feb	Meon Valley Plod - 21 mile XC Dursley Dozen - 12 mile fell
Sat 18 Feb	Weekly Free 5km Timed Park Runs
Sun 19 Feb	Drover's Revenge, new 8 mile (approx.) multi-terrain run
Sat 25 Feb	Weekly Free 5km Timed Park Runs
Sun 26 Feb	The Terminator 11.5miles QX 6k & 12k Trail Runs, Aldermaston

Mo; Jan 2012