

# THE HARRIERS HERALD

No. 196, June 2009

Editor: Sue Francis

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

- Thursday night schedules for June and July
- Correspondence received
- A new baby for the Harriers
- Harriers team fleeces
- Race results – wins for Lucy at the Marlborough Challenge and Sus at the Great Daffodil Run; Simon records his fastest 10K since 2002 at Woodley; plus The Three Forts Marathon, Silverstone 10K, Ollie Johnson 5-mile race and the IAH Relay
- Webmaster's article – Mo tells how to increase stamina, strength and flexibility
  
- Thanks to Martin, Simon, Sus and Mo for this month's contributions
- Copy date for June's Harriers Herald – 29<sup>th</sup> June

## Thursday night schedule for June

Thurs 4<sup>th</sup> Ryan to lead  
Thurs 11<sup>th</sup> Terry to lead  
Thurs 18<sup>th</sup> Handicap Race  
Thurs 25<sup>th</sup> Phil to lead

## Thursday night schedule for July

Thurs 2<sup>nd</sup> IAH Boundary Race (\*)  
Thurs 9<sup>th</sup> Sue to lead  
Thurs 16<sup>th</sup> Hannah to lead? TBC  
Thurs 23<sup>rd</sup> Peter L to lead  
Thurs 30<sup>th</sup> Pete H to lead

(\*) 8.1 mile run or walk around boundary of IAH land, 95% off-road; barbecue burning and bar open. More details to follow by e-mail.

<b>Correspondence received</b>		
<b>Sender</b>	<b>Subject matter</b>	<b>Action</b>
Catterick Garrison	The Paras 10 mile endurance challenge (13-09-09)	Events Diary & notice board
England Athletics	Receipt for members affiliation payments	File
England Athletics	'Setting the Pace' newsletter	Ask me if you want to read it
England Athletics	Nominations requested for EA Chairman	File

### *A new Harrier baby*

Many congratulations to Harrier Kev and his wife, Emma, on the safe arrival of baby Finley Wilkinson at the end of April.

### *New team fleeces*

Thanks to Sus, we now have some nice team fleeces – they are dark gray, with ‘Compton Harriers’ embroidered in green across the back. They are warm, comfortable and look very smart. They are available in a range of sizes and cost £20.05 each. Contact Sus if you would like one.

## *Race results*

### *Three Forts Half Marathon, 3<sup>d</sup> May*

**Sus**

Not my favourite, simply because it is not very well organized (perhaps Dick should teach them). Two toilets for the ladies ½ k away, a drink station with 2 litre bottles and, in the last minute, a change of the prize giving, but hay ho the massage was nice, the people were very friendly and at the end of the day you have had the pleasure to run 13 miles in the countryside. 237 finished the race.

1 <sup>st</sup> man	Leighton Aspell	1:22:39
1 <sup>st</sup> lady	Jo Clarke	1:40:36
2 <sup>nd</sup> lady	Sus	1:42:48

### *Silverstone 10K, 6<sup>th</sup> May*

**Sus**

Organized by Silson Joggers every year on a Tuesday evening, it is 2 laps of the grand prix track, very well organized. Just turn up; you are pretty sure to get in as they can take up to 5000 runners, pay for your race number and the use of a chip and off you go. No hanging about afterward to get a memento because there is not one. Ryan who just said that he felt very slow did very well finishing in 38:20 despite the windy conditions – so he was a happy lad. 805 runners finished the race.

1	1	1	698	Ashley Sabin	MS	32:22	Notts AC
61	57	41	731	Ryan Morris	MS	38:20	Compton Harriers
174	16	6	634	Susanne Enhard	F40	42:33	Compton Harriers

## *The Marlborough Downland Challenge, 16<sup>th</sup> May*

**Martin**

The Marlborough running club always organise an excellent event and the Marlborough Downland Challenge is no exception. There are 3 options on the day a) 20 mile run, b) a 33 mile run or c) a 20 mile stroll. All of which follow a scenic one lap route across the Wiltshire Downs, along the Wansdyke and through Avebury Stone Circle.

Meena, Lucy, Dick, Ryan, myself, Peter L and Peter L's mate Andy Pincock all toed the line for the 20 mile round. In actual fact it is only 19.1 miles but who's quibbling?

We were treated to a blustery but otherwise dryish day, which was a stroke of good fortune considering the awful weather we had during the previous week. Nevertheless, the going under foot was decidedly muddy during most of the first 4 miles or so until we got onto the ridge forming part of the Tan Hill Way. This is where the scenic stuff begins and you are treated to some petty fine views all the way to the finish.

As a general rule I am never very inspired by race mementos but the MDC is an exception. Each finisher gets a very nice hand crafted mug from White Horse Pottery and an embossed plate if you run fast enough to get a place on the podium. To wit, Lucy bagged first lady and Meena was awarded 3<sup>rd</sup> LV45 on the day. Unfortunately, it transpired some days later that Meena was awarded 3<sup>rd</sup> LV45 in error. However, she was cheered loudly when being presented with her plate and more importantly gets to keep the crockery.

At some later date, Peter L and Andy P may wish to elaborate on their daring venture into experimental race nutrition. For now, I can't be persuaded to give up my jelly babies in favour of that dynamic duo, figs and dates.

### Results

Robbie Atkin	2:13:47 (first home)
Martin	2:20:44 (by a shirt thickness)
Ryan	2:20:44
Dick	2:36:33
Lucy	2:38:47 (first lady)
Peter L	2:51:08
Andy P	2:54:12
Meena	2:58:00 (first LV50 - the official time given is incorrect)

144 athletes completed the 20 mile event



## Woodley 10K, 17<sup>th</sup> May

**Simon**

Flying the flag for the Harriers, I rocked up at this event for the 19<sup>th</sup> consecutive year on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> May. Despite some very heavy rain when I got to the car park, the weather miraculously cleared up half an hour before the off and the race itself was blessed with lots of sunshine and an occasionally brisk breeze.

For those of you who haven't run at Woodley before (why not?), the course is pretty much flat with nothing you could call a hill. This year's event attracted a pre-entry in excess of 700 and a further 150-odd signed up on the day, making it one of the best turnouts in years, if not ever. Unfortunately this did make the first half mile a bit crowded but it stopped me going off too fast, and once we got past the first kilometre mark I settled into a pretty regular 4:40-ish per km pace and kept it going all the way, crossing the finish line in 42:10 and recording my fastest 10k since 2002.

After a post-race coffee, a burger from the barbeque and a chat with Carol and Ted Wingrove – who have been involved in the organisation of the Woodley event longer than I've been running it – I trolled back to Aylesbury in Henry just as the heavens opened again.

The race was won this year by Andrew Robbins from Serpentine Running Club in a time of 35:08, with Eleanor Bedwell taking the honours for the ladies with a time of 41:50. The last finisher in recorded a time of 1:23:20. The results – available online the morning after the race – showed me as 171<sup>st</sup> out of 658 finishers.

Perusing the results, as I do, I did notice that Mel Gibson finished in a time of 51:13. Nice of him to turn up what with being so busy being a film star and all that. And someone with the surname Regent finished two seconds ahead of someone called Park. Regent Park! Honest – you couldn't make it up...

All in all this really is an excellent event and if you've not done it before I strongly recommend that you give it a go next year.

## Great Daffodil Run

**Sus**

This is one not to miss – very well organized. It is 15 miles on country roads in and around Kelmarsh Hall, Northampton, but the difference is that the roads are closed – completely closed, so you got the choice to run either on the left or right hand side – well even in the middle if you fancy, you do not have to repeat Dick's reasonable words of keeping to one side! Secondly you are treated to bottled water and gel/jelly babies several times through out the route. If you are lucky enough to be in the front a 4-wheeled police bike will follow you for the last few miles making you feel very important!

You also have the option of a 10k, but both Ryan and I went for the 15 miles. The 10k start time is half hour before the 15 miles and follows the same route and, when you eventually catch up and pass the back runners, you can hear that they are very impressed with the speed you put in and they cheer you on, and in their view it is probably very fast and it does make you perk up.

It was a rather warm day so my plan was not to go mad in the first half and keep taking on board a lot of water and then hope that the remaining female competitors would go dead in the heat so I slowly could reel them in, and my plan seemed to work – I overtook the last girl around mile 11 and from then on it was a question of keeping it till the finish and I succeeded thanks to also not too many serious competitors among the field. Ryan also did very well, just managing to keep the front runners in sight and finishing 5<sup>th</sup>.

1<sup>st</sup> man home, Neal Humphreys Corby AC 1:34:23

5<sup>th</sup> man Ryan 1:41:45

1<sup>st</sup> lady Sus 1:49:33

249 runners finished the race

## *IAH-Compton Relay, 21<sup>st</sup> May*

Sue

Many thanks to all who were involved in the relay as either competitors or helpers. After several days of dodgy weather, conditions were ideal for the race, and for spectators and competitors to enjoy a burger on the patio and a drink of the balcony. The course was in perfect nick, having been mown by Dick a few days previously. The new handicapping system worked well and, for the majority of teams, made for a much better race. The lead changed on every stage and the first four teams finished within the space of a minute. Congratulations to the winners 'The Hippos' (Pete O, Terry and their friends John and Jon), who also recorded the evening's fastest team time. Close behind were 'Two Hens and a Couple of Cocks' ahead of 'The Four Musketeers' and 'Baldrick's Cunning Plan'. The fastest lap time of the evening was recorded by Martin (9:00), with Matt second, and Dick and John Marriott equal third for the men. The top three ladies were Sue, Lucy and Susy Winter. Thanks to Mo, results (team and individual) and photos can now be found on our website at: <http://www.comptonharriers.org.uk/> (home page, under "IAH RELAY 2009 - Results").

Thanks to all Harriers who helped with the event, especially to Jan for her reliable and thorough time-keeping job; Mo for designing and running the race software for efficient result calculations; Dick for mowing the course; Ryan for marshalling; and all who helped with collecting route markers and signs.

## *Ollie Johnson Memorial 5 mile race, 25<sup>th</sup> May*

Sue

Mo and I set off for Kintbury – me to run and Mo (with a knee injury) to cycle round and support the race. I wasn't sure if any other Harriers or Reading AC runners had entered, so I had both my Harriers vest and my Reading AC vest with me so I could make the appropriate choice on arrival. As it happened, no other Harriers showed up, but three other Reading AC lady team-mates were there, so I ran in Reading colours.

The sky was dark and threatening and, as I set off for my warm-up and Mo assembled his bike, the rain started. However, it soon passed over and, as more than 200 runners gathered at the race start, conditions were nice for running. I set off behind Reading AC's Arianne Pritchard who is a very good cross-country runner but had never previously run a road race longer than 5K. We could see the leading lady, Team Kennet's Rachael Elliot, disappearing into the distance but the second placed lady, Laura Southwold (unattached), was never far ahead. Arianne and I ran together, with a couple of men, until 3 ½ miles when, to my surprise, I sensed she was struggling and I forged ahead to open up a gap of about 30 metres in the wooded section of the course. However, in the last ½ mile Arianne, pushed on by her male accomplice, made a determined effort and gained on me. Despite a warning from Mo that I needed to keep pushing on, I had to concede to my younger team-mate and she finished as third lady while I was fourth (31:45, 32<sup>nd</sup> overall). The race was won by Tim Traynor (WHH) in 26:15, while first lady was Rachael Elliot (29:40). There were 219 finishers including many Team Kennet and Newbury athletes well-known to the Harriers: Vicky Adams, Colin Price, Bob Taylor, Dave Rees, Ian Coxhead, Wayne Lillis.....

The race was once again friendly and well-organised, with a choice of medal or T-shirt as a finisher's memento, and a selection of post-race cakes on sale for charity. My only 'complaint' was that the presentation took place 20 minutes earlier than stated on the entry form.....so I went to get changed and missed it (not that I'd won anything, but it's nice to clap those who have).

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

Mo

*This month's article is the first of a series over the next 2 or 3 months. The subject will be fitness and different types of exercises to help increase the 3 main components of fitness: Stamina, Strength and Flexibility.*

❖ **Stamina (Aerobic or Cardiovascular Fitness):** is the fitness of the respiratory and circulatory systems. Good aerobic fitness ensures your heart, blood vessels and lungs deliver sufficient oxygen and nutrients to your working muscles so you can keep going longer without fatigue. Aerobic exercise is therefore the key element of most physical exercise programmes and is essential for the performance of most physically demanding tasks. High levels of aerobic fitness are directly associated with improved levels of performance.

Increasing aerobic activity involves exercise over a sustained period of time, using the body's large muscle groups, in repetitive, rhythmic activities such as running, walking or swimming - "Aerobic" means "with oxygen", so aerobic exercise must be performed at a level of intensity that ensure your body brings in enough oxygen to fuel the demand. Many newcomers to exercise tend to work at an intensity which is difficult to sustain and hence fall by the wayside. If you try to exercise too vigorously, your body cannot take the required amount of oxygen in quickly enough and exercise soon becomes "anaerobic" (without oxygen).

Exercise can take place over a broad range of activities. At the lower end of the scale, walking is an activity you can continue for a prolonged period without too much effort and is therefore 100% aerobic whilst further up the scale lie more challenging activities such as a brisk run, which is harder to sustain for long periods, but is still mainly an aerobic activity, with a small amount of anaerobic effort. At the top end of the scale, a 100 metre sprint is an activity in which the effort is fully anaerobic.

The secret to improving your aerobic fitness is to start by working at a comfortable, sustainable level and then to gradually introduce more challenging activities to take you "outside your comfort zone".

A great way of increasing the intensity of aerobic workouts is interval training - mixing lower intensity aerobic exercise with sessions of harder effort. This allows you to introduce a challenge while still keeping the overall training load manageable. Mixing walking/jogging and running is a good way of trying interval training

❖ **Strength:** is all about exerting a force. When muscles exert a force, they pull on bones, to enable movement to occur or a position to be maintained. To increase muscle strength, therefore, a progressive "overload" with a weight or other form of resistance is needed. Provided the right level and type of overload is placed upon the muscles often enough, they will adapt by getting stronger.

While some strength training exercises target one major muscle group (isolation exercises), others call upon multiple muscle groups simultaneously. These are called "compound" exercises and are generally held to be more "functional" than isolation exercises as in our everyday activities where we tend to use our muscles in groups rather than in isolation.

The specific way in which muscles are trained determines the type of strength they develop.

There are three factors you can manipulate to influence training outcomes. Firstly, the **number of times** you do an exercise (repetitions, or "reps"). Secondly, the **number of sets** you do (a set is a predetermined number of repetitions performed consecutively) and, finally, the **amount of rest** you take in between sets.

You might use anything between 1-5 sets, depending on the specific aim and purpose of the session. If you are new to strength training, initially a single set will produce results - but you will progress more quickly if you do three or more sets.

If you are a beginner, as a starting point aim to perform 10 repetitions per set. That means lifting a weight, or performing the exercise, 10 times - using a resistance level that makes the last couple of repetitions difficult. If the last couple of reps feel easy, use a heavier weight or a harder exercise. Follow these tips to make the most of your strength training:

- ▶ **Focus on muscular endurance** by increasing your repetitions but use less weight or go for an easier exercise option.
- ▶ **Focus on strength and size** by using fewer reps but an increased level of weight or a more challenging exercise.
- ▶ **Focus on power** (the product of strength and speed) by performing the exercises more explosively, or at a faster pace, but without reducing the level of resistance significantly. (Use fewer reps than you would for muscular endurance.)



You don't necessarily need weights to do strength training as gravity is always available and an excellent form of resistance. Otherwise, you can use elastic resistance bands, or improvise with household items such as water bottles and food cans etc.

- ▶ Initially, rest for one to two minutes between each set to allow the muscles to recover before they have to work again. If you want to focus on endurance, rest for a shorter period. If you want to focus on strength, rest for a longer period .
- ▶ To see results, two to three sessions per week is ideal.

❖ **Flexibility:** When muscles are supple and joints mobile, the body is able to move in the way it was designed - quickly and efficiently. A flexible joint can move through a greater range of motion at speed and with ease, leading to enhanced performance, better posture and a reduced risk of injury. This is a good reason to incorporate regular flexibility sessions into physical training on rest or recovery days in addition to the usual cool-down and stretch following other training sessions.

▶ **Why stretch?** Physical activity involves muscular contractions in which the muscle fibres shorten. If they aren't stretched out again afterwards, they remain shortened for longer and can adapt to this shorter length over time, pulling bones out of alignment ("adaptive shortening"). Tight, shortened muscles and stiff, creaky joint structures limit range of movement, which can be detrimental both to your general well-being and sports performance. Even non-physical activities, such as driving or sitting hunched over a computer all day, can wreak havoc on posture and joint health. Holding the body in a fixed position entails working some muscles more than others, leading to imbalances in their strength and length. This is why flexibility training is such an important part of any fitness programme.

There are two main forms of stretching: **static** and **dynamic**. The distinction between the two is whether a stretch is held without moving (as in the splits, for example) or whether you take a joint through its range of motion (such as taking your arm around in a wide circle). Static stretching develops the passive range of motion (your flexibility in a fixed position), while dynamic stretching develops the active range of motion (flexibility throughout the full extent of the joint's range). While it is the latter that is important as far as sports performance is concerned, static stretching helps maintain good posture and restores muscles to their resting length after exercise.

Research indicates that the optimal time to perform static stretching is after your workout, when your muscles are warm, pliant and less likely to tear or be overstrained. Stretching straight after the cool-down section of your workout helps the muscles relax and return to their resting length so "undoing" the shortening caused by physical activity and so speeding up recovery.

▶ **Mechanics of stretching:** When you first place a muscle into a stretched position, muscle "spindles" located among the muscle fibres detect a change in the length of the muscle and report back to the spinal cord. The nervous system then sends a message to the nerves governing these particular muscle fibres to tell the muscle to contract, in order to take it out of the stretched position. This is known as the "stretch reflex" and is the reason why you need to hold a stretch for a few seconds, in order to override this protective mechanism. a brief post -workout stretch will assist in maintaining your current range of movement, it is not sufficient to develop and enhance flexibility. In a "pure flexibility" session, the stretches are held for longer and repeated more frequently, as the goal is to actually develop and increase flexibility.

Try to put aside some time to go through a comprehensive flexibility workout once or twice a week. Improvements in flexibility come gradually, and will be lost if stretching is not regularly maintained.

Stretching:

- ▶ Speeds up the removal of waste products and the arrival of fresh nutrients to muscles post-workout.
- ▶ Increases blood supply to joint structures, keeping them healthy and mobile.
- ▶ Hastens the return of muscles to "resting" length.
- ▶ Improves mobility so that day-to-day activities, such as reaching up to a high shelf or folding your arms behind your back become easier.
- ▶ Slows down the decline in flexibility that occurs as we age (a recent study at the University of Nevada concluded that stiffness and lack of flexibility was more a result of lack of use than of age).
- ▶ Allows you to take some "time out" and can be an aid to relaxation .