

# THE HARRIERS HERALD

No. 193, March 2009

Editor: Sue Francis

## **In brief**

- Thursday night schedules for March and April
- Correspondence received
- Thanks to Sus and Mo for this month's contributions
- Copy date for April's Harriers Herald – 31<sup>st</sup> March

## **Features, reports and results**

- Watford Half – excellent performances from three Harriers on an undulating course
- Bramley 20 miles – Lucy sets a good time
- Oxford Mail X-C – Sue collects a trophy for the race series
- Hemel Hempstead training run – Harriers marathon runners find a good training event
- Meon Valley Plod – Sus and Ryan recommend a perfect trail run
- The first Ridgeway Relay – Sue writes about the inaugural Ridgeway Relay, held in 1969
- Handicap Race – Pete O takes the trophy home
- Website Update – Mo features eating and training: how to time it right

## Thursday night schedule for March

Thurs 5<sup>th</sup> Peter L to lead  
Thurs 12<sup>th</sup> Sue to lead  
Thurs 19<sup>th</sup> Handicap Race  
Thurs 26<sup>th</sup> Sally to lead

## Thursday night schedule for April

Thurs 2<sup>nd</sup> Lucy to lead  
Thurs 9<sup>th</sup> Preparation for Compton Challenge  
Thurs 16<sup>th</sup> Handicap Race  
Thurs 23<sup>rd</sup> Tom to lead  
Thurs 30<sup>th</sup> Martin to lead

<b>Correspondence received</b>		
<b>Sender</b>	<b>Subject matter</b>	<b>Action</b>
Loch Ness marathon	Loch Ness marathon and festival of running (04-10-09)	Events diary & notice board
Leeds City Council & York City Council	Leeds Half (10-05-09); Leeds 10K (02-06-09); York 10K (02-08-09)	Events diary & notice board
SEAA	Annual subscription renewal (£10)	Subscription paid
Association of Running Clubs	Another invitation to join to join RAC; letter explaining benefits.	File / discuss
University of Westminster	Offering a comprehensive 2-hour assessment of VO2 max & lactate threshold, and training advice for all those accepted for the 2009 London Marathon; first assessment £180. <a href="mailto:b.lee3@westminster.ac.uk">b.lee3@westminster.ac.uk</a>	Pass round to marathoners

### Watford half marathon, 1<sup>st</sup> February

Sus

Peter, Peter's friend Andy, Lucy and I set off from Peter's home on a rather windy cold morning to do this first time for all, half marathon. It is a big race with 2000 runners, and having two start places was a good idea. It is rather undulating so personally I found it difficult to get into a good rhythm. Losing my headband and seeing it fly with the wind did not add to my running rhythm either, and I decided not to run in the opposite direction of 2000 runners to retrieve it. It is a very well organized and, for some reason, still a fast race as Lucy managed a PB, and my time was the 2<sup>nd</sup> fastest half I have done, so definitely one for next year.

Sus 1:33:20

Lucy 1:35:13

Peter 1:37:45

Andy 1:45:16

### Bramley 20M road race, 15<sup>th</sup> February

In a field of 840 runners, Lucy put in an excellent performance to finish 260<sup>th</sup> in 2:29:08. First home was John McFarlane (Thames Hare & Hounds) in 1:47:06, while first lady was Sue Harrison (Leamington) in 1:57:22.

### Oxford Mail X-C series, Race 5 – Clanfield, 1<sup>st</sup> March

Sue

The final race of the series was held at a new venue, Friar's Court, at Clanfield near Faringdon, and was organised by Woodstock Harriers. The course was good (in my opinion), being flat, mainly dry and relatively short, and the weather was nice too. It followed field edges and grass tracks and was good for spectators too. The men ran twice round the 4.6K lap, while the ladies did one lap. The mens race was won by Steve Kimber (Headington RR, 30:03). Dick finished 102<sup>nd</sup> (37:41) in a field of 203 runners. The scoring six finished as 6<sup>th</sup> team on the day. The ladies race was won by Kate Jacobs (Swindon H, 17:21) with Team Kennet's Rachael Elliot 3<sup>rd</sup> (17:46). The course suited me well, and I had my best run of the series, starting sensibly and then passing several to establish myself in 5<sup>th</sup> place. I caught the Headington lady who was in 4<sup>th</sup> place, then tracked her, but she pulled away in the latter stages of the race and I remained 5<sup>th</sup> (18:20). My performances over the season were sufficient to give me the series prize for first FV35, while Rachael collected the prize for 2<sup>nd</sup> senior lady. Also, along with Helen Preedy, we collected the series prize for first ladies team ahead of Swindon Harriers and Headington A.

### Hemel Hempstead 17 mile training run

Sus

Phil, Ryan and I thought this could be a brilliant idea to do – and it certainly was. You enter on the day only, £5, and you run with 300-400 other runners, it is fully marshalled and on route there are 4 drink stations. At the finish you have all the cakes you can eat. The start time is fixed but you will not be timed. There is also a 12 and later a 20 miles run all in preparation for the London Marathon.

## Meon Valley Plod 21+ miles, 1<sup>st</sup> March

Sus

Ryan and I decided to give this race a try and we would warmly recommend it. This run is a must for any keen trail runner who wants to see the best the South Downs has to offer.

Beautiful scenery and faultless organisation, the route, apart from the missing sea and mud hole, reminded us of the Grizzly. Ryan was keen to do it as a training run and ran with me which was a real treat, not only for the company but he also carried the water and pushed me along. At the finish we were treated not only to a t-shirt and a medal but also plenty of fruit cakes and bananas, oranges and apples and tea/coffee; it felt just perfect .

1<sup>st</sup> Man            2:21:02            Nick Baker  
1<sup>st</sup> Lady           2:53:52            Helen Usborne  
71<sup>st</sup>/72<sup>nd</sup> Ryan and Sus 3:03:11 (4<sup>th</sup> lady overall)  
364 finished the race.

## The first Ridgeway Relay

Sue

A 70-year-old member of Reading Athletic Club, who now manages the junior boys' cross-country team, enjoys reminiscing about the days when he was a very good runner. Sometimes Bob brings along his training logbooks from the 1960s, sometimes he brings along old newspaper cuttings featuring events such as the John-O'-Groats to Lands End relay in which he competed. Recently, he lent me an official race programme for the first 'Ridgeway Relay', which took place on 19<sup>th</sup> October 1969 (which happens to be the day before I was born), and was jointly organised by Reading AC and Swindon AC. This event was not quite the same as the modern-day Ridgeway relay in which Compton Harriers compete, but I thought you might be interested to hear a bit about this first event. Extracts from the programme are given in italics.

The race was started at 12-noon (by the Mayor of Swindon dropping a flag) from Queens Drive in Swindon, and finished at Prospect Park in Reading. Prizes were awarded to the first 3 teams and the fastest individuals on each leg. Eleven teams took part (including Swindon, Reading, Worcester, Portsmouth and Bristol). Teams consisted of 10 runners (8 seniors, and 2 youths who ran the 2 short stages) and the route was 46 miles long. Stages 1 and 2 took the race up to join the Ridgeway at 'Ridgeway Farm'. The race then continued East along the Ridgeway as far as Aldworth. From here, it went via Upper Basildon and Sulham to Reading. *'The course of the Ridgeway is marked with blue computer tape, and the road sections are marked with chalk'*.

Stages 6 and 7 covered the Ilsley and Compton sections of the Ridgeway. The course for stage 6 (9K) was described as *'...pass a monument in 1K, through a copse at 4K (Scutchamer Knob?) and cross a metalled road before finishing at the A34....a pleasant, undulating stage mostly on good running surface'*. *'The finish of Stage 6 will be on the West side of the A34, and the start of Stage 7 will be on the East side. ...the reason being that the Ridgeway meets this busy trunk road on the brow of a hill (Gore Hill, before the underpass was made) where it would be dangerous for runners to cross'*. Stage 7 (9.5K) was described as *'...follow track along top of Several Down...meet metalled road (the 'Concrete Road') at 2600m and follow road on wide verge...make 90° left turn...cross old railway bridge....steep climb...fork off Ridgeway and follow metalled road into Aldworth'*. *'N.B. for those possessing an Ordnance Survey map, note that where Ridgeway is marked from grid ref 494833 to 535819 no such track exists. This was presumably the old Roman route and is now meadow land'*.



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

### Mo

Well we're into March already ... the Xmas party seems so long ago now and those of you who aren't checking the website count-down on a daily basis may be surprised to know that it's only about a month at the time of writing (2<sup>nd</sup> March) before the Downland Challenge gets underway (11<sup>th</sup> April). Those of you who wish to get involved need to chat to Dick or Martin .... I'm sure they will welcome you with open arms!

**For this issue, my recommended website visit is:**

<http://www.ultramarathonrunning.com> if you are looking for UK and international ultra running races, then this site should be your first port of call. The site provides race information for ultra running enthusiasts; including trail, mountain, desert & other ultra long distance endurance events. For an instant link to the UK events which include such old favourites as the High Peak Challenge, the Caesar's Camp Endurance Runs, the Ridgeway Challenge and our own 40 mile Challenge to name but a few, just follow this link

<http://www.ultramarathonrunning.com/races/uk.html> Also in the line-up is Dick's new event, the Thames Ring 260 scheduled for 24<sup>th</sup> June 2009.

### **My article this month is about Eating And Training: How To Time It Right**

Most runners know exactly what they should eat and when they should eat it ... it's the application that's likely to fail. You are either too hungry when you don't want to be – usually during training – or not hungry when you should be – immediately after training. The problem is that when you are planning your run around a busy work schedule, your brain, leg muscles and stomach don't always stay in sync.

An early-morning run, for example, can leave you feeling fatigued during your working day. A midday training session may become no more than an afterthought if hunger overrides your motivation. And an after-work session may press your evening meal time too close to bedtime.

The secret is to coordinate your meals with your training schedule, based on the time of day you run.

### **For the early Birds**

To eat or not to eat? That is the question!

If you can, you should fuel up before your morning run. This performs two functions; firstly your muscles receive an energy supply to help you power through the run and secondly, your entire body, especially your brain, receives the fuel and nutrients it needs for optimal functioning. Eating before a run boosts endurance compared with fasting for 12 hours. People who eat before exercise will find training better and less rigorous compared with those who don't.

However, not everyone can eat before a morning run; some like to sleep until the last minute before heading out of the door and simply don't have time to fit in a meal before running. Eating too close to a run may spoil it by causing cramps and nausea. On the other hand, if you are a true early bird, you may have the time to eat breakfast, read the paper and wash up before you head out of the door. Here are a few refuelling strategies for both types of morning exercisers:

#### **▶ Early risers**

Choose high-carbohydrate foods that are low in fat and moderate in protein. Aim for about 400-800 calories, which will fuel your training without making you feel sluggish. Drink about half a pint of water two hours before your run to offset sweat loss.

Try these 400- to 800-calorie pre-run breakfasts:

- Two slices of toast and a piece of fruit
- Cereal with skimmed or semi-skimmed milk and fresh fruit
- A toasted bagel topped with low-fat cheese and tomato slices

#### **▶ Late sleepers**

Most runners fall into this category and don't have time to eat and digest a full meal before they head out of the door. If you fall into this camp, experiment to see what you can stomach before you train. Here are a few suggestions:

- Half a pint of a carbohydrate drink
- An energy gel washed down with water
- Half a bagel

If none of these suits you just before a run, then fuel up the night before with a large dinner. As long as you don't plan a long or intense run in the morning, a high-carbohydrate evening meal should power you through your pre-breakfast run.

#### **▶ For both types**

Whether you are an early or late riser, your body needs calories from carbohydrate, protein and other nutrients after you have finished running. A recovery meal will help fuel your morning at work, preventing post-run fatigue. Eat within an hour of your training and be sure to include both carbohydrate and protein. Here are some suggestions:

- A fruit smoothie made with a tablespoon of protein powder
- Eggs on whole-wheat toast and fruit juice or fresh fruit
- Leftovers from dinner – pasta, soup, chilli or even vegetable pizza

### **The Lunchtime Crowd**

If you run during lunch hours you may find that hunger gets the better of you. That's because if you had breakfast early, it probably means you've gone several hours without food and by lunchtime, your blood sugar level has started to dip. Rather than increasing the size of your breakfast (which may just leave you feeling sluggish), you should bring a light, pre-run snack to work.

Remember the following three points as you run:

- ▶ **Timing** Eat one to four hours before your run to allow enough time for food to leave your stomach.
- ▶ **Quantity** Eat 100-400 calories, depending upon your body size and what you had for breakfast.
- ▶ **Content** Select foods rich in carbohydrate, low in fat and moderately high in nutrients.

Try these mid-morning snacks:

- A breakfast or energy bar with five grams of fat or less
- One slice of whole-wheat toast topped with fruit spread
- A 75g serving of dried fruit with a can of vegetable juice
- One packet of instant oatmeal made with skimmed milk

### ▶ **Post-run lunch**

The obvious problem with lunch-hour exercise is that you don't have time for lunch. But you need fluid and food to recover and fuel your brain for the rest of the working day. Packing your own lunch becomes a must – unless you have a work cafeteria where you can grab food for desktop dining. Packed lunches don't have to take a lot of time. Try these tips:

- Opt for convenience foods such as yoghurts, raisins, nuts and cereal bars
- Always add fruit for a reliable source of nutrient-packed carbohydrate
- Make the most of leftovers - any food from the previous night's dinner should be OK

### **The Evening Exerciser**

After a stressful day at the office, there's nothing like a run to burn off any excess tension. The main problem is that you probably don't feel like heading out of the door if you're hungry or exhausted. If you do manage to run, you return home so hungry that you eat everything in sight as you make your evening meal. Then you might eat dinner as late as 8pm and end up going to bed with a full stomach. (Now who ever does that??)

To avoid such pitfalls, just stick to the following two principles:

- ▶ Eat healthily during the day to avoid any intestinal upset that might spoil your training plans. Also eat often and sufficient to ensure that you're adequately fuelled for your session to avoid the 'I'm too hungry' excuse.
- ▶ Eat lightly after exercise to recover well without causing digestion to interfere with your sleep. (Hmm ... what about the pub meal then?? .... easily solved if you are a Compton Harrier ... wash it down with more beer!!).

Here are some tips for evening exercisers:

- Never skip breakfast. Eat at least 500 calories for your morning meal. For example, quickly throw together a fruit smoothie made with yoghurt, fruit and juice. Or try cereal topped with nuts, skimmed milk and a piece of fruit.
- Make lunch your main meal of the day. Focus on high-quality protein, such as fish, tofu, lean beef, chicken or bread with cooked grain, along with fresh fruit.
- Always eat a mid-afternoon snack. Around three hours before your run, eat a snack of fruit or an energy bar together with half a pint of water.
- Drink more fluids. Grab a drink as soon as you step back through the door after your run. And keep drinking as you prepare your meal. This helps replace sweat loss and may prevent you trying to eat everything in sight.

Eat moderately at dinner. Some people worry about eating too close to bedtime because they fear the calories will go straight to their fat cells. That's simply not true. Your body will use those calories to stockpile fuel in your muscles. On the other hand if you eat more calories than your body needs – no matter what time of day or night – your body will eventually store the excess as fat.

Mo – March 2009