

# THE HARRIERS HERALD

No. 200, October 2009

Editor: Sue Francis

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

- Thursday night schedules for October and November
  - Correspondence received
  - Rec. Soc. AGM information
  - Compton Harriers Christmas Meal preliminary thoughts
  - Race results: The Club has been very well represented in several recent races with PBs, prizes and good personal achievements all round. ‘Pewsey Vale Half’ and ‘Bristol Half’ – Sus posts good performances in both; ‘Peasemore 5’ and ‘Windsor 8K’ – Gillian and Alison enjoy their first races as Compton Harriers; ‘Berlin Marathon’ – a well-deserved PB for Sus; ‘Isle of Wight Fell Races’ – four Harriers do well across the Solent; ‘Boneshaker Duathlon’ – Team SuMo rides (and runs) again; ‘New Forest Half’ – Kev enjoys his first race of the year
  - News from the ‘Aylesbury branch’ - the deepening mystery of Simon’s injury
  - Webmaster’s article – Mo features exercises to build your core strength
  - Harriers Herald 200<sup>th</sup> edition Caption Competition
- 
- Thanks to Gill, Alison, Kev, Pete H, Simon, Sus and Mo for this month’s contributions
  - Copy date for November’s Harriers Herald – 31<sup>st</sup> October

## Thursday night schedule for October

Thurs 1<sup>st</sup> Handicap Race  
Thurs 8<sup>th</sup> Peter L to lead  
Thurs 15<sup>th</sup> Sue to lead  
Thurs 22<sup>nd</sup> Sus to lead  
Thurs 29<sup>th</sup> Handicap Race

## Thursday night schedule for November

Thurs 5<sup>th</sup> Ryan to lead  
Thurs 12<sup>th</sup> Phil to lead  
Thurs 19<sup>th</sup> Terry to lead  
Thurs 26<sup>th</sup> Hannah to lead

<b>Correspondence received</b>		
<b>Sender</b>	<b>Subject matter</b>	<b>Action</b>
Bedford Harriers	Bedford Half marathon (13-12-09)	Events Diary & notice board
UKA	Election of UKA Vice President – Steve Backley has been nominated	File
SEAA	Info Update #125 SEAA open road race, Crystal Palace (04-10-09)	File Events Diary & notice board
UKA	Independent Safeguarding Authority: vetting process for those working with under-16s in sports activities	A good reason not to open Compton Harriers to youngsters!
UKA	Gateshead X-country races (14-11-09)	Events Diary & notice board
Berks, Bucks & Oxon (BBO) X-country assoc.	X-country champs (14-11-09, Maidenhead)	More details to follow

### Rec. Soc. AGM

The Annual General Meeting of IAH Recreation Association will be held at 12:30 on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> October, at the Institute. All Rec. Soc. members are welcome to attend (though associate members are not allowed to vote). One important item for discussion will be the future of Rec. Soc. (and thus the Pickled Pig facility) as the Institute winds down towards total closure in 2013. If there are any other issues which you would like to be raised at the AGM, let me know by 12<sup>th</sup> October, and I will pass this on to the Rec. Soc. Secretary.

### Christmas meal

It will soon be time to book up for our Harriers Christmas gathering. For those who haven't been before, it's usually a Christmas meal at a pub fairly local to Compton, held on a Friday or Saturday evening in December. With the influx of new members this year, we are likely to be a bigger party this time (perhaps 25ish), so this will be a consideration when booking. If you have any ideas for the venue, or have picked up any decent Christmas menus, please bring along on a Thursday evening for all to see. Pete O has recommended 'The Four Points', where he enjoyed a work Christmas do last year.

### Race results

#### Pewsey Vale Half Marathon, 30<sup>th</sup> August

Sus

Knowing it would be a late night the previous evening, due to marshalling at the Ridgeway Challenge, plus an early morning run on the same day, added to the belief that this race was just going to be a fast Sunday run. Taking a relaxed approach at the back of the field dressed in heavy non-racing shoes we were off. Climbing the first hill at app. 5 miles in I felt brilliant but everybody around me seemed to be struggling. Continuing on this high I caught up with Peter who had been feeling rather lethargic lately; after exchanging a few words he decided to jog home and I continued this seemingly effortless run now aiming to reel in as many ladies as I could – and just managed to overtake the third lady before reaching the finish.

What it was which enabled me to run this race with over 5 min to spare compared to last years time, despite bad preparation the day before, I will never know – maybe I do not want to know maybe that is the beauty about running ?

1 <sup>st</sup> Man Paul Hasler	1:12:04
1 <sup>st</sup> Lady Tamsin Simmonds	1:23:33
30 <sup>th</sup> Ryan	1:26:55
60 <sup>th</sup> Sus (3 <sup>rd</sup> Lady)	1:33:27
89 <sup>th</sup> Peter	1:37:36

#### Bristol Half Marathon, 6<sup>th</sup> September

Sus

Driving without my co pilot Ryan, I was not able to find suitable parking and took the first and best parking house meaning I had a good 30 min walk to the race town (had I known the location it probably would have been shorter, but at 8 AM on a Sunday morning there are not many shoppers to

ask). There were 2 start times - one at 09:30 and the 2<sup>nd</sup> at 10:00. I was in the first and off we went. I had aimed this race as one of my key races and hopefully a PB but, reaching mile 8, I was 1 min behind schedule and was not strong enough to catch up. So, from then, on I decided to run home and just finish in a respectable time not risking anything before Berlin Marathon.

The first half of the route is very scenic up the port way and under the suspension bridge – a u turn and then back again only to hit in and out of side streets. However it is very well organized with plenty of drink stations and marshals, but I'm not sure I will be doing it again next year as there are better courses out there for a lot less money.

1 <sup>st</sup> Man Ezekie Cheron	1:03:26
1 <sup>st</sup> Lady Claire Hallisey	1:12:03
Sus	1:32:32

### *A couple of 5 mile challenges for the new members!*

#### **Gill & Alison**

Alison and I joined the Compton Harriers a few weeks ago, and promptly signed up for a couple of 5 mile runs to set ourselves a few challenges. The main aim was to increase our distance but mainly to improve our speed.

The first of these was the Peasemore 5 Mile Road Race and, being our first outing as new members of the Compton Harriers, we were determined to not embarrass our fellow members by coming in last!! ;-). The atmosphere at the start was great, with lots of people from other clubs there, all ready for the race. This made us a little apprehensive that we might just end up being last.

We turned up on a lovely Sunday morning, it was quite cool and overcast, so perfect conditions for a run round the Peasemore lanes. As the run started, Alison took an early lead, and managed a 9 minute mile; I kept her in my sights and tailed her to make sure that my speed did not drop too much.

For those not having taken part, the run is a lovely figure of eight, meandering along the lanes through the village of Peasemore. It is fairly undulating, with more than a few uphill stretches.

As we were coming up to the 3 mile marker, which took in a half mile climb up Hailey Hill, I managed to just overtake Alison. From there in, we were pretty much neck and neck right up to the finish on the Peasemore Recreation Ground.

We managed to finish the run in 52 minutes and 2 seconds, and 52 minutes and 14 seconds, so we were incredibly close at the end of the race. We were also not last, which was one of our main aims. I suspect that, on a flatter course, Alison will beat me on our next outing!!

The next race we had lined up was the Windsor 8Km run for Breakthrough Breast Cancer, on Saturday the 26<sup>th</sup> of September. Again the weather was beautiful, sunny and therefore very warm. The atmosphere at the start was great, as this was a women only race, and for charity, so everyone was there to have a good time.

The course is lovely, as it wanders through the Windsor Great Park, with a beautiful mile-long climb at the start up towards the George the Third statue, along the path known as the Long Mile. It was amazing to see all the deer standing in the grass next to the path, just watching us, not even fazed by the many runners going past.

We set off and the runners quickly spaced out, and it was a real pleasure to run round the park and the beautiful grounds of the large mansions within the Great Park. The race itself was very well run, with lots of markers though, disappointingly, it only had the one water stop at approximately the 2 mile marker, which could have done with being a little further round.

Alison really paced herself on this run, as she felt she had been going too fast too early on in Harrier runs on Thursdays. The change in pace really showed at the end as she beat me home!! ☺ Well done Alison!!!

The course was fairly undulating and the hills were reasonably steep, but the atmosphere pulled us round and in a fairly good time. We both managed to beat our times from Peasemore, Alison coming in ahead of me in 50 minutes and 54 seconds, and I came in at 51 minutes and 8 seconds. This means we are slowly getting down to our 10 minute mile target, just 10 seconds per mile to go! ;-)

We were also incredibly pleased with our places, as we managed to get into the top 350 runners, Alison was 336 and I was 344. We will definitely be up for this race next year, as it was a really good fun race.

Next month, Alison has signed up for the Bupa Great South Run, which is a 10 mile run down at Southampton. This will be on the 25<sup>th</sup> October and, on the same day, I will be running the Dorney Lake 10Km for Race for Life. So, at the moment, we are busy on a Sunday, increasing our mileage slowly, so Alison will be running the 10 miles with no problem. This is a brilliant increase for her as, before she had joined, she had only ever run 5Km. ☺ Well done Alison.

We have also agreed to take part in the Reading Half Marathon next March, so will be taking our training on from there.

### **Berlin Marathon 20<sup>th</sup> September**

**Sus**

Klaus, my brother, suggested that we should do this marathon but, reaching the big day, he revealed that his longest run was 15 K so I alone had to defend the good family name while Klaus took a more relaxed approach giving him time to see the sights we were passing and also dancing with spectators. The weather was warm but with no wind. The route was flat as flat can be, but the km markers and drink stations markers were not very visible - but one thing was for sure you knew exactly where the finish was – Brandenburger Tor. Going through it was quite unique in more than one way. Afterwards I had the most lovely massage out in the open while the sun was baking on me – I was in heaven!

1 <sup>st</sup> Man, Haile Gebrselassie	2:06:08
1 <sup>st</sup> Lady, Habtamu Besuye (ETH)	2:24:47
Sus (overall 114 <sup>th</sup> Lady)	3:15:20
Klaus	3:50:37

41,982 finished the race

### **Isle-of-Wight Fell Running Series, 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> September**

**Pete H**

I finally succumbed to a summer of relentless persuasion and agreed to take part in the IoW Fell Running Series on the weekend of 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> September. For some unknown reason we arranged to set off at 4.15am in order to catch a ferry from Pompey to coincide with the sun rising across Spithead. I'd never run 2 distance races in one day so, to do so after 4<sup>1/2</sup> hours sleep, was not an auspicious concept. The first race was a mere 3 miles with the first half being a near vertical climb up Boniface Down and, after a brief bit of flat ground and barely enough time to take in the view, a descent that is as fast as your courage allows. After this warm up event, there was time for a swim in the English Channel followed by a pint of the highly recommended locally brewed *Goddard's Fuggle Dee Dum* at race HQ.

It was very relaxing sitting out in the autumn sun until the realisation dawned that there was a 7 mile race in the afternoon. We again set off from the Winter Gardens on a steep climb reaching 70° gradient in places before reaching a plateau to allow one to recover before setting off on another reckless descent back into town.

An enjoyable evening was spent in Shanklin including a visit to a medieval themed pub which seemed to have been decorated by the team from TV's *DIY disasters!*

As someone with an aversion to running up hills, a half marathon on an undulating course seemed even less appealing than going to Sunday morning service at the local church, more so as my legs were far from fresh after the previous day's exertions. Fortunately this race takes a less steep route to the top of the hills which hem Ventnor in against the sea. I adopted a take it easy on the ascent and go for it on the descents approach, and this served me well with no one get remotely close on the downhill sections where I made up all the time lost on the ascents.

At around the 9 mile mark I had an interesting conversation about missiles, as you do (!) with Caroline from Loughton A.C. who works for an arms company that shall remain nameless. This took my mind off how tired my legs were and ironically I ended up feeling fresher at the finish than the start. My third post race swim of the weekend was by far the shortest with the sea temperature failing to match the ambient one.

In the SEAA Championship, based on the three races, Martin was third in his age category whilst Lucy was runner up in hers. Dick and I finished somewhat further back. Serpentine Running Club took some two dozen runners to the event and cleaned up most of the major honours.

Thanks go to Dick for driving the team bus and to Lucy for booking the accommodation – despite the quirky showers. Overall it was a very enjoyable couple of days and, despite the 3,800 foot of ascent, it was far less gruelling than I imagined. I would thoroughly recommend you pencil next year's event into your diary.



*Are these two breaking the speed limit? Pete & Dick approach the finish line (photos courtesy of Martin)*

### **Bonshaker Duathlon, 20<sup>th</sup> September**

**Sue**

For the fifth successive year, the Bonshaker Duathlon was blessed with fantastic weather and, as usual, it was a really well-organised and enjoyable event. This year, 76 teams and 149 individuals competed over the multi-terrain run-bike-run course. Mo and I competed as Team SuMo, while Ryan had formed a team ('Just for Fun') with his neighbour Magdalena.

Mo and I were pleased to be 90 seconds faster than last year – my times for the run sections were much the same as in 2008, but Mo was faster on his bike this time. The race was timed by chips

attached round competitors' ankles with Velcro straps. Those of us competing as part of a team had to pass the strap and chip onto our team-mate in the transition zone. I was momentarily dismayed to cross the finish line after the final run to find that I had lost my chip from the strap (in my rush to put the strap on, it seems I hadn't overlapped the Velcro very well). Fortunately, a marshal had reported the chip being found, and the back-up timekeeper recorded our finish time manually.

Ryan's team beat us, but it was quite close. Ryan had a good ride on the cycle section (though Mo says it took Ryan longer to catch him this year). Nevertheless, as he transferred his team chip to Magdalena for the last run section, she asked what had taken him so long – Ryan wasn't too impressed!

We also saw former Harrier Gill Harrison, who was participating as an individual. Gill wasn't too enthusiastic before the race, having suffered injuries and a virus infection in recent months. However, she competed well and was in good spirits afterwards – in fact we all had a good 'smile' when she accidentally walked into and fell over the barrier round the transition zone, knocking the whole thing down!

'Team SuMo' finished as 33<sup>rd</sup> team (76<sup>th</sup> out of 225 overall), while 'Just for Fun' finished as 24<sup>th</sup> team (60<sup>th</sup> overall). Gill was 127<sup>th</sup> overall and 2<sup>nd</sup> FV50.

	<b>5K Run</b>	<b>21.5K Cycle</b>	<b>5K Run</b>	<b>Total time</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> team (79ers)	16:30	43:51	18:20	1:18:41
1 <sup>st</sup> man (Jon Darwent)	16:27	52:12	17:17	1:25:57
'Just for Fun' (Ryan & Magdalena)	21:09	1:00:01	23:05	1:44:16
Team SuMo (Sue & Mo)	18:14	1:08:53	18:46	1:45:55
1 <sup>st</sup> lady (Tania Clifton)	20:45	1:04:45	21:25	1:46:55
Gill Harrison	21:37	1:09:42	22:16	1:53:35

### ***New Forest 1/2 Marathon, 27<sup>th</sup> September***

#### **Kev**

This was my first race for quite a while and first half marathon for two years. Arrived at the car park and got my stuff together for the short walk to the start. The race HQ was New Milton sports centre and I stored my kit here. We were called to the start about 09:15 and everyone gathered in the High Street and waited and waited. The race eventually started about 09:50 and we were off: cross line, plant foot firmly on chip mat, done.

The route went out of town straight up hill and then levelled off and after, 1.5 miles, I was surprised to see the first water station. From here it was out onto the heath land and the route seemed to generally climb for the next 3 miles. It was blooming hot and at 4 miles the course turned right and we were up on high ground running between two plains. The organisation was excellent with traffic stopped everywhere and drivers queuing for a long time. Most were ok and cheered us along. At half way I had to pop into the first aid tent to get some plasters for my nipples as they were streaming blood down my vest. Left first aid van, went back to collect my sunnies, and then got on my way again in a bit of a flap trying to make up some lost time. I pushed on well until Sway village where the route ducked under a railway line and the climb up the other side killed me, so I dropped the pace a bit. For the next mile the route was a gradual climb and I passed loads of people here which was a good morale boost. At 10 miles we were back on the road we came out on, and there was an official jelly baby station! So I grabbed a few, a sponge and some water. The route was pretty uneventful from

here on. Skirting around New Milton and back to the sports centre, it was very well supported with the final mile having streets lined with people come to see me run (personally I didn't know I had so many fans). I crossed the line in 2hrs 23mins 49 sec. I'm pretty happy with that.

First man was Steve Jeffery of Basingstoke & Mid Hants AC in 1:15:50. First lady was Valeria Sesto of New Forest Runners in 1:26:09. For the full marathon first man was Jo Corbett in 2:46:44, first lady Jenny Moore of Wells City Harriers in 2:57:18.

### **Injury update from the Compton Harriers' Aylesbury branch**

**Simon**

Well, it's not my hamstrings. Yes they were tight – both of them – and needed stretching, but it seems that isn't what's causing the injury. After about six weeks of stretching I went out for a little run and, apart from a slight tightness in my right calf, things didn't feel too bad. At Joanna's suggestion I also removed the heel raise from my right shoe which I've been using since straining my left Achilles tendon on the Ridgeway back in the late Nineties.

I did a couple of 3-mile runs and then a couple of 4-mile runs and things started to feel more normal. I even started thinking that I'd be able to train enough to get up to Buxton for the High Peak 40 again next year. Then, last Wednesday, about 200 yards from home at the end of a 5-miler, my right calf went again...

Now, I know what it isn't – it's not an Achilles problem, it's not tight hamstrings and it's not compartment syndrome – and I know what it is – an extreme tightness across the top of the right calf muscle which is extremely painful to walk or run with. My calf muscle is nice and loose when relaxed and there are no tender points, but when weight-bearing the top of the calf (between about two and five inches below the knee joint, or five and twelve centimetres if you're reading this in metric) is very tight and tender and I get occasional sharp stabbing pains across the muscle.

Has *anyone* got *any* ideas about a) what exactly it is and b) what I can do to treat it?

Any suggestions by email please. If anyone comes up with a solution I'll make them a SkyChart as a thank you. (By the way – shameful plug – did I mention my website is finally up and running? <http://www.skycharts.co.uk> if you want to have a look. Discounts available for all Compton Harriers!).

Happy and injury-free running to you all, Simon

### **Website update... <http://www.comptonharriers.org.uk>**

**Mo**

A quick opener ... if you would like the chance of winning Saucony kit over the next couple of weeks, there's a free-to-enter competition on the Runner's World website ... although you have to register, but you never know your luck...! <http://www.runnersworld.co.uk/comp/Comp.asp?C=139> ... there is loads of interesting info and articles anyway on the website, so it's still worth a visit.

Recently, Richard Chalkley sent out an email to some of us to recommend a book about the story of Mike Hare's incredible weight loss from 28 stone to 13 stone and his subsequent progression into running marathons ... and he was over 50 yrs old when he started the journey.

Liz Yelling wrote a forward to the book in which she states, 'Mike's inspirational memoir, aptly titled 'From Sofa to Start Line', is a compelling account of his weight loss journey, which begins with healthy eating, basic exercise and a very determined attitude. As the weight comes off, a chance remark inspires him to start running. He starts with a local 10K and builds up to running marathons. By the end of the book he has lost a whopping 15 stone, has had surgery to remove the loose skin and is quite literally half the man he used to be'.

For more information on the book and where to purchase it ... <http://www.fromsofatostartline.com/>

And don't forget about Richard's other suggestion ... the Kilomathon series ... 26.2 Km / 16.3 miles - London, Cardiff, Belfast and Edinburgh. <http://www.kilomathon.com/>

*The next in my series of fitness articles continues this month with core strength exercises.*

### ❖ Core Strength

Also referred to as "core stability", the aim is to enhance the deep-set trunk muscles which provide stability to the spine and pelvis. This will provide a stable base from which to move your limbs with maximum efficiency and power, and reduce the risk of injury.

The core stabilisers are responsible for maintaining the usual S-shape of the spine during exercise. These muscles operate at a low level of contraction, need to have the ability to "switch on" when they are needed and be able to work continuously.

Core exercises often don't involve lifting weights; in fact some don't even involve moving at all. However, the core muscles are active in almost every movement we make, so they are continuously being trained. Concentrating on proper training techniques and good posture during core stability work helps to target the muscles more closely.

It is worth getting into the habit of core exercise before performing any other demanding exercises in order to protect the spine and strengthen these important muscles. Even a simple exercise such as drawing your belly button in towards your spine helps engage the core stabilisers.

### ❖ Abs and back exercises

#### ▶ PLANK

Lie face down on a mat, with elbows below shoulders and forearms pointing forwards. Draw your belly button towards your spine and raise your body off the floor, so that your weight is resting on your forearms and toes, and forms a perfect straight line. Do not let your back sag in the middle. Hold for a short period of time, breathing freely.

#### ◆ Easier variation

##### MODIFIED PLANK

If you are unable to hold the full plank position for even a few seconds, try the modified version and gradually work your way up to the full plank.

Begin as per the plank, but this time, when you raise your body on to your elbows, keep the knees on the floor, so that your body forms a straight line from your knees to the top of your head.

#### ◆ Harder variation

If the full plank feels easy, try extending alternate legs up into the air while still in position, keeping the body stable and not rocking from side to side.

#### ▶ SIDE PLANK

This position works the transversus abdominis, quadratus lumborum and obliques.

Lie on your side, propped up on the lower elbow, with your body in a straight line. Raise your body up, so that your weight is resting on your elbow and the lower foot. You can keep the upper arm close to the body, or raise it up straight in the air (a balance challenge).

#### ▶ SIT-UP

This is the classic exercise for strengthening the rectus abdominis ("six-pack"). It also works the external obliques and hip flexors.

Start by lying on the floor with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Hold your hands across your chest with your fingers touching each collarbone and your elbows tucked in.



Maintaining a flat back, curl your head, shoulders and torso off the floor until your torso is in an upright position, then roll back down through the spine to the start position and repeat.

By performing the exercise with your feet anchored by a partner or low object it becomes less taxing on the abdominals and introduces the hip flexors.

◆ *Easier variation*

HALF-SIT

If you find the full sit-up too difficult, start off with this easier version, which works the rectus abdominis and external obliques.

Lie on the floor with knees slightly bent. Place your hands on your thighs and curl up, sliding your hands up along your legs until your fingers extend beyond your knees. Lower and repeat.

◆ *Harder variation*

CRUNCH

This advanced variation of a sit-up works most of the core muscles, as well as the hip flexors.

Start lying on the floor with your hands beside your head. Sit up, bringing your knees to your chest and then rock back, fully extending your legs before bringing the knees in to meet the chest again.

Do not allow your feet to touch the floor in between reps.

▶ TWIST SIT-UP

The element of rotation in this sit-up focuses on the external obliques. Begin by lying on the floor with hands beside your head and knees slightly bent, feet on the floor. Curl your torso off the floor, rotating it to the right as you simultaneously bring your right knee in towards your chest.

Lower, taking your foot back to the floor, then curl up, twisting to the left and bringing the left knee into the chest. Continue to alternate from side to side for the set.

▶ DORSAL RAISE

Lie face down on the floor with fingertips clasped in front of your chin. Lift your torso off the floor, being careful not to jerk or force the movement, and keeping your head in line with the spine. Pause and lower to repeat.

◆ *Harder variation*

SUPERMANS

A good progression from, or alternative to, dorsal raises, Supermans also work the back extensor muscles.

Lie face down on the floor, with arms extended flat on the floor overhead. Lift your right arm and left leg off the floor simultaneously, keeping the hips and pelvis centred, and your head in line with the spine. Lower, and then lift your left arm and right leg off the floor. Continue to alternate for the set.

▶ BRIDGE

This exercise strengthens the lower back extensors, the glutes and the inner thigh muscles.

Lie on the floor with knees bent and feet flat. Raise the body up to form a straight line between knees and shoulders and hold for a short length of time.

◆ *Harder variation*

BRIDGE WITH LEG EXTENSION

Once you can do the bridge comfortably, do the same as above, but when your pelvis is raised, alternately extend one leg and then the other, without allowing the pelvis to rock from side to side.

*The Harriers Herald 200<sup>th</sup> edition*

*Caption Competition*



**Can you come up with a caption for this photo?**

**Mail your caption (maximum 20 words) to Sue by 31<sup>st</sup> October.**

**Mo will judge the captions (without knowing who wrote them)**

**The prize-winner will be announced in November's Harriers Herald**