

THE HARRIERS HERALD

No. 187, September 2008

Editor: Sue Francis

In brief

- Thursday night schedules for September and October
- Correspondence received
- Thanks to Kirsty, Sus and Mo for this month's contributions
- Copy date for October's Harriers Herald – 30th September

Features and reports

- Compton Harriers affiliation to IAH Rec. Soc. – an update
 - London Triathlon – Kirsty sets a PB on 10K run for 'Team Compton'
 - Ridgeway 86.5-mile Challenge – A P.B. and second place for long-distance Lucy
 - Lambourn Carnival 5 – Second place for Sus
 - Burnham Beeches Half Marathon – Phil and Sus enjoy a pleasant race
 - Headington 10K – Sus is close to her best
 - Track athletics – Sue achieves season's goal in 1500m
 - Handicap Race – A new course record for Martin, and another win for Lucy
 - Website Update – Mo's features 'The Tour of Britain' cycle race, and 'Runners and the Law'
- Events Diary – will no longer feature in the HH, as it can now be accessed directly on our website

Thursday night schedule for September

Thurs 4th Martin to lead
Thurs 11th Peter L to lead
Thurs 18th Mo to lead
Thurs 25th Dick to lead

Thursday night schedule for October

Thurs 2nd Handicap Race
Thurs 9th Phil to lead
Thurs 16th Sus to lead
Thurs 23rd Andy to lead
Thurs 30th Ryan to lead

Correspondence received		
Sender	Subject matter	Action
SEAA	AGM and voting papers	File
'Run 10K Team'	Cancer Research 10K Series	Events Diary & Notice Board

Compton Harriers affiliation to IAH Rec. Soc. – an update

Sue

Our Chairman, Martin, recently wrote to the Rec. Soc. Chairman. The points raised by Martin are summarised below:

1. We would like to amend CH's constitution to accommodate 'friends' of Compton Harriers along the following lines: (1) restricted membership to CH may be offered to any person with strong historic or other links to the club at the discretion of the Committee, (2) Such members would be entitled to compete as a CH on payment of the CH annual subscription and the England Athletics levy, (3) Such members would not be free to enjoy any of the benefits offered by Rec. Soc.
2. These proposed changes have been prompted by the wish not to exclude those who want to join CH but are highly unlikely to visit and use the Rec. Soc. facilities – circumstances when it would seem unfair to expect them to pay the £24 Rec. Soc. fee.
3. By virtue of CH affiliation to England Athletics, membership of CH allows runners to subscribe to England Athletics and to compete legitimately as a CH. This situation is unique amongst the clubs currently affiliated to Rec. Soc., which is why we are asking for special consideration.

These issues were briefly discussed at August's Rec. Soc. Committee meeting. The Committee sympathised with the issues raised by CH, but felt that these requirements could only be met by a change in the Rec. Soc. constitution, which would need to be agreed at the Rec. Soc. AGM (scheduled for early October - Wednesday 8th?? – to be confirmed) and will be scheduled as an agenda item.

London Triathlon, 9th August

Kirsty

Swim: 1500m

Bike: 40k (25miles)

Run: 10k

Team Compton embarked on our voyage to London on a very non-summery Saturday morning, having deposited Lola safely with her cousins in Surrey for the day.

Helpfully the train company had banned bikes from the trains, so we jumped in our trusty VW and set off for Docklands. Having gone through the Blackwall tunnel and missed the turning which caused brief turmoil in the car, we finally found our way into the massive car park under the Excel centre.

As we got out of the car and Andy began putting his Bike together, I took the opportunity to have a nose at a few other triathletes close by. They were mostly from Tri clubs and looked slightly serious about the whole thing which sent visions of me, alone on the running route with everyone finished and showered, running through my mind.

Once we had a bike in one piece and had come to the conclusion that Andy had lost his sunglasses, we set off for the entrance, only to find that you can't get your timing chip until you have your wristbands to show, which Vicki had in her possession somewhere in Wembley. So, after several "get a move on!" phone calls to Vicki, we were all gathered in the timing chip queue and Andy then got to go and rack his bike.

Our race started at 11:30 and Vicki was first off into the dock water to do the swim. The weather was sunny when Vicki set off into the water, but there was a bit of a breeze building up. Once all the swimmers were in it was impossible to tell who was who as they all had white swim caps on, so it was just a case of waiting.

Andy then went off to his bike to wait for Vicki to emerge. We waited and waited what seemed like ages, but finally out she came, looking slightly beaten up and complaining of being kicked and punched, which made me think the run was a better option.

So off went Andy on the bike and by this time the wind was starting to howl and the clouds were coming over. Andy had been suffering from a chest infection which left him very short of breath and unable to train for two weeks before the event, so he wasn't sure how he would perform.

I left Vicki to dry off and went to watch the Bike laps. The course was four laps, so it was easy to catch Andy going by. He looked comfortable and was passing a few riders, so I left him to it and went to change into my Harriers vest. By this time the rain was coming down and the wind was howling through the concrete tunnels of the bike lap, so I wasn't really looking forward to doing my bit.

I made my way to transition which by now was full of frantic bike riders flying along, trying to stay upright in their slippery cycle shoes as they ran back to find their runners. There were a few pile ups as they came in too fast and couldn't get their shoes off the pedals fast enough and ended up in a very undignified heap on the floor.

I tried to run up and down the racks of bikes to warm up while I waited for Andy to appear, but I think I just annoyed people trying to come in or run out, so I ran back to our racking point and bounced around on the spot until I could see Andy's cycle helmet coming through the crowd and, luckily, Andy was still attached to it, so it was my moment.

I ran out of the centre down a steep concrete slope and into the rain to start my four running laps. I'd figured that I would be pleased if I managed a 12-minute lap as 48 mins would be a PB for me at 10K, I'd only ever achieved 52 mins before.

The first half of the lap was quite pleasant apart from the showers they had laid on for the "sunny" weather, I could have done without running through a shower when it was raining anyway. Then we turned onto a long straight and it was like a wind tunnel, I slowed down dramatically (if that's possible) and found myself a large man to run behind. At the end of the wind tunnel I passed my windbreak man and picked up speed only to come across an extremely slippery area of square cobbles. I managed to skate across them and remain upright and turn for the run back to the centre.

Just before the centre was a very short steep concrete ramp which meant that all the runners entered the centre and all the spectators with jelly legs and not looking their best, but I took a leaf out of Dick's book and kept smiling behind my by now very wet sunglasses. Three more laps to go! Joy! I took a quick look at my watch (which is completely against my run-to-have-fun rule) and it was on 13 mins, so I thought OK I need to speed up a bit even with the wind tunnel. The next few laps went by OK with a few near misses around the people stopping for the several drink stations, which I didn't use at all, and the cobbles were getting more slippery every lap. The last lap was the hardest as the rain was still coming down and there were more runners pushing past, but I managed to pass a few people which spurred me on a bit. Finally the last hill into the centre and I could hear the roar of the crowds as the finish came into view. I hadn't heard anyone shouting for me as the wind was howling so loud, but I'm sure they were there somewhere. Through the finish and one lady grabbed my ankle for my timing chip whilst another struggled to put a medal round my neck as I tried to keep walking forwards to try to stop my heart beating out of my chest.

I saw Vicki who came over and said "is it raining?" I'm not going to repeat my reply, but it was not overly polite. Andy then appeared through the crowd with his bike looking a much better colour than when we arrived, so the next chest infection he gets, I'll be sending him out for a brisk 40K on the bike and no arguments!

We all had a look around the expo which was full of very shiny bikes and lots of energy bars and gels to make you sick on your runs, and then we said goodbye and happy birthday to Vicki and made our way back to the car.

We both enjoyed the race much more than we thought we would and it was fun to do just the part that you enjoy the most, so we will be returning next year hopefully.

The results came out the next day and Team Compton came 162nd out of 417 teams which we were more than happy with. The only thing we really would have liked was the sunshine to show its face for us.

Vicki's swim: 33:47

Andy's Bike: 1:15:36

Kirsty's Run: 49:23 (PB)

Ridgeway 86.5-mile Challenge, 23rd – 24th August

Congratulations to Lucy, who completed this event – the entire length of the Ridgeway – in approximately 18 ½ hours and was second lady home. Lucy's performance knocked over 3 hours off her 2006 time.

Lambourn Carnival 5, 3rd August

Sus

This is a nice little race, which goes through Lambourn Village and the hamlet of Upper Lambourn, and is mainly on roads. This race is a simple straightforward good value for money race; you can turn up a few minutes before the start. And, if you are into medals, a nice quality one will be waiting for you at the other end. All for just £5!

Ryan and I, with Gerry and Jenna as spectators, decided to run it. Knowing from the website that there would be no mile makers, I had set my Garmin to tell me the distance. Reaching the last mile I gave it all I had left just missing a PB by a second. After getting my breath back, Gerry revealed that she was certain that I was second lady so we decided to wait for the prize giving. Ryan had wisely advised me to change back to my Compton vest in case my name was called out, and it was. Disappointed not coming home with a PB, at least this was some comfort.

Sus 34:25

Ryan 31:00

Burnham Beeches Half Marathon

Sus

This year the race was chip-to-chip timing, meaning they had skipped the predicted finish time boxes you were supposed to stand in before the start. This meant that the first ½ mile was very crowded, even after the start we went down to walking pace. Never mind, I thought, I will try to catch up later. My plan was to run an even pace so, while standing in the long queue before the start for the toilets, I changed my Garmin from 3 displays to just one. App. 1 mile into the race I looked at my Garmin, which told me that I was running 10:30 per mile? – strange, I thought, thinking it could be something to do with a poor signal running in the woods. No good to me I will change it to just a stop watch – I did so while running which surprisingly told me that I was one hour and 3 min into the race; only then did I realize that I had forgotten to reset to zero at the start. Bugger it! Well I shall turn that thing off and just run – I did so and finished nearly a minute later than last time I did the race. I wasn't that pleased but it was a lesson to be learned – but all in all it is a very good race and Phil and I had a beautiful day out.

Sus 1:37:38

Phil 1:45:23

Sus also completed the *Pewsey Half Marathon* in just under 1:38.

Run Oxford Headington 10K

Sus

If you want a race for serious runners then you have come to the right place. It is a fast route despite a couple of hairpin bends. Though taking place on an airfield it is very sensitive to the weather but it has everything you could wish for in a race: well marshalled, on site parking, secure baggage tent, changing tent, massage, home made cakes and friendly organizer and then a nice box of chocolate for every finisher. But it did lack some cosiness, maybe I was missing my green lawn to throw myself down on after the finish, instead I had to put up with hard concrete floor. Also, trying to avoid a long queue in front of the portable loos, I had to resort to spending a penny on an airfield hoping nobody would be able to spot me. But it is a good race and I would do it again but it won't be for the scenery.

First man	Paul Fernandez, Abingdon Amblers	33:23
First lady	Jane Preen, Marshall Milton Keynes	36:56
12 th lady overall	Sus	42:45

Track athletics

Sue

For the last two summer seasons, I have just missed the 5-minute mark in the 1500m. Last year, my best was 5:00.2 and, this year, I'd achieved 5:00.8. So, sub-5 was my target for Reading A.C.'s final Southern League match of the 2008 season, held at Hemel Hempstead on one of August's few hot and sunny days. The 1500m race is 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ laps of the track, and to achieve a time of 5:00 requires an average lap time of 1:20. As the gun fired, a young lady (who was about 18" shorter than me and at least 20 years younger), who had already convincingly won the 3000m just an hour earlier, went straight into the lead and set a good pace. I tucked in behind her. The time after one lap was called at 1:17, confirming that this was an appropriate pace for me, so I decided to hang on to the leader as long as possible. The 800m mark was reached in 2:36, and the time at the bell was 3:36 meaning I had 1:24 to run the last lap. By this time, the young leader had opened up a 10m gap and showed no signs of tiring so, now safe in second place, I was just racing the clock. I crossed the line in 4:58.7 – mission accomplished!

The absence of some of our regular 400m and 800m runners meant I was also asked to compete in our team for the 4x400m relay – the final event of the day. Although I'm not particularly fast at 400m these days, I enjoy being part of the relay team and it's nice just to be able to do a flat-out hard run to finish the day. Our leg 1 and 2 athletes were also not regular 400m runners and, after the first two stages, we were lying 4th (last). I took over on leg 3 and, although I didn't manage to improve the position, I gained considerably on two teams. We'd saved our best runner, Julia, for the anchor leg and she had a storming run to bring us home 2nd as she completed her lap in 60.9. My lap time (67.0) was my fastest of 2008, so I was pleased with my day.

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

Mo

Before I get on with the links followed by my article on the Law and Running, I need to mention that the Events Diary I normally attach to the Website update has now been superseded by the 'Calendar & Events Diary' link on our website menu bar. I will of course endeavour to keep this up-to-date as information on events becomes available ... and any diary entry requests that are sent to me.

For this issue, recommended website visits are:

<http://www.tourofbritain.com> for those of us who also have an interest in cycling, next week the place to be is Streatley Hill when the tour of Britain Cycling Event passes through our local area towards the end of stage 2 from Milton Keynes to Newbury. The tour is expected to reach Streatley after passing through Goring at about 12:45 pm on Monday 8th September and will feature the 'King of the Mountains' race up the Hill. Full details of each stage can be viewed on the tour's website.

A strong core will make you fitter and faster, so if you want to know more about the muscle groups below, you will need to read the article at <http://tinyurl.com/5amr6o>

- **Transversus Abdominis**
- **Rectus Abdominis**
- **Spinal erectors .**
- **Obliques.**
- **Hip flexors and rotators**

(All sounds a bit rude doesn't it?)

Now for my article about running and the law

Although runners are bound to pick up the odd injury during the course of a year, running is not considered to be a particularly dangerous sport and most injuries tend to be self-inflicted and could possibly be avoided.

However when most of your training and racing happens along the side of public roads, there is always a risk of being involved in an accident.

Whereas most sensible runners run against the traffic, wear bright clothing and generally make themselves visible and avoidable to passing motorists it isn't always possible to legislate for the actions and attention span of every driver or runner! There is always the potential for an accident caused by a temporary lapse in concentration by either the runner or the passing motorist and if an accident does happen, it is likely to be serious.

While no one takes up the sport thinking about the potential legal issues they could be involved in, it is worth knowing where you stand should the small risk taken reach its full potential.

As we all know, some drivers are far from sympathetic with our endeavours to maintain a degree of fitness and others are positively hostile. So, where do you stand if an accident does happen?

Should you be the unfortunate victim of a hit and run case, you're not stranded, as claims can actually be brought against a body called the Motor Insurers Bureau and the same applies if the driver is uninsured. Further worries about the potential cost of bringing a case can be reduced as there are a number of specialist solicitors who are keen to take up cases on 'no win, no fee' agreements. Most of these specialist solicitors work online ... by typing 'Personal injury compensation' into a search engine you will get pages of results from which to select a suitable specialist should you need one.

Now, before we all decide to start playing chicken with the oncoming motorist, a word of caution; the level of compensation you are likely to receive can be modest when set against the injuries you're likely to sustain. Awards generally will cover lost earnings and expenses, future financial losses and general damages for the injury itself, although each case is looked at on its own merits. General guidelines do exist, and for something like a broken leg without complete recovery you might expect an award in the order of £15,000 - £25,000.

That said, its not unusual for there to be a discount on the full value of the claim because of what's known as 'contributory negligence' — that is, blame on the part of the runner for not adequately predicting the driver's movements. Obviously, the greater your visibility, the better your claim, so don't run with your head down looking at the road!

One important point to remember; if you are involved in a collision you should always follow these basic steps:

- If you are injured, report the accident to the police within 24 hours. You are legally obliged to do this and, in any event, the police may want to make their own investigations.

- Get as many details about the other party or parties involved in the accident as possible, including details of witnesses.
- Make sure you obtain suitable medical treatment if you are injured, even if your injuries do not seem very serious.
- If the accident occurred because of the state of the road and did not involve another party, simply obtain witness details and take photographs of the defect as soon as possible. Measurements can be critical.

Even when it comes to races, incidents needing legal intervention occasionally occur. Race organisers should be aware that they could be sued if it was felt that runners were placed in danger through inadequate marshaling or sign-posting on the road. Most race entry forms contain a clause to preclude the runner from pursuing any claim against the organisers for 'personal injury or death howsoever the aforementioned should arise...', but under the 'Unfair Contracts Terms Act' these claims can't be legally excluded. That's not to say that every organiser can expect to find them-selves embroiled in future litigation. As long as 'reasonable care' is exercised there is no need not worry. Fortunately, claims against race organisers and motorists are rare. In fact, most personal injury claims brought by runners are as a result of tripping and falling whilst running on the pavement, not from a collision with a car.

It is on record that a runner from Wokingham (*I don't think it was Pete ...*) tripped on a paving stone which protruded about two inches. The broken wrist which followed meant not only that there would be a claim for the injury itself, but also for the lost earnings which resulted. The courts have ruled that while pavements need not be as level as bowling greens, the Highways Act places a duty on the Highway Authority (usually the local council) to repair, inspect and maintain the roads. As a rule of thumb, an inch and a half of lift would be required for a successful claim to be brought.

Quite apart from the hazards of vehicles and pavements, runners should also be aware that dog bite claims are on the increase. A claim can be brought against the owner (who these days may well have insurance cover under a household policy) for not keeping the dog under control. The bad news, however, is that most dogs are allowed 'one bite' before you'll be successful with a claim. The best thing to do when confronted with a dog is therefore to run fast and avoid the bites it's much less painful in every sense.

There's also the surprising area of theft to consider. Mugging is fairly rare; runners on the move are not likely to be carrying large amounts of cash with them. However, there have been several cases where runners have had their shoes stolen. In these cases, providing some injury has been sustained, it is possible to bring a case through the Criminal Injury Compensation Authority. And, as with hit and runs, that's the situation even when the attacker cannot be traced. It is vital however, that the incident is reported to the police immediately.

Compensation is not by any means the only legal area in which runners can become involved. As off-road running becomes increasingly popular, more runners are seeking out new tracks and trails. Ignorance is no defence in the eyes of the law and there's no better example than in the law of trespass, so it's always best to keep to defined public footpaths, which fortunately abound in this country. Although landowners technically have a right to claim compensation against you as soon as you take an illegal step on to their land, the reality is usually different. Unless you persistently offend, the worst that will probably happen is that you'll be asked to leave – angry landowners certainly don't have the right to use you for shotgun practice.

Runners should also be aware of the legal issues when under sponsorship for charity events. While the vast majority of fund-raising runners deliver upon their promises, you should be aware that any money you collect is held by you in trust for the charity, and that withholding it is effectively theft. Merely failing to collect all the money on your sponsor form, as is often the case, is not a legal issue. Likewise, if someone just won't pay up after agreeing to sponsor you, there isn't much that you or the law can do about it!

I'm sure the above will give you plenty to think about, but don't be overly concerned by it all. When considering the number of runners in the country, the miles of training put in on the roads and the thousands of faultless races put on every year, your chances of coming into contact with the law through running are extremely small!

Happy running,

Mo – September 2008