

THE HARRIERS HERALD

No. 199, September 2009

Editor: Sue Francis

Contents, features, reports, results

- Thursday night schedules for September and October
- Correspondence received
- Race results: ‘Ridgeway Challenge’ – congratulations Lucy! 1st lady and 4th overall; ‘Salisbury 54321’ – Sus and Ryan enjoy a pleasant 30K event; ‘Race the Train’ – Pete attempts to beat the 14:05 from Tywyn; Back-in-a-Flash 5K – Sue enjoys a local event, despite the wind and rain
- Handicap Race – Lucy regains the trophy, while Dick leads the series
- News from the Aylesbury Branch – Simon thinks he’s found the root of his injuries
- Webmaster’s article – Mo features lower body exercises to build up strength
- Thanks to Pete H, Lucy, Simon, Sus and Mo for this month’s contributions
- Copy date for October’s Harriers Herald – 30th September

Thursday night schedule for September

Thurs 3rd Mo to lead
Thurs 10th Martin to lead
Thurs 17th Sally to lead
Thurs 24th Pete O to lead

Thursday night schedule for October

Thurs 1st Handicap Race
Thurs 8th Peter L to lead
Thurs 15th Sue to lead
Thurs 22nd Sus to lead
Thurs 29th Phil to lead

Correspondence received		
Sender	Subject matter	Action
St Catherine’s Hospice	Crawley 10K race (18-10-09)	Events Diary & notice board
SEAA	AGM: reports, resolutions, voting papers (06-09-09)	Voted in favour of all resolutions (nothing remotely controversial)
National Blind Children’s Society	Raise money for this charity in races www.nbcs.org.uk	Notice board
England Athletics	Notice of AGM (12-09-09), ‘Setting the pace’ newsletter (2 copies), Road-running leaflet	File Pass round newsletter

Good Luck.....

...to Compton Harriers Rich Bickerton (aka Ricky Biky) who is heading to New Zealand (via Asia) where he plans to spend the next two years. Rich has plenty of challenges lined up, including trekking to Kilimanjaro base camp, jungle safaris, and Ironman triathlons.

Race results

Ridgeway Challenge, 29th & 30th August

Lucy

On Saturday 29th August I lined up for my 4th race on this excellent 85-mile route from Ivinghoe Beacon to Avebury. In some ways this was a bit of an experiment in tapering, since we had only a week ago got back from our week in the Lakes, where we had done 90 miles of hilly walks and runs! The weather was perfect however, so I decided to go for gold and led the race for the first 200 yards, dropping back to only about 9th place before people ahead started to drop out. By the time I got to Swyncombe (32 miles) I was feeling weary, but sheer force of habit made me continue rapidly along my favourite part of the 1st half, which takes you along Grim's ditch to the Thames. The welcome at Goring was of course brilliant, and with a rub down of the legs and a change to comfier shoes I was a new person. I probably left Goring (43 miles) in 6th place and was cracking along nicely when I realised my torch had gone missing. Ten minutes scrabbling in the dark proved fruitless, so I called up Martin for his spare and scuttled off to Burydown (50 miles) to pick it up. The next leg went very well, but by Sparsholt firs (61 miles) I was feeling a bit 'nil by mouth' – which got worse on the uphill and reduced me to a fast walk. As usual I missed the exit to Smeathes ridge at Barbury castle (80 miles) in the dark, but someone else's supporter was there with a headtorch to guide me in. The final leg is short but rutted in parts so I was relieved to start the descent into Avebury on the Herepath. Joan Clarke jogged a mile up the road to guide me in, and warned me that no. 2 Lady was gaining on me. Curiously this news made me forget my nausea and fly off like a rocket – perhaps it was all in the mind! I probably ran the last mile at 7m/m pace, and at a time of 17:08 was welcomed at the Avebury social centre by Tim Gravina of Marlborough and several other old pals. The second lady arrived only 7 minutes later (accompanied by the 4th man), so thanks Joan! I ended up in 4th place overall; 1st man Andy James broke the record by a couple of hours in 12:25; 2nd man Paul Fernandez also broke the old record. The 3rd man had probably got lost, since he overtook me quite late on in the race and going very fast. I feel I have finally 'cracked' this race now, so will be helping the glorious Compton volunteers next year, perhaps also guiding some other Harrier's 1st attempt at the race???



Lucy leads the way from Ivinghoe Beacon



Compton Harriers Champ

Salisbury 54321, 9th August

Sus

The unusual numerical suffix to the race is not as it might seem the countdown that the official starter yells into his megaphone but simply the fact that there are 5 rivers to cross, 4 hills to climb, 3 country estates to run through and 2 castles and 1 cathedral to admire through the marathon route. Organised by the Salisbury fire Service it attracts app. 500 runners in the four different distances: 10, 20, 30K and marathon distance. Ryan and I had chosen the 30K. Unless you know the route you have to match the map route with the written commentary to avoid getting lost, but as the start was very well marked we believed that we would be OK without and left the instructions behind. Upon reaching a field that seemed to go on for ever (and on this hot day it went further than that) we got lost! With the help of two guys who had followed us, and who still had the instructions, we got back on track again fairly quickly. After running through an enchanted forest of ancient trees, enjoying nature's more pleasing birdsong, babbling rivers and the sound of wind in the trees, we reached the Salisbury Cathedral with crowds of tourists thankfully with their eyes transfixed on greater things than us - and then back again to the fire station.

It is not a PB course but it has all that you'd expect of an off-road event in abundance.

1 st Man	Darren McNeely	1:52:18
1 st Lady	Jenny Thoore	1:53:21 (beat that!)
21 st and 22 nd	Ryan and Sus	2:43:44 (5 th lady)

120 finished the race

Race the Train, 15th August

Pete H

Always up for a novelty event, on Saturday 15th August I decided to enter the 26th Rotary Challenge, better known as Race the Train. It's a 14-mile cross country event starting from Tywyn (pronounced Towin) in mid Wales at the unusual time of 14:05 to coincide with the train timetable.

The race aims to follow as close as possible the route taken up the valley by the narrow gauge Talylyn steam Railway and allows passengers to spectate on the move. To borrow the football saying it is a "race of two halves". The first 1.5 miles is on road. Since most of the route is on private land specially opened for the race most of the terrain is grass rather than path or track. Up to the halfway point the terrain is gently undulating albeit gradually uphill.

Although the return leg as a whole descends to the sea it contains two steep ascents one of which is reminiscent of the Grizzly's *Stairway to heaven*. The daunting prospect of the stairs is partially offset by running past a lovely waterfall at their base. A second Grizzly-style feature then makes an appearance in the form of a bog which is slightly more than ankle deep. There is also a long stretch on a very narrow single-track section of path where staying upright takes priority over speed. Anyone planning on doing a fast time needs to go flat out over the first seven miles as most competitors tend to walk the muddy sections and there are few passing places. One runner did attempt to pass me after first shouting "keep to the right". I did just that as he passed to my left and ignored the marshal's warning that the ground was slippery – he tried to impress the crowd by jumping the bottom section of the steep slope and went flying much to everyone's amusement! I don't recall him overtaking for a second time!

If the terrain was not tough enough the headwind caused by a strong gale blowing in from the sea certainly was.

Having seen very few mile markers over the first 10 miles they came thick and fast after that. Having

passed one stating 2 miles – I assumed to the finish – I then came across one saying 5 km. The reason being that there are five separate events of varying distances (including oddly a 5 mile & a 10km race) sharing the last few miles of the course taken by the main race.

Apart from the mile markers the race was very well run with plenty of marshals and half a dozen drink stations.

The last 3 miles are run over the same ground as covered in the opening stage albeit in reverse with the finish close to the station, where needless to say, the train was parked up for the day. One needed to do a time of 1 hour 47 minutes to beat it so my time of 2 hours 12 was off the pace. That said, it's not a course for PBs but is certainly one I'd like to repeat. 150 of the 958 finishers managed to beat the train with the winner clocking a time of 1 hour 21, my time gave me a position of 534th.

Having parked on the front I planned on a swim in the sea rather than use the showers. That proved to be difficult however as the promenade is something like 7 metres above the beach and the only way down was some steps 1,000 metres away. So it was back to the campsite to clean up after an enjoyable afternoon.

Back-in-a-Flash 5K, 2nd September

Sue

I very much enjoyed this Wednesday evening event, which is just a short trip down the M4. The race is organised by 'Grassroots Events' and takes place at Coate Water Country Park on the outskirts of Swindon, with race HQ being at 'The Sun Inn' (where, 16 years ago, I had my first car 'accident' when I reversed my Metro into a taxi in the car park!).

Although it is run over an out-and-back course, the 5K route is not remotely boring, following a tree-lined cycle route by Coate Water Lake. It's by no means a PB route, having lots of twists, turns and undulations and, on this occasion, it was also windy and absolutely pouring with rain covering the non-tarmac sections with muddy puddles. The most unexpected part of the route for me was the spiral up to and down from the footbridge over the M4 (I had thought we were running under the M4) – it was a strange experience running round in circles while gradually going upwards.

As I approached the 2.5K halfway point, the faster runners had already turned and were retracing their steps and I saw two ladies who had a significant lead on me. After I'd gone round the halfway bollard myself, I could see a string of ladies not too far behind me. The return route had more downhill and was wind assisted, so I managed negative splits. This was the first race I'd done in a truly competitive frame of mind since injuring my foot two months ago, and I felt I ran strongly and maintained my position well, although I did lose one place to another lady at 4K.

Everyone was plastered in mud at the finish, so I was surprised that I was the only person who went for a paddle in Coate Water to wash my legs before going to the pub function room for the presentation. During the short wait, I chatted to a man who was wearing a 2009 Compton Downland Challenge sweatshirt – he said he'd enjoyed running the CDC 40 for the first time this year. The presentations were followed by a draw (into which all competitors were entered) for a pair of trainers – I couldn't help thinking of Sus for some reason.

I would recommend the event as a possible future Harriers away-day race suitable for runners of all abilities, with a large and welcoming pub right at the finish.

1 st man	16:50	Andy Fulford	Swindon Harriers
1 st lady (19 th)	18:50	Kate Jacobs	Swindon Harriers
1 st FV35 (4 th lady/36 th)	20:26	Sue	
Last finisher (140 th)	32:30		

Handicap Race

Sue

Conditions were far from perfect for August's Handicap Race – it was pouring with rain, the track was muddy, the chalk was slippery, and large puddles had formed along the concrete road. Only five regular Harriers turned up to run the race but two brave (mad?) souls, Gillian and Alison, joined us for their first run with the Harriers. Both had run mainly on roads before, so this was a real baptism of fire. After our warm-up lap, Alison sensibly decided to help Jan with the timing while the rest of us splodged our way round the race. Needless to say, there were no PBs set on this occasion. Gillian set off first with Mo as guide-cum-pace-maker. Lucy set off next, followed by Dick, Sue, and then Martin. And that's the order in which we finished too: Lucy was first home to collect the trophy and the 7 championship points. Gillian set a good target to beat for her next attempt at the Handicap Race.

Well done Lucy, and thanks to Jan and Alison for timing. The next Handicap Race will be on 1st October, which hopefully means there will be enough light to use the off-road route for the last time this year.

Pos	Name	Start time	Finish time	Actual time	Handicap Beaten?
1	Lucy	4:53	19:04	14:11	+0:04
2	Dick	5:33	19:12	13:39	+0:12
3	Sue	5:55	19:39	13:44	+0:39
4	Martin	6:38	19:47	13:09	+0:47
5=	Gillian	2:31	26:58	24:27	New runner
5=	Mo	2:31	26:58	24:27	New runner

After six races, competition remains very close at the top of the Championship. Dick has regained the lead, with Pete O, Sue and Phil close behind. It's likely to remain close for the last few races, as it is an individual's best five scores which will be added to determine their Championship total so there is still plenty of opportunity for positions to change.

Pos.	Name	Race points									Total
		Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Race 4	Race 5	Race 6	Race 7	Race 8	Race 9	
1	Dick	6	6	5	-	1	6	-	-	-	24
2	Pete O	4	7	6	-	6	-	-	-	-	23
3	Sue	5	4	3	5	2	5	-	-	-	(24) 22
4	Phil	-	5	7	4	5	-	-	-	-	21
5	Lucy	3	3	1	3	3	7	-	-	-	(20) 19
6	Martin	7	2	2	2	1	4	-	-	-	(18) 17
7	Terry	-	-	1	7	7	-	-	-	-	15
8=	Ryan	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	6
8=	Kirsty	2	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
10	Pete H	-	-	-	1	4	-	-	-	-	5
11=	Gillian	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	3
11=	Mo	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	3
13	Romy	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1

News from Compton Harriers' Aylesbury branch

Simon

Me again. Thought I'd keep you all up to date with my latest injury. Having had a couple of weeks off and then a couple of days of light running in early August my right calf started tightening up (it was the left calf that caused the last lay off), so it looked like a seriously long break was in order...

Then, one evening, after I described the point of discomfort to Joanna, she had a bit of a poke round, got me to do a few stretches and took a few measurements. "Mmmm," she said. "What?" "You've got incredibly tight hamstrings." And that, dear reader, is quite possibly what has been causing my consistent niggling injuries for the past 18 months or more: hamstrings (to give it its correct medical terminology) tighter than a nun's gusset.

It seems, after nearly 30 years of running and not stretching a great deal, that my hamstrings have decided they like being quite short and have an aversion to being stretched when running. So I'm doing my exercises now, sitting on the floor at least twice a day having a good old stretch. Joanna reckons four to six weeks should loosen them up a bit – I'm not sure I can go that long without running at all but we'll see how it goes.

Meantime, if any of you fancy doing a couple of miles on my behalf I'd be very grateful as I had pencilled in the Ridgeway Run at Tring in October, so training by proxy might just mean I'll still be able to do it. Thanks.

Simon

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

Mo

Notable web links this month ... As mentioned last month, if you are interested in athletic performances, rankings and records, then <http://www.all-athletics.com> is the place to go. The ten best male and female performances at the recent world championships are now listed.

Also appended to this month's report is an entry form to a 10k race on Saturday 26th September 2009 at RAF Lynham so if you fancy seeing the air base from the inside, here's the chance.

The next instalment on my series of articles on Fitness will continue on the second component of fitness (Strength – the other components being Stamina and Flexibility). The emphasis last month was on Upper Body Exercises; this month I will concentrate on Lower Body Exercises and next month core strength exercises.

❖ **Lower Body Exercises**

- ▶ **STANDARD SQUAT**; This compound exercise works the quads, glutes, and calves.

Start with your feet hip-distance apart, toes turned slightly upwards and hands crossed over chest.

Keeping your torso as upright as possible, bend the knees and lower your bottom towards the ground.

Do not bend further than a 90-degree angle at the knees.

Pause in the lowered position, then raise and repeat.

◆ *Easier variation*

QUARTER SQUAT; Use the same technique as for the standard squat, but bend only to 45 degrees rather than 90 degrees.

◆ *Harder variations*

SQUAT WITH MEDICINE BALL; Start in the same stance as for the standard squat, but this time, instead of having your arms crossed over your chest, cradle a medicine ball or weight in front of you, close to your torso, to avoid putting excessive strain on your back. Now perform the squat as before.

ONE-LEGGED SQUAT; This exercise works the quads, glutes and hamstrings as well as challenging the stabilisers in the lower leg. Take one foot off the ground and slightly bend the knee. Now bend the supporting leg, allowing the torso to tip forward as you lower, ensuring the knee stays in line with the foot, rather than rolling in or out. Lower as far as you comfortably can go, then straighten and repeat. Swap sides.

- ▶ SQUAT JUMP; This advanced version of the squat adds speed and explosiveness, building power in the quads, glutes and hamstrings. Stand with feet hip-distance apart and bend your knees until your hands touch the back of your ankles. From this position, leap up into the air, landing back down into the squat position, touching your ankles between each rep.
- ▶ FORWARD LUNGE; This compound exercise works the quads, glutes and hamstrings. The inner thighs and hips (adductors and abductors) also work to balance and stabilise you. Start with feet together and lunge forward, allowing the back knee to travel towards (but not touching) the floor and the front knee to bend, so that the knee is aligned above the ankle. Push back up through the front heel to the start position and repeat with the opposite leg. Holding dumbbells makes the exercise harder.

◆ *Easier variation*

BACKWARDS LUNGE; This version of the lunge puts less stress on the knees. Starting with feet together, lunge backwards with the right leg, allowing the right knee to travel towards the floor and the left knee to bend, so that it is above the left ankle. Push back up through the front heel to return to standing, then lunge back with the opposite leg.

◆ *Harder variation*

LUNGE JUMP; This challenging exercise brings in speed, co-ordination and explosiveness. Perform as per the forward lunge above, but instead of pushing back up to the start position, leap up into the air, swapping feet midway, so that you land back in a lunge position on the other leg. Alternate from leg to leg to complete the set.

- ▶ WALKING LUNGE; In this version of the lunge, begin with your feet together and lunge forward as normal. Then bring the back foot through straight into a lunge on the other leg. Continue to "walk" forwards.
- ▶ STEP-UP; Stand in front of a step (or stair) and step up on to the surface with your right foot ensuring the whole foot makes contact with the platform. Immediately step up with the left foot so both feet are on the platform, then step back down with the right and left foot. Go straight into the next repetition, stepping up with the left foot. Ensure you do not bend from the waist as you step up. To make the exercise harder, hold a weight in each hand, keeping arms straight and by your sides.

◆ *Harder variation*

STEP-UP WITH KNEE RAISE; Stand in front of a step with your feet together. Step up with your right foot and drive through with your left leg, bringing this left knee up to your chest before placing first the left and then the right foot back on to the floor. Swap to lead with your left leg, and alternate between the two legs to complete the set. (Note: The step should not be so high that the knee goes beyond 90degrees when stepping up. The lower the step, the easier the exercise.)

Next month will continue with the various strength exercises; this time the focus will be on core strength and the muscles that stabilise your body (e.g. holding the spine in its usual 'S' shape) whilst other muscles provide the strength to move.

Mo – September 2009

RAF Lyneham 10K Run

By Kind permission of the Station Commander,
Group Captain M C Neville ADC BSc RAF

Saturday

26 Sept 2009

Held under UKAA Rules (Permit Applied for)

In Support Of:



A flat, fast course on a closed road environment around RAF Lyneham

Prizes:

1st 2nd 3rd Male 1st Female
1st Male Vet Over 40 1st Female Vet Over 35
1st Team (3 runners)
1st RAF Lyneham Runner

Gates Open 0900
Race Brief 1030
Race Starts 1100
Presentations 1300

Memento Medal to all Finishers

RAF Lyneham 10K Run

Entry Form

Surname: _____ First Name: _____

Address: _____

Post Code: _____ Tel No: _____

Age on Race Day: _____ UKA Club: _____
(min age 15 years)

Sex M/F RAF Lyneham Employee Y/N

RAF Lyneham Section: _____

Vehicle Reg. and Type Visiting Lyneham If Known: _____

Entry Fees: £9.00 Affiliated
£10.00 Unaffiliated

Cheques Payable to: **SFAS RAF Lyneham**

And return to: "Seb" Coe
24 Sqn Pilots
RAF Lyneham
Chippenham
Wilts
SN15 4PZ
Tel: 01249 897444

Please Enclose a 9x6 SAE for Race Pack

DECLARATION: I am medically fit to run and I understand that I enter at my own risk. The organisers will in no way be held responsible for any injury or illness incurred to my person as a result of the event, or for any property lost on the course, in the changing area or in the vicinity of the course.

Signed _____ Competitors Signature (Parent/Guardian if under 16)