

Striders of Croydon

JUNE 2014 MAGAZINE



**Striders in action at the Southern Veterans League match at Croydon Arena
(photos by Kevin Hann)**

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2014

Sun 22 June – Richmond 10K (including Surrey Championships)
Wed 2 July – Club 5-mile Handicap (Goodall Trophy) – Sandilands
Mon 14 July – Southern Veterans League – Wimbledon
Sun 20 July – Elmbridge 10K (Surrey Road League)
Sun 17 Aug – Wimbledon 5K (including Surrey Championships)
Sat 23 Aug – Surrey 10000m Track Championship – Tooting
Sun 28 Sep – Switchback 5 miles (Striders hosting)
Sat 11 Oct – Surrey Women's Cross-Country League Div 2 – Richmond Park
Sat 11 Oct – Surrey Cross-Country League Division 2 (men) – Newlands Corner
Sun 19 Oct – Croydon 10K – Lloyd Park Avenue
Sat 8 Nov – Surrey Cross-Country League Division 2 (men) – Ham
Sat 6 Dec – Surrey Women's Cross-Country League Div 2 – Nonsuch Park

2015

Sat 13 Jan – Surrey Women's Cross-Country League Div 2 – Wimbledon Common
Sat 13 Jan – Surrey Cross-Country League Division 2 (men) – Wimbledon Common
Sat 10 Feb – Surrey Women's Cross-Country League Div 2 – Coulsdon
Sat 10 Feb – Surrey Cross-Country League Division 2 (men) – Lloyd Park

SECRETARY'S CORNER JUNE 2014

While Robin is away sunning himself I've been asked to step in with a round-up of the latest club news.

It was great to see a whopping 47 Striders at our recent mobmatch against Blackheath & Bromley and we are looking to arrange some more of these events this year. Dates and venues are yet to be finalised but we hope to have a return fixture at Norman Park in September and another Lloyd Park race against Croydon Harriers in December.

We are also in discussions with Wimbledon Windmilers about a race to honour the memory of Helen Furze who was a member of both our clubs. Provisionally we are hoping to arrange a parkrun mobmatch in late November but we are unsure of the details at the moment.

We also want to re-start some of our 'away runs' on Sunday mornings, hopefully increasing the mileage each time so that it helps those Striders training for autumn marathons. However for this to work we will need volunteers to lead groups as the likes of Robin, John, Stuart and myself are unlikely to be able to lead the longer runs – so let me know if you are happy to lead a small group. As a starter we will hopefully run the following '9 Parks' route on Sunday 6th July: <http://www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=5725369>

I am hoping to develop some new routes: two suggestions we already have are a loop of Richmond Park and a circuit around Wimbledon Common and Putney Heath.

We haven't forgotten about the social life of the club either. From August onwards we will be re-starting our 'first Wednesday of the month' socials in the club bar after the club run. The rotation of food between pizza and chips choices will probably continue.

Hannah will be hoping to organise a late summer social event and Mick will be running one of his (in)famous quizzes in the autumn.

Talking of committee members, this reminds me that we are desperately seeking some new blood to join us. Robin will shortly be sending out a couple of 'wanted' ads to find some Strider keen to join us as either membership secretary or kit manager – initially as a deputy to the existing post-holder.

We regularly update our website with future fixtures, recent results, race reports, club rankings etc. so keep visiting the site <http://www.stridersofcroydon.co.uk/> If we haven't added your latest PB or have missed a recent record then let us know.

And don't forget: on September 28th we will be hosting our annual Switchback race. Debra Bourne will be race director and will be sending out communications soon to seek volunteers to help and organise the event.

When you run, remember to feel lucky.....

Chris

THE KRAKÓW MARATHON (by Linda Daniel)

I had always wanted to visit the beautiful medieval city of Kraków in Poland, a treasure trove of Gothic and Renaissance architecture, so when I discovered there was a marathon, I had no hesitation in entering the 13th Cracovia marathon. The entry fee is £16 if you enter early: however for overseas runners you must pay your registration fee via bank transfer, which increased the cost to £40. You can register and pay on the weekend, but this costs more although it is still cheaper than a lot of marathons in the UK. The marathon is the last event of the Kraków Running Festival weekend, which starts on the Friday evening with an open 10k run, followed by Junior 1K and 3K races on Saturday morning, then a roller skating event on Saturday afternoon.

Unfortunately two weeks before the running festival Kraków was immersed in heavy rain which culminated in the marathon course having to be changed three times, and when my husband Steve and I arrived on the Friday before the marathon the heavens opened once again, followed by more rain on Saturday. Amazingly by some meteorological miracle marathon day dawned to bright, sunny and warm conditions, a sharp contrast to the unseasonably wet weather previously. Due to the route modifications, runners were diverted from the most scenic part of the course, along the embankment and river, to a not so scenic motorway, so instead of a single loop the course doubled back on itself which meant you glimpsed the front runners as they flashed past on the other side of the road three times, which was very disconcerting!! The river had overflowed to the extent that park benches were totally submerged. The rain did return briefly at the half way point but was thankfully dry thereafter.

The marathon set off to bells ringing from the Gothic masterpiece, St Mary's Church, situated in the largest medieval town square in Europe. That was followed by the Kraków signal bugle call, from the church's tower, a haunting melody dating back to the Middle Ages. Support from the organization staff during the race was second to none. They stood in the rain, handing out water and energy drinks and cheering, along with Polish women in traditional dress and lots of music maintaining our spirits. The marathon finished where it started, in the amazing, cobbled main square, with enthusiastic spectators shouting, "Bravo, bravo!" I crossed the line at 4 hours 8 minutes, a few pounds/Polish dumplings lighter, exhausted but triumphant.

Despite the first 2½ days being wet, the rest of the week from Monday onwards was lovely and we were blessed with temperatures of 27 degrees, perfect conditions to explore Kraków and its magnificent churches, architecture and a staggering 2.3 million artworks. What is known as the second centre of Kraków, the Kazimierz/Jewish quarter, is home to many galleries and synagogues; also in this part of Kraków is the Oskar Schindler factory. Oskar Schindler was an ethnic German industrialist, German spy, and member of the Nazi party who is credited with saving the lives of 1,200 Jews during the Holocaust by employing them in his enamelware and ammunitions factories; some scenes from the film 'Schindler's List' were filmed in Kazimierz. Not to everybody's taste but a must-see visit is to the thought-provoking Auschwitz-Birkenau, the Nazi concentration camp which is now a museum left virtually untouched since its liberation in 1945. On a happier note and only an hour's bus ride from Kraków are the Wieliczka Salt Mines, known as the underground salt cathedral of Poland with dozens of statues, 3 chapels and a cathedral carved out of rock salt by the miners.

So if you like your marathons steeped in medieval, Gothic culture, scenic, flat with lots of support, and a choice of dumplings, dumplings and more dumplings for the perfect Polish carbohydrate cuisine the night before the race, then you will have a cracking time in Kraków.



I ran for the charity Myeloma UK, which provides support to patients suffering from myeloma, a debilitating bone marrow cancer, and their families.
If you would like to sponsor me, please email me at: linda.daniel@o2.co.uk



THE LIVERPOOL ROCK 'N' ROLL MARATHON (by Carolyn Storey)

I find it hard to say no, especially to my younger sister. This 'flaw' led me to register for the inaugural Liverpool Rock 'n' Roll Marathon on Sunday 25th May 2014. With 7000 participants, the race around the 2008 City of Culture promised live music every mile from local bands and a party like atmosphere to make long distance running fun. Six months quickly passed and after following a very loose training schedule my very first marathon was upon me.

Usually a calm and collected person I was surprised at the pre-race nerves that hit me. How tight do I tie my shoe laces? Single or double knot? How do I usually put my hair up? What if the bobble breaks? The simple act of getting ready for a run took twice as long as usual. Having forced down a bowl of porridge, I added the finishing touches to my pre-marathon preparation, earrings and a quick spray of perfume and we set off to the start line.

As a first time marathon runner, I don't have anything to compare this experience to but I was impressed by the pre-race organisation. With 20 minutes to go, we headed over to the start line and waited as the crowd got bigger and the skies grew darker. There was a party atmosphere and it was easy to forget what faced me over the coming hours.

The corrals were released by former rugby union international Austin Healey and before I knew it I had crossed the start line and was running my very first marathon. The route started on the Albert Dock, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It then wound inland through the city's famous Cavern Quarter, past the Cavern Club where The Beatles played several times in their formative years. Sadly for a marathon in their home town, there was no tribute band. We moved towards the north of the city, looping around Goodison Park, the home of Everton FC. Live music and support from the pyjama-clad locals made me relax and start to enjoy myself. Running through Stanley Park we crossed the 10k mark and then ran by the side of Anfield, home to Liverpool FC. Many runners stopped to pay their respects as we passed the memorial for the 96 who lost their lives in the Hillsborough disaster. Renditions of "You'll Never Walk Alone" from the crowds lightened the mood.

My hill training with Striders came in handy as we turned the corner onto St Domingo Street at mile eight. Although not as steep as some of the treats we have faced in training, this was a challenging hill for a race course. Head down, arms pumping I was pulled to the top of the hill by the sounds of a large samba band playing at the top – this was definitely my favourite band on the course.

Heading back to the city centre we ran through Everton Park; the view of the Liverpool skyline and the river Mersey was an unexpected treat and a welcome boost. In the city centre, we ran past the Royal Liver Building, a Grade I listed landmark building and through China Town and the Chinese Ark. This was one of my favourite parts of the course, with the locals out in traditional dress waving fans and encouraging us on our way.

The second half of the route took in Princes Park, the beautiful Sefton Park and Otterspool Park. My lasting memories from the parks is running past the half-way point to hear one of the DJs declare 'half way there, not long to go!' Anyone who has run a marathon surely knows that there is still a very, very long way to go...

After what felt like an eternity I finally made it to the waterfront, I was almost there, only four miles to go. Almost there? How wrong could I be! The last four miles were the longest, hottest and loneliest four miles I have ever run, the only positive was that it was flat. One criticism of the race is that there should have been more bands and water stations along this

stretch, there was just one. Not only would this have provided a welcome distraction for the runners on the most difficult part of the course, it would have encouraged more supporters to come to this area to provide encouragement.

Approaching the last half mile, the crowds started to thicken and I realised how close I was to finishing a marathon! The increase in support and numerous photographers encouraged me to pick up my pace; having struggled for the last four miles, it amazed me where this energy came from. I was lucky enough to spot my family and high five my dad around 200m from the finish line finally crossing the finish line with a smile on my face.

The atmosphere on crossing the finish line was relaxed and happy. After collecting my medal and picking up my finisher's T-Shirt I was excited to go celebrate with my family. I was just in time to enjoy a live rendition of "All Together Now" from the Farm at the finishers' concert before enjoying a complimentary Cobra with my family; never has a beer tasted so good.

Despite the lack of music – there certainly wasn't a band every mile and many of the 'bands' were in fact DJs – I had a fantastic day. The course was hilly and I found it much tougher than expected but would definitely recommend this event to anyone!



TRIBUTE TO THE ORANGE ARROWS (by Corinne Carr)

The marathon training season seems to start earlier each year. Last year, the first long Sunday run took place at the beginning of November. When the email came round, my first thought was "Oh, no! Already?..." It didn't feel like a few months had gone by since the last marathon was completed and it was time to start training again.

Looking back, it was a good idea to start early. Robin put a schedule together of alternative long/normal Sunday runs during November and December. By the beginning of the New Year, the "half marathon" threshold distance had been achieved. The schedule included the usual long runs, e.g. to the White Bear and Keston Ponds etc. Due to the very wet weather conditions this year, we were unable to run by the river as its banks had burst. This was unfortunate but instead, we discovered new routes such as the London Bridge/ Greenwich/ Blackheath/ Lewisham/ Croydon one and a couple of new ones in the Coulsdon area. All were very enjoyable with the muddiest being the High Elms 17! The total distance covered on Sundays was close to 260 miles.

We never really know who is going to turn up at East Croydon station on a very wet morning to join the run. This year, the bulk of the marathon trainees were from the faster groups. Robin, sometimes accompanied by Steph, kindly joined us on his bike to guide and support us every Sunday. As distance increased week after week, he had to cover more and more miles zooming from the front of the pack with the fast guys and girls back to...me!

He came up with this simple but brilliant idea of temporarily "painting" the route ahead of time so that it was ready for us when we turned up on Sundays. He used orange paint to spray arrows and blobs on the pavement. This proved very successful for all. The pressure was off the fast group who did not have to loop back any more, the slower ones did not have to try and keep up, and Robin was able to go home at a reasonable time.

As there was no-one else of my ability this year training for the longer distances, mine became long solo runs. This was absolutely fine but I had to make sure I was self-reliant. I never felt so re-assured by a small blob of paint or a small mark on the pavement which confirmed that I was on the right track. I spent most of my Saturday nights for several months printing the routes on A3 sheets and making a collage of the relevant sections which I would keep in my pocket in case I got lost. This proved to be very helpful on the Regent's Canal route, when, having missed an orange arrow, I ended up in the middle of a housing estate at Paddington. I soon rectified the mistake and resumed the route guided by the welcomed orange arrows.

I would encourage anyone planning to do a marathon next year to consider joining the Sunday runs. With this system, they can be run at your own pace, whatever that is.

On behalf of this spring's marathoners, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Robin who, Sunday after Sunday, came along with us, to make sure we were safe and enjoyed this funny game.



BEWL WATER MARATHON (by Corinne Carr)

If you are a PB chaser, this one is not for you...

Bewl Water Country Park is set in over 1,000 acres of beautiful wild countryside, on the border of Kent and Sussex. It is South East England's largest lake and is better known for its cycling and water sports than for its running. It's only 50 minutes down the A21 so easy to get to by car, not so easy by public transport though. It's a great place for a family's day out.

Three years ago, David and Mel Ross, a South African-Scottish running couple, organised the Bewl Water marathon for the first time. They have completed nearly 500 marathons between them. They set up "Hermes Running" through which they organise events such as Bewl Water and the Thames Meander summer and winter marathons which some Striders have run. It is their way of giving back to the running community and to charity. These are events organised by runners for runners and it shows.

The Bewl Water can be run as a half or a full marathon in May. The date changes every year depending on what other events are taking place on the Bewl Estate. The half is one lap around the reservoir; the full is two. It has been voted as one of the top 10 trail marathons on RW and takes you through woods, fields and a few gently rolling country lanes. The course is stunning albeit tough due to the terrain and undulation. This year, we had the added challenge of heavy rain and strong winds the week preceding the marathon and on the very morning which made the ground very wet and muddy. I thought it was good fun but one of the female runners who had decided to run with two huskies tied to her waist was dragged in the mud when the dogs had no problem with grip but she did. She was forced to leave the animals in her car at the end of the first lap.

It is a small event: 153 runners did the full marathon this year so similar in size to our local parkrun. $\frac{3}{4}$ were (young) male and it was welcoming to all. There were a limited number of marshals and the course was very well marked. Four water stations with different types of cakes, plenty of GU gels and drinks served the course twice.

There is a cut-off time of 5 hours for the half and 6 hours for the full. I'm not sure of the logic there and can only guess that the organisers were keen to pack up and go home at 3pm...

The medal is impressive and runners are able to choose the colour of their technical t-shirt (I got yellow!). What more does a girl want? 😊

RW comments include: "muddier than last year which added an extra bit of toughness, as if it wasn't challenging enough!! Lovely cakes, most EXCELLENT tech T shirt, great medal. A bit of a gem this one."

And I couldn't agree more...



SURREY ROAD LEAGUE 2014: PART 1

The Surrey Road League is the younger cousin of the Surrey Cross-Country League. The Surrey Cross-Country League began in 1962 with one division of six clubs, and has steadily grown so that it now comprises four divisions. The Surrey Road League did not begin until 1990, and has attracted less publicity. This is partly because many of Surrey's top runners have tended to compete in track races rather than road races in the summer, partly because cross-country league races are free to enter whereas road races are not, partly because with one division there is no potential for promotion or relegation, and partly because the Surrey Road League only requires three runners to comprise a team, whereas the Surrey Cross-Country League requires ten runners to comprise a team and is therefore a greater test of a club's strength in depth. Nevertheless the Surrey Road League now includes almost all of the Surrey clubs, and many (although not all) of the leading clubs take it quite seriously.

Striders' best season in the league was 2003, when our men's team did very well to place fourth, helped by consistent good performances from Justin and Damian Macenhill, Tony Sheppard and Ciaran Osborn; and our women, captained by Emma Haillay, placed fifth. At this time there was also a very strong team spirit which encouraged many Striders to compete in the local Road League races: for example, the Sutton 10K of May 2003 attracted 25 Striders (almost 30% of the club membership, which stood at 88 at the time). Since then our performances in the league have fluctuated, although in the last two years our men have again done well: in both 2012 and 2013 we finished seventh out of the 30 competing clubs. Our women also made the top half of the table in 2013, finishing twelfth.

The 2014 Surrey Road League began with the Richmond Half-Marathon on Sunday 4 May. This is now such a popular race that entries close about three months before it takes place, and unfortunately for us, only four Striders managed to enter in time. Two of those subsequently withdrew with injuries, so that only two of our runners – Ernie Hann and Chris Morton – actually competed in the race. Ernie had an outstanding run to set a new personal best of 80 minutes 30 seconds, finishing 26th in a field of more than 700 runners. Chris also had a good run to finish 111th, recording 91 minutes 24 seconds.

Unusually, only 14 of the 31 clubs in the league fielded complete three-man teams in this race. We obtained the best points score of the incomplete teams, and gained 17 league points to place us 15th in the table after one match.

The second Surrey Road League race of 2014 was the Sutton 10K, held just a week later on Sunday 11 May. Older Striders will remember when this race was held on a two-lap course starting and finishing at Sutton Arena. Sadly, traffic problems forced the host club, Sutton Runners, to find a new course. For several years the race was held on a rather dull and urban three-lap course starting and finishing in Beddington Park. However last year it was moved to a new and much more scenic two-lap course starting and finishing in Nonsuch Park, which has the advantage of being within easy walking distance of Cheam Station.

We had a good turnout of 15 Striders for this race (ten male and five female). Karen Stretch had an excellent run to be the sixth woman to finish. She placed 91st overall, recording 40 minutes 55 seconds. Our men were led by Ernie Hann, who had won the weekly parkrun in Lloyd Park the previous day and still finished 22nd in a personal best of 36 minutes 41 seconds. Our second man home was Graeme Drysdale who placed 88th overall in 40 minutes 40 seconds. Stephen Harrison completed the scoring trio in 106th (41.45), and was followed by Steve Massey, Alan Dolton and Alan Purchase. Colin Cotton ran well to place fourth in the over-60 category, recording 47 minutes 08. Our second woman to finish was Becky Laurence, who placed 234th overall in 48 minutes 22. Linda Daniel completed the

scoring trio in 306th (53.00), and was followed by Karen Peake and Pat Edwards. Our men's contingent was completed by Peter Laurence, Nick Fiander and John O'Dowd.

Although we had fielded a complete men's team, which we had not managed in the previous league race, many of the other clubs were also stronger, so that we repeated our 15th place from the first race. Our total of 34 points from two races saw us slip slightly to 18th, although our lead over the Harriers had risen from one point to six points. Our women placed 11th in the women's team event, giving us 20 points. This placed us equal 17th in the league table, four points ahead of the Harriers, who had had the individual winner of the women's race (Lisa Harris) but had not managed to field a complete team of three.

The third Surrey Road League race of 2014 was the Dorking 10-mile road race, on Sunday 1 June. We had eight male Striders for this race but unfortunately only managed to field two women, one short of a complete team. Rachel Lindley had an excellent run to be the third woman to finish, recording 66 minutes 36 seconds, which was the fastest time by a female Strider for 13 years and lifted her to third place in our all-time women's rankings. Becky Laurence also ran well to record 78 minutes 25 seconds, placing her 41st in the women's race. Not having a third woman meant that we finished 18th in the team event and also slipped to 18th place in the league table after three races.

Our men were led by Krzysztof Klidzia who placed 38th in 61 minutes 51. Simon Ambrosi was 64th (64.26) and Graeme Drysdale completed the scoring trio in 121st (68.53). They were followed by Chris Morton, Andy Perks, Darren Woods, Steve Smith and Jonathan Burke. We finished 16th in the team event, and our total of 50 points from three races saw us climb slightly to equal 16th in the league table.

This marks the midway point of the season, with three races remaining. The next race is the Richmond 10K on Sunday 22 June. This is on a flat course and a scenic route alongside the River Thames, as is the fifth race, which is the Elmbridge 10K on Sunday 20 July. (The Elmore 7 was included in the league last year, but has been dropped this year, as the organisers have unfortunately decided to change the date so that it is on the same weekend as the Elmbridge 10K.) The season finishes with the Wimbledon five-kilometre road race, which was originally advertised as being on 10 August but has now been put back a week: the Hercules Wimbledon website states that is being held on Sunday 17 August.



Rachel Lindley, who placed third at Dorking, pictured in the Beckenham Relays

SURREY ROAD LEAGUES: MID-SEASON TABLES

MEN

Clapham Chasers	87
Ranelagh	84
South London Harriers	84
Stragglers	84
Hercules-Wimbledon	77
Tadworth	77
Elmbridge	69
Herne Hill	67
Reigate	64
Collingwood	63
Sutton Runners	62
West Four Harriers	61
Guildford & Godalming	59
Wimbledon Windmilers	59
Camberley	53
Dorking	50
Striders of Croydon	50
Epsom Oddballs	47
Woking	41
Croydon Harriers	37
26.2 RRC	35
Epsom & Ewell	31
Lingfield	28
Redhill Royal Mail	16
London City	13
Thames Hare & Hounds	12
Waverley	6

Four clubs (Belgrave, Dulwich, Kingston and Windle Valley) have entered the league but have had no male finishers in any of the first three races.



The start of the Dorking 10: the third race in this year's Surrey Road League

WOMEN

Clapham Chasers	87
Ranelagh	87
South London Harriers	80
Elmbridge	79
Stragglers	77
Collingwood	71
Sutton Runners	66
Guildford & Godalming	62
Wimbledon Windmilers	62
Woking	52
Reigate	48
Herne Hill	47
Epsom Allsorts	45
Epsom & Ewell	45
Camberley	40
Epsom Oddballs	36
Tadworth	36
Striders of Croydon	34
Croydon Harriers	28
West Four Harriers	25
London City	24
Hercules-Wimbledon	21
Kingston	20
Lingfield	16
Thames Hare & Hounds	14
Dorking	13
26.2 RRC	10

Four clubs (Belgrave, Dulwich, Waverley and Windle Valley) have entered the league but have had no female finishers in any of the first three races.



Lisa Harris, the first woman at both the Sutton 10K and Dorking 10-mile races

THE SURREY MASTERS CHAMPIONSHIPS (by Alan Dolton)

More Striders compete in marathons and ultra-marathons than compete in track and field events. Nevertheless, we do have some members who particularly enjoy competing on the track. For some of our most track-minded members, the main focus of their summer season is the annual Surrey Masters Championships, which take place in late May or early June. This year they took place on Sunday 1 June, and were again held at Ewell. Five of us travelled there in search of county medals. And we were very pleased to have three loyal supporters – Lorraine, Kim and Dee – who also travelled to Ewell to cheer us on.

There was some controversy in the run-up to the championships when the Surrey AA issued a statement that medals would only be awarded to athletes who achieved the standard set by the British Masters Athletics Federation (BMAF). The BMAF standards are designed for the national championships, and are rather high, so that this decision provoked objections from several clubs and athletes, including an objection on behalf of Striders. Fortunately the Surrey AA backed down and the meeting organiser, Camilla Thrush, obtained an agreement that the standard for medals would be the SCVAC standard, which is considerably lower than the BMAF standard. (The initials 'SCVAC' stand for 'Southern Counties Veterans Athletics Club', which is the body which organises the Southern Veterans League which Striders have competed in since 1996. As an example of the difference in standards, the SCVAC medal standard for a woman aged 35-39 and racing at 5000m is 23 minutes 39, whereas the BMAF standard is 19 minutes 30. For a man of the same age, the SCVAC medal standard is 20 minutes 30, whereas the BMAF standard is 16 minutes 20.)

As usual, the first Strider to enter the action was the longest-serving member of our squad, Kevin Burnett, who was largely responsible for Striders initially registering as a track and field club in the mid-1990s. Kevin currently holds all the club's over-70 records, and had entered six events: all five of the throwing events, plus the 3000 metre walk. He claimed silver medals in all of his six events, setting a new club age-group record for the 3000 metre walk of 22 minutes 54.7 seconds. He also recorded 17 metres 51 with the discus, 17 metres 39 with the hammer, 15 metres 56 with the javelin, 7 metres 23 with the heavy hammer and 6 metres 36 with the shot.

Our next athlete to compete was Sandra Francis, who had in 2012 become the first female Strider ever to win a Surrey championship, when she won a hat-trick of gold medals in the over-55 women's 80 metre hurdles, long jump and triple jump. In 2013 a knee injury dissuaded her from attempting to retain her titles, and in 2014 she did not compete in the hurdles or the triple jump, but she did regain her long jump title with a leap of 3 metres 38. This turned out to be Striders' only gold medal of the day. Later on Sandra also won silver medals in the 200 metres, where she set a club age-group record of 35.51 seconds, and in the 100 metres, where she ran 16.73 seconds.

Our other three competitors all came away with silver medals. I ran in the over-55 1500 metres and although I was some way behind the winner, Simon Bean of Epsom, my time of 5 minutes 29.76 was sufficient for second place. In the over-45 age-group, Paul Stanford competed in the 100, 200 and 400 metres. The 100 and 200 metres are always popular events, and both attracted strong fields, so that Paul finished just outside the medals despite recording good times of 13.33 seconds and 26.74 seconds. However Paul's persistence paid off, and he took second place in the 400 metres with a time of 60.97 seconds. Both his 200 metre and 400 metre times were new club over-45 records. Meanwhile Paul Cripps had gained a silver medal in the over-45 high jump, clearing 1 metre 45 despite nursing an injury sustained while doing the long jump in our league match two weeks earlier.

So our small team of five athletes came away with 12 medals (one gold and eleven silver). This was just two less than we managed in 2013, when the opposition for some events was slightly weaker, and we had gained six gold medals plus four silver and four bronze. However, for the second successive year we won more medals than our local rivals Croydon Harriers, who gained a total of nine medals, eight of which were in field events (six gold and two silver), and who gained just a solitary silver medal on the track. And two second-claim Striders also won gold medals: Maggie Statham (5000m) in the colours of Holland Sports, and David Hoben (3000m walk) in the colours of Surrey Walking Club.

I realise that some Striders may find the prospect of competing in a county championship intimidating, but in fact the standard was very varied. There were many older athletes whose performances have slowed with age but who still enjoy competing. After competing in the 1500 metres I spent the rest of the meeting track judging, and was very pleased to see a wide variety of competitors ranging from 35 to 85 years old. Indeed Eric Shirley claimed British over-85 records of 98.45 seconds for the 400 metres and 3 minutes 54.37 seconds for the 800 metres. And 80-year-old Brian Shave of Herne Hill took a gold medal by running the 1500 metres in 8 minutes 24.17 seconds. Although the sprinting and throwing events were reasonably popular, there were some small fields in the jumping events and also in the middle-distance races, meaning that many Striders (and especially many of our women) would have a realistic prospect of a county medal if they entered the right event. So I would certainly encourage more Striders who have reached the age of 35 to consider entering this event next year.



Sandra Francis – the most successful female athlete in Striders' history, having now won four gold medals in Surrey championships

BOOK REVIEW – DANIELS' RUNNING FORMULA

(by Jack Daniels: reviewed by Alan Dolton)

To most people, the name 'Jack Daniels' will probably produce an image of a glass (or a bottle) of whisky. However, many runners will know Jack Daniels as a leading American coach. In 1956, when he was 23 years old, he won a silver medal in the modern pentathlon at the Melbourne Olympics. He subsequently turned to coaching and his book 'Daniels' Running Formula' was originally published in 1998 (when he was 65 years old). A second edition appeared in 2005, and a third edition, substantially amended, was published in February 2014 (a couple of months before the author's 81st birthday).

This third edition of Daniels' book comprises 15 chapters (whereas the first edition comprised 14 and the second edition comprised 20). The first chapter is entitled 'ingredients of running success.' It discusses inherent ability, inherent motivation, and the need for consistency in training. The second chapter is entitled 'training principles and running technique'. Daniels recalls that, when he was training for the modern pentathlon, his first coach used to set a session of 10 x 400m five times each week. This is definitely not recommended: a session of 10 x 400m can be useful, but there needs to be more variety and more focus on recovery between hard sessions than this coach prescribed. Daniels also observes that it is important to avoid injury, and to reduce training when a runner is under particular stress in other aspects of his or her life. The third chapter is entitled 'aerobic training and running profiles' and discusses the need to improve one's aerobic capacity, lactate threshold and maximum oxygen consumption (also known as VO2 max).

In my opinion, the fourth and fifth chapters are the most useful feature of the book. They are entitled 'training runs and intensities' and 'VDOT values'. (Somewhat unconventionally, Daniels uses the term 'VDOT' where most coaches and physiologists use the term 'VO2 max'.) Daniels discusses easy runs, marathon-pace runs, and tempo runs at about lactate threshold. He comments that the purpose of tempo runs is 'to allow your body to improve its ability to clear blood lactate and keep it below a fairly manageable level', and recommends that these runs should be limited to about 20 minutes, although they can be preceded and followed by a period of easier running. He also recommends that a runner should do 'interval sessions' at VDOT or VO2 max. He suggests that runners can only run at their VO2 max (maximal oxygen consumption) for 11 minutes at most. An elite athlete will be able to cover about 4000 metres in 11 minutes (so that their VO2max is faster than 5000 metre pace but slower than 3000 metre pace), but many Striders will take more than 11 minutes to run 3000 metres, so for us VO2 max is faster than 3000 metre race pace. Daniels also advises that five minutes is the longest recommended duration for individual efforts in such an interval session, and that the ideal duration of each individual effort in an interval session is between three and five minutes. He therefore recommends that only elite-level athletes should do mile repetitions, and that most athletes should not do repetitions exceeding 1200 metres.

The fifth chapter includes a very useful chart enabling a runner to assess his or her current VDOT (similar to VO2 max) from recent performances over a range of distances from 1500 metres to the marathon. Interestingly, Daniels assesses that a 10km time of 34 minutes 23 gives a VDOT of 62, which should be sufficient for a well-trained runner to complete a marathon in under 2 hours 40 minutes (which would be a Striders club record). At a more modest level, a runner hoping to run a marathon in under three hours will need a VDOT of 54 (equivalent to 38 minutes 42 for 10K), and a runner hoping to run a marathon in under four hours will need a VDOT of 38 (equivalent to 52 minutes 17 for 10K). The chapter also includes a pace chart, giving suggested training intensities for easy runs, marathon-pace runs, threshold runs, and speed sessions for repetitions ranging from 200 metres to a mile,

all based on a runner's current VDOT or VO2 max. There is also a chart giving target mile times for runners aged from six to 58 – although personally I was disappointed that this chart does not cater for runners aged over 58: several Striders have shown that it is possible to remain fit and competitive well beyond one's 60th birthday.

The sixth chapter is entitled 'season training' and discusses the need to plan a running 'season' which will typically last for up to 24 weeks. For a track runner, this will typically include a gradual 18-week build-up followed by a six-week period in which the most important races take place (so, for example, some Striders may aim for the Surrey Masters Championships). For a marathon runner, a 'season' will normally comprise a gradual build-up before tapering for the selected chosen marathon; a separate chapter on marathon training appears later in the book. Runners aiming for intermediate distances may aim for a particular championship (such as the Richmond 10K, the Dorking 10 miles or the Richmond Half-Marathon, all of which incorporate the Surrey Championships), or may aim for a personal best time in a race on a fast course.

The seventh chapter is entitled 'fitness training' and is targeted at novice runners, whereas the eighth chapter goes to the other end of the spectrum, and deals with altitude training. This is an interesting discussion of a subject which is of considerable importance for elite athletes, although it is probably has less practical application for most Striders.

The next six chapters give advice on training to race specific distances, beginning with the 800 metres and ending with the marathon. This section of the book has been significantly amended since the previous two editions. Chapter nine deals with training for the 800 metres, which the first edition of the book had almost ignored. Chapter ten deals with training for races from 1500 metres to two miles. Daniels recommends that athletes aiming for these distances should do some fast repetitions of no more than two minutes, which means that for most athletes, these repetitions should be 600 metres or less. He also recommends that the total volume of fast repetitions in such a session should not exceed 5% of a runner's current weekly mileage, so that a runner who runs 40 miles per week should not do more than two miles of fast repetitions, and a runner who runs 25 miles per week should not do more than 2000 metres of fast repetitions. (Sessions for such a runner could be 10 x 200m, 5 x 400m, 3 x 600m or some combination of these distances.)

Chapter 11 deals with training for races from five kilometres to ten kilometres. In my view, this chapter is a significant improvement on the two previous editions of the book, in which the same chapter dealt with races from five kilometres to 15 kilometres, although there are substantial differences between training for a 5km and training for a 15km (and I would question how many runners actually train for a 15km, which is a rather unusual distance). Chapter 12 deals with training for cross-country races.

However it is Chapters 13 and 14 which show the greatest improvement from the two previous editions of this book. Both the first and second editions of the book had concluded with a single chapter entitled 'half-marathon to marathon', although there are very substantial differences between the two distances. For example, it would be relatively unusual for a half-marathon runner to show significant signs of glycogen depletion, whereas many marathon runners have experienced this problem (colloquially known as 'hitting the wall'). For the third edition, the subject in question has, very sensibly, been split into two chapters. Chapter 13 deals with half-marathon training. Daniels recommends that runners who are new to the half-marathon should use his VDOT chart from chapter 5 to predict their likely time, and select the appropriate pace. Thus, for example, he predicts that a 47-minute 10k runner should be able to run 1 hour 44 minutes for a half-marathon.

I suspect that most Striders will be particularly interested in chapter 14, dealing with training for the marathon. Daniels includes several different schedules, ranging from a run-walk

schedule for novices (in which the longest run-walk is for 2 hours 30 minutes) to a highly demanding schedule for those who have sufficient time and enthusiasm to run for 120 miles per week.

The final chapter of the book is entitled 'training breaks and supplemental training'. This discusses returning to running after a lay-off, and includes two pages on circuit training (which is rather less than some similar books). The appendices include a very useful pace chart (showing, for example, that someone wishing to run a marathon in under four hours needs to average 5 minutes 40 per kilometre) and a further chart which, rather oddly, gives 'pace conversions' for speeds from 1 mph to 50 mph (albeit only in whole numbers). I can see the value of the speeds from 6 mph to 12 mph, but personally I cannot see much value in including a pace chart for someone running/walking at 1 mile per hour (who would take more than 13 hours to complete a half-marathon, which might frustrate some of the marshals) or for anything faster than 20 miles per hour (which is only slightly slower than the world record for 400 metres). It would have been more sensible to exclude such speeds from the chart and replace them with intermediate speeds such as 7.5 mph, 8.5 mph, etc.

This book has many similarities with the book 'Road Racing for Serious Runners', by Pete Pfitzinger and Scott Douglas, which I reviewed in the March 2013 issue of this magazine. Both books are published by the same company (the American company 'Human Kinetics'). Personally I have a slight preference for the book by Pfitzinger and Douglas, which gives very clear advice on preparing an appropriate training schedule which includes four different types of training: long runs, lactate threshold sessions, VO2 max sessions, and speed/technique sessions. However, although Daniels' book has some eccentricities, it also has the advantage of including two very useful charts, one to give runners an indication of their current VDOT/VO2 max, and one laying down suggested training paces based on that VDOT/VO2 max.



Even at 81 years old, Jack Daniels is still coaching: his athletes include Janet Cherobon-Bawcom (pictured above), who placed 12th in the 2012 Olympic 10000m

50 YEARS AGO: LOCAL ATHLETICS IN 1964

The Surrey Cross-Country Championships were held at Coulsdon on 4 January. The winner was Barry Collins of Surrey AC (who were based at Motspur Park, and subsequently merged with Belgrave Harriers in 1982). The team event was won by Walton AC. The junior and youths' races were held one week later at Wimbledon. The winning junior team was Hercules AC (who were subsequently to merge with Wimbledon AC). Mitcham AC (who have subsequently been merged into Sutton & District) won the youths' team event. They also had the individual winner in Steve Badgery.

The Under-16 boys' championships were held separately, at Morden on 22 February. The winner was John Rix of Caterham, who later became a leading member of South London Harriers. In second place, five seconds behind, was Don Faircloth of Selhurst Grammar School. Don subsequently became one of Croydon Harriers' best ever runners, and placed third in the marathon in the 1970 Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh.

The Surrey Cross-Country League completed its second season with a match at Addington, hosted by Herne Hill, on 8 February. Walton AC won the league for the second successive year, with a score of 672 points from the four fixtures, while Belgrave again took second place with 753. The other four competing clubs were Hercules AC (1252), Mitcham (1317), Surrey AC (1488) and Herne Hill (1838). The individual champion was Bob Roath of Walton, although Gerry North of Belgrave won two of the four races. Gerry subsequently became a well-known race organiser in the Portsmouth area: he died earlier this year, aged 77.

The Inter-Counties Cross-Country Championship took place at Solihull on 7 March. Surrey won the team event in the youths' race, with their four scorers all placing in the first nine. Fred Stebbings of Croydon Harriers ran in the junior men's race and did well to finish tenth, one place ahead of Dave Holt of Hercules AC. Eight years later, Dave ran in the Olympic 10000 metres in Munich. Fred died in October 2012.

The Surrey 3000 metre steeplechase championship was held at Wimbledon on 9 May. Croydon's Fred Stebbings won, for the second successive year, in 9 minutes 15.6 seconds. The Surrey Decathlon Championship was held at Wimbledon on 9 and 10 May, and was won by Tony Tymms of Surrey AC. Don Webb of Croydon Harriers placed ninth with 3312 points, including 400 metres in 55.1 seconds and 1500 metres in 5 minutes 17.3 seconds. Fifty years later, Don regularly acts as field referee for matches at Croydon Arena.

May 1964 also saw the formation of the Rosenheim League (a track and field league for clubs in the South London area). The inaugural winners were Herne Hill, with Croydon Harriers second, Mitcham AC third, Wimbledon AC fourth and Hercules AC fifth.

The Olympic Games took place in Tokyo in October 1964. Paul Nihill was second in the 50 kilometre walk. His time of 4 hours 11 minutes 32 placed him only 19 seconds behind the winner. Paul had been brought up in Addiscombe (where he lived in Warren Road), and was a member of Surrey Walking Club.

The Surrey Cross-Country League began its third season in October 1964, with seven clubs competing, the six founder-members having been joined by Croydon Harriers (who had won the East Surrey League for the third successive year). The opening match, at Wimbledon Common, was won by Belgrave Harriers. Croydon placed sixth. They had 25 runners (which is considerably more than they have managed in more recent years). Some of them remained active club members for many years, including Mike Fleet (84th), Ken Crooke (133rd) and Don Webb (144th). Don Faircloth placed fourth in the Under-17 race.

10 YEARS AGO: LOCAL ATHLETICS IN SUMMER 2004

On 6 June, Striders' women produced a good team performance in the Dorking 10-mile road race. They finished fifth in the team event, and climbed to equal second in the Surrey Road League. Emma Haillay placed 25th in 78 minutes 49, with Kerry Backshell 35th (80.24) and Steph Upton 44th (82.08). Striders' men placed tenth in the team event. Justin Macenhill placed 34th in 62 minutes 31, with Damian Macenhill 46th (64.14) and Gerry Crispie 69th (66.45). New member John Foster made an encouraging debut to finish 75th (67.22).

On 27 June, Striders had 22 of the 426 finishers at the Dysart 10 kilometre road race. Our men's team finished sixth, and our women were eighth. We were again led home by Justin Macenhill, who finished 27th in 36 minutes 38 seconds. Our next two finishers were both veterans, with Don Kayum placing 31st in 36 minutes 53, and Bob Ewen 32nd in 37 minutes 18. Our women were led home by Kerry Backshell, who ran 45 minutes 07 to finish 195th overall. Steph Upton was 230th in 47 minutes 06, with Elene Kayum 232nd in 47 minutes 12.

On 5 July, Striders' track and field team produced their best performance of the season in the final Southern Veterans League match, held at Croydon Arena. Our men placed third of the eight competing clubs. Nigel Davidson won the steeplechase in a new club over-40 record of 11 minutes 34.4 seconds. David Batten won the over-50 800 metres in 2 minutes 25.9 seconds, with Colin Cotton winning the B race in 2 minutes 34.3. In the overall league table both our men and women finished sixth. Special mention should go to Dave Lovell and Kevin Burnett, who were the only Striders to compete in all four fixtures.

Striders were not providing track competition for athletes aged under 35, so our talented teenager Daisy Collingridge joined Croydon Harriers as a second-claim member. During the summer Daisy set Striders' records of 2 minutes 25.2 for 800 metres and 5 minutes 34.3 for 1500 metres. Understandably, she resigned from Striders at the end of the season and became a first-claim member of Harriers (as Kieron Connor has done more recently).

On 17 July, Striders had 16 of the 245 finishers at the Elmore 7-mile road race. Our leading runner was again Justin Macenhill who placed eighth in 40 minutes 40 seconds. His brother Damian placed 32nd (44.34) while John Foster placed 37th (45.27). Striders' women were again led by Kerry Backshell, who finished 103rd overall in 52 minutes 04. Steph Upton also ran well for 114th (53.08) with Clare McFadzean 117th (53.40) and Emma Haillay 151st (57.46). Sadly this was Emma's last race for Striders, as she subsequently moved to Dorset.

On 25 July, Striders had 20 of the 580 finishers at the Elmbridge 10 kilometre road race. Our men's team placed eighth while our women's team was tenth. Our leading runner was again Justin Macenhill, who finished in 19th place, recording 35 minutes 24 seconds. Veteran Don Kayum was 50th (38.06), while Damian Macenhill was 53rd (38.17).

The Olympic Games took place in Athens in August. Croydon's Donna Fraser helped Britain to fourth place in the women's 4 x 400 metre relay, having placed seventh in her semi-final of the individual 400 metres, where she recorded 51.84 seconds.

The Wimbledon five-kilometre road race, which was the final match of the Surrey Road League season, took place on 22 August. Striders' men placed seventh in the match, finishing the season in sixth place of the 28 clubs in the league. Of the other local clubs, South London Harriers were eleventh while Croydon Harriers were sixteenth. Our leading runner was again Justin Macenhill, who placed 18th in 16 minutes 40 seconds. Don Kayum was 36th in 17 minutes 46, with Damian Macenhill 50th (18.25) and John Foster 53rd (18.27). Striders' women fielded a weakened team but finished the season in seventh place.



Daisy Collingridge, who still holds Striders' women's records for 800 metres, 1500 metres and long jump

STREAKING FOR TIGERS (by Ali Catt)

London Zoo is hosting a very unique event on the evening of Thursday 14th August. We are looking for animal-loving supporters to strip off and bare all for Tigers and streak around London Zoo! We hope this event will not only raise much needed funds for ZSL (Zoological Society of London) but it will also highlight and raise the profile of ZSL's work with Tigers.

Registration details are on <http://www.zsl.org/zsl-london-zoo/whats-on/streak-for-tigers>.

Once registered, all streakers will receive a fundraising pack, including a Tiger mask, as well as further information leading up to the event. We can guarantee that this will be the most fun and easiest fundraising you will ever do! The event opens at 19:00pm. The evening will be limited to the central area within ZSL London Zoo and the surrounding lawns. No animal houses will be open.

Tiger streakers will enter ZSL London Zoo via main entrance. Once inside ZSL London Zoo, all Tiger streakers are required to register. Streakers can then remove their clothes in the private participants' area. Streakers will assemble for the streak within Central Court at 20:00pm. All streakers will be given a foil to wrap around themselves until they start their streak. At a count down into the event, Streakers will be asked to remove their foils and hand these to a marshal. Streakers will then commence on the Streak for Tigers!

The Streak for Tigers route is within ZSL London Zoo and is out of view from the road and park. When streakers complete the course they will be given a wrap to cover up with as they finish within the central area. Streakers can of course carry on and always do another lap! This has been designed as a fundraising event and as one that will help to raise the profile of ZSL's work with Tigers. Therefore this very unique event is likely to receive much media attention leading up to it and on the evening. By signing up to this event, streakers and spectators are consenting to photographs and filming taking place throughout the evening.

Not quite brave enough? Come and watch! The event will have a limited number of spectator tickets for the evening. Access to the site will be limited to the area where the Streak is taking place but we can guarantee you an evening you will never forget! Please note that Spectator tickets can only be purchased by friends and family of Streakers and do not include access to the zoo during the day.



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