

Striders of Croydon

MARCH 2015 MAGAZINE



Group photo (by Linda Oxlade) from our second mobmatch against Croydon Harriers, held in conjunction with the Lloyd parkrun on 13 December 2014. As in 2013, we outnumbered and defeated our local rivals.

CONTENTS:

Dates For Your Diary
Chairman's Corner (by Robin Jamieson)
Coach Power (by Ian Campbell)
Strider Profile: Robin Jamieson
Strider Profile: Chris Morton
Strider Profile: Alan Dolton
Surrey Cross-Country League: Final Tables
Competitive Highlights: 13 December 2014 – 28 February 2015
Beware of Unmeasured Courses (by Alan Dolton)
Book Review – The Art of Running Faster
Book Review – I Also Ran (Mike Fleet's autobiography)
30 Years Ago – Local Athletics in Spring 1985
10 Years Ago – Local Athletics in Winter 2005

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sun 29 Mar – Croydon Half-Marathon (Striders hosting)
Thu 2 Apr – East Surrey League Road Race – Ewell
Sun 12 Apr – Brighton Marathon
Sun 26 Apr – London Marathon (Striders marshalling)
Sun 3 May – Ranelagh Half-Marathon (Surrey Championship) – Petersham
Sun 10 May – Sutton 10K (Surrey Road League)
Mon 18 May – Southern Veterans League – Kingsmeadow
Sun 24 May – Surrey 3000m & 5000m Track Championships – Kingsmeadow
Sun 7 June – Dorking 10 miles (including Surrey Championships & Road Lge)
Sun 7 June – Surrey Masters Championships – Ewell
Mon 15 June – Southern Veterans League – Walton-on-Thames
Sun 21 June – Richmond 10K (including Surrey Championships & Road League)
Mon 29 June – Southern Veterans League – Ewell
Mon 13 July – Southern Veterans League – Croydon Arena
Sat 18 Jul – Elmore 7 miles (Surrey Road League)
Sat 25 Jul – British Masters Championships – Birmingham
Sun 26 Jul – Elmbridge 10K (Surrey Road League)
Sun 9 Aug – Wimbledon 5K (including Surrey Championships)

CHAIRMAN'S CORNER MARCH 2015

Good luck to everyone running in the Brighton, London or any other marathons in the next few months. I hope you have enjoyed this year's series of training runs. Unlike last year when we suffered floods and train cancellations this year's series has been blessed with more trains, reasonably good weather but astonishingly sticky mud in places. I have just been looking back at the previous schedules for these runs. Although there have been longer runs in the marathon training season for many years, the first published schedule I think was in 2009 when I listed eight runs starting in mid-February and we didn't do the Merstham 15 until March 8th.

We now have 18 runs in the series, starting in November, and had already scaled the North Downs from Merstham six weeks earlier. I reckon this is the practical limit for the number and time span of these runs but if anyone has any suggestions for any that could be changed I am happy to consider them. We have nothing scheduled for Easter Sunday yet. Any suggestions?

The Croydon Half is coming up in less than three weeks. Thank you to everyone who has offered to help so far. We can never have enough helpers so please offer to help if you haven't done so yet, especially as it looks like they are replacing the lamp posts on Park Hill which is going to add to the fun. Our sponsors, Streets Ahead estate agents are celebrating their 25th year and are hoping to have a BBQ for everyone after the event. So come along... Though of course this will be the year when it chucks it down.

I am hoping to step back from the Croydon Half a bit for next year and hand over most of the actual race organisation to Nice Works, who also run the Croydon 10k for Croydon Harriers. I am aiming to have a more detailed discussion with them about who does what at this year's event. I will then continue in a coordination role for next year. If anyone would like to assist me for the 2106 race, with a view to taking it over in 2017, please let me know. I will advertise this with a bit more details once I have confirmed the division of labour with Nice Works.

As usual a full magazine and an article from Ian Campbell on the topic of coaching. Someone suggested some profiles of club members, which apparently used to appear in the magazine many years ago. So for our sins some background detail for me, Chris Morton and Alan.

Well done to everyone who competed in club competitive events in the past year. And well done to James Bennett for winning a "half marathon" by such a margin. You could always have a go at the Croydon Half which is certified though perhaps not the best for a PB. You may be interested to know that, as a byproduct of certifying our course, it was confirmed that starting and finishing at the corner of Grimwade and Sandilands and following the full Croydon 10k circuit without the start and finish stretch in Lloyd Park Avenue is a measured six miles.

There are a couple of book reviews and the usual records of the past from Alan. The magazine is packed with information but is very dependent on Alan's experience. Come on everyone, provide some articles, photographs, games, puzzles or quizzes for next newsletter. Anything to make Alan's job as magazine editor easier,

May all your runs be in sunlit forests.

Robin Jamieson

COACH POWER (by Ian Campbell)

Unbelievably we are already **nine weeks into 2015**. That leaves less than two and half months or ten weeks, or to really focus the mind, **seventy training days left**, not including any taper time, to nail that Spring marathon. Where on earth did the time go I hear you say?

If you haven't quite got your training in order yet, it's time to address that and get in some consistent weeks of training over the next eight weeks. That leaves you two weeks of taper before your Spring marathon.

I have found out this year, since I got myself a coach, that more focus on quality over quantity, and making those training sessions count, produces results. So where I would have run every day and done a 5, 6 or 7 mile session at whatever pace I considered appropriate, now my training is more likely to be a **10 mile progression run** or an **8 mile hill session** and there are **guilt-free recovery days** included. The most important thing I have really benefited from by having a coach is the level of accountability it brings to your training (and really to yourself). Whilst I was disciplined in running almost every day it brings a **deeper level of commitment** knowing that you will have to at sometime tell your coach what you have been up to - or not for that matter! And whilst they are not your mother, father or your schoolteacher it's going to be a bit lame just saying 'I didn't feel like it on that day'.

A good coach will guide you through the appropriate training plan, mentor you and assist you through the ups and downs (mainly the downs!) for when it doesn't go to plan. Remember, the **plan is the ideal world** but it's not reality and obviously things happen in our lives that impact the training that you would like to do, like you get ill, you have family or work commitments that mean you have to reschedule or drop training sessions, or you are just plain over -and need a rest. When it doesn't go to plan it can all **feel overwhelming**, thinking that you have failed and that your objective race will not be achievable and that you must catch up those miles (btw – big mistake!) but a good coach will guide you through that with skill and advise you on what options you have and guide you with the best course of action. It may simply be that you carry on with your training plan or it's altered in some way to take into account the dropped training sessions.

I guess the point is that if you are following a marathon plan and you don't have a coach and you suddenly find yourself not keeping up with what is on the schedule **it's not a calamity**. But, it's a great idea to **get advice** and not let it worry you. Get on the runners forums, talk to others with experience for their advice **or just get yourself a coach, it's never too late!**



STRIDER PROFILE: ROBIN JAMIESON

Current age-group: M65

Home Town: Leeds, though spent nearly all my working life in York.

When did you move to Croydon: 1996

When did you begin running: Regularly at School from 1961. I led my first longer run in 1964 when a group of us ran from our school in Fleetwood round Blackpool Tower and back - just short of 12 miles. Then a break while at uni. Perhaps only once a month for a jog until the late 1980s when I started Orienteering.

When did you join Striders: 2001

Have you been a member of any other running clubs: Not running clubs but Orienteering Clubs. I joined Eborienteers in York about 1990 then transferred to CROC (Croydon Orienteering Club - now merged with SLOW) in 96. But found I was doing more running (on my own) than Orienteering and joined Striders. About the same time I decided I ought to have a go at a marathon before I was too old.

Have you competed in any other sports: Orienteering (and rifle shooting at Bisley a very long time ago). I entered a sailing dinghy race with a friend once but we capsized on the start line.

What was your best ever race: My PB of 3:53:56 in 2008 at the London Marathon. The only Marathon that I kept running at a decent pace and didn't hit the "wall".

What is your favourite event: Probably the Hastings Half, though I have only run it once. Simply because of the wonderful long down hill second half and where I got my PB.

What is the most memorable place you have run: Not in a race but in, around and over the Langdales in the Lake District. Also the Esterel Massif in the South of France overlooking Cannes.

What are your current running goals: Just to keep running, encourage others, not get injured and claim at least one M70 record in 2017.



The Langdales

STRIDER PROFILE: CHRIS MORTON

Current age-group: M50

Home Town: Reading

When did you move to Croydon: 2000

When did you begin running: 2000

When did you join Striders: 2000 !

Have you been a member of any other running clubs: No

Have you competed in any other sports: Football, badminton, cricket.

What was your best ever race: probably Greensand Marathon, 10th in 3 hours 40, or Vanguard Way Marathon, 4th in 3 hours 58.

What is your favourite event: When things are going well I love the Eridge 10, Near As Dammit, Switchback, Dash for the Splash, Parliament Hill, Leith Hill Half but when things are a struggle I hate all of the above !!

What is the most memorable place you have run: Maybe La Crevillenta in Spain on New Year's Eve – the whole town seemed to turn up to watch the race and it was a great Spanish fiesta.

What are your current running goals: Personally – to maintain my age-grading scores. For the club – to see the men's team promoted to Surrey League Division 1.



The start of the San Silvestre Crevillenta road race on New Year's Eve.

STRIDER PROFILE: ALAN DOLTON

Current age-group: M55

Home Town: Elstead, a village near the Surrey-Hampshire border.

When did you move to Croydon: Jan 1980, when I was posted here by the Civil Service.

When did you begin running: At university, to get fit for football. I was soon talked into joining the college cross-country team and realised that I was better at running than I was at football. Didn't begin serious running until February 1980, when I joined Croydon Harriers.

When did you join Striders: 1998, to train for my first marathon.

Have you been a member of any other running clubs: Croydon Harriers (February 1980 – August 1998), mainly as a track runner. I was a member of the Croydon team which won Division One of the Southern League in 1985 (racing at 1500 metres and 5000 metres).

Have you competed in any other sports: Very low standard football: I retired after suffering a knee injury in 1978.

What was your best ever race: Finishing second in the Surrey 10000 metre championship in 1987, in a lifetime best of 31 minutes 01.9 seconds.

What is your favourite event: I enjoy the annual Surrey Masters Track & Field Championships, as I still like racing at shorter distances against runners of my own age.

What is the most memorable place you have run: The beaches of Southern Fuerteventura, when the tide is going out so that the sand is relatively firm. But too much running on sand is not good for my ageing calf muscles.

What are your current running goals: To keep enjoying my running, and to keep competitive in track races for my age group. I am still hoping that, in 22 years' time, I will be competing in international championships in the over-80 category!!



Playa de Sotavento, in southern Fuerteventura

SURREY CROSS-COUNTRY LEAGUES: FINAL TABLES

MEN – DIVISION TWO

Clapham 663 (promoted)
Guildford 1188 (promoted)
Striders 1704
Ful-on-Triathlon 1920
Walton 2002
Dulwich 2159
Wimbledon Windmilers 2184
Epsom & Ewell 2227 (relegated)
Stragglers 2333 (relegated)

Croydon Harriers and Reigate were relegated from Division One.
Dorking and West Four Harriers were promoted from Division Three.

WOMEN – DIVISION TWO

Ful-on-Triathlon A 274 (promoted)
Dorking A 433 (promoted)
Woking A 462 (promoted)
Elmbridge A 576
Striders A 756
Ful-on-Triathlon B 826
Kent A 931
Holland Sports A 1338
Sutton A 1340
Collingwood A 1487
Epsom Allsorts A 1508
Kingston A 1521
Tadworth A 1544
Walton A 1612
Dorking B 1693
Epsom Oddballs A 1722
Runnymede A 1734
Barnes A 1785
Windrush Triathlon A 1809
Lingfield A 1836
Dulwich Park A 2074
Striders B 2245
Woking B 2312
Elmbridge B 2485
Epsom Allsorts B 2519
Croydon Harriers A 2531
Sutton B 2691
British Airways A 2754
Dulwich Park B 3130
Collingwood B 3155

These were the only Division Two teams to compete in all four matches.
Epsom & Ewell, Wimbledon Windmilers and 26.2RRC were relegated from Division One.



**Our women's team at their Surrey League match at Richardson Evans Playing Fields, Wimbledon.
Left to right = Jessica, Selena, Steph, Debra, Linda, Rachel, Josephine, Victoria, Alice.**



**Most of our men's team pictured after their Division Two race at Lloyd Park on 7 February.
Back row = Geoff, Krzysztof, Steve M, Greg, Simone, Darren, Ernie, Matt, Simon.
Front row = Lee, Damian, Colin, Andy, Justin. (Bill and Steve S also ran)**

COMPETITIVE HIGHLIGHTS: 13 DEC 2014 – 28 FEB 2015

The second annual 'mob match' between Striders and local rivals Croydon Harriers took place on Saturday 13 December. For the second successive year Striders' superior strength in depth gave them victory in the team event, by 2608 points to 1952. Striders had a total of 31 runners finishing in under 25 minutes compared to only 21 Harriers, and overall Striders had a total of 58 finishers, compared with 37 from Harriers. New member Peter Mills was second (18.24) and Krzysztof Klidzia third (18.32), while Rachel Lindley was the first woman to finish, placing 14th overall in 20 minutes 04.

In the Surrey Cross-Country Championships at Lloyd Park on 3 January, Striders' best performance came from James Bennett who placed 37th of the 236 finishers, covering the very muddy twelve-kilometre course in 46 minutes 29 seconds. Matt Morgan was 73rd (48.52), with Ernie Hann 85th (50.02), Simon Ambrosi 94th (50.51), Krzysztof Klidzia 99th (51.07) and Damian Macenhill 100th (51.15). Striders placed ninth out of the 17 complete teams. For Striders' women, Serena Stracey was 64th of the 129 finishers, covering the eight-kilometre course in 39 minutes 15. Debra Bourne was 88th (42.55) and Katie McInnes 113th (47.48).

In the penultimate Surrey Women's League Division Two match of the season, at Wimbledon Common on 10 January, Rachel Lindley ran very well to place fourth out of the 166 finishers, covering the muddy five-mile course in 33 minutes 45. Josephine Thompson was 23rd (38.12), with Steph Upton 30th (38.50), Alice Ewen 43rd (40.18) and Selena Wong completing the A team in 71st (43.09). They placed sixth out of the 34 teams.

Later in the day Striders' men competed in their Division Two match at the same venue. They placed fifth in the match, but remained third in the overall Division Two table. James Bennett was 11th (29.52) with Simone Luciani 17th (30.08) and Matt Morgan 23rd (30.42). Phil Coales, making his Surrey League debut, finished 48th (31.38) with Krzysztof Klidzia 55th (31.55), Damian Macenhill 60th (32.11), Justin Macenhill 68th (32.29), Simon Ambrosi 83rd (33.14), Mike Stewart 103rd (33.48) and Greg Williams 110th (33.56).

In the final Surrey Cross-Country League Division Two match of the season, at Lloyd Park on 7 February, Striders did very well to place second of the nine clubs, and finished third in the final Division Two table. Simone Luciani ran very well to place ninth of the 157 finishers, covering the very muddy five-mile course in 31 minutes 25 seconds. Matt Morgan also ran well to place 17th (32.04) with Bill Makuwa 26th (32.25), Ernie Hann 33rd (33.05), Krzysztof Klidzia 36th (33.13) and Lee Flanagan 37th (33.19). Steve Starvis was 41st (33.24) with Justin Macenhill 42nd (33.26), Damian Macenhill 57th (34.29) and Simon Ambrosi completing the scoring team in 71st (35.20).

On the same day Striders' women placed sixth in their Division Two match at Coulsdon. The A team were led by Steph Upton who placed 29th of the 159 finishers, covering the five-mile course in 39 minutes 35 seconds. Alice Ewen was 38th (40.51), Josephine Thompson 39th (40.54), Becky Laurence 41st (41.11) and Debra Bourne 46th (41.49). They finished fifth in the final Division Two table. Striders' B team finished the season in 22nd place, and were the third best B team: we would have a better chance of promotion to Division One if the women's league used the same ten-to-score system as the men's league.

In the National Cross-Country Championships, at Parliament Hill on 21 February, Striders' best performance came from Rachel Lindley who placed 122nd in the senior women's race. Steph Upton was 406th, Alice Ewen 424th and Adele Boesinger 584th. Striders' women were 51st in the team event. Simone Luciani was 360th in the men's race.

BEWARE OF UNMEASURED COURSES (by Alan Dolton)

When we run in a track race, we can be confident that the track has been officially measured and certified as exactly 400 metres, so that provided that we run the correct number of laps, we can be confident that we have run an accurately measured distance. When we run in a cross-country race, such as the popular Surrey League races, we accept that while the course may be advertised as five miles, it may not in fact be precisely five miles: some courses may be slightly under-distance while others may be somewhat over-distance. (For example, the traditional Striders five-mile cross-country course in Lloyd Park is definitely longer than the slightly different course which the Harriers now use.) This does not matter to most of us, as conditions for a cross-country race vary greatly: some races may be held in fast dry conditions whereas others will be held in heavy mud, so that most runners enter a Surrey League race looking to achieve a particular position (such as placing in the top 50 or top 100), rather than trying to achieve a 'personal best'.

So what happens when we enter a road race? Some Striders may enter a road race because it is particularly scenic or challenging, and may not be concerned with their official time. But many Striders will enter road races in the hope of achieving a personal best time, and it would be very frustrating to enter and complete a marathon, and subsequently be told that the course was actually a quarter of a mile short.

In an attempt to ensure that road races are accurately measured, UK Athletics have instituted an official policy of providing a measuring service for courses. Those Striders who are interested in the details can find more information on the official website <http://www.coursemeasurement.org.uk/>. Most major races, such as the London Marathon and Brighton Marathon, and most races organised by local athletic clubs, including Striders' very own Croydon Half-Marathon which will be held for the fifth time later this month, have certificates confirming that the course has been accurately measured. Of course, it is just possible that emergency road works or a road accident may force a race organiser to alter a course at the last moment: this happened a few years ago at the Sidcup 10 miles and I can also recall it happening some years earlier at the Hercules-Wimbledon 10 miles, but fortunately such events are rare, and in general one can be confident that a personal best achieved on a course with a UKA certificate is accurate.

Earlier Striders can vouch for the usefulness of such a service, because there were a couple of occasions in the 1980s when club members thought that they had achieved a particularly notable time, only to discover that the course was short of the advertised distance. The first of these took place at Crystal Palace on 30 December 1984, with a 'road race' on the tarmac paths within the grounds of Crystal Palace, which was advertised as 10 kilometres. One of Striders' youngest members, Simon Smith, set what would then have been a Striders club record of 35 minutes 15. However, many of the leading finishers achieved times which were significantly quicker than their lifetime bests, and the organisers subsequently agreed that the course was short. (It was probably at least 300 metres short, as I placed 22nd in 30 minutes 11 seconds, which was almost a minute faster than my lifetime best of 31 minutes 01 on an officially measured course.)

Another example took place on 1 November 1987, when a newly-formed local athletic club named Redhill & Surrey Beagles, who have subsequently disbanded, organised what was advertised as a ten-mile road race on a new course, which had not been officially measured, and which started and ended at Chipstead Rugby Club. Many of the runners set what appeared to be new personal bests, but the course was subsequently measured by a member of South London Harriers who found that it was more than 400 yards short of the advertised distance. This helped to explain why Striders' first five finishers, and Croydon

Harriers' first four finishers, had all appeared to set new personal bests. (Of the nine runners in question, Nigel Davidson ran a faster time at Tadworth five years later, but none of the other eight managed to reach their Chipstead times on an officially measured course.) It subsequently transpired that the race organiser, who was not herself a road runner, had measured the route by driving round it in her car and using the car's milometer to judge the distance. While a few Striders may possibly measure their training routes in this way, this is certainly not a method of measuring courses which meets the requirements of UK Athletics as laid down on <http://www.coursemeasurement.org.uk/>. This was particularly frustrating for those Striders who had entered the race hoping for a personal best, because in general races organised by athletic clubs usually meet the UKA requirements, and it tends to be 'fun runs', intended to raise money for charity, which do not bother to comply with UKA's requirements.

The recent increase in the number of 'fun runs' and informal races intended to raise money for charity has increased the possibility that a Strider may enter such an event without initially realising that the course has not been officially measured. For example, the Stroke Association organised what was advertised as a 10k in Hyde Park last September. Hyde Park is a venue at which it should be possible to ensure that the distance is accurate. However the Stroke Association did not do so, and although the event raised a lot of money for charity, it was subsequently accepted that the course was short. (One of the runners to be denied an official personal best was Alice Ewen of Striders, who finished in 41 minutes 42, more than two minutes faster than her official personal best of 44 minutes 10.)

More recently, there was a high-profile example of a Strider achieving an outstanding performance on a course which is not officially measured on Sunday 1 March, when James Bennett ran in the Brands Hatch Half-Marathon, organised by the British Heart Foundation. A search through the forums of Runner's World indicates that the British Heart Foundation have previously been criticised for advertising 10K races on courses which have been less than the advertised distance, and unfortunately it appears that they did not bother to obtain a UKA certificate for this particular race. James has established himself as our leading runner with some excellent recent performances, notably in the Surrey Cross-Country Championships in January and again in the Bramley 20-mile road race in February, which is an officially certified course and where he recorded an excellent chip time of 1 hour 53 minutes 59 seconds. At Brands Hatch James recorded an astonishing time of 69 minutes 50 seconds, which is more than three minutes faster than the official club half-marathon record which Simon Morris set at the Reading Half-Marathon (on an officially certified course) in 1986. James finished almost 12 minutes ahead of the runner-up, Stuart Penman of Wimbledon Windmilers, who has an official half-marathon personal best of 82 minutes 47 seconds (set on a certified course at Ealing) and who ran 81 minutes 40 seconds at Brands Hatch. It is also worth noting that the Brands Hatch course is distinctly undulating and that it included off-road sections: it was not entirely on fast tarmac paths. Unfortunately the fact that the organisers did not obtain a UKA certificate of accuracy means that there must be an element of doubt as to the exact race distance, which is frustrating because even if he had had to run an extra half a mile, James would still have finished inside Simon Morris' existing club record. It would be good to see just how fast James can run on an officially measured half-marathon course such as Hastings, Paddock Wood or Croydon.

Clearly there will be occasions when Striders enter a road race for the experience without being concerned as to the accuracy of the distance. For example, very few people will enter the Elmore 7-mile road race in July with the aim of achieving a personal best: there are so few seven-mile road races that athletes do not tend to compare their seven-mile PBs, and the Elmore course is renowned for being undulating if not positively hilly. But those Striders who are interested in achieving a personal best would be well advised to look for races which do have a UKA certificate of accuracy. (Incidentally, all the races in the Surrey Road League, advertised on page 2 of this magazine, meet this requirement.)

BOOK REVIEW – THE ART OF RUNNING FASTER

(by Julian Goater: reviewed by Alan Dolton)

Julian Goater was one of Britain's leading distance runners of the early 1980s. He is probably best known for his outstanding win in the 1981 National Cross-Country Championships at Parliament Hill Fields, held on a course which had become exceptionally muddy following torrential rain, and which has been described as the most difficult 'National' since 1972 (when the race was held at Sutton Coldfield in such a severe blizzard that one of the marshals died of hypothermia shortly after the finish). Goater coped with the mud far better than any of his rivals, winning by almost two minutes, which was one of the biggest winning margins in the history of the race. Goater was not quite as successful on the track, having narrowly missed selection for the 1980 Olympics, but he still places eighth in the British all-time 10000 metre rankings, with a best time of 27 minutes 34 seconds, set in 1982. He subsequently became a successful coach. Among the athletes he coaches is Cecilia Morrison, who in 2012 set a British over-70 women's 5000 metre record of 22 minutes 06.2 seconds (a time which many younger Striders would be happy to achieve).

Goater's book 'The Art of Running Faster' is divided into 13 chapters and into two parts, the first of which is entitled 'Building the Base' and the second is entitled 'Sharpening the Knife'. The first chapter ('pushing the limits') observes that, while many runners appear to be obsessed with improving their stamina, they should also aim to improve their speed, suppleness, strength and running technique. The second chapter ('aiming true') recommends that athletes should do at least one long run and at least one repetition session as part of their week's training: he also recommends fartlek sessions (including some faster efforts on mixed terrain), and some easy recovery runs. The third chapter ('running with skill') encourages runners to improve their technique: he suggests that many runners need to improve their stride-rate and shorten their stride-length. He expands on this in the fourth chapter ('gearing up for success'), in which he comments that many runners take too long a stride when running up hills.

The fifth chapter is a brief but very useful guide to stretching for runners. Goater comments that some runners are deterred from stretching by the wide variety of possible stretches. He picks out six stretches (one each for hamstrings, quadriceps, adductors, each of the calf muscles and the piriformis) to give a short but effective way for runners to maintain and improve their flexibility. This is followed by a chapter entitled 'take a deep breath', which encourages runners to try to improve their lung capacity by breathing more deeply. The final chapter in this part of the book explains the benefits of joining a running club for company, coaching and motivation. Goater observes that 'running as part of a club team, whatever your level, gives you more motivation and inspiration than running on your own, and that helps you dig deep and discover your potential'.

The second part of the book begins with a chapter encouraging runners to do some training on hills. (Most Striders should be well aware of the value of this, as we are fortunate to have our base very close to the North Downs, giving our 'routemasters' a good selection of hills to choose from for our Wednesday and Sunday runs, and our local parkrun also includes an uphill section on each lap.) This is followed by a chapter entitled 'strength in the fields', encouraging runners to improve their strength by taking part in cross-country races.

The tenth chapter deals with speed training. Goater recommends that runners should include regular speed sessions for at least ten months of each year, and encourages runners to vary their sessions, rather than repeating the same session every week. (Our club sessions on Tuesdays and Thursdays deliberately vary from week to week.)

The eleventh chapter deals with injuries. Besides qualifying as a coach, Goater also qualified as a sports massage therapist, and not surprisingly he advises runners who have any type of minor injury to visit a sports massage therapist without delay. He also advises runners who are training hard to visit a therapist even if they are not injured, observing that 'a sports massage therapist can identify imbalances and treat them before you're aware of them and before they develop into injuries'.

The penultimate chapter, entitled 'all in your head', deals with the psychological aspects of running, while the final chapter ('reaching your peak') deals with the process of peaking and tapering for an important race. Goater advises runners to 'focus on an important race months in advance and use other races to help you build up to the important one'. For many Striders, the focus of their training will be a marathon: but for others, it may be a particular championship (such as the Surrey Masters Championships, or one of the Surrey road championships such as the Ranelagh Half-Marathon or the Dorking 10 miles); or it may be a race on a particularly fast course which gives a good chance of a personal best.

I found this to be an inspiring book, with some interesting anecdotes about Goater's days as an international-class runner as well as quite a lot of training advice. I do not share all Goater's views; for example, I do not share his enthusiasm for fartlek sessions, because my experience as a coach is that many novice runners find these to be too unstructured, and can end up doing them either too hard or not hard enough, whereas with repetitions over a set distance it is much easier for a runner or a coach to judge the appropriate pace. However I would definitely recommend this book to anyone who is serious about trying to improve their running performance.



Cecilia Morrison, who is coached by Julian Goater, and who holds the British over-70 women's 5000 metre record of 22 minutes 06 seconds

BOOK REVIEW – I ALSO RAN

(by Mike Fleet: reviewed by Alan Dolton)

In September 1962 Mike Fleet ran a half-mile in 1 minute 48.9 seconds (which equates to 1 minute 48.2 for the slightly shorter metric distance of 800 metres), and later that year he finished fifth in the Empire Games, in a race won by Olympic champion Peter Snell. 1962 was also the year when a Liverpool-based pop group called the Beatles had an audition with Decca Records. Decca's A&R executive, Dick Rowe, was not impressed with their audition and did not offer them a contract, reportedly telling their manager Brian Epstein that "guitar groups are on the way out". Later that year the Beatles signed a recording contract with Parlophone, with whom they had a very successful career, and Dick Rowe went down in musical history as "the man who rejected the Beatles".

At this point, some younger Striders may be wondering why I am referring to Decca and Parlophone. The reason is that, to an earlier generation of Striders, Mike Fleet has gone down in club history as "the man who rejected Striders" or, more precisely, as "the man who rejected Steve Owen". For in 1982, when Steve Owen was enquiring about joining a running club and training for the London Marathon, it was Mike Fleet whom he telephoned, and was surprised to be told that Croydon Harriers did not have anyone to coach novice road runners. The result was that Steve Owen and Mick Meech, who both worked for Philips – which was one of Croydon's largest employers at that time – decided to form their own club. And after a change of name in 1996, the club which they formed has grown into Croydon's largest road running club – 'Striders of Croydon'. (There is a more detailed account of Striders' formation in Colin Golding's article in the Summer 2007 edition of this magazine. Our annual 'Owen Trophy' is named after Steve Owen, who became our first chairman.)

In defence of Mike, it should be pointed out that he was actually correct in that at the time when Steve Owen telephoned him, Harriers did not have a qualified road running coach, and had not done so since the retirement of their former coach Brian Proctor in the 1970s. (In 1965 Brian had run a marathon in 2 hours 39, which is faster than any Strider has achieved.) A 1981 Croydon Harriers club newsletter lists fifteen qualified club coaches, of whom six specialised in sprints and/or hurdles, three (including Mike himself) in middle-distance running and six in field events. So it is arguable that Mike has taken the blame for the failings of some of the Harriers' road runners who had been born in the 1930s and 1940s, and who had not been interested in obtaining a coaching qualification and in helping younger road runners. Be that as it may, Harriers' loss turned out to be Striders' gain.

More than 50 years after he represented Britain in the Empire Games, Mike Fleet still holds the Croydon Harriers 800 metre club record, and he has continued to serve the club as a coach and an official. Mike was also an excellent 400 metre runner. He raced much less at 1500m, although he did run a mile in 4 minutes 17.

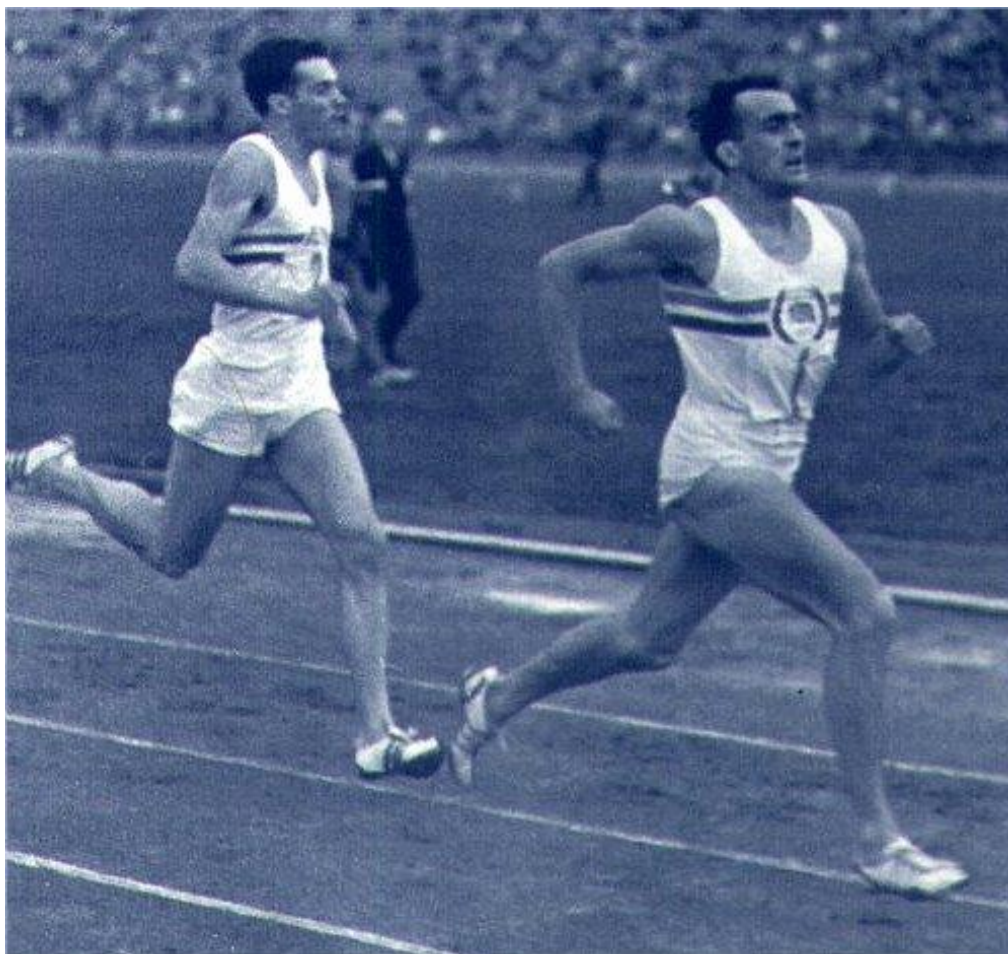
Mike's background as a 400/800 metre runner is in line with his contemporary Ann Packer (and with some subsequent Olympians such as the 1976 champion Alberto Juantorena) but contrasts with most of Britain's subsequent 800m runners such as Seb Coe, Steve Ovett, and Kelly Holmes, all three of whom were primarily 800/1500 runners rather than 400/800 runners. Therefore I was particularly interested to read Mike's details of his training and racing, and he seems to have benefited from weight training with another Croydon international and long-standing club record-holder, Nick Morgan.

Although Mike spent almost 40 years as Croydon Harriers' secretary, this book is very much his story rather than a history of his club, and there is no mention of club stalwarts such as

Sheila Glover (who led Croydon's women to Division One of the UK Womens League) or Dennis Wallington or Chris King (who led Croydon's men back into the British League after a ten-year absence). The parts of the book dealing with Mike's life in athletics after retiring from top-level competition concentrate largely on his coaching, where his enthusiasm has remained undimmed despite the disappointments which coaches face when talented young athletes abandon the sport prematurely, and where he has organised several overseas trips for his athletes.

I enjoyed reading Chapter 12 ('on the other side of the track') which includes Mike's experiences as a starter and an announcer, and his reminiscences of working with a variety of figures including Jason Livingston and the late Andy Norman. I was particularly amused by pages 129 to 131, giving Mike's account of an incident at a Veterans League match at Croydon Arena (I remember the incident well, as I was on the track judges' stand at the time). There is a good appendix in which Mike pays tribute to some 'unsung heroes' of club athletics such as David Barrington and Don Turner.

Mike's memory appears to be at fault when he credits Mike Blagrove with being the first man to run a mile in exactly 4 minutes: the well-known historian Mel Watman credits this feat to Derek Ibbotson (in September 1958). There appears to be a production error on page 152, with some missing text which I hope the publishers will reinstate if there is a second printing. And I was sad to read on the back cover that Mike was persuaded to remove one chapter "featuring drugs cheats, a felon and a fraud". That is a chapter which I would dearly love to have read.



Mike Fleet, competing for Great Britain in Volgograd (Russia) in 1961

30 YEARS AGO: LOCAL ATHLETICS IN SPRING 1985

The annual Forbanks Half-Marathon was held at Beckenham on 3 March. The winner was Bob Treadwell of Surrey Beagles in 65 minutes 47. Striders were led home by two of the club's founder-members. Colin Golding ran 92 minutes 44, two seconds ahead of club colleague Mick Meech. On the same weekend, Croydon's shot putter Judy Oakes competed in the European Indoor Championships in Athens, finishing sixth with a putt of 17 metres 83.

The East Surrey League held its annual road relay on 9 March, over the traditional course at Box Hill. The race was won by Croydon Harriers. Their team comprised Martin Walmsley (10.21), Alan Dolton (10.20), Peter Yarlett (10.44) and Gary Bishop (10.18): two of these subsequently joined Striders. They finished just over a minute ahead of Hercules-Wimbledon, with Crawley third and Epsom fourth.

Several Striders competed in the Worthing 20-mile road race on 10 March. Their first finisher was Rob Pinfield who ran 2 hours 12 minutes 02. He was followed by Alan Purchase (who is still an active club member), who ran 2 hours 16 minutes 09. A week later seven Striders completed the Hastings Half-Marathon. Mick Meech led them home with a personal best 82 minutes 14, while there were also personal bests for Ron Carver (85.30) and Simon Smith (88.28). Dave Hoben ran 97 minutes 30, finishing eight seconds ahead of Colin Golding.

The English Schools Cross-Country Championships were held at Norwich on 23 March. The leading local runner was Karen Sutton, of Addington High School and Croydon Harriers, who placed seventh in the junior girls' race. This gained Karen selection for the English team in a 'Home Countries' international at Denbigh a week later, where she finished sixth.

The East Surrey League held its annual road race at Ewell on 9 April. Mark Greenaway of Crawley won in 21 minutes 20, with future Strider Alan Dolton finishing second in 21 minutes 25. Crawley won the team event with Croydon second. In the overall league table, Croydon and Hercules-Wimbledon placed equal first with Crawley third.

The fifth London Marathon was held on 21 April. British athletes took the first three places in the men's race with Steve Jones running 2 hours 08 minutes 16, Charlie Spedding 2 hours 08 minutes 33 and Allister Hutton 2 hours 09 minutes 16. Norway's Ingrid Kristiansen won the women's race in a new world record of 2 hours 21 minutes 06. The first local runner was Paul Foster of South London Harriers, who ran 2 hours 31 minutes 51. The first Croydon Harrier was Keith Pearson, who ran 2 hours 37. Future Strider Bob Ewen, who was then with the RAF, ran a personal best 2 hours 47. Striders' press report claimed a total of 14 finishers, eight of whom were from Croydon and six from other branches of Philips. (The club's name was still 'Philips City Striders'.) They were led home by Alan Purchase who ran a lifetime best of 2 hours 55 minutes 45. Rob Pinfield also ran a lifetime best of 3 hours 03, while Len Picott ran 3 hours 22 and Mick Meech 3 hours 23. Striders' sole woman competitor was Debbie Picott who ran an excellent 3 hours 27 in her first marathon. Cecil Chisholm, running his first marathon at the age of 53, and Colin Golding both ran 3 hours 43.

The Surrey 10000 metres championship was held at Croydon Arena on 28 April. The winner was Ian Lamplough of Boxhill Racers in 31 minutes 25. Ray Marriott of South London Harriers was second in 31 minutes 30. Two Croydon Harriers fought out the bronze medal in a sprint finish. Alan Dolton took third in 31 minutes 50.5, with Martin Walmsley fourth in a lifetime best 31 minutes 50.6.

Three Striders completed the Paris Marathon on 12 May. They were led by one of the club's youngest members, Simon Smith, who ran 3 hours 22 minutes in his first marathon.

10 YEARS AGO: LOCAL ATHLETICS IN SPRING 2005

On 5 March Striders won the team event at an inter-club cross-country match in Lloyd Park, organised by local rivals Croydon Harriers, and held over a very muddy ten-kilometre course. The race was won by Colin Oxlade of the Harriers in 41 minutes 49. Striders' veteran John Foster ran very well to finish second in 42 minutes 21. Striders packed well to have five of the first 13 finishers. Scott Antony had another good run to place fourth in 43 minutes 34, while veteran Bob Ewen placed eleventh in 45 minutes 07. Andy Allison was twelfth, just one place ahead of team manager Chris Morton, with both runners recording 45 minutes 32. Striders' Kerry Backshell was the first woman to finish, placing 26th overall.

On 12 March Striders produced an excellent team performance to win the East Surrey League's annual road relay at Box Hill. We were given a good start by Damian Macenhill, who placed fifth in a competitive first leg, covering the undulating 2.2 mile course in 11 minutes 38 seconds. New member Matt Morgan made his Striders debut on the second leg and gained three places, running 11 minutes 49 and lifting us to second place. Justin Macenhill ran the third leg in a very good 11 minutes 13 seconds, closing the gap on leaders Dorking. On the final leg Scott Antony rapidly caught and passed the Dorking runner, running a very impressive 11 minutes 03 seconds to bring Striders home as clear winners. This was our only victory in this long-standing event, which was discontinued after 2012.

On 20 March Striders produced some good performances in the Cranleigh 21-mile road race. We were again led by the Macenhill brothers, with Damian producing an excellent run to place third overall in 2 hours 16 minutes 57 seconds, and gaining a rare victory over his younger brother Justin, who placed sixth (2.17.37). Veteran Don Kayum returned to form with 13th place (2.22.06), while club secretary Chris Morton was 34th (2.29.32). Serena Stracey was second in the women's race and 47th overall (2.35.44).

The 28th Croydon 10K took place on 3 April. The winner was David Warrington of Oxford City, who ran 33 minutes 20 seconds. For Striders, Scott Antony ran very well to place second in 34 minutes 09, with club colleague Justin Macenhill seventh in 34 minutes 59. Damian Macenhill was 19th (36.55) and Bob Ewen 29th (38.25). The first woman was Janet Ray of Dorking, in 38 minutes 48. Striders' Helen Furze was second in 39 minutes 40.

In the Rotterdam Marathon on 10 April, Striders' Ian Campbell ran a personal best of 3 hours 11 minutes 52, while club secretary Chris Morton ran a personal best of 3 hours 13 minutes 02. The 25th London Marathon took place a week later, on 17 April. Striders had 25 finishers - more than 20% of the club's membership. They were led home by Scott Antony who produced an excellent run to finish in 2 hours 53 minutes 18 seconds. He was closely followed by Justin Macenhill who ran a personal best of 2 hours 54 minutes 36. Veteran Dave Shaw ran steadily to record 3 hours 09 minutes 59, with Damian Macenhill not far behind in a personal best 3 hours 10 minutes 34. Striders' women were led by Serena Stracey, making her marathon debut. She produced an excellent run to finish in 3 hours 17 minutes 13, moving her to third place in Striders' all-time women's rankings. Striders' next finisher was Dave Goodall, who ran 3 hours 40 minutes 19. Sadly, this was Dave's only marathon, as he was diagnosed with cancer a few months later, and died in June 2006.

The Surrey Championships were held at Kingsmeadow on 14 and 15 May. Croydon's 18-year-old Martyn Rooney won the under-20 400 metres in 47.65 seconds and the 800 metres in 1 minute 52.33. On the same weekend Justin Macenhill won the Heatherley 10 mile road race at Copthorne in 58 minutes 31. Striders also had the first two women to finish, with Serena Stracey running a personal best 70 minutes 19 and Helen Furze setting a club over-35 record of 71 minutes 04.



Matt Morgan, who made his Striders debut in March 2005

SPORTS MASSAGE THERAPY

HELPS REDUCE MUSCULAR SORENESS AFTER TRAINING OR
COMPETITION: HELPS RECOVERY FROM SOFT TISSUE INJURY

ALAN DOLTON, LSSM Dip, ITEC Dip, MSMA, MISRM
CNHC REGISTERED SPORTS THERAPIST
UK ATHLETICS LEVEL 3 CLUB COACH

70 WARREN ROAD, ADDISCOMBE, CROYDON, CR0 6PF
TELEPHONE 020 8656 0532

alandolton@yahoo.co.uk

DISCOUNTED RATES FOR STRIDERS OF CROYDON

Sports Massage Therapist (CNHC) Osteomyologist BSc MAO (Manip) Sports Massage — Mobilisation — Rehab

Sports injuries-Aches/Pains-Muscle Tension OR Postural Problems?

Beatrice Schaer BSc, MAO, CNCH, UKA licensed

You can find me @

The Chiropractic Center, 9a George Street (behind tram stop)

Call 07984 052 823 for an appointment

(quote 'Striders' for special rates)

K. B. INTERIORS'

g garden maintenance

Painting ♦ Decorating ♦ Garden Maintenance

***Do you wish you could get that painting &
decorating, you keep putting off, done at a reasonable
cost, by someone you could trust to leave a key with?
Or have someone to keep your garden looking neat & tidy?***

Phone Kevin Bannister on 020 8688 5085

Or 07528 65 65 80 (mobile) for a chat & a free

Estimate. Or if you prefer, email me on

kbinteriors@fsmail.net

Fully qualified & insured