

# Striders of Croydon

MARCH 2018 MAGAZINE



**Marianne Chua posing for the camera in our cross-country mobmatch against Beckenham RC and Blackheath & Bromley (photo by Tom Simpson)**

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## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

Thu 5 Apr – East Surrey League Road Race – Ewell  
Sun 8 Apr – Croydon Half-Marathon (Striders organising)  
Sun 22 Apr – London Marathon (Striders marshalling)  
Mon 30 Apr – Southern Veterans League – Wimbledon  
Sun 6 May – Ranelagh Half Marathon – Richmond (Surrey Road League)  
Sat 12 May – Surrey 5000m Championship – Kingsmeadow  
Sun 20 May – Sutton 10K – Nonsuch Park (Surrey Road League)  
Mon 21 May – Southern Veterans League – Ewell  
Sun 3 Jun – Surrey Masters Track & Field Championships – Ewell  
Sun 3 Jun – Dorking 10 miles – Dorking (Surrey Road League)  
Mon 11 Jun – Southern Veterans League – Walton  
Sun 17 Jun – Richmond 10K – Richmond (Surrey Road League)  
Sun 24 Jun – South of England Masters Track & Field Championships – Battersea  
Mon 9 Jul – Southern Veterans League – Kingsmeadow  
Sat 14 Jul – Elmore 7 miles – Chipstead (Surrey Road League)  
Sun 22 Jul – Elmbridge 10K – Walton (Surrey Road League)  
Sun 12 Aug – Wimbledon 5K – Wimbledon (Surrey Road League)  
Sun 26 Aug – British Masters 5000m Championship – Birmingham  
Sat 15 Sep – Surrey Road Relays – Wimbledon

## CHAIRMAN'S CORNER MARCH 2018

Another very full magazine. Although I have to confess a large chunk of it was "borrowed" from the New Scientist: the one magazine I have been reading since my school days in the early 60s. I was impressed by the series on fitness published in mid-January especially since it had a whole article on "hitting the wall", which I experienced quite badly the last time I ran Brighton. Good luck to everyone running one of the major marathons coming up in April and take the advice of the article – pace yourself.

A much more original article is Peter Mills' compilation of your comments at the end of the XC season. Well done to everyone who contributed. Congratulations to our men's team for making it to the first division and to our ladies for improving on last year.

This time last year we were huddling in the hall for our post run drinks (at wholesale prices) and sampling the delights of a Mick George curry. Well done and thank you to Mick. I think the wait was most definitely worth it and the new bar a vast improvement and the beer is still a decent price. Well done and thank you to the Turner family who have succeeded in making such a dramatic improvement.

Meanwhile the marathon training season is heading towards its finale and I hope you have enjoyed our series of long runs. These have evolved over the last 10 years to the point where we have run out of Sundays and run out of route options. Come on somebody, we need a few new ideas before next year!

The Croydon Half Marathon is coming up at the beginning of April. Planning for it is progressing well, but please either enter it or offer to marshal/help. It's your club's major event along with the Switchback in late September and it needs a lot of us on the day to make it succeed.

As you may know one of your fellow running members Mark Watson, a councillor for Addiscombe, has ambitions to set up a Croydon Marathon. A few years ago now when we proposed the Croydon Half we were told that anything that might involve closing any of the routes through Croydon or prevent the Sunday shoppers getting to their precious shops was a complete no-no. Which is why the Half is near enough two laps of the 10k and also quite limited in the numbers it can either attract or practically support.

I think there is a long way to go but the idea of closing major roads is no longer out of the question, so just maybe my own suggestion of a route from the Athletics Arena out to Purley along the main roads will come to something... we shall see.

And finally, a sad week for athletics with the death of Sir Roger Bannister. I am so old I can actually remember the event. Just before my 7<sup>th</sup> birthday, we had recently taken delivery of our first TV (I think it was so my father could watch the boat race a few weeks before). So Oxford winning the boat race and Roger achieving the 4 minute mile must have been some of the first news items I ever saw on a TV.



Robin Jamieson

# EXTRACTS FROM THE NEW SCIENTIST

(edited by Robin Jamieson)

*(These articles are about exercise in general and not just long distance running, although one of them is about not hitting the "wall". So although New Scientist reports on the latest research, these aren't necessarily perfect advice for training for a marathon.)*

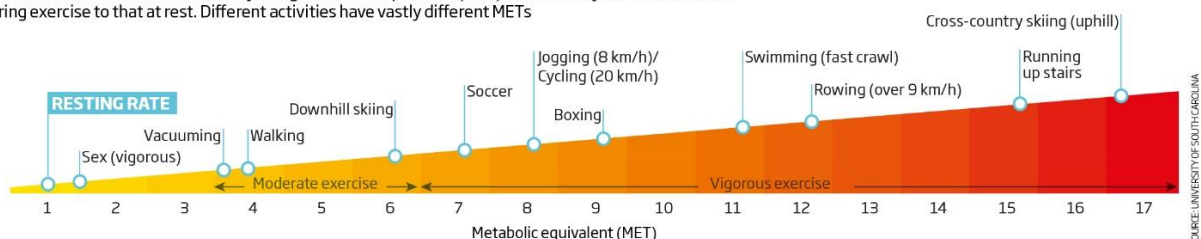
## When, how and how much should I exercise?

Standard advice from the World Health Organization (WHO) states that adults should get at least 150 minutes of moderate activity or 75 minutes of vigorous activity per week in order to: extend their lives, maintain a healthy weight, and get fit, with stronger muscles and be a healthy weight. Further benefits are suggested from doubling that amount of exercise. It should be noted that WHO's definition of moderate exercise includes for example domestic chores and gardening (also e.g. traditional hunting and gathering!) and that chores such as these, as well as e.g. walking to work, if carried out for at least 150 minutes a week, can produce a 28% reduction in risk of early death. Inactivity levels in the UK are too high, and women are 36 per cent more likely to be physically inactive than men.

While most governments urge people to do a little every day, or at least spread their exercise over the week, a study from Loughborough University suggests that those who have a "weekend warrior" regime – inactive during the week but meeting the exercise requirement over the weekend – or even in just one day – still gain the benefits of reduced all-cause risk of early death, and reduced risks of cancer and heart disease. It isn't all or nothing, either – a single bout of exercise weekly, even not reaching the suggested 150 minutes, still produces gains above total inactivity. At the other end of the scale, Gary O'Donovan from Loughborough University is quoted by the New Scientist as saying "There's no increase in mortality or morbidity if you keep increasing the amount." – Although exercising very hard each time may be more of a concern. Another of the Loughborough scientists suggested that 3-5 exercise sessions a week, of mixed types, would be good for a long and healthy life, although noting that "running 10 to 15 miles, seven days a week, on a road will probably lead to injuries."

## What counts as exercise?

The World Health Organization recommends at least 150 minutes of moderate or 75 minutes of vigorous exercise a week. It measures intensity using metabolic equivalent (MET); the ratio of your metabolic rate during exercise to that at rest. Different activities have vastly different METs



## Does high-intensity interval training work?

Getting fit in 4 minutes: this is the promise of high-intensity interval training, marketed in gyms as HIIT. It was thought up in the 1990s by Izumi Tabata and a team of researchers from the National Institute of Fitness and Sports in Japan: "Tabata showed that 4-minute workouts, comprising repeated cycles of 20 seconds of all-out work followed by 10 seconds

of rest, done four days a week, brought greater aerobic improvements than an hour's normal workout done five days a week for six weeks."

It definitely works, according to Chris Easton, a sports scientist at the University of the West of Scotland, UK: "High-intensity training works: it's been shown pretty consistently to make you fitter, make you healthier". Training out of the body's comfort zone for short periods forces it to adapt, and this adaptation is higher if the intensity is higher. Lungs, heart and circulation all benefit from this adaptation, and it's due to high blood flow through the heart.

Additionally, a study at the Mayo Clinic, Minnesota, by Sreekumaran Nair and colleagues looking at muscle samples from people of various ages who had done HIIT and/or a weights workout for three months. They found that HIIT could reduce, even reverse, the normal deterioration of mitochondria, the 'powerhouses' of cells, seen as people age. Additionally, HIIT helps to boost the body's metabolic rate, so more energy is burned even when resting, not exercising – good if trying to lose weight or prevent weight gain. What's more, high-intensity training helps boost your metabolic rate, which means you burn more energy even at rest. However, full HIIT is not pleasant to actually do. In the article, Chris Eaton said: "I do this with my students and invariably after all-out 30 seconds of maximal work on a bike, half of them are physically sick afterwards." Without going for the full HIIT experience, including short periods of vigorous exercise into a longer routine is still beneficial.

### **How can marathon runners avoid hitting 'the wall'?**

"Bonking" takes on a very different meaning when you start running. It doesn't matter whether you are a seasoned runner or a newbie, when faced with your first marathon, it is impossible to ignore talk of bonking or "hitting the wall". Those who have hit the wall describe this as a sudden onset of debilitating fatigue and loss of energy. It generally happens during the second half of the race, often by about 20-21 miles (34 km), leading to a run turning into a shuffle or even a walk, while the runner stops wanting a specific finish time and just wants to finish. If you can get past the 34 km point without hitting the wall, you will probably be okay to the end.

Physiologically, "hitting the wall" happens when we run out of stored glycogen in our muscles and liver and the body has to switch to using fat for energy – we have lots of this but are generally less efficient at using this, so cannot maintain exercise intensity – as indicated by running speed.

What's still unclear is why runners hit the wall sometimes but not all the time, and how it can be avoided. One study looked at more than 300 marathoners. It found that: 43% reported hitting the wall during the marathon; they were more likely to be men; they were likely to have gone less far in their long training runs than those who didn't bonk. It may be a matter of pacing to avoid suddenly running out of glycogen, rather than a more gradual switch over, and women may be more disciplined at training and pacing. Also, there's a psychological component: people who expect to hit the wall are more likely to do so than those who don't expect to. Suggestions from Clare Stevenson, Loughborough University, are to focus on external things – scenery, spectators, drinks stations etc. rather than either daydreaming or thinking about how you are feeling or your breathing all the time -just check those intermittently.

While carb loading can increase the amount of stored glycogen to an extent, long-distance training runs, pacing and mental strategies are important to avoid the wall.

## **Does stretching before and after a workout help?**

We're all short of time and stretching after a workout uses that previous time. Is it worth it? Accepted wisdom has it that a good stretch helps avoid injury and leaves you less sore after a tough workout. A review in 2011 suggested that stretching may not significantly reduce delayed-onset muscle soreness. It also doesn't seem to reduce the risk of injuring your back or lower limbs. But it does seem to fractionally reduce the risk of some injuries to muscles, ligaments and tendons. This is especially true of dynamic stretching, where you move your limbs to increase the range of motion, says Nic Gill at the University of Waikato, who is also the head strength and conditioning coach for New Zealand's All Blacks rugby team. "The point of stretching should be to get good mobility and normal function," he says. Lynda Norton of Flinders University in Adelaide, Australia, who conducted a review of studies looking at the impact of stretching, concluded that stretching is sensible to loosen up if your body feels stiff/tight when you get up in the morning, before doing any exercise, but that stretching before and after each workout may not be necessary.

## **Is exercising inside or outside better for you?**

It has been suggested that running on the treadmill could be easier than running outside, because of lack of air resistance. It has become dogma that setting the treadmill to an incline of 1% is essential to counteract this. This comes from a study in 1996 finding that at 7-minute-mile pace used similar amounts of energy either on the flat outside or at a 1% on a treadmill with a 1 per cent incline. However, when running more slowly, energy costs were the same over the ground as on a flat treadmill: so at an easy pace, no incline is needed: the treadmill is no easier.

For many people, running on the treadmill is perceived as harder than outside – leading to these machines being called "dreadmills". For example, asked to run at the same speed as they did on the track, runners were actually two minutes per mile slower. In the opinion of Irene Davis (Harvard Medical School), this may be due to the treadmill enforcing a single speed, without the natural variation seen in normal outdoor running, during which: "you're constantly speeding up and slowing down and probably adjusting your speed to your fatigue level". There is also the lack of visual clues of pace.

Running outside, in pleasant surroundings or green space can add psychological benefits not gained from running on a treadmill, and it has been found in studies that "people who worked out in the fresh air had higher levels of satisfaction and enjoyment, and said they were more likely to do it again than those who exercised indoors." If preferring the treadmill, Irene Davis suggests varying both the speed and the incline during the workout – keeping speed and/or incline constant is less good for the body: "Your body is meant to be loaded in lots of different ways".

## **Is yoga a proper workout?**

Bikram yoga is a series of 26 poses with breathing exercises, performed in sequence for 90 minutes in a 40°C humid room. Performed regularly it may improve muscle strength but does not have any effect on aerobic fitness, according to scientific studies. Calorie burn is moderate – about 460 for men, 330 for women, while gentler forms of yoga will burn less than this.



In women with symptoms of depression, stress and emotional eating problems, two Bikram classes a week produced a three-times greater reduction in negative symptoms than those not doing yoga, and an improvement in positive thoughts and symptoms. A study is needed on whether the same is true for normal yoga sessions.

However, there is evidence that mind-body practices including yoga, tai chi and meditation can have health benefits such as switching off genes involved in inflammation – and immune-system overreaction is involved in a number of diseases. Yoga has been shown in studies to reduce the risk of cardiovascular diseases and may improve quality of life in people with conditions such as diabetes, asthma and cancer.

### **Are sports drinks worthwhile?**

If you believe the adverts, sports drinks are essential and working out without them will cause dehydration and reduce performance. The manufacturers suggest that failing to consume the drinks will lead to the athlete failing to replenish not only water by sweating but also essential minerals. The water loss leads to reduced blood volume, which means your heart needs to work harder to get oxygen to the muscles, and the mineral ions are essential for cell functioning.

So, how much do we lose while sweating. Studies were reviewed by the International Olympic Committee and they concluded that while on average you lose 0.8-1.4 litres of sweat per hour when exercising, impairment in performance due to dehydration won't be noticeable until at least 2% of body weight has been lost (1.5 litres if you weigh 75kg). So if you are running for less than an hour, no intake should be needed. Over that, it could be beneficial to drink and replace the lost water.

As for the electrolytes, the main one lost in sweat is sodium and that is important to regulate water going into and out of cells, and to regulate blood pressure. On a typical Western diet you will have taken in enough sodium for most runs, but topping up electrolytes could be useful for longer runs, such as ultra-marathons.

The carbohydrates in sports drinks (often 5-10 spoonfuls of sugar in a bottle) could exceed the amount you are using in your workout, if you're not doing serious training.

The New Scientist article said that in a test in swimmers exercising for 75 minutes, there was no difference in performance between those given water, a sports drink or nothing – with the authors of the study coming to the conclusion that any sugary drink would be just as good as a specific sports drink.

It was also noted that alcohol hampers coordination and performance, but that a non-alcoholic beer drunk before exercise could help to maintain your electrolyte levels.

### **Should my muscles be hurting days after a workout?**

Aching of muscles immediately post-exercise, or acute muscle soreness, is thought to be due to tired (fatigued) muscles, accumulation of acidic waste products (e.g. hydrogen ions) and fluid that builds up in the area as the body seeks to remove those waste products. This aching should reduce after some rest.

A lot of pain just after exercise may indicate muscle damage, such as a strain and that may take longer to heal – about a week.

Muscle aches that start 1-3 days after the exercise are known as DOMS – delayed onset muscle soreness. As the New Scientist article explains: “Your muscles contract by pegging together fibres called actin and myosin. Every time a muscle lengthens, these fibres experience significant load. As they tire through continued exercise, the fibres struggle to resist that load and individual actin and myosin pairs are ripped apart, causing microtears in the muscle.” Once this microdamage has occurred, the body starts a series of recovery and repair processes. The injured muscles release chemicals, causing inflammation and attracting white blood cells to the area to remove the damaged cells so that regeneration can start. The repair process involves making the muscles more able to cope with the exertion that led to the micro-tears – so the fibres get larger and the muscle becomes stronger. It takes a few days for the tears to be healed and the muscle to recover. During this time, it is possible to work different muscle groups.

### **Does carb loading improve performance?**

In general no, but for long workouts (e.g. a big race), can help. In a study of elite male cyclists, doubling their normal carb intake for three days enabled them to increase their power output by 6% and increase speed by 1.3 kph in a 1-hour time trial following a 2-hour strenuous ride.

Before a long, hard event such as a marathon, it has been recommended that you eat 8-12g carbohydrate per kg body weight per day (24 hours) for the previous 1.5-2 days.

Sports drinks and gels containing glucose may act in two ways: both topping up your energy stores and activating the sensors that tell when carbohydrates are in the mouth – indicating fuel is available, which tells the brain it can keep pushing the body at a high rate. It has been shown that the brain can be tricked with this: endurance runners on a treadmill were able to keep running for 10 minutes longer when they had rinsed their mouths with a solution containing carbohydrate but not actually swallowed the fuel.

However, Timothy Noakes, a sports scientist at the University of Cape Town, South Africa used carbohydrate-loading to help fuel 80 marathons and ultras over a period of 33 years. Since then he has been diagnosed with type-2 diabetes and he attributes this to a combination of excessive carbohydrate intake and a family history of type-2 diabetes (i.e. genetic predisposition to develop the problem). Noakes now suggests use of an alternative: eating a low-carb, high-fat diet (70% fat, 25% protein, 5% carbohydrate) for at least 6 weeks to adapt the body to burning fat as a fuel. There has been a lot of hype about low-carb, high-fat diets but there is to date no robust evidence they improve athletic performance – although it might help for keeping going at a moderate pace throughout a marathon without carb loading.

After a workout is when it is important to take in protein. Burke recommends eating 20g protein within 30-60 minutes of finishing exercise to provide the building blocks needed for building new muscles, and a further 20g protein in each meal for the next 1-2 days if you want to get maximum benefit as your muscles will still be responding to that session.



# THE STRIDERS OF CROYDON QUARTERLY MAGAZINE BIENNIAL CROSS-COUNTRY QUESTIONNAIRE

(compiled by Peter Mills)

The Striders of Croydon Quarterly Magazine Biennial Cross-Country Questionnaire catches up with the men's cross country team, fresh from being promoted to Division One.



**The men's team at the fourth Division Two Surrey Cross-Country League fixture, at Lloyd Park on 10 February 2018. With thanks to Katrina Webster who took the photo.**

(The runner partially obscured by Kryzysztow is Phil Coales, who was last seen in full at the Switchback.)

The Striders of Croydon Quarterly Magazine Biennial Cross-Country Questionnaire (TSoCQMXCQ) tried to get as many responses from as many of the men's team as possible. If you weren't included then have a word with Peter Mills. TSoCQMXCQ will pose more questions to the men's team before the first fixture of next season.

	<b>Tad Okamoto</b>	<b>Dave Vinton</b>	<b>Peter Johnson</b>	<b>Chris Morton</b>
So....good season?	Definitely good season, thanks to promotion	Yes - first season and it's been a lot of fun!	Ok I was using XC to get fit for my marathon	Terrible for me - never even got in our top 20
Pleased it's over?	Yes, I can relax now.	Really enjoyed it and looking forward to the next!	Yes	No, I was just starting to enjoy the really muddy courses
Which was your favourite course over the last few months?	Farthing Downs (Pirie 10), hilly, hard, chilly and windy	Beckenham but this is because I was fastest round this one...	Beckenham	Lloyd Park, definitely the most challenging and fun
Who is your hero of the season?	Peter Mills, who led striders to div.1	John O'Mahony for helping out, providing lifts etc despite being injured for a lot of it	The whole team - I'm going for Rob Lines unsung hero always seems to score	Peter Mills for leading the way; Krzysztof for pushing and dragging us to promotion;
Who is the most improved Strider over the course of the season?	Darren Woods, who achieved PB several times this season.	Darren has got much better over the season and now is taking this form to the roads	Mick Turner	Darren Woods, though Mick Turner's 12th place in the final race was the one-off performance of the season
What is the best post-race drinking venue?	The Milan bar in Croydon	Green Dragon!	Only went to one at Wimbledon	Green Dragon
How are you going to keep yourself busy over the spring / summer?	Keep training on road and trail for next XC season and marathon in Oct. Stick to 190 to 200 miles per month	More racing? Lots of 10ks and 5ks to work on speed and some Surrey road league fixtures.	London marathon and may do Surrey league road races	Mainly parkruns
Any targets over the next few months?	Sub 2:50 at Dublin	Definitely get 10k under 40 minutes then continue building mileage	London marathon to go under 4hrs nothing else at this stage	To keep my age-grading over 70% at every parkrun.....
Will you make any changes to your training in preparation for next XC season?	Group zero training makes me faster if I can keep up	XC was meant to be training! Hills and speedwork are the big 2.	Train more off road. More speed training. Invest in spikes.	move from waffles to spikes at the first sign of mud
If you could make one change to the Surrey XC League it would be....	Start in the morning.	The weather	Not sure	Love it if course routes were stuck to - so maybe more runners disqualified for cutting corners
The Strider to watch over the summer is....	Alastair Falconer	Darren Woods	Darren Woods	Darren Woods, Dave Vinton
This time next year Striders Men's XC team will be.....	Happy with being in div1	Making big waves in Div 1	Safe from relegation	Relegated, but enjoying mixing with the big boys

	<b>Greg Williams</b>	<b>Simon Ambrosi</b>	<b>Andy Perks</b>	<b>Joseph Ibe</b>
So....good season?	For Striders: the best. Not my best individual performance	Of course!	Absolutely. Back to back promotions...who'd have guessed that?	Yes
Pleased it's over?	No, I enjoy racing XC. It gets me fit	Glad we've qualified but miss the competition.	Sort of. I'm looking forward to not being cold at the start.	Yes
Which was your favourite course over the last few months?	Lloyd felt the most honest	Beckenham Place Park. Nice fast course!	Probably Lloyd. Shame we didn't have Polesden Lacey this year.	Beckenham
Who is your hero of the season?	Peter Mills. Strong individual results, and encouraged team bonding	Phil for solid performances every race including when he was very ill!	Krzysztof - for galvanising the team and always turning up even though injured.	Not sure
Who is the most improved Strider over the course of the season?	Mick Turner was on fire in the final race	Andrew Aitken.	Andrew Aitken - going from nowhere to scoring.	Not sure
What is the best post-race drinking venue?	Clubhouse. We had pizzas	I've only been able to make the last post-race drinks.	Sandilands after the last match.	Green dragon
How are you going to keep yourself busy over the spring / summer?	Leading marathon training runs, then triathlon season	Usual reps, parkrun, long run.	Trail marathons / ultras.	Continue training runs.
Any targets over the next few months?	Get fit on the bike again	To continue running with an extra child!	Beat my road marathon time.	Try and set some PB on the track and road.
Will you make any changes to your training in preparation for next XC season?	Try and start park running earlier in the season	If possible, track sessions in the run up to the season.	Can I get 10 years younger? Trying to do more conditioning work.	Try and embrace the mud and hill parts of training runs
If you could make one change to the Surrey XC League it would be....	Increase the number of scoring runners.	Have the races earlier in the day.	An extra fixture - 4 is not enough but no idea when you'd hold it.	Have the men's race earlier
The Strider to watch over the summer is....	Darren Woods has come into form	Too many improving Striders to name!	Darren Woods	Not sure
This time next year Striders Men's XC team will be.....	Commiserating our relegation. (Sorry, but it seems likely!	Surprised at having survived div 1 without relegation!	Still in Div 1 (he says somewhat optimistically).	Still in the division they just got promoted to.

	<b>Phil Coales</b>	<b>Alastair Falconer</b>	<b>Luke Burden</b>	<b>Mick Turner</b>
So....good season?	The best one yet, collectively.	Fantastic first season running x country.	Yes	The Best
Pleased it's over?	Yes - pleased we made it across the line in second.	No, can't wait for next year.	Nope	NOOOOOOOOO!
Which was your favourite course over the last few months?	Richmond Park. Slightly more secluded than the others; smooth underfoot; our second second place finish.	Favourite Surrey League was Wimbledon, but Bromley and Blackheath mobmatch was my favourite course overall	Stanmer Park	Shocking to see me write this but Lloyd Park
Who is your hero of the season?	The Fulham runners who didn't turn up to Lloyd Park.	Either Peter Mills, Bill (how does he make it look so easy) or Darren Woods	Tad	Peter for showing more enthusiasm for XC than me - and I LOVE IT.
Who is the most improved Strider over the course of the season?	Joanne Campbell, Rachel Vinton and Nikki Javan improved the women's team	Mick Turner, finally wore some spikes and smashed it in the final race.	Darren	Andrew Aitken
What is the best post-race drinking venue?	The guy who owns the bar's wife's 50th.	Cronx, stunning beer and no lager drinkers in sight.	Cronx	Anywhere with Andy Perks
How are you going to keep yourself busy over the spring / summer?	Can we enter more races as a team, to warm up?	Training for Edinburgh marathon, my wife is having a baby in June so that may keep me busy.	Marathon, summer 10k's	By entering a few races and doing some Sunday club runs to increase the miles.
Any targets over the next few months?	Improve times on road and on track.	Edinburgh marathon	Marathon	Run sub 40 10K and 1:30 Half again.
Will you make any changes to your training in preparation for next XC season?	I will be designing some memes ahead of the next XC season.	Hopefully not having to rush from work to get to each race, longer warm up and decent cool down.	Train harder	I didn't get in good enough shape for the first fixture. Also, running Lloyd a couple of times before the final fixture was great so I may well run the other courses beforehand, Along with more strength work.
If you could make one change to the Surrey XC League it would be....	Men and women's races on at compatible times/locations, so we could support each other.	No cowbells on the course and all matches to be within 10 minutes of East Croydon.	More races	To remove relegation from Div 1.
The Strider to watch over the summer is....	Iain, Paul, Jamie, Liam could all be in our top 10 next time around.	Darren Woods, how many races can he do in a summer?	Phil Coales	Iain Harrison. Or Alastair Smith - he'll be having a XC smackdown with Che.[Compton of Kent AC]
This time next year Striders Men's XC team will be.....	Preparing for life in Division Zero	Celebrating staying in division 1.	Celebrating staying in div 1	Relaxing in a hot tub

	<b>Krzysztof Klidzia</b>	<b>Steve Harris</b>	<b>Peter Mills</b>	<b>Mike Stewart</b>
So....good season?	Promo yes, injury no	I had a great first ever xc season	Top notch	The club got promoted so great overall!
Pleased it's over?	50-50	It's not over yet! I have either a half or full North Downs Way marathon in 2 weeks' time.	Yes it was becoming too much of a good thing! I'll be missing it in a couple of months' time though.	I was only able to run one due to injury so wasn't really part of it.
Which was your favourite course over the last few months?	Stanmer Park, Brighton, Southern Champs	Surrey Champs at Denbies	Lloyd Park	I only did one so it has to be Lloyd Park!
Who is your hero of the season?	Dave Shaw, OV55 comes along, scores in crucial match	Peter Mills for turning up to club sessions and organising the tactics event	Simon Ambrosi, always battles hard to keep in the top 10, and had a lot of competition this year.	Krzysztof as manager for leading us to promotion.
Who is the most improved Strider over the course of the season?	Tricky... Darren Woods, Andrew Aitken	Dave Vinton improved most	Andrew Aitken	Ali Falconer.
What is the best post-race drinking venue?	Green Dragon/Claret	Green Dragon	Claret	Green Dragon.
How are you going to keep yourself busy over the spring / summer?	Track maybe	Edinburgh marathon and will do some road races	Doing laps of Lloyd Park	Surrey Road League and training for Berlin and Chicago marathons in the autumn.
Any targets over the next few months?	Keep injury Free	3hr05 min marathon if I can stay fit	Half marathon and 10k, trying to keep James Bennett and Phil Coales on their toes	Get fit for London marathon and raise it over the summer for the two autumn marathons.
Will you make any changes to your training in preparation for next XC season?	Strengthening	I'm constantly working on my technique as need to be a more efficient runner. Need to increase cadence too.	More track sessions in the Summer and early autumn - something I neglected this year.	More off road and shorter distance speed training.
If you could make one change to the Surrey XC League it would be....	Vets to score bonus points if top 10	Make the league more inclusive for slower runners like me	Have one more fixture	...to push the start time to earlier than 3pm where possible.
The Strider to watch over the summer is....	Darren Woods	Darren Woods looks set to pb all distances.	Jamie Hopps.	Jamie Hopps
This time next year Striders Men's XC team will be.....	Still in Division 1!	I don't think the top scoring ten will change much.	Stronger for the Div 1 experience	Celebrating still being in Division 1!

	<b>Lee Flanagan</b>	<b>John O'Mahony</b>	<b>Darren Woods</b>	<b>Iain Harrison</b>
So....good season?	Frustrating! Kryzysztof was still managing pbs at 53 whereas i'm already struggling to maintain form.	Yes. I only ran 1 fixture. Glad to be part of it in helping with lifts, kit & marshalling	Yes a very good season	Non-existent season for me - battling back from injury
Pleased it's over?	No. I love xc	Yes, a season to forget for me ...looking forward to the road season now	I am yes to an extent	Yes, but fantastic Striders got promoted
Which was your favourite course over the last few months?	I thought they were all good this year. Probably Richmond has it just.	I only ran Richmond....so yes Richmond	Lloyd Park	I only ran in Lloyd Park but that's a firm favourite of mine
Who is your hero of the season?	Peter Mills for his enthusiasm and commitment!	Our team manager Kryzysztof	Peter Mills leading by example	I am not in a great position to comment but getting our top runners out each race has been amazing.
Who is the most improved Strider over the course of the season?	Tad for taking to xc so well	Darren Woods	Dave Vinton who's really come on well	Sorry, not been at the club enough to comment.
What is the best post-race drinking venue?	The one we went to at Wimbledon	Green Dragon	Green dragon great ales.	Green Dragon, Croydon
How are you going to keep yourself busy over the spring / summer?	I'm going to mix things up... Do more cycling and gym work. Hopefully some track and road racing.	Leg and core strength in the gym before hopefully returning to running before the summer	Manchester marathon. Then grand slam of PBs	Continue my comeback training
Any targets over the next few months?	I'd like to get under 18mins at Lloyd one more time!	Sub 40 min 10k is my main target	Sub 3:10 marathon. 1:23 half marathon	Lugano Half Marathon, Midsummer Munro. Amsterdam Marathon.
Will you make any changes to your training in preparation for next XC season?	More strength training beforehand	Be a lot stronger BEFORE the start of next season's XC, rather than going in too weak& picking up injuries	More intense speed sessions.	I'll be ready for next season. Big summer ahead I hope, ending with Amsterdam
If you could make one change to the Surrey XC League it would be....	Make the start of the races earlier... I never know when to eat.	Better organised marshalling and cleanup	Start the xc fixture at 1pm	Not sure how some teams qualify as 'Surrey' when Kent or Metro leagues seem more applicable.
The Strider to watch over the summer is....	Kryzysztof... Will he get back to peak form and start beating me again?!	Myself of course ;)	Joseph Ibe	Hopefully me lol. So eager to get back in it!
This time next year Striders Men's XC team will be.....	Celebrating!	Celebrating staying in Div 1	In division 1	Survival/consolidation at the top



Our ladies finished in a very respectable seventh place in Division Two (and were the sixth A team). TSoCQMBXCQ catches up with them just as they are putting away their baking trays.



**Our women's team at their third Surrey League fixture, at Wimbledon on 13 January**



**Our women's team at their fourth Surrey League fixture, at Richmond on 10 February**

TSoCQMXCQ tried to get as many responses from as many of the women's team as possible. If you weren't included then have a word with Becky Laurence, who will have a word with Peter Mills. TSoCQMXCQ will pose more questions to the women's team before the first fixture of next season.



	<b>Becky Laurence</b>	<b>Steph Upton</b>	<b>Marianne Chua</b>
So....good season?	Not bad, thanks!	Yes I think so, wish I ran faster:)	yeah
Pleased it's over?	Yes!	I love xcounrty, would do more!	ask me after Parliament Hill!
Which was your favourite course over the last few months?	Richmond: hills, lakes not too muddy	I like Parliament Hills, it's a challenge	Wimbledon
Who is your hero of the season?	Lucy Finch and Andy Elliott	Becky	Jo Campbell!
Who is the most improved Strider over the course of the season?	Nikki Javan, she gets quicker with every race!	Becky	Jo Campbell
What is the best post-race cake?	Banana loaf	They are all lovely, it's one of the perks of xcounrty!	All of Nikki's
How are you going to keep yourself busy over the spring / summer?	Hit the trails	Off road running somewhere	Road marathon training! And realistically shooting weddings every weekend!
Any targets over the next few months?	Improve my 5k time	Bluebell 10 miler	Brighton marathon, hoping to qualify for good for age... who knows!
Will you make any changes to your training in preparation for next XC season?	Er... I've never trained for XC. Rock up, hope for the best - it works for me!	Yes, try and eat less!	I will do more intervals, and try and run more of the coombe woods runs
If you could make one change to the Surrey XC League it would be....	Make it a morning race and not middle of the day	Timing, it would be nice to race early and not use up the whole day	---
The Strider to watch over the summer is....	The blonde bombshell, aka Joanne Campbell. An awesome runner with fire in her belly...	Lots of new members I don't know	Nikki Javan
This time next year the Striders Women's XC team will be.....	As amazing as ever, of course!	Full of new members, hopefully.....	Still eating cake!

	Selena Wong	Jo Campbell	Michelle Klein
So....good season?	Yes, it's been a great season with a much larger turnout from the women's team compared to previous years and some new runners who have given strong performances.	Yes, loved it! It's great getting away with the team on a Saturday.	Yes great fun and team camaraderie nice to socialise outside your usual Wednesday group
Pleased it's over?	Not quite over as I'm running the National champs at Parliament Hill tomorrow. But yes, I think 4 Surrey league races is enough for a season.	Yes, but I did enjoy the focus.	Yes because that means Spring is on the way!
Which was your favourite course over the last few months?	Reigate Priory was my favourite as I like the undulations and the fact that it ends on a downhill	Parliament Hills, although I've never tackled it post-Christmas.	Richmond
Who is your hero of the season?	Joanne - she has always been a fast runner, but has done extremely well this season and is very encouraging to others	Becky Laurence has put on a fine show, and is still supportive of everyone in the team	Jo Campbell
Who is the most improved Strider over the course of the season?	Susanna Lutman has improved her running significantly	Susanna Lutman is going from strength to strength - attending the majority of the races and starting the club speed sessions.	Anyone other than myself as was almost always last the Strider home
What is the best post-race cake?	Nikki's vegan lemon cake	Fond of the carrot cake.	Deborah's vegan flapjacks
How are you going to keep yourself busy over the spring / summer?	A spring marathon. After a short break to recover, I will start some sessions at the track to improve my 5k and 10k race times.	I want to lie up, but this is the time to train for next year. I'll be doing all the races possible that aren't over 10k.	Training for a couple of half marathons
Any targets over the next few months?	A sub-4hr marathon would be nice, but not sure if I will achieve it this year.	I'm going to a race in May that is organised by a local football team in County Fermanagh. I want to beat all them footballers, so I've a time in mind and hopefully it happens.	To just keep running and enjoying it. I may not be a fast runner but I'm a happy runner ☺
Will you make any changes to your training in preparation for next XC season?	No, but I would like to do more cross training to help with core strength and injury prevention	Need to be doing more stretching, foam rolling, massaging and core strength work.	More training over Christmas and hopefully flu free
If you could make one change to the Surrey XC League it would be....	Improve the results processing, so there are fewer errors	I'd choose muddier courses.	Earlier start times preferred 11am start time
The Strider to watch over the summer is....	Nikki Javan	Niamh Matthews - she means business :)	Jo Campbell
This time next year the Striders Women's XC team will be.....	Breaking into division 1. In our dreams perhaps...	5th would be lovely, and a gradual progression from this position. If everyone puts in the work and puts up a fight in the day, it would be no bother.	Hopefully have more women on the team

	<b>Linda Daniel</b>	<b>Adele Boesinger</b>	<b>Susanna Lutman</b>
So....good season?	Yes	Really enjoyed this season as we managed to get so many ladies out. Everyone is really supportive and encouraging.	Yes - it was fun but challenging
Pleased it's over?	Yes !!	Yes and no, it always goes too quickly as only 4 races. However, I'm ready for some sun now!	Yes - enough for this season - I won't miss cleaning my shoes and clothes after each race!
Which was your favourite course over the last few months?	Wimbledon	Nonsuch- I've run that course a few times now so it's nice to get to know the route.	Nonsuch Park
Who is your hero of the season?	Andy Elliott - with no Andy there would be no ladies xc team.	Becky L- that girl is on fire!	Joanne Campbell or Steph Upton
Who is the most improved Strider over the course of the season?	Adele	There were a lot of ladies who hadn't done XC before and threw themselves into it! For me - Nikki J	Nikki Javan or Becky Laurence
What is the best post-race cake?	Flapjacks	any cake is good cake	Banana cake or chocolate brownies
How are you going to keep yourself busy over the spring / summer?	Training for the Bournemouth marathon in early October.	The summer road league	By racing in the Surrey Road League
Any targets over the next few months?	To run the Croydon half marathon for the first time.	To beat my road league times from last year	To beat my times for the road league races I did last year
Will you make any changes to your training in preparation for next XC season?	Run more challenging off road races/parkruns ie Lloyd Park.	Maybe do a few trail runs at race pace earlier. Organise some trips to scope out the courses.	I would make sure I did consistent speed training to help with sprint finishes, and more strength training such as calf raises and core work
If you could make one change to the Surrey XC League it would be....	Races to start in the morning instead of the afternoon.	Races earlier in the day.	Races in the morning rather than early afternoon
The Strider to watch over the summer is....	Nikki Javan	For me- Lucy and Selena as we're similar paced	Niamh Vincent
This time next year the Striders Women's XC team will be.....	Promoted to the first division.	Getting 2 teams out every match and finishing higher in the table	Fitter and faster, but still having fun and eating great post-race cake!

	<b>Nikki Javan</b>
So....good season?	Not sure XC is my forte but it's great fun
Pleased it's over?	Yes and no! If it's the sign that spring is coming then I can hardly wait. I'd like to start being able to feel my fingers on runs again. Conversely, it's been my first season running anything for the club (well actually doing any team sport as an adult) and to say I have enjoyed it would be an understatement.
Which was your favourite course over the last few months?	Denbies! To be honest the courses for the Surrey League were a little on the tame side for my liking with very little mud and few hills. Maybe this is what comes of having Lloyd as a local parkrun.
Who is your hero of the season?	Lucy Finch! Not only was she the loudest cheerleader for the senior ladies, she single handedly ended the season in a fantastic position for the junior girls. Well done Lucy!
Who is the most improved Strider over the course of the season?	This is a really hard question but I think a few of the ladies had a fantastic season. If you're going to push me for a single name then probably Susanna Lutman. She made some significant progress throughout the races and put everything into it each time.
What is the best post-race cake?	I could, and do, eat cake all day long but I particularly liked the vegan carrot cakes from the Richmond Park fixture. Is it considered bad form to nominate for one's own cake?
How are you going to keep yourself busy over the spring / summer?	It's my first full spring/summer of running having only joined Striders in June last year. Maybe it's a little ambitious To plan too far ahead but I'll be keeping myself busy doing anything and everything running related that comes along. The best thing about being a new runner is that almost ever run is a PB!  Oh and spending time with my family.
Any targets over the next few months?	At the moment everything is about the marathon.
Will you make any changes to your training in preparation for next XC season?	Given that I didn't even contemplate XC ahead of the start of the season I think any sort of preparation would be progress for me. I think I'll be squeezing in a few more hill rep sessions and maybe some more off road running.
If you could make one change to the Surrey XC League it would be....	Although I don't want to start a debate on gender equality in xc, I wouldn't say no to equalisation of the distances. It would also be handy to have the races either at the same venue or at least closer together. It would make logistics a lot easier for those running couples and we could cheer each other on more regularly.
The Strider to watch over the summer is....	This is the hardest question here so I'm going to have to give you a list: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Niamh Vincent joined the club late in the season but made a great first impression in the races she competed in.</li> <li>• Rachel Vinton is running really well now she is over her injury and you could really see her progress from Christmas to the end of the season.</li> <li>• Sophia Sachedina finished the last race of the season really strongly and I think she's got a lot more to give the club.</li> <li>• Becky Laurence was a force all season and has just gone from strength to strength. It'll be incredible to see what else she has because just when you think she's reached the top, she produces yet another stellar performance.</li> </ul>
This time next year the Striders Women's XC team will be.....	Celebrating one of their strongest xc seasons on record.

## WHAT TYPE OF MARATHON FOR YOU? (by Debra Bourne)

A marathon: a foot race of 26.2 miles, or 42 km. For many people, completing a single marathon, probably raising money for charity, is a huge achievement, involving four or five months of training from a base of no or very little running. Afterwards, the running shoes are cast aside. For many club runners, including Stridres, a marathon is something to be trained towards once or twice a year, commonly with the goal of running a PB – a personal best time – although there are the hardy souls who run two or three marathons within the space of a few spring weeks. And then there are the people who run marathons repeatedly during the year, sometimes on two (or even more) consecutive days.

For most non-runners, the word “marathon” probably conjures up the typical mass-participation city marathon, such as the Virgin Money London Marathon. These races involve thousands of runners, ranging from the elites at the sharp end of the field through the top club runners and all the way to the charity runners in amazing and sometimes improbably fancy-dress outfits. The roads are closed to traffic for the duration of the race. There are thousands or tens of thousands of spectators lining the streets and cheering on the runners, punctuated by groups from specific charities, encouraging their runners. Every few miles there is a refreshment station handing out bottles of water and/or sports drink, possibly with sports gels available at some of these as well. There are thousands of people lining the course cheering on tired runners; the atmosphere at these events is festive and may be punctuated by various bands along the course. These events are also well publicised. Not surprisingly, it is this type of marathon that most first-time marathon runners enter.

There are also down sides to big city marathons. Generally you have to enter some months ahead of the event. For some, such as the London Marathon, you have to hope to get through on the computer simply to enter the ballot, with several people chasing each place, although alternative entry routes are available: run another marathon fast enough to earn a “Good for Age” entry; get a place through your running club; or sign up with one of the charities that has places and pledge to raise a considerable sum of money – often £1000 - £2,000.

Then you need to get to the expo to pick up your number; queue to get it; work out how to reach the start when roads are closed and there’s no parking anyway; queue for the portable toilets (hoping that either they still have loo paper or you’ve remembered to bring some); queue to give in your drop bag; stuff yourself into a start pen and wait to actually start moving some minutes after the official start of the race... While you run, you often have to sidestep to avoid slower runners, sometimes running three or four abreast with linked arms blocking the course. And all over the road there is a litter of discarded drinks bottles, usually thrown down after only two or three mouthfuls have been drunk, now lying ready to trip an unfortunate runner or, when stood on, to spray sticky sports drink all over a runner’s ankles. Big city marathons employ a veritable army of people to clean up all the litter after the race is over.

While the big city marathons get a lot of attention, there are quite a lot of smaller-scale marathons around. Some are held during the spring or autumn “marathon seasons”, but you can find marathons in all months of the year. Listings of these are posted online and can be searched variously by geography and/or date. Most of these events are held on certified marathon-length courses. These marathons take place in smaller towns and in beautiful countryside locations: the Snowdon marathon, Loch Ness marathon and so on. Participants generally vary in number from a few hundred to a few thousand. In general they attract fewer charity runners and gather fewer spectators than the big city marathons, so if you rely on the cheers of the crowds then these may not be for you! Water stations may be fewer, but waste may also be reduced, which has to be a good thing. Medals may be less ornate and there

may or may not be T-shirts for starters/finishers – but they are less expensive to enter and usually take a lot longer to fill up and sell out.

At the opposite end of the scale from the big city marathons are those held by groups such as Saxons, Vikings and Normans and Phoenix Running. These are the ultimate low-key marathons. You might get there 30 minutes before the start, queue up behind one other person to get your number, with your name hand written on it in large letters, visit the toilets (where there might be a short queue), drop your kit bag near the aid station, listen to a quick briefing about 5-10 minutes before the start (“Follow the arrows, don’t cross any roads or bridges and you can’t really get lost”, then set off. No chip timing, few if any spectators. These events have a field of maybe 150-200 runners – fewer for those held on weekdays. They are generally lapped courses, some being out-and-back, e.g. along a seaside promenade, others laps around a cycle track or a light trail path through a country park or a farm. Some are certified marathons while others are 6-hour or 8-hour challenge events, during which you complete as many or as few laps as you like to earn you your medal and goodie bags – so you can run a 10K, half-marathon, marathon, ultramarathon or any other distance, such as 15 or 20 miles. The goodie bags contain chocolate, biscuits, crisps and a can of lager/cider/Coke. The aid station offers crisps, sweets, biscuits, grapes, supplemented by whatever runners have made and brought with – which may be flapjacks, cakes, cheese straws and similar. The surface may be anything from tarmac or concrete to light trail, depending on the event.

Trail marathons may be very small and low key, such as the Vanguard Way and Woldingham trail marathons, quite local for Striders (very local in the case of the Vanguard, which sets off from Lloyd Park), or somewhat larger, as with Beachy Head marathon. As the name suggest, these are held on surfaces that are mostly trail (although some such as Woldingham do have substantial tarmac sections) and are very likely to involve hills! The length is generally approximate and may easily reach 27 miles or more rather than precisely 26.2. Medals and mementoes, whether T-shirts or other, are quite variable, and while many are quite well marked, others do involve an element of navigation, such as following a set of route directions. Water stations may be every four to six miles or so and littering is strongly discouraged - the organisers do want to be allowed to hold the race in future years, and landowners will be understandably reluctant if they know runners will leave litter (or damage their fences).

So next time you fail to get a place in the ballot for London, remember there are lots of other marathon options out there.



## RECOVERY FODDER: CHEAT'S KEDGEREE (by Peter Mills)

With thanks to Mrs Mills\* who packs this in my lunchbox when I have post-race aches and pains.

- Preparation time: 10 minutes
- Cooking time: 20 minutes
- Serves: 4

### Ingredients

1 tbsp sunflower oil  
1 onion, chopped  
1½ tbsp curry powder  
200g rice  
2 eggs  
2 tomatoes, chopped  
300g smoked mackerel fillet, flaked, hot or cold  
3 tbsp chopped flat-leaf parsley

### Method

1. Heat the oil in a wide shallow pan over a medium heat. Add the onion and cook for 5 minutes, then add the curry powder and rice. Stir for 1 minute.
2. Pour in enough water to come an inch above the surface of the rice. Season and bring to the boil, then cover and reduce to a slow simmer. Cook for 12–15 minutes, until the rice is tender,
3. Meanwhile, hard boil the eggs. Then peel and quarter the eggs.
4. Stir in the eggs, tomatoes, mackerel and parsley.

### Eat

1. Ensure room is well ventilated
2. Ensure office colleagues are not within smelling distance
3. Eat. Can be eaten hot or cold.

With thanks to Waitrose who provided the original version of this recipe on their website.

**Does anyone else have any recipes they would like to share?**

(\*my wife, not my mum.)





# **BOOK REVIEW – BRITISH MARATHON RUNNING LEGENDS OF THE 1980s**

**(by Gabrielle Collison: reviewed by Alan Dolton)**

In December, Urban Bettag gave a talk about marathon training to Striders, and Krzysztof subsequently distributed a PDF containing Urban's Powerpoint slides. Urban recommended two books for further reading. One of these was 'Advanced Marathoning' by Peter Pfitzinger and Scott Douglas, and I was delighted to see that the second book was 'British Marathon Running Legends of the 1980s' by Gabrielle Collison, which I had reviewed in the December 2013 issue of this magazine. Since we have had quite a large influx of aspiring marathon runners in the years since I published my review, I thought that it might be useful to reproduce it here, in a very slightly updated form.

Gabrielle Collison used to run for Belgrave: she placed second in the 1993 Surrey Women's Cross-Country Championships, and the following summer she placed second in the Surrey Championships at both 1500 metres (4:36.1) and 3000 metres (9:42.6). She subsequently obtained an MSc in sports science. This book contains interviews with 18 of Britain's leading male and female marathon runners of the 1980s, including Hugh Jones and Mike Gratton, who won the 1982 and 1983 London Marathons respectively; Charlie Spedding who placed third in the 1984 Olympic Marathon; and Joyce Smith who won the women's race in the 1981 and 1982 London Marathons. (The most notable omission is Steve Jones, who set the British marathon record: Gabrielle has explained that he twice failed to attend scheduled interviews with her.)

These 18 interviews are followed by a section entitled 'pilot study interviews', which features interviews with Jim Alder and Bill Adcocks (first and second in the 1966 Commonwealth Games Marathon) and with Croydon's own Don Faircloth, who placed third in the 1970 Commonwealth Games Marathon. Personally I would have thought that it would be more logical to have these three interviews as a prologue rather than as an epilogue, but they still make very interesting reading.

In her introduction to the book, Gabrielle observes that the standards of British marathon running in the 1980s were significantly higher than they are now. In 1983, 100 British men ran the marathon in under 2 hours 20 minutes: the 100th fastest British marathon runner that year recorded 2 hours 19 minutes 52. By contrast, in 2009 the 100th fastest British marathon runner recorded 2 hours 33 minutes 59. In the 1980s, eight British men ran a marathon faster than 2 hours 10 minutes; from 2000 to 2009, only two did so.

For anyone living in Croydon, Gabrielle's interview with Don Faircloth makes fascinating reading. In 1968 and 1969, Don set Croydon Harriers club records at 5000 and 10000 metres: they are still the fastest times ever run by an English member of Croydon Harriers, although they have been beaten by runners born in the Southern Hemisphere. And in the 1970 Commonwealth Games, Don set a Croydon Harriers club record of 2 hours 12 minutes 19 seconds: this still places him second in the Harriers' all-time rankings, only having been beaten by Dave Chettle, who was born in Tasmania. Don's best time is still more than 12 minutes faster than the next best Croydon Harrier (John Lee), is 22 minutes faster than the best Croydon Harrier of the last 20 years (Steve Bayliss), and is more than 20 minutes faster than Striders' club record (held by James Bennett). So what training was Don doing, to enable him to run so much faster than Croydon's subsequent distance runners?

Don observes that he started training with Croydon's senior runners at the age of 15, doing part of their track sessions. At that time (1964) Croydon's senior runners usually did a club run of up to 15 miles on Sundays, and Don also began doing this, commenting that "it was

better than running on my own". As a teenager he had more success at cross-country than on the track, where he recorded personal bests of 3 minutes 56.7 for 1500 metres (at the age of 19) and 4 minutes 14 for the mile. In 1969, at the age of 20, he set what was then a Croydon club record of 29 minutes 01.0 for 10000 metres. That autumn he suffered a stress fracture and had to temporarily stop speedwork, but continued doing long runs. In April 1970 he won the Kent 20-mile road race in 1 hour 44 minutes, and two months later he won his first ever marathon (the Polytechnic Marathon from Windsor to Chiswick, which was then the AAA championship), recording 2 hours 18 minutes on a very hot day. This won him selection for the Commonwealth Games later that year, where he ran his lifetime best.



**The start of the 1970 Commonwealth Games Marathon. The eventual winner Ron Hill is on the left, wearing number 108: Don Faircloth is immediately behind him.**

At this time Don had a physical job, working as a horticulturist, which involved spending a lot of time pushing wheelbarrows. He trained twice a day, doing a fartlek session in Lloyd Park at lunchtimes and another session in the evening. Looking back at his failure to improve his marathon time after setting a lifetime best at the age of 21, Don comments "I should have gone back to concentrating on the track because track speed is really the answer to getting faster at the marathon. Most good marathoners are also good track men."

Don's mileage averaged 70-80 per week, which he increased to 90-100 while building up for a marathon. He did a ten-week build-up "which consisted of 8 weeks of very hard work and a couple of weeks of easing down". He did a long run of between 16 and 23 miles on a Sunday on hilly roads, which was the only time he did a hard session on the roads: his lunchtime sessions were done in Lloyd Park and Addington Hills. His track sessions were on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. One of his track sessions, which was initially set by Croydon's long-distance coach Brian Proctor, was 52 x 200m with a 100m jog between each rep, followed by a flat-out 400 metres. Including the jog recoveries, this session totalled exactly 16000 metres, which is almost ten miles (and it is worth noting that Don's jog 'recoveries' were at quite a brisk pace). Don comments that this type of session "toughens you up mentally, especially for when you get into a difficult situation in a race". Both Don's long runs and his track sessions were always done with a group. He comments that "if you did the long run and thought that you hadn't worked hard enough, then there was always the option of going out for another session in the evening". For the track sessions, there was a hardcore group of three or four Harriers who trained together, so that Don usually had other runners with him for about two-thirds of most sessions, but he observes that although some

of them may have had better basic speed than him, they did not have the same pace judgment and would tire in the second half of the session.



**The medallists in the 1970 Commonwealth Games Marathon:  
(left to right) Jim Alder, Ron Hill and Don Faircloth.**

Don also comments that he benefited from regular physiotherapy and sports massage (from a GB team physio who lived in Worcester Park), and that there was “always a fine line between being fit and getting ill”. He notes that, when he was at school, his parents didn’t have a car, so that he “used to walk everywhere. I’d even save money on the bus fare by jogging to the cinema and back. Another 10 or 20 years on, and things are getting worse and worse with kids having very sedentary lifestyles.” He had “a balanced diet” and, at his peak, he only weighed 8 stone 4 (Don is 5 foot 8 inches tall, and other Harriers can testify that, despite being so slim, he was well-known for having a healthy appetite).

Many of the other interviews in the book make similar points: a background of playing out of doors in childhood, and a reasonably high mileage including high-quality fast sessions with other athletes as well as long runs, seem to be regarded as the basic ingredients of success at the marathon. Hugh Jones – still the only Surrey runner ever to win the London Marathon – notes that he did regular runs of 23 miles and considers that “20 miles isn’t long enough if you are building up for a marathon”. He ran about 90 miles per week when training for a marathon. Like Don, he used to do much of his training in local parks, rather than on the road.

Joyce Smith, who won the women’s race in the 1981 and 1982 London Marathons, began her career as a track runner and ran 4 minutes 09 for the 1500 metres (which is faster than any male Strider has run for more than 20 years). In her marathon preparation, she ran some long runs of 25 miles and also did a weekly track session such as 5 x 1 mile (in about five minutes) and 6 x 800m (in about 2 minutes 23). She averaged between 70 and 90 miles per week when training for a marathon.



Charlie Spedding, the only British runner to win an Olympic medal at the marathon in the last 60 years, also had a background of track running (running 3 minutes 45 for the 1500m and 4 minutes 03 for the mile). In his marathon build-up, he did one long run of about 28 miles, about four weeks before the marathon, but apart from this he did not run more than 20 miles (an interesting contrast to Don Faircloth and Hugh Jones). He averaged about 90 miles per week. He too did a regular Tuesday track session. One of his hardest regular track sessions was 5 x 1 mile in 4 minutes 40, jogging a lap in 90 seconds as recovery. This session totals 10000 metres and Charlie used to run the session, including the recovery jogs, in just under 31 minutes. His personal best for the 10000 metres was 28 minutes 08 seconds, so that his total time for these sessions was about two and a half minutes slower than his personal best. 28 minutes 08 seconds for 10000 metres requires an average of between 67 and 68 seconds per lap, so that Charlie's mile reps were two or three seconds per lap slower than his 10000 metre race pace. He also did a high-tempo run most weeks, where he ran for 15 miles at about 5 minutes 40 seconds per mile. (It should be borne in mind that Charlie's marathon race pace was under 5 minutes per mile, and that most of his other training runs were between 6 minutes and 6 minutes 30 per mile.)

This is a very interesting book which I would definitely recommend to any Striders with ambitions to run a fast marathon, or to anyone with an interest in learning more about how British distance runners used to train in the 1980s, when British distance running had significantly more strength in depth than it does today.



**Gabrielle Collison in the 1993 Surrey Cross-Country Championship at Frimley**

## **BOOK REVIEW – RUNNING SCIENCE**

**(edited by Professor John Brewer; reviewed by Alan Dolton)**

This 192-page book is edited by John Brewer, who is the Professor of Applied Sports Science at St Mary's University in Twickenham (which is well-known as a good base for middle-distance runners). He himself has written two of the eight chapters in this book, including the opening chapter which is entitled 'The Runner's Body'. It includes good explanations of running economy, the importance of 'maximum oxygen uptake' (commonly known as VO<sub>2</sub> max) and lactic acid (which is not responsible for the muscle soreness runners feel after a very long run, but is responsible for the very different type of muscle soreness which runners feel when they try to run flat-out for 400 metres). It also includes a good explanation of the difference between 'fast-twitch' and 'slow-twitch' muscle fibres, explaining why some runners are more suited to short distances while others are more suited to long distances.

The second chapter, entitled 'Perfect Motion', includes an interesting discussion of the optimum relationship between stride-length and stride-rate. It observes that Usain Bolt had a slower stride-rate than most of his rivals (including Tyson Gay and Asafa Powell) but had a significantly better stride-length, and that 10000-metre world record holder Kenenisa Bekele had a stride-rate of 186 steps per minute, and a stride-length of just under two metres, when running at his race pace. It also observes that many long-distance runners have tight hip flexors and lean forward too much from the waist, whereas more efficient runners have a slight forward lean from the ankles, rather than from the hips.

The third chapter discusses the importance of nutrition, observing that excess body weight 'is extra baggage and runners pay an energy penalty for lugging around extra weight', while the fourth chapter discusses running psychology.

The fifth chapter, entitled 'Training And Racing', includes an interesting discussion of high-intensity interval training'. The authors suggest that runners should do two interval sessions each week (something which very few Striders seem to do, despite the fact that the club offers interval sessions on two evenings each week). It also includes a good discussion of marathon pacing, observing that it is better to run negative splits than to start too fast and have to slow down in the second half. The authors observe that women seem to be much better at the art of pace judgment, and at running negative splits, than male runners.

The sixth chapter, written by former British international Paul Larkins (who ran 1500 metres in 3 minutes 35 back in 1987), deals with equipment. It includes a good discussion of how to choose running shoes, advising runners to "get yourself to a specialist running store, have them look at your form, and go for there". It also advises runners to wear vests or T-shirts in breathable fabrics to help perspiration to evaporate, rather than wearing cotton or polyester.

The seventh chapter, on avoiding injury, is written by a physiotherapist, Anna Barnsley. Sadly, I found this to be the only disappointing chapter in the book. A brief discussion of stretching observes that 'if you already have a soft-tissue injury related to muscle imbalance, in which a muscle is functionally short and tight, there is good evidence that stretching is helpful as it increases joint range of movement, releasing muscle tightness ...'. However, although the chapter includes a brief discussion of knee pain resulting from the patella being pulled out of alignment, it only mentions one cause of this problem, i.e. a weak gluteus medius causing tension in the ilio-tibial band (which runs from the outer hip to the lateral side of the knee). I was very surprised that the author failed to mention another common cause of such pain, namely an imbalance between the quadriceps muscles, where the outer quadriceps muscle (vastus lateralis) becomes much more powerful than the inner

quadriceps muscle (vastus medialis). As the well-known physiotherapist Vivian Grisogono has commented in her standard textbook 'Running Fitness and Injuries', "the key muscle for kneecap control is the only one to hold the kneecap from its inner edge: the vastus medialis". This is only exercised and strengthened when the knee is fully extended, so that it is weakened when runners only do slow jogging without fully extending the knee. My personal experience as a therapist is the same as Vivian Grisogono's, and I am puzzled as to why Barnsley does not discuss this common imbalance. (I suspect that the most likely explanation may be that most of her experience is with treating elite runners who do regular speedwork, and are therefore less likely to suffer this particular injury than runners who do most or all of their running at a slow pace without fully extending the knee.)

The final chapter in the book, written by John Brewer, is entitled 'The Big Questions'. He expresses the view that "the sub-two-hour marathon is feasible, but will certainly require an extraordinary run from a very talented individual, under conditions that are ideally suited to marathon running. The course will need to be flat with few sharp bends, at sea level, and with a climate that is cool enough not to overstress the body's thermoregulation system, with no breeze to create resistance." In a discussion of world records in general, he observes that across almost all of the distances from the 100 metres to the marathon itself, the women's world record pace is between 88% and 91% of the men's world record pace. However, at 100 kilometres, the women's world record pace is 95% of the men's world record pace, illustrating that in ultra-distance events, men have less advantage over women than they do at shorter distances. Brewer has good news for both sexes when he observes that runners have a significantly reduced risk of deaths from cardiovascular disorders as well as a reduced risk of death from some cancers, neurological diseases and infections. He also observes that two research studies have shown that the health benefits of running are reduced when a runner exercises for several hours at a time, although the studies disagree as to exactly when a runner begins to reduce life expectancy instead of increasing it.

Despite my disappointment at the rather superficial nature of the chapter on injuries, I enjoyed reading this book and would recommend it to other Striders.



**The women's cross-country team at St Mary's University,  
where John Brewer is Professor of Applied Sports Science**



## STRIDERS IN THE SURREY CROSS-COUNTRY LEAGUE

As most readers should already know, this season has seen Striders' men promoted to the top division of the Surrey Cross-Country League for the first time, after spending 32 years in the lower divisions.

The League was formed in 1962, initially with one division of six clubs. A second division was added in 1967, and a third division was added in 1982. Coincidentally, 1982 was also the year in which Striders were formed (for a detailed account of the club's formation, see Colin Golding's article in the summer 2007 edition of this magazine). Initially Striders' main focus was on marathon training, and it was not until 1986 that the club entered the Surrey Cross-Country League. The club mustered 15 runners for the first race of the season, at Epsom Downs on 11 October, and finished the season in a creditable fifth place. Their best individual performance came from Simon Morris, who placed 16th in the third match, held at Coulsdon. Simon missed one of the four matches, so Striders' first cross-country trophy was won by Nigel Davidson, who was one of the first four Striders to finish in all four matches.



Standing (left to right) --- Simon Morris, Dave MacDonald, Tony Smith, Ron Carver, Allan Day, Darren Ennor, Colin Golding, Steve Page, Dave Langley, Len Picott, Peter Jeal.  
Kneeling --- Steve Harman, Simon Smith, Steve Owen, and Nigel Davidson.

### **Striders' first Surrey League team, in October 1986**

In 1987/88, Striders improved to finish fourth, with their leading runner being Henrique Galvan who was the first Strider to finish in all four races, consistently placing in the top ten. The team slipped back to sixth in 1988/89, and slipped further in 1989/90 to finish only 12th (out of 16 clubs).

For 1990/91, Division One was increased from eight clubs to nine and Division Two was increased from eight clubs to eleven. The opening match of the 1990/91 season, at Dorking on 20 October, saw Striders finish third of the 13 clubs in the match, which was the first time that the club had placed in the first three in a Surrey League match. The second match, at Esher on 17 November, saw Striders improve still further to finish second in the match and consolidate third place in the division. The club held this position in the third match, on 19 January, and with three clubs to be promoted to Division Two, looked forward to clinching promotion at the final match of the season, scheduled to be held at Hindhead on 9 February. The weather played its part when heavy snow forced the cancellation of the match (the



Division One match was also cancelled, although the Division Two match at Tilford went ahead). So the Striders' team, led by Nigel Davidson, could celebrate promotion to Division Two for the first time.

Striders' first match in Division Two was at Epsom Downs on 12 October 1991. Striders' team was led by Nigel Davidson, who placed 23rd. The team placed tenth of the eleven clubs in the match. The second match was at Brockwell Park on 16 November. Nigel Davidson was 28th but no other Striders managed to place in the top 50. The team placed eleventh in the match and slipped to the bottom of Division Two. The next two races, in January and February, both saw Striders place tenth in the match: they managed to climb off the bottom of the table but finished the season in tenth place of the eleven clubs and were duly relegated back to Division Three.

The next four years followed the same format, with promotion to Division Two being followed by relegation back to Division Three. The 1992/93 season saw Striders place second to Epsom in each of the first three matches. The final match of the season was at Esher, and saw Striders clinch promotion by winning the match, which was the first time that the club had won a Surrey League match. Nigel Davidson led the team home in seventh place, with Juan Galvan 15th, Gary Wales 27th and John McGilvray 28th. Simon Smith was 51st with Steve Owen 52nd, Lee Morgan 56th, John Gerken 69th, Colin Golding 74th and Colin Cotton completing the scoring team in 98th. The final Division Three table saw Epsom win with 1585 points, but Striders' total of 2051 saw them finish well clear of Stragglers (2759), Dorking (3021), Reigate (3049) and 13 other clubs in the 18-team division.

For the 1993/94 season, Division Two had been reduced from eleven clubs to nine, with four clubs having been relegated. The season began with a match at Epsom on 16 October. Striders' total of 770 points saw them finish last of the nine competing clubs. The team stayed at the bottom of the table for the rest of the season, and were duly relegated back to Division Three. The difference in standard between Division Two and Three was shown again in 1994/95 when some consistent Striders performances saw the club on top of Division Three with one match remaining. The final match was at Richmond Park on 11 February. Stragglers, competing on their home course, won the match by a sufficiently large margin to take first place in the final table. Striders were third in the match but finished second in the final Division Three table, continuing their sequence of bouncing between Divisions Two and Three and being promoted for the third time in five years.

The 1995/96 season began with a Division Two match at Brockwell Park on 14 October. Only two Striders managed to finish in the top 60: Lee Morgan led the team home in 39th place with Tony Sheppard 59th. The team finished last of the nine competing clubs, and repeated this position in each of the three remaining matches. In the second match, at Wimbledon on 18 November, Lee Morgan ran well to finish 20th, which was the first time that a Strider had placed in the top 20 in Division Two. Tony Sheppard was 45th with John McGilvray 52nd. In the third match, at Lloyd Park on 6 January, Juan Galvan, in his only appearance of the season, led the team home in 25th place. Tony Sheppard was 31st with Lee Morgan 40th. In the final match, at Richmond Park on 17 February, Lee Morgan led the team in 31st place while Tony Sheppard was 41st and Nigel Davidson 52nd.

Striders' results for the past six years made interesting reading:

1990/91	3rd in Division Three. Promoted.
1991/92	10th (of 11) in Division Two. Relegated.
1992/93	2nd in Division Three. Promoted.
1993/94	9th (of 9) in Division Two. Relegated.
1994/95	2nd in Division Three. Promoted.
1995/96	9th (of 9) in Division Two. Relegated.

However this marked the end of the club's sequence of promotion being followed by immediate relegation: Striders were now to remain in Division Three until 2002.

For 1996/97, the Surrey League had been expanded to four divisions and Division Three had been reduced to nine clubs. The season began at Epsom Downs on 19 October. Juan Galvan ran very well to place fourth, which was the best placing any Strider had managed in a Surrey League race. Lee Morgan was ninth with Dave Langley 20th. The team placed fourth in the match. In the second match, at Reigate on 16 November, the team placed third, led by Lee Morgan who placed 13th with Eric Parker 14th. The third match took place at Wimbledon on 4 January. Striders again placed third, led by Juan Galvan who finished seventh in his last race for the club before returning to Spain. Tony Sheppard was 12th and Lee Morgan 15th. The final match was at Esher on 22 February. Striders were led by Eric Parker who placed 14th with Lee Morgan 16th. The team was fifth in the match and fourth in the final league table.

The 1997/98 season began with a match at Epsom Downs on 18 October. Striders did well to place second in the match, behind Stragglers but ahead of host club Epsom. They were led by Lee Morgan who finished eighth. Eric Parker was 13th with Bob Ewen 16th and Gerry Crispie 20th. Unfortunately the team were unable to maintain this position: they eventually finished the season in sixth place in Division Three, which was the club's worst placing since 1989/90. The team suffered a further setback at the end of the season when Lee Morgan resigned from the club and joined South London Harriers.

The 1998/99 season began with a match on 17 October, on a very tough course at Wisley. Striders finished a disappointing eighth of the nine clubs in the division, leaving us in danger of relegation to Division Four for the first time. However, we produced a slightly better performance in the second match, at Stoke Park in Guildford on 21 November, and in the third match, at Esher on 16 January. The final match was at Lloyd Park on 27 February, and the benefit of home advantage saw us make sure of avoiding relegation, with our best performance of the season. Our leading runners were Tony Sheppard (who was our first man home in three of the four races) and Eric Parker.

The opening match of the 1999/2000 season was at Epsom on 16 October. We placed fifth in the match. Tony Sheppard was again our first man home, finishing tenth. The second match, at Richmond Park on 20 November, saw us slip to seventh, and we repeated this position on 11 December, on a tough course at Hindhead which included a climb up the Devil's Punch Bowl on each lap. These results left us in seventh place in Division Three and dangerously close to the relegation zone with only a small lead over Haslemere. The final match was at Wimbledon on 5 February. We finished fifth in the match and sixth in the final table. Tony Sheppard led us home in tenth place while Neil Furze was eleventh. Haslemere also avoided relegation by just six points because Walton, who had been more than 200 points clear of the relegation zone before the match, turned up with only four runners and finished a well-beaten last.

The 2000/01 season began with a match at Richmond on 14 October. We placed fourth in the match. Gerry Crispie was tenth, with Eric Parker 13th and Tony Sheppard 14th. The second match, at Wimbledon on 18 November, saw us slip to sixth in both the match and the league table. The third match, at Epsom on 13 January, saw us place fourth in the match and climb to fifth in the league table. Tony Sheppard led us home in tenth place, with Nigel Davidson 20th. The final match, at Lloyd Park on 3 February, saw us place second in the match and climb to fourth in the final league table. Our team was again led by Tony Sheppard who placed seventh, with Eric Parker 15th and Nigel Davidson 20th.



**Striders' Surrey League team in 2001**

The 2001/02 season began with a match at Wimbledon on 13 October. We did well to place second, only 13 points behind host club Wimbledon Windmilers. Eric Parker led us home in eighth place, with Tony Sheppard eleventh. The second match was held on 17 November at Epsom. Striders placed second; for the second successive match, we were 13 points behind Wimbledon Windmilers. Our team was led by Simon Alexander who placed seventh, with Eric Parker 13th and Neil Furze 18th.

The third race of the season was held on 15 December at Lloyd Park. Striders boosted our promotion hopes by winning the match, 13 points ahead of Collingwood, and moving to the top of the table. Simon Alexander led us home in sixth place, with Gerry Crispie 13th, Ciaran Osborn 15th and Neil Furze 19th. The final match was held on 2 February at Oxshott. We placed second to Walton in the match, and by beating our closest rivals Wimbledon Windmilers, we made sure of winning the Division Three championship for the first time in our history (we had gained promotion on three occasions in the early 1990s, but had never finished as champions). Eric Parker led us home in 12th place with Simon Alexander 18th.

Having led us back to Division Two after six seasons in Division Three, Nigel Davidson stood down as team manager and was succeeded by Chris Morton. Meanwhile local rivals Croydon Harriers could only place eighth in Division Two, and were relegated to Division Three for the first (but not the last) time in their history. This meant that, for the first time, the 2002/03 season would see Striders competing in a higher division than the Harriers.

In each of Striders' three previous seasons in Division Two, we had been relegated immediately. However 2002/03 saw a substantial improvement. The season did not start until 16 November, as the match scheduled for October was postponed at the request of British Airways. Our opening match was at Richmond Park. We placed fifth of the nine competing clubs, with Tony Sheppard tenth, new member Justin Macenhill 13th, Eric Parker 16th and Simon Alexander 30th.

The second match was at Epsom Downs on 11 January. On a frozen course, Striders won the match, gaining our first ever Division Two win. This also lifted us from fifth to second in the Division Two table. Justin Macenhill led us home in ninth place with Ciaran Osborn tenth,



Tony Sheppard 15th, Eric Parker 27th and Simon Alexander 29th. The third match was held at Lloyd Park on 1 February. Striders finished second behind Box Hill Racers, thus retaining second place in the overall Division Two table with one match remaining. Simon Alexander led us home in sixth place, with Ciaran Osborn 14th and Eric Parker 17th.

The final Division Two race was not held until 15 March, at Richmond Park. Striders had an impressive turnout of 29 runners, hoping to celebrate promotion to Division One for the first time in our history. Unfortunately Stragglers had other ideas and produced their strongest team of the season to snatch the second promotion spot. We were led home by Ciaran Osborn who had an excellent run to place fifth. Eric Parker was 15th and was followed by Justin Macenhill (20th), Tony Sheppard (26th) and Joe Butlin (30th). Sadly, our other five scorers finished a bit too far down the field. Finishing third was still a fine achievement as in all three of our previous seasons in Division Two, we had been relegated back to Division Three. Stragglers' reward for snatching promotion was to finish a distant ninth in Division One in 2003/04.



**The Striders' team which narrowly missed out on promotion in March 2003.**

**Back row: Don Kayum, Colin Cotton, Kevin Burnett, Ken Low, Greg Evans, Alan Dolton, Damian Macenhill, Neil Furze, John Gannon, Kevin Bannister, Eric Parker, Dave Lovell, Steve Bramson, Mark Wilkinson, Simon Alexander, Joe Butlin, Dean Casella, Bob Pullen, Dave Shaw, John Kirby, Gerry Crispie, Tony Sheppard.**

**Front row: Mick George, Ciaran Osborn, Simon Smith, Chris Morton, Justin Macenhill**

Unfortunately the 2003/04 season was a very disappointing one for our men. The first match was on 18 October at Wimbledon. Ciaran Osborn placed tenth and Justin Macenhill 24th, but our team could only manage eighth. The second match, at Lightwater on 13 December, was even worse, as none of our runners finished in the top 30, and the team placed ninth.

The third match was at Merrow on 10 January. Justin Macenhill was 15th and the team improved to place fifth. However we were still in the relegation zone for the final match of the season, at Lloyd Park on 7 February. Justin Macenhill again ran well to place ninth, but we only had four runners in the top 70, placed ninth in the match, and were relegated to Division Three.

We began the 2004/05 season with a match at Epsom on 9 October. We finished fourth, led by Justin Macenhill who placed tenth. The second match was at Lightwater on 27 November. Duncan Lancashire made an excellent debut, finishing fourth, while Justin Macenhill was 13th. We again placed fourth in the match. The third match was at Lloyd Park on 15 January. Justin Macenhill was ninth, John Foster 15th and Iain Harrison 16th. The team placed fifth in the match. With one match remaining, we were fifth in the table, 95 points behind second-placed Dorking, with Woking and Sutton also ahead of us.

The final match was at Wimbledon on 12 February. We produced our best performance of the season to win the match, and gain promotion back to Division Two after just one year in Division Three. Our total of 258 points saw us well clear of nearest rivals Epsom (308), Sutton (329) and Dorking (383). In the overall Division Three table, Epsom were clear champions with 1263 points, but our total of 1471 saw us take the second promotion spot, ahead of Dorking (1501), Sutton (1502) and Woking (1624). Our team at Wimbledon was led by Justin Macenhill who placed tenth, while Scott Antony was 13th and Iain Harrison 15th.

The following seasons saw us establish ourselves in Division Two. The 2005/06 season began at Epsom on 8 October. Justin Macenhill finished ninth with Duncan Lancashire 11th, and the team placed fifth. We were also fifth in the second match, at Richmond Park on 19 November. Duncan Lancashire was seventh and Justin Macenhill tenth. The third match was at Lloyd Park on 14 January. Justin Macenhill was eighth and Scott Antony 25th. The team placed sixth. We were also sixth in the final match, at Richmond Park on 4 February, where Justin Macenhill finished tenth. We finished sixth in the final Division Two table.

The 2006/07 season began on 14 October, with another match at Richmond Park. Justin Macenhill placed eighth with Scott Antony 23rd and Damian Macenhill 30th. We were fourth in the match. The second match was at Wimbledon on 11 November. Justin Macenhill finished ninth, Matt Morgan 22nd, Dave Archer 26th and Duncan Lancashire 30th. We were third in the match. We also finished third in the third match of the season, held at Esher on 13 January. Justin Macenhill was sixth, Scott Antony was eighth, Duncan Lancashire 10th and Matt Morgan 16th. The final match was at Epsom on 10 February. Justin Macenhill placed fifth, Duncan Lancashire tenth and Matt Morgan in 24th. We were fifth in the match and finished fourth in the Division Two table.

The 2007/08 season began with a match at Richmond Park on 13 October. Duncan Lancashire placed 12th and our team were sixth. The second match was at Epsom on 10 November. Duncan Lancashire placed tenth and new recruit James Buchanan was 13th. Our team were seventh. The third match was at Richmond Park on 12 January. James Buchanan placed eighth, Justin Macenhill 16th, and Duncan Lancashire 27th. Our team were fifth. The final match was at Lloyd Park on 9 February. We had three runners in the top ten with James Buchanan sixth, Justin Macenhill eighth and Duncan Lancashire ninth. Our team finished fourth in the match and fifth in the final league table.

The 2008/09 season began with a match at Wimbledon on 11 October. Matt Morgan finished ninth, while our team placed fifth. The second match was at Esher on 8 November. Duncan Lancashire placed eighth and Matt Morgan 15th. Our team were sixth. We were also sixth in the third match, at Lightwater on 10 January. Duncan Lancashire finished sixth, one place and one second ahead of Matt Morgan, while Justin Macenhill placed 27th. The final match was at Lloyd Park on 28 February. Duncan Lancashire was ninth, Justin Macenhill tenth, and



Matt Morgan 14th. We were fourth in the match, and also finished fourth in the final league table, which was our best placing since 2003. Meanwhile local rivals Croydon Harriers had a very disappointing season, finishing bottom of Division Three and being relegated to Division Four for the first time in their history.

The 2009/10 season began with a match at Esher on 10 October. With seven of our runners in the top 30, we gained only our second ever win in a Division Two match. Duncan Lancashire had an outstanding run to place third with Justin Macenhill sixth, Matt Morgan eighth, new member Lee Flanagan 15th, Abdul Rashid-Abdi 17th, Steve Starvis 26th and Iain Harrison 28th.

The second match was at Dorking on 14 November. Our men extended their lead at the top of Division Two with their second successive win, finishing 15 points ahead of second-placed Dorking. We had three of the first four finishers. Justin Macenhill took second place, Matt Morgan third and Duncan Lancashire fourth, while Lee Flanagan was ninth. The third match was at Lloyd Park on 12 December. In a competitive match we finished a close third, but remained narrowly on top of the overall Division Two table. Matt Morgan placed sixth, Lee Flanagan 14th, Tyler O'Callaghan 17th and Richard Lee-Smith 25th.

The final match was at Richmond Park on 6 February. We were without a couple of our leading runners and had to settle for third place of the nine competing clubs. In the final table Dorking won the Division Two championship with 1358 points, while Stragglers took second with 1371 and we slipped to third with 1392, just missing out on promotion after having led the division for three-quarters of the season. We were again led by Matt Morgan who ran well to finish seventh. Justin Macenhill was 13th with Steve Starvis 23rd, Lee Flanagan 32nd and Richard Lee-Smith 36th.

The 2010/11 season began with a match at Lloyd Park on 9 October. Lee Flanagan placed ninth, Steve Starvis 16th and Justin Macenhill 23rd. We were sixth in the match. The second match was at Wimbledon on 13 November. Lee Flanagan placed ninth, Duncan Lancashire tenth, Steve Starvis 16th and Justin Macenhill 24th; we were fifth in the match. We also placed fifth in the third match, at Newlands Corner, near Guildford, on 15 January. Duncan Lancashire placed seventh, Lee Flanagan 12th, Steve Starvis 18th and Justin Macenhill 29th. The final match was at Richmond Park on 12 February. Duncan Lancashire placed seventh and Lee Flanagan eighth. Sadly, this was Duncan's last race for the club, as he had moved to Andover. We placed fourth in the match and fifth in the final Division Two table.

The 2011/12 season began with a match at Richmond Park on 8 October. Lee Flanagan was 28th, but none of our other runners placed in the top 40, and we had to settle for last place of the nine competing clubs. The second match was at Lloyd Park on 12 November. Lee Flanagan was 33rd: again, he was our only runner in the top 40, and we finished eighth. The third match was at Reigate on 14 January. Tyler O'Callaghan placed 18th with Lee Flanagan 19th. We placed fourth in the match, and climbed out of the relegation zone. The final match was at Esher on 11 February. Lee Flanagan again placed 19th: he was our only runner in the top 40, but we placed sixth of the nine competing clubs and also finished sixth in the final Division Two table.

The 2012/13 season began with a match at Nork Park on 20 October. Lee Flanagan placed 15th, Iain Harrison 16th and Krzysztof Klidzia 26th. The team placed third. However, we slipped back to fifth after the second match, at Epsom on 10 November, where Iain Harrison placed 29<sup>th</sup> but none of our other runners made the top 40. The third match was at Mitcham on 12 January. Lee Flanagan placed eleventh and Krzysztof Klidzia 30th. We were sixth in the match. The final match was at Lloyd Park on 9 February. Lee Flanagan placed tenth, Iain Harrison 14th and Krzysztof Klidzia 15th. We finished fourth in the match, and fifth in the final Division Two table.

The 2013/14 season began with a match at Richmond Park on 19 October. Iain Harrison finished eleventh, Lee Flanagan 18th and Matthew Smith 27th. The team placed fourth. The second match was at Wimbledon on 9 November. Iain Harrison was 14th and Lee Flanagan 28th. The team placed eighth. The third match was at Reigate on 11 January. Iain Harrison placed eleventh, while new member Dave Howell was 25th and Ernie Hann was 27th. We placed third in the match. The final match was at Lloyd Park on 8 February. Iain Harrison placed tenth, Matthew Smith 18th, Ernie Hann 19th and Justin Macenhill 26th. We were fourth in the match and finished fourth in the final Division Two table.

The 2014/15 season began with a match at Guildford on 11 October. Ernie Hann placed 22nd, new member Simone Luciani 23rd and Bill Makuwa 25th, while Matt Morgan made a welcome return to Striders colours in 30th. We placed third in the match. The second match was at Ham on 8 November. Bill Makuwa placed eleventh, Simone Luciani 15th (31.09) and Matt Morgan 26th. We placed fourth in the match. The third match was at Wimbledon on 10 January. James Bennett was 11th with Simone Luciani 17th and Matt Morgan 23rd. We placed fifth in the match. The final match was at Lloyd Park on 7 February. We produced our best performance of the season to place second of the nine clubs, and finished third in the final Division Two table. Simone Luciani was ninth, Matt Morgan 17th and Bill Makuwa 26th.

The end of the 2014/15 season saw Chris Morton stand down after 13 years as our team manager. In the years before Chris became team manager, we had spent only three seasons in Division Two (never finishing higher than ninth) and 13 seasons in Division Three. With Chris as team manager, we had spent 12 seasons in Division Two and only one in Division Three.

Krzysztof Klidzia took over as team manager for the 2015/16 season, which was our eleventh successive season in Division Two. Our season began with a match at Wimbledon on 10 October. Phil Coales placed tenth and Lee Flanagan 31st, but with only two runners in the top 50, we placed ninth in the match. We were also ninth in the second match, at Esher on 7 November. Simone Luciani placed eleventh, Peter Mills 12th and Phil Coales 22nd. The third match was at Reigate on 16 January. James Bennett ran very well to place second, while Peter Mills was third. Team manager Krzysztof Klidzia won the over-50 category, placing 30th overall, but the team remained in the relegation zone. The final match was at Lloyd Park on 13 February. Peter Mills became the first Strider ever to win a Surrey League race, while James Bennett placed third. Lee Flanagan was 24th and Krzysztof Klidzia again won the over-50 category, placing 31st overall. The team placed fifth, which was their best performance of the season, but were relegated to Division Three, finishing ninth overall.

Our 2016/17 season began with a convincing win in the first Division Three match, at Wimbledon Common on 15 October. James Bennett ran very well to place second, with Phil Coales fourth, Peter Mills fifth, Simone Luciani sixth and Bill Makuwa seventh. Team manager Krzysztof Klidzia was the first over-50 to finish, placing 15th overall, while Lee Flanagan was 17th and Rob Lines 19th. We won the team event with 131 points, well clear of second-placed Fulham who scored 289.

We produced an excellent team performance to win our second successive Division Three match at Epsom on 12 November, extending our lead at the top of the Division Three table. We had the first three finishers with James Bennett winning the race, Peter Mills placing second and Simone Luciani third. Steve Starvis placed ninth, just ahead of team manager Krzysztof Klidzia who recorded the same time and was the first over-50 to finish. Phil Coales was 16th with Rob Lines 18th.

We again had the first two finishers in the Division Three race at Cranford on 14 January, with Peter Mills winning by five seconds from runner-up James Bennett. Simone Luciani was

ninth and Phil Coales 15th. We placed second in the match, and remained at the top of Division Three with one match remaining, at Lloyd Park on 11 February.

We duly won the final match to win the Division Three championship and gain promotion back to Division Two. We were again led by Peter Mills who gained his second successive Division Three win, and also won the individual Division Three championship. Phil Coales placed third and Simone Luciani fifth. Team manager Krzysztof Klidzia was first in the over-50 category and 11th overall, while Lee Flanagan was 13th and Rob Lines 16th.

Back in Division Two after only a year's absence, we maintained our momentum by placing second in the opening match of the season, at Wimbledon Common on 14 October. Peter Mills placed eighth, while Phil Coales was 13th, new member Tatsuya Okamoto 19th, Bill Makuwa 23rd and Alastair Falconer 33rd. We again placed second in the next match, at Richmond Park on 11 November. Peter Mills placed sixth with Phil Coales eleventh, Bill Makuwa 24th, James Bennett 27th, Alastair Falconer 32nd and Tatsuya Okamoto 37th.

In the penultimate match of the season, at Beckenham on 13 January, we finished third of the nine clubs, just behind promotion rivals Fulham, but remained in second place in the overall league table. We were again led by Peter Mills who placed seventh, with James Bennett eleventh, Phil Coales 20th, Tatsuya Okamoto 23rd and Alastair Falconer 32nd. The final match of the season was on 10 February on our home course in Lloyd Park, and in true cross-country conditions: cold, wet and very muddy. As those who have read the whole of this article will know, this was the third time that we had begun the final Division Two match of the season in the top two. Unlike 2003 and 2010, where we had faltered at the final hurdle, we held off the challenge of promotion rivals Fulham to retain second place, although we had to settle for third in the match, narrowly beaten by champions Guildford and by our somewhat inconsistent local rivals Croydon Harriers. Peter Mills again placed seventh, with James Bennett 12th, Phil Coales 22nd, Simone Luciani 24th and Tatsuya Okamoto 29th. We can look forward to spending the 2018/19 season in Division One.



**Striders' men (and a few supporters) celebrating promotion to Division One**

## COMPETITIVE HIGHLIGHTS: DECEMBER 2017 – FEBRUARY 2018

In the Surrey Cross-Country Championships at Dorking on 7 January, Striders' senior men placed tenth in the team event. Peter Mills ran very well to place 30th out of the 220 finishers, covering the muddy twelve-kilometre course in 43 minutes 17 seconds. Phil Coales also ran well to place 39th (44:14), with Alastair Falconer 67th (46:03), Krzysztof Klidzia 113th (49:54), Darren Woods 123rd (50:35) and Andy Perks completing the scoring team in 131st (50:57). Striders' women placed 14th in their team event. They were led by Steph Upton who placed 67th, covering the eight-kilometre course in 38 minutes 51 seconds. Nikki Javan was 78th (40:38) with Niamh Vincent 84th (41:24) and Lucy Kulp 104th (46:35).

In the penultimate Surrey Cross-Country League Division Two men's race of the season, at Beckenham on 13 January, Striders finished third of the nine clubs, just behind promotion rivals Fulham, but remained second in the overall league table. Striders were again led by Peter Mills, who ran very well to place seventh of the 208 finishers, completing the five-mile course in 28 minutes 11 seconds. James Bennett also ran well to finish eleventh (28:24), with Phil Coales 20th (29:14), Tatsuya Okamoto 23rd (29:22), Alastair Falconer 32nd (29:42), Bill Makuwa 44th (30:19), Lee Flanagan 52nd (30:40), Simon Ambrosi 59th (31:02), Robert Lines 60th (31:03) and Andrew Aitken completing the scoring team in 75th (31:48).

Meanwhile, Striders' women placed ninth in their Division Two match at Wimbledon. They were led by Joanne Campbell who ran well to place 41st of the 248 finishers, covering the five-mile course in 40 minutes 55 seconds. Niamh Vincent was 55th (41:37) with Rachel Vinton 61st (42:06), Nikki Javan 68th (42:19) and Debra Bourne 69th (42:28).

The fifth annual mobmatch between Striders and local rivals Croydon Harriers took place at the Lloyd parkrun on 3 February. Striders provided the first three finishers: Tatsuya Okamoto first in 18 minutes 06, Peter Mills second (18:09) and Phil Coales third (18:12). The first woman to finish was Leanne Moore of Harriers, who was 40th (22:29). Striders had the next three women to finish with Becky Laurence 43rd (22:46), Joanne Campbell 50th (23:14) and Nikki Javan 53rd (23:23). Striders mustered 58 finishers, while Harriers mustered 35, giving Striders victory in the match (also winning if only scoring the first 35 finishers for each club).

Striders produced an excellent team performance in the final Surrey Cross-Country League Division Two men's race of the season, at Lloyd Park on 10 February. They placed third in the match, narrowly beaten by champions Guildford and local rivals Croydon Harriers, but held off the challenge of promotion rivals Fulham to place second in the final league table and clinch promotion to Division One for the first time in the club's history. The team were led by Peter Mills who had an excellent run to place seventh of the 202 finishers, covering the muddy five-mile course in 28 minutes 32 seconds. James Bennett also ran well to place 12th (29:12), while Phil Coales was 22nd (30:25), Simone Luciani 24th (30:32), Tatsuya Okamoto 29th (30:47), Lee Flanagan 44th (31:47) and Rob Lines 46th (31:49). Veteran Dave Shaw placed second in the over-50 category and 48th overall (31:59), while Andrew Aitken was 54th (32:24) and Simon Ambrosi 64th (33:04). Striders had a total of 34 finishers.

Earlier in the day, Striders' women placed sixth in their Division Two match at Richmond Park, and seventh in the final league table. They were led by Becky Laurence who ran well to place 22nd of the 234 finishers, covering the five-mile course in 37 minutes 33 seconds. Joanne Campbell was 27th (37:58) with Steph Upton 39th (38:27), Rachel Vinton 48th (39:06) and Nikki Javan 63rd (39:58). Striders had an encouraging total of 15 competitors.

On 25 February Sandra Francis won the W60 long jump at the South of England Masters Indoor Championships at Lee Valley, setting a new club age-group record of 3 metres 42. In the Brighton Half-Marathon, Andy Elliott set a club over-70 record of 2 hours 4 minutes 59.

## 20 YEARS AGO: LOCAL ATHLETICS IN SPRING 1998

The Inter-Counties Cross-Country Championships were held at Cardiff on 1 March. Jane Lansdown became the first Strider to represent Surrey in this prestigious event, placing 100th out of 185 finishers.

The East Surrey League held its annual road relay at Box Hill on 21 March. The race was dominated by the two local clubs, with Box Hill Racers winning in 41 minutes 43 and Dorking & Mole Valley second in 42 minutes 19. Croydon Harriers placed third in 43 minutes 43, while Striders were sixth in 45 minutes 22. Striders' team comprised Lee Morgan (10:48), Eric Parker (11:13), Gerry Crispie (11:39) and Dean Casella (11:42).

The National Veterans Cross-Country Championships were held in Lloyd Park, in warm and sunny conditions, on 28 March. The over-40 race was won by Dave Hollins of Potteries Marathon AC, who covered the three-lap ten-kilometre course in 34 minutes 32. Striders were led by Bob Ewen, who placed 84th in 39:41. The over-50 race, over the same course, was won by Peter Hyde of Altrincham, in 36:29. Striders were led by John McGilvray, who placed 79th in 43:25. The over-70 race, on a five-kilometre course, was won by Steve Charlton of Thames Valley Harriers in 23:21. The women's race, held on the same course as the over-70 men, was won by Caroline Horne of Crawley, who recorded 19:53. The first local runner was Maggie Statham of Holland Sports, who ran very well to place seventh in 20:51. Viv Mitchell of South London Harriers also ran well to place 25th in 22:51.

The Tatsfield five-mile road race took place on the following day. Striders did very well to win the team prize, with Blackheath Harriers placing second. The race saw a close battle between veteran Bob Treadwell of Redhill & Surrey Beagles and Striders' leading runner, Lee Morgan. Bob won by just three seconds, recording 26 minutes 53. Also for Striders, Eric Parker placed fifth in 28:45, while Bob Ewen, in his second race of the weekend, was second in the over-40 category in 29:32.

The East Surrey League finished its season with the traditional road race at Ewell, on 7 April. The race was won by Robbie James of Dorking & Mole Valley in 20 minutes 37. Paul Haywood of Box Hill Racers was second (20:48) and John Fitzpatrick of Croydon Harriers was third (20:51). Striders were again led by Lee Morgan, who finished fifth in 22:28. This was Lee's last race as a first-claim Strider; after the race he resigned his Striders membership and became a first-claim member of South London Harriers. (Lee subsequently rejoined Striders as a second-claim member, enabling him to continue competing for us in the East Surrey League, as SLH were not members of that league.) Eric Parker also ran well to finish eleventh (23:52). Box Hill won the team event with 30 points, while Croydon Harriers were second with 34 and Striders did very well to finish third with 56. Box Hill also won the overall league title with 48 points; Croydon Harriers were second with 43, while Striders finished equal third with Epsom, both teams totalling 35 points.

The fourteenth Croydon 10K was held on 19 April. Stuart Major of South London Harriers gained a very comfortable win, finishing more than two minutes clear of the field in 31 minutes 12 seconds. Former Strider Lee Morgan, making his debut for South London Harriers, was second (33:36), six seconds ahead of third-placed Barry Cooke (Croydon Harriers). The first Strider to finish was Eric Parker who placed eighth (35:36), while veteran Colin Golding ran a creditable 36:56. The first over-50 was Stan Collie of Croydon Harriers, in 35:58. Striders' John McGilvray placed third in this category, in 39:02. The first woman to finish was Heather Fenton of Croydon Harriers, who placed 60th overall in 41:13. For Striders, Clare Mitchell ran 46:13.



## **10 YEARS AGO: LOCAL ATHLETICS IN SPRING 2008**

The East Surrey League held its annual road relay at Box Hill on 15 March. Striders placed fourth. The team comprised Chris Morton (13:32), Justin Macenhill (11:15), Damian Macenhill (11:49) and Matt Morgan (11:37). The Macenhill brothers showed good powers of recovery to be Striders' first two finishers at the Hastings Half-Marathon the following day. Damian finished 57th in 1 hour 22 minutes, half a minute ahead of Justin.

On 21 March Colin Cotton produced a good performance in the Maidenhead 10 mile road race. He set a new club over-60 record of 71 minutes 16 seconds, and was the third over-60 finisher in a strong field which incorporated the Berkshire Championships. Justin Macenhill placed 38th in 60 minutes 03, while his brother Damian was 45th in a personal best 60:36.

On 30 March Striders had several competitors at the Paddock Wood Half-Marathon. Our first man home was Justin Macenhill who placed 27th of the 1630 finishers in 1 hour 18 minutes 45 seconds. His brother Damian was less than two minutes behind, finishing 41st in 1:20:42.

The 28th London Marathon took place on 13 April. Striders had a total of 17 finishers. Our first man home was Iain Harrison who ran 3 hours 01 minute 36. He was followed by Damian Macenhill (3:08:08) and Ian Campbell (3:08:58). Club treasurer Robin Jamieson set a new club over-60 record of 3:53:56 (which has subsequently been beaten by Nick Kyritsis).

The first Southern Veterans League match of the season took place at Kingsmeadow on 28 April. Despite a lack of numbers, Striders' men finished a close fourth of the six clubs in the match, only six points behind third-placed Kingston. Justin Macenhill ran well to win the over-35 1500 metres by more than six seconds (4:27.1), having earlier placed second in the 400 metres (58.0). We gained good points in the 2000 metre walk, where Bob Ewen placed second in a new club record of 11:54.8, while Mick Turner won the B race (12:11.3). Team manager David Batten ran well to win the over-50 400 metres, setting a club over-55 record of 67.6 seconds.

The first Rosenheim League match of the season took place at Battersea Park on 7 May. Striders' women placed equal third, while our men were fourth of the seven competing clubs. Team manager Matt Morgan led by example, getting Striders off to an excellent start by winning the opening event, the 2000 metre steeplechase (6:40.9). We also finished the evening with a victory, thanks to our 4 x 200 metre relay team of Stephen Harrison, James Buchanan, Eliot Osher and Duncan Lancashire, who won their race in 1:48.5. Our women's team comprised Natalie Osher, Yasmin Anderson, Sarah Milne and Kim Ford. They finished the evening with second place in the women's 4 x 200m relay.

The second Southern Veterans League match of the season took place at Croydon Arena on 19 May. Striders' men placed third, just two points ahead of fourth-placed Kingston. Our leading scorer was Justin Macenhill who gained a convincing win in the over-35 3000 metres (9:33.0), having earlier placed second in the 800 metres (2:06.2). Both these times were club over-35 records. Our women were short of numbers and had to settle for fifth place.

The second Rosenheim League match of the season took place at Croydon Arena on 21 May. Striders' women did very well to take second place, just one point behind winners Serpentine, while our men were third. Serena Stracey won the women's discus with a throw of 12.44 metres, while our men were again led by Matt Morgan, who gained an emphatic win in the 1500 metres (4:22.1) and also placed second in the 400 metre hurdles in 74.6 seconds.



**Damian Macenhill in the 2008 London Marathon**



**Robin Jamieson in the 2008 London Marathon**

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