

Striders of Croydon AC

CHRISTMAS 2012 NEWSLETTER



**Surrey Womens Cross-Country League Match 2 – Nonsuch Park
(photo by Ray O'Donoghue). Congratulations to the six Striders who ran.**

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2012

Friday 28 December – Striders Orienteering – Lloyd Park

2013

Saturday 12 January – Surrey Women's Cross-Country League – Mitcham Common
Saturday 12 January – Surrey Cross-Country League – Mitcham Common
Saturday 9 February – Surrey Women's Cross-Country League – Denbies', Dorking
Saturday 9 February – Surrey Cross-Country League – Denbies' Vineyard, Dorking
Sunday 7 April – Croydon Half-Marathon
Sunday 21 April – London Marathon (Striders marshalling)

MARATHON TRAINING RUNS 2012/3

Sun 30 Dec	Greenwich 13 from London Bridge	www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=2170782
Sun 6 Jan	White Bear 13	www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=5190399
Sun 13 Jan	Wandle 14 from Clapham J.	www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=2479863
Sun 20 Jan	Riddlesdown 14	www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=5240872
Sun 27 Jan	Merstham 15 from Merstham	www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=1550627
Sun 3 Feb	Keston Ponds 14	www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=2558460
Sun 10 Feb	White Bear 14	www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=2520180
Sun 17 Feb	Lewisham 16	www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=4324052
Sun 24 Feb	Merstham 17 from Coulsdon S.	www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=1550627
Sun 3 Mar	High Elms 17	www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=5241108
Sun 10 Mar	Regents Canal 18 from Victoria	www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=2523234
Sun 17 Mar	Botley Hill 18	www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=2627833
Sun 24 Mar	Kingston 20 from Clapham J.	www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=1680067

CHAIRMAN'S CORNER DECEMBER 2012

Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year to all Striders and may you achieve a pb in every race you run next year 😊.

Judging from the feedback on Facebook, everyone enjoyed the Christmas Party so on behalf of everyone who was there thank you and congratulations to Hannah. Unfortunately early December is the time fixed in the family calendar for our annual trip to the Lakes, so I have now missed the last two Christmas events at the clubhouse.

However to compensate earlier in the week, I was walking over the Lakeland hills above Langdale in sunny but freezing weather (actually easier as you can walk straight across the boggy bits). As I battled up the hills runners kept passing me in the opposite direction. Eventually as I was scrambling up a rocky section 1000ft up on Blea Rigg, four women appeared above me and came running down the crags. As they flashed past, I just had time to ask if they were racing in an event or what? No just out training came the reply, some training! Puts even our hillier marathon training runs to shame. So next time one of our routes takes us up the North Downs, we will have to repeat the climb at least 3 times to compete.

I also called into the bank in Keswick to pay in some of your cheques. Seeing the club name on the cheques the girl behind the counter commented "I see you call yourselves Striders down there. We call them Ramblers up here". I couldn't convince her that we were runners and, despite my comment above, we really do have some quite good hills and countryside to run through.

Marathon Training season has now started in earnest: one more before Christmas - the run back from Oxted, probably the nearest we have to running up one of the smaller Lakeland hills - then from the Sunday after Christmas through to the end of March we have something scheduled for you for every Sunday, varying from dead flat to quite hilly; some on road some off road and getting progressively longer, so there should be something for all of you. The full schedule is at this top of this magazine, and is now on the fixtures page of the new website and there is a printable version under training/marathon runs.

The redesigned website is now up and running, feedback has been very positive although there are one or two glitches. The main outstanding problem is that the filters and buttons on the fixtures page, which allow you to display races only or change the display layout, don't work on all browsers all of the time. We are still waiting for our theme developer to resolve it but it was not enough to stop us switching over from the old site. I also have to experiment a bit more with the fixtures colour scheme: one or two of you have quite reasonably complained you can't read white on yellow. Also apologies to anyone still using IE7: it seems to try and save space by displaying the words over the pictures.

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to this edition, particularly the comprehensive article on the Beachy Head Marathon - the one race which reminds me that the hills down here can be just as tough as the Lake District's, especially when you have already to run 20 miles to get to the first of the Seven Sisters.

May all your runs be through sunlit forests.

Robin Jamieson

VIEWS OF BEACHY HEAD MARATHON

By Paula Irving, The Ref (Stephen Tyler), Clive Smith, Corinne “Pumpkin” Carr, Victoria Legg and Debra Bourne

With 12 Striders completing Beachy Head trail marathon this year, the following report combines several views of this race. Photos courtesy of Paula, Corinne and (all the landscapes) Victoria.

Intro

The Ref: This was without doubt one of the hardest marathons that I have done - if not *the* hardest allowing for the fact that the Tanners was thirty miles and mid-summer – except for the winter Tanners (which still exists) and takes place mid-January!

It replaced the Seven Sisters Marathon (and on mentioning it to a work colleague, he told me that he was familiar with Tottenham) and starts relatively close to sea level west of God’s waiting room at St Bede’s School.



In the beginning...

Victoria: Beachy Head is one of those marathons that I had always wanted to do, Paris, London, New York and Beachy Head, so when entries opened in December last year I was one of first to apply. As many of you know I spent most of the summer fighting colds so my training had not gone as well as I would have liked, but I decided to do it using a walk/ run technique; little did I know that this would be what most people did on Beachy Head!

Corinne: This is another one of these spontaneous moments when you shake hands with the girls on what appears to be a good idea at the time. “Fancy doing the Beachy Head marathon?” “Yeah, sure...bring it on!” That was back in March. Come October and I am the only one out of the four who hasn’t got a good enough excuse not to do it. Hey girls, where are you? I miss you!

Paula: So I had finished the Brighton marathon with Julie Jordan and Bernadette Coulthurst in April this year and I was sitting at my desk one day at work thinking we could all do with another challenge and focus.....I know what we can do, let’s apply for the Beachy Head marathon! So on the 7th June I emailed both Julie and Bernie, something along the lines of.....do you fancy joining me running Beachy Head marathon? I didn’t even get to count to ten before they both replied.....Yes! So Julie put together a plan of action for us, long runs on a Sunday, Striders runs on a Wednesday evening, along with other weight training, personal training etc.



Debra: I'd recently run the North Downs Way 50 and was wondering what else I could do this year, when Belinda sent a message over the Striders list that she couldn't use her Beachy Head place. That sounds like fun, I thought... With her place officially transferred to me, I looked up the course and the profile: hills, hills and more hills! As training runs, I got Corinne to join me for the Dunstable Downs Challenge (completing 20 miles in 27 °C heat – Corinne had more sense and just did the half-marathon) and she dragged me to the Jog Shop Jog 20 a few weeks later. Both courses were mostly up and down, so good training for Beachy Head.

Eastbourne Antics

Paula: Well before we knew it we were all on the train on a Friday evening straight after work to Eastbourne. The weather man said it would be turning colder at the weekend; as we sat eating our bowl of pasta in Prezzo's in Eastbourne we were all talking about whether we had brought enough warm clothing. Up at 6am on a Saturday morning and yes the weather man was right, it was cold and bright – he forgot to mention the wind, it was biting! We had a warming breakfast and made our way to the start line.

Victoria: As it was an early start I had decided to stay down there the night before. I asked at the hotel where St Bedes was and they told me, basically straight up. So after dinner (pasta with tomato and pesto – was nice) I decided to walk up to St Bedes just so I knew where it was. When I got there registration was open so I picked up my race pack and then walked back to my hotel, which was about the furthest you could get from the start and still be in Eastbourne.

Clive: Checking the weather forecast in the days leading up to the event it became apparent it was going to be cold and on the day it proved to be very windy too. However, it was also sunny and dry so spirits were up for the long run. I had travelled down by train the night before and met up with my brother Rob, a Stafford Harrier, where on arrival at the grandly named Hilton Royal Park Hotel the realisation that service and rooms were going to fall well below our expectations started to set in. The stay was capped with everyone having to evacuate the building (again) at 2am Sunday morning due to a faulty fire alarm.

The Ref: An early arrival meant that I could park close to the headquarters which proved a Godsend at the end, saw Victoria and Kevin Hann early on before returning to do the crossword and then prepare.

Corinne: As Debra knows I can cut it very fine when it comes to getting to races on time. Well, this time I missed the mass start completely. Note to Graham: it takes 1h45 to get there, not an hour!

Tina, Lisa and I got changed in a quiet staircase in the race headquarters, away from the crowd. As it was nearly Halloween, a black and orange costume seemed fit for purpose and appropriate to distract me from the pain that was to come. I mentally went through my newly improvised kit list to make sure I had everything: ...orange petticoat? ...check ...orange hat?... check ...pumpkin mask? ...check ...I'm ready to go.



At the Start

Paula: I realised that I had forgotten to bring my hat and gloves but I knew I could rely on my running buddies, Julie had a pair of gloves for me and Bernie a hat, they are so good to me. When we got to the start line I was told do not look up.....so I did.....crikey, what a big hill to get up and that was just the start!

Clive: Fortunately the focus was all about the marathon where the organisation and facilities were very good indeed. We made the start line with numbers pinned, hot tea drunk, baggage dropped so everything was pretty much perfect.

The Ref: A glance at the website shows the start, a few hundred yards of sheer ascent up onto the South Downs. And when the starter said bang, the hardier actually sprinted up the hill and out of sight before the mere plebs had crossed the start line. Impressive or what! Kate Custis entered the Halloween spirit by wearing a skeleton outfit and stood there shivering before the off.

Victoria: The first people I met were Stephen Tyler (The Ref) and Kevin Hann (a regular Lloyd parkrunner and regular Beachy Header). I saw the sausage rolls and hot cross buns already waiting to go to their various check points. I also saw The Ref and Kate at the start. I decided to go in the joggers section; I looked up and saw the start, OMG it was vertical. We saw the first runners going up the start like a rat up a drain pipe and then we were moving. Most of our group decided to walk up the start. I got to the top and then started to run; start there was a piper and that cheered me up as I have a place in the Edinburgh Marathon. I was keeping an eye on Steven Tyler, then I recognised some legs going past - Jo Penny, then Bernie, Paula and Julie.

Debra: I knew the race description said it started with a steep uphill, but I hadn't been prepared for just how steep it was just metres from the start line. After about 20 paces I decided to go for "ultra rules" and walk this section, alongside Ernie Hann's father, Kevin.

Corinne: It was 9.06 as I crossed the start line and looked up to the first massive hill I had to climb. It didn't matter in the end as it is a chipped race.

The race!

Corinne: A big good luck hug with Lisa was the last thing I remembered. The next six hours were just a blur...



Debra: The course was wonderfully scenic, and the undulations were expected. The constant headwind I could have done without. Having crested that first ridiculous slope, Kevin and I set off at a moderate pace, picking up a bit on the downhill sections. Clive had obviously gone out at a good clip as we only passed him after about eight or nine miles. In the central section where we ran round a huge curve, with runners stretching in front and behind along the edge, Kevin commented that at least as we turned, the wind would be behind us. "Hah" was my reply, and unfortunately my pessimism was justified! At 14 miles or so Kevin waved me on while he slowed with a hip nigggle. I was feeling okay and even wasn't too bad over the Seven Sisters Bitches [see photo below], walking the uphill fairly briskly and running the downhills with a sharp eye out for rabbit holes. However, as I approached the long slog up Beachy Head, just after I'd told Rachel (who was supporting Kate and kept appearing with Otti all over the course) that yes, I was enjoying the run, my glutes started objecting and stiffened, and my pace dropped to a crawl. Along the top, the wind was blowing so hard (still against us, of course) that I was almost running backwards and I craftily dropped in behind a guy a bit taller and wider than me, staying in his (relative) wind shield. That was a huge help, and as we started to descend again I got a slight second wind, thanked the other runner for his unknowing assistance, and pushed on again.

Paula: The course was undulating, the scenery was beautiful, the marshalls were great, but the wind was awful. At one point none of us could talk (which is a first!) the wind was blowing in all directions and I thought we were going to be blown off the side of Beachy Head... luckily we all soldiered on and made it to the end. I remember saying to Julie and Bernie, "we can do this, we are warriors".

Clive: The race started on time and within a minute or two we were on the first hill, very steep and to be one of many. We were able to appreciate the level ground a few minutes later as we really got going. After a couple of miles we were moving along quite fast and I decided to pick up the pace

further while the going was good. Hills came and went and the landscape varied as I was in the zone, enjoying muddy tracks through woods, running down slopes like a fell runner and powering up hills – I was soon to pay a price. Of course my brain had switched off although eventually I had to slow down as the hills kept on coming, but it was too late! At around half way, cramp kicked in which meant walking and when possible running very gently, this brought me to my senses to try and salvage my race which looked to have been shot down in tatters. Frustrating because my legs felt they still had plenty of running left, but they just would not actually run without cramping as if they were on strike, refusing to do their job. It was not all doom and gloom though as the marshals were friendly and encouraging with water and various snacks generously laid on at regular intervals. The locals also turned out to cheer us on which was superb and made for a good atmosphere.

I was still in race mode mentally with a view to at least completing the course; my 5 hour target looking increasingly unlikely, but I was still a little optimistic because of the fast first half. The Seven Sisters came into view and I felt I was on the homeward leg, but the Sisters, unaffectionately also known as the Seven Bitches, had other plans, it was not over by a long chalk! Putting themselves hard in my way, at the foot of each one I had to brace myself and stumble upwards, jog down the other side and do it all again repeatedly. The ordeal did not let up at the top along Beachy Head as the wind and rain lashed relentlessly side on into my face, but to my surprise I was fighting back! Running with little sign of cramp on albeit now tired legs, the target time had passed, but the salvage operation to make something of this race was in full swing as I moved on to the long gentle downhill slope that headed back down to Eastbourne.

The Ref: Whilst my original intention was to perambulate up the hills and jog as much as I could without any sustained training specific to the event, the perambulation was far greater than I had envisaged with running being confined to jogging the early declines. So it was with ticker pounding that I got to the first turn off point, a right fork along the Downs and with Eastbourne far away and lower down to the right, past a number of dew ponds and golfers enjoying their Saturday morning round.

I made my best decision early on and that involved what to wear. A club tee shirt under a red marathon fleece and a yellow Goretex top – it served to retain body heat in the biting wind. Plus shorts. When the sun shone, it was glorious, giving sweeping views across the valleys either side, inland to the right and the sea not that far across the fields down below to the left. Panoramic picture card views and only when we had to cross roads, traffic.

The first 6k is an almost unremitting ascent up to the summit of Willingdon Hill followed by a downhill 1000m descent to the first checkpoint. And somewhere along there there was Act One, Scene One of Macbeth in the form of Paula Irving, Julie Jordan and Bernadette Winsborrow who went past after the first major hill and a few miles later, Corinne Carr who disappeared into the distance. I caught the three up on a downhill stretch and also Jo Penny.

Going underfoot, where it wasn't stony, was on the softish side especially where the sun or wind couldn't get at it. One of the givens about such an event is that wherever there's a downhill, an up isn't far ahead and that was oh so true.

Eventually around the ten mile mark, we descended into Alfriston, following the winding, fast flowing stream over the wooden bridge into the village and a short stretch of tarmac with them behind. After a pit stop in one of the village pubs, it was a sharp right and back on the ascent for a few miles, a steady line of walkers following arrows and heading in one direction until we reached checkpoint three at Borstall Hill, the furthest and highest point of the course.

I could see Jo's unique green top in the distance from way along with the others being less visible until I caught up at the checkpoint and we walked the next generally downward 7k with a picturesque view over the winding water course in the valley leading down to Cuckmere Haven and the English Channel. And in the distance to the west, i.e. our right, was the town of Seaford – I had never realised just how big the place was!

The event's previous title was the Seven Sisters and that was where we had now reached. As the crow flies, the distance doesn't look too great but when you factor in the rolling hills and descents which take you out of view of the people behind followed by the ascents then it is fair to say that the crow flew a much shorter distance than we walked. As an aside, bearing in mind the wind, the sea appeared remarkably smooth.

Eventually we arrived at the cafe and pub at Birling Gap, more grub and Victoria caught us up. Onwards and upwards, I started to push on towards the finish, and a long ascent over a relatively short distance, past the Beachy Head pub and then God's Waiting Room down below to the right. A gentle downward slope until we reached the top of the first hill, walking very gingerly down keeping to feet instead of bouncing down on bum cheeks.

Victoria: There were parts of Beachy where you could not even stand up let alone run, but I did meet some nice people which meant that we all got round together. I met a couple who had been inspired by their son, who did it last year, so we were running along and somehow had gone off course (I think a sign had come down) so we end up in the road and frightened the marshals as we appeared, then it was along by a river, we ran along there and then cross a little bridge and end up in a little village and there was the soup, hot cross buns and sausage rolls (I am veggie so I took a hot cross bun and some juice).

And then it was up across farmland, the rain came down and it was quite heavy, however we came to woods so there was a bit of shelter. Then the hills started and we started walking up steps, I was then with people from Sittingbourne Striders who when we reach the top and the sun come out starting singing "Somewhere over the Rainbow", which we all joined in. Then we got to 18 miles and the marshal said you've got less to go than you've already run so that was a boost, but I am afraid it was more steps, the next turn was down to the sea and Cuckfold Haven. It was beautiful running along by the river, then it was up and then up a steep hill until the Seven Sisters. You could see them and the sea was a beautiful azure blue. The coast guards in the middle of the Seven Sisters had put up a water station with Mars bars - wonderful. I think a lot of people were surprised to see us out and a tourist asked me what was going on; I explained and I think she thought I was mad, but I continued on to Birling Gap, which I remembered from my childhood: it had not changed. The route then took a detour because the marathon cannot go up to the lighthouse, which is now private, but the flat bit was nice and we ran through some woodland, then the route took us up to Beachy Head itself, and a very nice man said to me "you've only got 45 minutes to go". I could see the gang going up, the ref in front followed by Jo and then Paula, Bernie and Julie. Up at the top of Beachy Head it was blowing a gale but I decided to keep on running. I could see Eastbourne getting nearer and nearer, then we dropped down. The marshal said there was less than 1½ miles to go so I decide to pick up my speed and push on. The next thing I heard was my mum saying "come on Victoria", and she decided to run with me, this is something she does as she thinks it gets me faster and I am afraid she is right. So I ran with her.



The Finish...

Debra: The final slope down to the finish came unexpectedly while I was hoarding my strength – I'd thought I still had about 3/4 mile to go. Suddenly the competitive instinct kicked in and I threw caution to the winds as I flew down the hill to overtake a woman who had passed me just a minute earlier and finish in 4.35. Very soon after, a sharp shower started and I quickly pulled on my extra layers from my backpack. Tina finished not long afterwards and Kevin came in just seconds over the five hours. Kevin and I waited a while longer to see if Clive or Kate finished, until the cold drove us inside. I did see Kate later, in her skeleton outfit.

The Ref: The four ladies (!) pushed past around this point and we crossed the line within fifteen seconds of each other on gun time, collected a quality medal and then got in out of the wind as the temperature started dropping quite sharply with the sun out of sight behind the hill.

Victoria Legged it in shortly afterwards but I didn't see Debra Bourne, Clive, Lisa Jackson or Tina Macenhill – by the time we'd finished, the latter was probably fed and watered with her feet up in front of the goggle box.

Paula: Seeing that finish sign was the best thing ever, we even managed a sprint finish and had a big group hug at the end all saying "never again".....famous last words!



Victoria: I should have known what goes up also goes down... The last bit was the hill that we'd climbed at the start and now had to go down. Normally I like downhills but when it comes at the end of a hard marathon it can be not welcome. My mum helped me down; she told me where to put my feet and then I crossed the mat and continued to the finish. (There was a group of ladies that thought when they got to the mat they had finished and the marshals and everybody shouted at them "no you've got to keep going!")

A nice touch was that the announcer said all our names as we came towards the line... and then it was over.

Afterwords

The Ref: It was very hard graft, harder by far than a street marathon, especially without training specific to such an event. You might like to try the Winter Tanners in January, but on that, you get a map and route description to guide yourself around to add to the experience!

Next up, maybe the Tanners but definitely Paris and Edinburgh.

Victoria: How did I feel? I must admit I said never ever again but now thinking about it, I probably would consider it. The next day was so different - there was no wind whatsoever; there were even people swimming in the sea. Mum and I walked along the seafront to Beachy Head and there was no wind.

Would I recommend it? Yes, not for your first but if you are looking for a bit of variety in your running, it's well organised, with brilliant marshals, good checkpoints with biscuits, Mars bars and cakes, and free food after the marathon.

BECKENHAM CHARITY TRAIL 10K (by Steve Tyler)

I have not run the mid-summer 10k so I don't know whether the course is the same but somehow I doubt it (**Editor's Note** – it is a different course: the summer race is a road race on tarmac).

A peep at the organisers' update a day or so before the race was "the course is extremely wet with a couple of unavoidable boggy patches, so we highly recommend you bring a change of clothing and shoes as you will get muddy!" They weren't lying!

Beckenham Place Park was bigger than I had imagined and we started around five minutes away from the Cricket / Tennis Club headquarters on the brow of a waterlogged hill. After two minutes' silence the starter said bang and we were off. A short lap which wound down hill and continued to do so through another until it reached the railway line. Alongside to an incline and through another clearing to a steep climb over a railway bridge and a large loop on the other side of the tracks. Around 2k later there was another incline, a hill and round the base of the starting hill before climbing to the top and doing it all again.

Hard graft on what started as a frosty morning but with the sun out, turned into a glorious day. A local event for which I would have thought we would have had a greater presence as a club. And a bonus for any train spotters present, a steam special rattled its way past whilst I was on the first lap (I think Merchant Navy class - for those of you who know what that is – if not, look it up on the internet). Mind you, having mentioned it to an anorak...

Time was down on what a normal flat road 10k would be – but that's only to be expected. An event worth putting in for next year I would suggest!



CRYSTAL PALACE CANTER 5K (by Steve Tyler)

A small informal event which takes place on the first Tuesday of each month from the top car park close to Paxton's bust. Minimal organization, no entry fee, just turn up and run – all you have to do is give the organizer your name and email address for the results. Along the pathway towards and round the concert bowl heading towards the motor racing circuit. A quick left and then right along the pathway beneath the stadium and then a short incline towards the sports centre, a left turn and round the bottom of the Jubilee Stand, up the slope and back round for the second lap.

Ideal for the veteran runner who has retired from work but also a useful workout if you have the day off and fancy an extra training run. No medals, no nothing but worthwhile nonetheless.

SURREY CROSS-COUNTRY LEAGUES: MID-SEASON TABLES

MEN'S LEAGUE DIVISION TWO

Walton 527
Clapham 660
Kingston 759
Epsom 857
STRIDERS 973
Tadworth 1032
Guildford 1046
Dorking 1049
Wimbledon 1287

WOMEN'S LEAGUE DIVISION TWO

Dorking 188
Epsom 227
Elmbridge 245
Walton 251
Wimbledon 304
Guildford 311
26.2RRC 316
Kingston 526
Holland Sports 609
Sutton 637
STRIDERS 652
Collingwood 663
Haslemere 737
Epsom Allsorts 748
Lingfield 830
Wimbledon B 833
Tadworth 889
26.2RRC B 913
Dulwich Park 956
Elmbridge B 1006
Dorking B 1183
Epsom Allsorts B 1216
Holland Sports B 1227
Collingwood B 1259
Epsom B 1286
Sutton B 1296
Dulwich Park B 1349
26.2RRC C 1387
British Airways 1463
STRIDERS B 1465
Dulwich Park C 1540
Kingston B 1543
Collingwood C 1571
Lingfield B 1613
Haslemere B 1620

STRIDERS IN THE NATIONAL RANKINGS

The 2012 annual track and field rankings are currently being finalised, and it is likely that we will soon see an article in the local newspapers in which Croydon Harriers tell us just how many of their talented teenagers, as well as their established internationals, feature prominently in the national age-group rankings for 2012.

I doubt whether anyone among Striders' membership seriously expects to challenge the Harriers' established international athletes such as Martyn Rooney and Lawrence Okoye. But many of our members may not be aware that Striders also have several athletes who feature in the top ten in the national rankings in their particular age-group.

Pride of place must go to Sandra Francis. She is ranked third in the UK in the over-55 women's 80 metre hurdles, with her time of 20.5 seconds which she achieved when winning the Surrey Masters Championships in May. She is also ranked sixth in the W55 long jump, with her best jump of 3 metres 62, which she achieved at a Rosenheim League match in July. (And Sandra can claim family 'bragging rights' over her daughter Azaria, who competes for Woodford and is ranked 52nd in this year's women's 60 metre rankings.)

Striders' most successful event is the mile, where four of our members rank in the top ten in their respective age-groups. Three of these performances came in the inter-club races which Croydon Harriers organised in conjunction with the Sport Relief Mile at Croydon Arena in March. Debra Bourne ranks fifth in the W40 age-group (6 minutes 27.9) while Michelle Campbell is sixth in the same category (6 minutes 46.3) and Alan Dolton is seventh in the M55 age-group (5 minutes 42.3). Striders' oldest athlete still competing, Kevin Burnett, ranks seventh in the M70 age-group, with a time of 9 minutes 36.1 which he achieved at a Veterans AC meeting in August.

Striders' youngest male athlete to feature in the rankings is Paul Cripps, who ranks ninth in the M45 triple jump with his season's best performance of 10 metres 15, which he achieved at a Veterans League match in June.

It would be good if 2013 were to see more Striders competing in track and field events, including the annual Surrey Masters Championships, and possibly featuring in next year's national rankings.



Michelle, Debra and Alan, outnumbered by younger Harriers after the Sport Relief mile

THE LONDON LOOP – SOUTH FROM COOMBE LANE TRAMSTOP

Most Striders who come on our Sunday runs will have seen some of the signposts which relate to the 'London Outer Orbital Path' (commonly known as the 'London Loop'). This extends for about 150 miles around London, from Erith to Purfleet. Our chairman walked the entire length of it (in eight stages of about 20 miles) during 2007. For those who want to emulate Robin and walk the entire length, I would suggest purchasing a copy of the book 'The London Loop' by David Sharp. But I suspect that more Striders will simply be interested in walking the sections which are within easy reach of Croydon, or using the Loop to do an out-and-back training run.

It is easy to join the Loop at Coombe Lane tramstop, from which one can head south towards Hamsey Green, or north-east towards High Elms. This article will concentrate on the route south. From Coombe Lane tramstop the Loop, and many of our Sunday runs, head east adjacent to Coombe Lane, before crossing Coombe Lane by the junction with Ballards Way. Our club runs generally head down Ballards Way before turning left into Riesco Drive: the London Loop takes a more scenic route into Heathfield Gardens before reappearing in Riesco Drive. At the bottom of Riesco Drive we pass through a gate into Bramley Bank. The London Loop takes the shortest route through Bramley Bank: our main group of runners generally follow this path, whereas our faster runners usually add a bit more distance by taking a fork to the right which gives a longer path through the woods before rejoining the Loop by the exit from Bramley Bank, at the clearing alongside Edgecoombe.

From the Edgecoombe clearing both the Loop, and many of our Sunday runs, head into Littleheath Woods.



Shortly after entering the woods there is a clearing where our Sunday runs usually split into a 60-minute group and a 90-minute group. The 60-minute group normally head west and usually leave

Littleheath Woods by the junction with Queenhill Road. The 90-minute group usually head south towards Selsdon Park Road. The Loop follows neither of these routes: it heads south-west across the clearing and back into woodland, before turning left to join the path known as 'Vanguard Way' which has run from the north-west (bottom) corner of Littleheath Woods. The path usually taken by our 90-minute group merges with Vanguard Way before reaching and crossing Selsdon Park Road very close to the point where its name changes to Addington Road, near the junction with Ashen Vale. Ashen Vale bends to the right, but the Loop (and our Sunday runs) continue downhill along a narrow bridleway which ends at the junction of Yew Tree Way, at the northern entrance to Selsdon Woods.

Entering Selsdon Woods, the Loop turns right for a few paces and then turns left (heading south-east) up a steep hill which is very muddy in winter and is one of the toughest sections of our Sunday runs. After a section of level ground, the Loop then heads downhill to leave Selsdon Woods at the junction of Courtwood Lane and Bakerboy Lane. (Most of our Sunday runs do not follow the Loop quite as far as the exit: we turn right along a path called The Wend which stays in Selsdon Woods, heading southwards for a while before turning west and reaching the car park at the main entrance to Selsdon Woods, by Old Farleigh Road.) The Loop heads south, going up Bakerboy Lane, until it reaches Old Farleigh Road by the entrance to Farleigh Court Golf Club. It follows the road for a short while until Elm Farm, where the Loop leaves the road and turns right down a rough track (heading west). This drops quite steeply downhill before climbing again, leaving the woods and reaching open fields at Mossyhill Shaw. Crossing a stile takes us into Kingswood Lane, where the Loop turns left (heading south). In the 1990s quite a few of the Striders' long runs followed what has since become the London Loop from Elm Farm to Kingswood Lane: nowadays it is more common for us to enter Kingswood Lane at its north end, by the car park at the main entrance to Selsdon Woods.

Kingswood Lane veers southwest and gradually becomes more urban as it enters Hamsey Green. The Loop crosses Limpsfield Road by the 'Good Companions' pub which is a well-known landmark. From there the Loop heads west down Tithe Pit Shaw Lane before entering Riddlesdown Common. The Loop crosses Dipsley's Field and veers right, heading northwest and approaching Riddlesdown School, before abruptly turning left and heading down a slope to join a stony track which is the 'Old Riddlesdown Road'. This passes over a railway bridge carrying the line from East Croydon to Oxted, and then drops downhill to the Godstone Road.

Crossing the main road, the Loop then turns southwest down Old Barn Lane and passes over another railway bridge, carrying the line from Purley to Caterham. Old Barn Lane becomes New Barn Lane and the Loop climbs steeply onto Kenley Common, initially heading southwest and then veering to the south to reach Sunnycroft Farm, close to the north edge of Kenley Aerodrome, which was used by our Spitfires during the Battle of Britain.

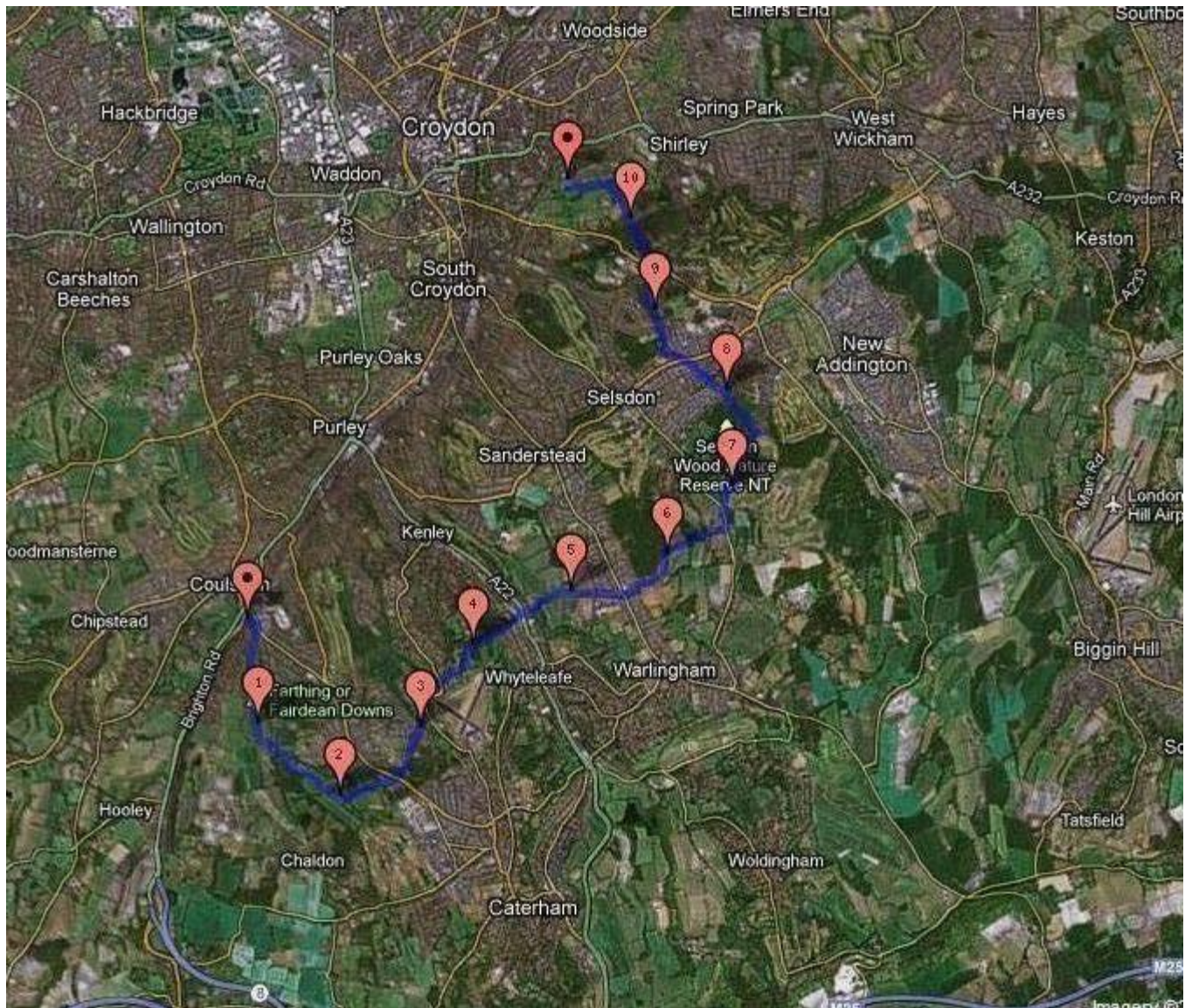
The Loop follows Golf Road before turning right and then left onto a path which reaches Betts Mead, where there is a small children's playground. A left turn takes the Loop to Old Lodge Lane, very close to the Wattenden Arms. Old Lodge Lane heads northwest towards Kenley but the Loop quickly leaves it, turning left over a stile and heading southwards to join Waterhouse Lane.

At the junction with Caterham Drive, the Loop follows Rydons Lane, still heading south to reach Coulsdon Common, having passed to the east of Taunton Manor High School. On Coulsdon Common the Loop follows a large track and veers to the right, heading south-west to reach the main Coulsdon Road, just north of the border between Coulsdon and Caterham. Crossing the road, the Loop continues heading south-west down Fox Lane to reach the pub called The Fox, which is another well-known local landmark.

The Loop continues south-west and drops into Happy Valley where it reaches its southernmost point, before veering right to head north-west and join South London Harriers' cross-country course. It heads uphill into Devilsden Wood and climbs quite steeply at the north end of Devilsden Wood before emerging onto Farthing Downs.

This is a favourite spot for spectators at cross-country races, who can encourage the runners up the last part of what is quite a testing hill. South London Harriers' cross-country course follows a rough path heading north, but the Loop follows the narrow road, which soon begins to drop quite significantly as it heads towards the north entrance to Farthing Downs.

Anyone who is training for an 'ultra', and has been using the Loop as a training run, may prefer to turn round at the gate close to where the narrow road merges into Downs Road, and retrace their steps to get an impressively long and scenic run back to Coombe Lane tramstop. (The distance from here to Coombe Lane is about nine miles, so this will give an 18-mile training run.)



The London Loop route back from Coulsdon to our Sandilands clubhouse

By contrast, anyone who has been walking will probably want to continue along the Loop as Downs Road merges with the B276 (Marlpit Lane). The Loop then turns left into Reddown Road to the back entrance to Coulsdon South station, from which one can return to Croydon by train.

In a future article, I hope to trace the London Loop north-east from Coombe Lane tramstop, as it passes through Addington Hills, Pinewoods, Threehalfpenny Wood and Sparrows Den.

NEWS FROM FORMER STRIDERS

Congratulations to our former women's captain Emma Haillay, who gave birth to her second daughter, Martha, in October. Emma, who was a leading member of our women's cross-country and road teams between 2001 and 2004, now lives in Dorset.



Emma Haillay (no 583) chasing a Dulwich runner in the Green Belt Relay

Three former Striders from the 1990s — Barbara Gambrill, Sandra Johnson and Eric Parker — attended our rather wet anniversary barbecue in September, held on the same day as the Switchback. Barbara first competed for us under her maiden name of Cole: she met her future husband Mick Gambrill while she was on an early Striders warm-weather training trip to Club La Santa in Lanzarote. Barbara and Mick gained the club a great deal of publicity by marrying during the 1999 London Marathon. They were also two of the three Striders (along with Jane Lansdown) who completed the 2001 Two Oceans Ultra-Marathon in South Africa. Barbara and Mick have subsequently divorced. Barbara now competes for Thanet Road Runners; earlier this year she completed the Thanet 20-mile road race in 3 hours 05 minutes 51.

Sandra, like Barbara, was a key member of our women's cross-country team of the mid-1990s, when we only had seven or eight women on our books but still managed to turn out full teams of five in the Surrey Women's Cross-Country League. She was also a prominent figure at some of the club's social functions: John Gannon can relate various anecdotes to anyone who is willing to buy him enough beer.

Eric Parker was one of our leading cross-country runners during the 1990s and also features prominently in the club's road rankings. In 1997 he ran 56 minutes 04 for the Thames Towpath 10

miles, 75 minutes 35 for the Southend Half-Marathon, and 2 hours 53 minutes 51 for the Potteries Marathon. He also took part in a variety of track and field events, competing as a second-claim member of Holland Sports in the lower divisions of the Southern League, and he still holds Striders' club records at 110m hurdles, 400m hurdles and pole vault. Eric now lives in Portsmouth and competes for Portsmouth Joggers although one could hardly call him a jogger – earlier this year he ran 39 minutes 07 in the Stubbington Green 10K.

The barbecue also saw a welcome visit from our former secretary Michele Lawrence, who does not qualify as a 'former Strider' because she is a life member, but has not been seen on a club run for several years. Michele was our club secretary from 1995 to 2001, and was also our women's team manager throughout that period.

Two former Striders who are still competing successfully are Ciaran Osborn and his wife Diane. Diane was a leading member of our women's team which gained promotion to Division One of the Surrey Women's Cross-Country League for the first time in 2001, and ran 3 hours 22 minutes 07 in the 2001 London Marathon. At that time, she was known by her maiden name of Diane Ballard: she met her future husband after he also joined Striders.

Ciaran was a leading member of our men's team which finished a close third in Division Two of the Surrey Cross-Country League in 2003, and he ran 2 hours 47 minutes 05 in the 2003 London Marathon. Ciaran and Diane now live in Sussex and both compete for Wadhurst Runners. Earlier this year Ciaran ran 2 hours 58 minutes 59 in the Brighton Marathon, while Diane ran 1 hour 41 minutes 27 in the Barns Green Half-Marathon.



Diane Osborn competing for Wadhurst on the track

BOOK REVIEW – RUNNING INJURIES

(by Tim Noakes and Stephen Granger: reviewed by Alan Dolton)

As the authors of this book state in their preface, “most runners find themselves injured, in pain, or even laid off, at some time in their running careers. This happens despite the fact that there is a growing body of knowledge about the treatment and prevention of running injuries.”

In most cases, the injured runner should see someone who is experienced in assessing and treating running injuries: this will usually be a physiotherapist or a sports massage therapist. However, it is also very useful to have some basic knowledge of how best to try to avoid injury, and what to do when injury strikes. In my opinion, this 176-page paperback, written by two South African specialists, is one of the most readable that I have come across, and is a book I would recommend to Striders to help understand their particular injuries.

The book is divided into seven chapters, of which the final chapter is by far the longest (it is almost as long as the other six put together). The chapter headings are as follows:

- New insights into running injuries
- Understanding the body
- Understanding the mind
- Prevention is better than cure
- The ten laws of running injuries
- Bones and muscles: a discussion of non-site-specific injuries
- A troubleshooter's guide: a discussion of site-specific injuries

The text includes several brief interviews with elite athletes (mainly South African but including Paula Radcliffe), describing injuries they have suffered and how they have recovered from them.

The chapter on ‘prevention is better than cure’ is particularly useful. It includes several important observations such as:

- Women have wider hips and are therefore more likely to have knee and lower leg injuries
- Overweight runners experience increased loading on the lower limbs and back during running
- Inflexibility of the leg muscles may contribute to injury
- There is a greater risk of injury when runners are adapting to increased training

Regular stretching helps to reduce inflexibility, but the authors comment that ‘runners who will somehow squeeze in one or two hours of running a day never seem quite able to find the additional five to ten minutes needed for adequate stretching’. The chapter contains seven pages of photographs showing how to stretch (demonstrated by a middle-distance runner, Tanya Peckham). The chapter on ‘the ten laws of running injuries’ includes the reassuring observation that ‘only a minute fraction of true running injuries are not entirely curable by quite simple techniques’. The rare exceptions to this law include:

- Runners with very severe biomechanical abnormalities (including abnormal hip, knee or ankle joints)
- Runners with severe degeneration of important tissues - such as the Achilles’ tendon
- Runners with such weak bones that they repeatedly suffer from stress fractures

Other particularly noteworthy ‘laws of running injuries’ are:

- Unless the injury is a stress fracture, rest is seldom the most appropriate treatment: treatment needs to address the biomechanical cause of the injury or the problem will recur
- Never accept the advice of a non-runner as a final opinion (even if that person is a doctor)

The chapter on ‘non-site-specific injuries’ discusses three specific types of muscle injury:

- Delayed muscle soreness
- Chronic muscle tears
- Muscle cramps

Delayed muscle soreness will be familiar to many (probably most) Striders who have trained for a marathon: in the authors’ words, it occurs ‘after unaccustomed or particularly severe exercise’ and ‘is indicative that the muscle has been overstressed’.

The section on ‘chronic muscle tears’ comments that ‘in contrast to bone injuries, which will improve if sufficient rest is allowed, chronic muscle tears will never improve unless the correct treatment is prescribed ... all the runner, or preferably a physiotherapist or other health professional need do, is to press firmly with two fingers into the affected muscle in the area in which the pain is felt. If it is

possible to find a very tender hard “knot” in the muscle, then the injury is definitely a chronic muscle tear. It is impossible to emphasise sufficiently just how sore these knots are when palpated forcefully – they are excruciating!’

While I agree with the great majority of what the authors write in the book, I do part company with them when they describe the treatment of chronic muscle tears. The authors state:

‘The only treatment that works is a physiotherapeutic manoeuvre known as cross-frictions. A better term would be “crucifixions” because nothing, not even your toughest-ever race, is as painful as cross-frictions applied, however gently, to a chronic muscle tear! The key to the treatment of these injuries is that a chronic muscle tear will heal only if the cross-frictions are applied to the injury site – the tender knot in the muscle – and if they are applied sufficiently vigorously. If the cross-friction treatment does not reduce the injured athlete to tears, either the diagnosis is wrong, or the physiotherapist is being too kind.’

I definitely disagree with that final sentence, which seems to me to be an example of hyperbole or of South African machismo (and possibly both). Judged by South African standards, I will readily plead guilty to the charge of ‘being too kind’ to my clients. But in more than 12 years of treating Striders and other runners, I can only recall one occasion when an athlete has broken into tears on my massage couch – and that was not from the pain of the massage, but from the realisation that she was not recovering from an injury quickly enough to be able to compete in a forthcoming race which she had been looking forward to. Most sports massage tutors in the UK – certainly including my former tutors at the London School of Sports Massage – emphasise that it is important to try to keep the pain caused by the treatment within the individual athlete’s pain threshold, which varies very significantly between different runners.

Nevertheless, while I disagree with that particular sentence, I would still endorse the basic advice in the chapter. The authors emphasise that ‘because these injuries tend to recur, one should be fastidious about stretching the muscles that tend to be injured. This is especially important before any fast running, in particular before early morning races.’

The final chapter in the book deals with ‘site-specific’ injuries. The authors comment that the most common injury site is the knee. They describe the two most common injuries as peripatellar pain syndrome and iliotibial band friction syndrome.

They comment that peripatellar pain syndrome (pain at the lower end of the patella or kneecap) is frequently caused by excessive ankle pronation, which causes a twisting force to develop at the knee and pulls the kneecap out of its correct alignment. Inappropriately soft shoes which may have collapsed to the inside may fail to control pronation adequately and may contribute to the injury. Conversely, very hard running shoes may also contribute to injury by not giving sufficient shock absorption at the knee. Very hard running shoes may also be a contributory factor in iliotibial band friction syndrome, where the pain is caused by the iliotibial band (which runs along the outside of the upper leg) exerting pressure on the femoral condyle at the outside of the knee.

It is interesting to compare the authors’ coverage of knee injuries with the coverage in a somewhat larger and more expensive book by a British physiotherapist, ‘Running: Fitness and Injuries’ by Vivian Grisogono.

The principal difference is that Grisogono devotes more attention to injuries resulting from an imbalance in the quadriceps muscles, where the outer quadriceps muscle (vastus lateralis) becomes much more powerful than the inner quadriceps muscle (vastus medialis). Grisogono describes the resulting injuries as ‘runner’s knee’ and observes that ‘the key muscle for kneecap control is the only one to hold the kneecap from its inner edge: the vastus medialis’. She observes that the vastus medialis 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, and the best way of avoiding a recurrence of this injury is to ‘run fast, or relatively fast, for at least some of your programme, rather than jogging slowly all the time’.

My own experience, in more than 12 years as a sports massage therapist specialising in treating runners, is the same as Vivian Grisogono’s. I have seen many runners with knee injuries who have had very significant imbalances in the strength of their quadriceps muscles, having a strong and very tight vastus lateralis and a very weak vastus medialis.

It is worth speculating as to why Noakes and Granger devote so much less space to this particular condition than Grisogono does. I think that the most likely explanation is that Grisogono has spent a great deal of her time treating recreational runners as well as elite runners. Recreational runners are more likely to suffer from this particular injury because they do most or all of their running at a slow pace without fully extending the knee. By contrast, Noakes and Granger spend most of their time treating elite runners who do a good percentage of speedwork in their training and are therefore much less likely to suffer this particular injury.

30 YEARS AGO: LOCAL ATHLETICS IN AUTUMN / WINTER 1982/83

The 1982 Commonwealth Games were held in Brisbane in October. Croydon's Judy Oakes produced an outstanding performance to win the women's shot with a putt of 17.92 metres, which was a new UK record and a new Commonwealth Games record. Her Croydon colleague Shireen Hassan ran in the women's 800 metres and placed fifth in 2 minutes 02.21.

The second Croydon 10-mile road race was held on 17 October, on a two-lap course beginning in Oaks Road and finishing in the grounds of John Ruskin School (which has subsequently been demolished). Striders subsequently adopted this course for our annual club handicap, until the arrival of Tramlink prompted us to switch to our current course for reasons of safety. The race was well promoted by Croydon Council, and attracted more than 1000 entrants, mostly local 'fun runners' rather than members of athletic clubs. The race was won by Dave Lockley of South London Harriers in 50 minutes 41, while his wife Margaret (running for London Olympiades) completed a family double by winning the women's race in 58 minutes 02, more than ten minutes ahead of her nearest rival. Croydon Harriers had four runners in the top seven: Don Faircloth placed third in 51.39 and was followed by Martin Walmsley (5th, 53.07), Gary Bishop (6th, 53.57) and Alan Dolton (7th, 54.16). Ray Marriott of SLH placed 8th in 54 minutes 19. Australian Diane Chettle, running for Croydon Harriers, was the second woman to finish, recording 68 minutes 42.

The East Surrey League held its annual cross-country race in Lloyd Park on 23 October. Bob Treadwell (who lived in Warlingham and ran for Surrey Beagles) gained a runaway win in 27 minutes 26. Croydon Harriers won the team event with Alan Dolton second (29.00), Ian Wright third (29.02) and Gary Bishop fourth (29.05). Surrey Beagles were second in the team event and Hercules-Wimbledon, who had only just joined this league, placed third. The Under-17 race was won by Croydon's Colin McCauley, who lived in Addiscombe. Sadly, Colin was tragically killed just a month later, at the age of 16. On a very stormy November evening he was running along the alleyway between Canning Road and Clyde Road when a section of the wall gave way and collapsed on top of him.

In 1982/83 the Surrey Cross-Country League was celebrating its 21st season, and had been split into three divisions for the first time. Aldershot won the Division One title for the eleventh successive year, more than 400 points clear of South London Harriers and Herne Hill, who tied for second place. Epsom (4th) and Belgrave (5th) retained their Division One status, while Croydon Harriers (6th) and Ranelagh (7th) were relegated to Division Two. Hercules-Wimbledon won the Division Two title, with Metropolitan Police also gaining promotion in second place, and Thames Hare & Hounds just missing out by placing third. The newly-formed Division Three was won by a new and short-lived club named Omega, who were based in the Weybridge area and had been formed by a group of 'elite' runners who had left Walton after disagreements within that club. Woking placed second and were also promoted.

The Surrey Women's League was in its fourth season, and still comprised just one division, with 15 clubs. Croydon Harriers won the league for the second time, finishing two points clear of Epsom, with Surrey Beagles third. South London Harriers had entered a team for the first time, and finished ninth.

The Surrey Championships were held on 8 January, on a hilly course at Frimley. Bob Treadwell was the individual champion, while Aldershot won the team event. Bob Treadwell also won the Southern Championships over a muddy course at Cockfosters on 12 February, while Aldershot again won the team event. The highlight of Aldershot's highly successful season came on 5 March, when they won the team event in the National Cross-Country Championships, held on an unusually flat and dry course at Luton. Aldershot had five of the first 23 runners to finish, including internationals Roger Hackney and Bernie Ford. The individual winner was 24-year-old Tim Hutchings of Crawley, who now works as a commentator for Eurosport. Defending champion Dave Clarke of Hercules-Wimbledon was second, while Bob Treadwell ran well to finish ninth. Of our local clubs, South London Harriers placed 33rd, with their leading runners being Andy Evans (158th), Dave Lockley (204th) and Francis Upcott (230th). Croydon Harriers placed 121st, with their first man home being Alan Dolton who finished 374th.

10 YEARS AGO: LOCAL ATHLETICS IN WINTER 2003

The Surrey Cross-Country Championships were held at Nork Park, Banstead, on 4 January. The men's race was won by Paul Rodgers of Crawley. Dereje Kebede (Hercules-Wimbledon) was second and Jon McCallum (Croydon Harriers) was third. Herne Hill won the team event, while Striders were a disappointing 16th. We were led by Justin Macenhill who placed 58th, with Gerry Crispie 62nd, Chris Morton 98th, Damian Macenhill 103rd, Bob Pullen 164th and John Gannon completing the scoring team in 177th. Croydon Harriers' Robbie Powell won the under-17 race and led Croydon to victory in the team event. Their other scorers were Mark Elsworthy (11th) and future track star Martyn Rooney (16th). The senior women's race was won by Jo Kelsey of Woking, who also won the team event. Only three of Striders' women competed: Elene Kayum was 75th with Emma Haillay 81st and Michele Lawrence 106th.

The second Surrey Cross-Country League Division Two match of the season was held 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, recording 30 minutes 27. He was followed by Ciaran Osborn (10th, 30.33); Tony Sheppard (15th, 30.42); Eric Parker (27th, 31.16); Simon Alexander (29th, 31.24); Gerry Crispie (40th, 32.17); John Kirby (47th, 32.52); Paul Bowyer (55th, 33.20); Damian Macenhill (65th, 33.39) and Chris Morton (72nd, 34.01). Striders had an impressive total of 24 finishers.

On the same day our women were at Richmond Park and finished a disappointing 15th. Elene Kayum led us home in 51st, while Emma Haillay was 55th, Linda Daniel 69th, Lyn Simmons 90th and new member Karen McDermott 95th. (Karen is of course now known by her married name of Macenhill.)

The third Surrey Cross-Country League Division Two match of the season was held at Lloyd Park on 1 February. Striders did well to finish second to 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, recording 32 minutes 51. He was followed by Ciaran Osborn (14th, 33.21); Eric Parker (17th, 33.46); Dave Shaw (31st, 34.51); Justin Macenhill (32nd, 34.56); John Kirby (49th, 35.51); Gerry Crispie (51st, 35.56); Dean Casella (61st, 36.17); Chris Morton (68th, 36.45) and Simon Smith (78th, 37.34).

The final Surrey Womens Cross-Country League match of the season was also held at Lloyd Park. Our women produced their best performance of the season to finish fifth in the match and tenth in the final league table. Diane Ballard led us home in 12th place (32.20). She was followed by Elene Kayum (29th, 34.38) and Emma Haillay (34th, 35.10). New member Steph Upton made an encouraging debut in 40th (35.41), while Linda Daniel was 58th (37.53).

In the Wokingham Half Marathon on 9 February, Justin Macenhill ran a personal best 77 minutes 33, lifting him to seventh place in the club's all-time rankings. Chris Morton ran a personal best 86 minutes 28, with Damian Macenhill not far behind in 87 minutes 15.

Divisions One and Three of the Surrey Cross-Country League had both finished their seasons on 1 February. Woking won Division Three with Croydon Harriers second and Walton third. However 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. On the day this was a big disappointment, but the following season was to show that it may have been a blessing in disguise, for we would undoubtedly have been outclassed in Division One, just as our women had been the previous year. Finishing third was 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.

AUTUMN QUIZ - ANSWERS

Some of the questions in the Autumn Quiz proved challenging. John Gannon was a narrow winner with 17.5 correct answers (half a point for question 27), just ahead of Chris Morton who had 16 correct answers (without referring to the club website). So John wins the bottle of wine.

The correct answers are:

1) Kevin Burnett. 2) Margaret Faherty. 3) Nick Kyritsis. 4) Mark Bayliss. 5) Sandra Francis. 6) Four. 7) 2010. 8) Justin Macenhill. 9) Matt Morgan. 10) 2005. 11) 2005. 12) John Gannon. 13) 2003. 14) 2003. 15) 2003. 16) Neil and Helen Furze. 17) Tony Sheppard. 18) 2002. 19) 2001. 20) 2001. 21) 2000. 22) Mick and Barbara Gambrill. 23) Jane Lansdown. 24) 1996. 25) Philips City Striders Athletic Club – but I also accepted 'Philips City Striders'. 26) Nigel Davidson. 27) Michelle Campbell - 100m hurdles. 28) Alan Dolton. 29) 1986. 30) Steve Owen.

(The fact that many of the 'in which year' questions relate to the period from 2000 to 2005 reflects the fact that, from a competitive viewpoint, this was the most successful period in the club's history. It may not be a coincidence that, during this period, most of the club's leading runners did speed sessions together.)

CHRISTMAS QUIZ 2012

Christmas is the time of goodwill to all men – including not only our fellow-Striders but also members of our rival clubs. (And 'all men' includes both sexes – it is not intended to be gender-specific.) So this Christmas Quiz is designed to test Striders' knowledge of our local rivals. Many (but not all) of the answers will be found in the various history articles which have appeared in this newsletter in recent years.

- 1) Which local club compete in white vests with a maroon vertical stripe?
- 2) Which local club compete in yellow vests with dark blue diagonal bands?
- 3) For which local club were Nigel Davidson and Daisy Collingridge competing when they set Striders' 800 metre records?
- 4) Which local club awarded themselves the team prize at the 2012 Croydon 10K, despite only having one of the first six finishers whereas Striders had three of the first six finishers?
- 5) In 1995, when Striders' members voted to change the club name to 'Croydon Striders', which local club lodged an objection with the Surrey AA, preventing us from using that name?
- 6) Which Croydon Harrier set a British discus record in 2011?
- 7) Which Croydon Harrier finished sixth in the 400 metres at the Beijing Olympics?
- 8) Which Croydon Harrier finished fourth in the 400 metres at the Sydney Olympics?
- 9) In which year did Croydon Harriers last field a complete team of five senior women in the Surrey Womens Cross-Country league?
- 10) In which year was the cinder track at Croydon Arena replaced with a synthetic track?
- 11) Which member of Bromley Ladies competed in the 1500 metres in the 1988 Olympics?
- 12) In which year did Croydon Harriers win Division One of the Southern Men's League?
- 13) Which member of Mitcham AC competed in the 100 metre hurdles in the 1976 Olympics?
- 14) Which Croydon Harrier finished third in the 1970 Commonwealth Games marathon?
- 15) Who became secretary of Croydon Harriers in 1964, and still held the same post 35 years later?
- 16) Which South London Harrier won a silver medal in the 1956 Olympic 5000 metres?
- 17) Which South London Harrier won a silver medal in the 1948 Olympic marathon?
- 18) Which Croydon pub did South London Harriers use as their headquarters during the reign of King Edward VII?
- 19) Which South London Harrier won the National Cross-Country Championship in 1901, 1902, 1903 and 1904?
- 20) In which year were South London Harriers formed?

The committee have kindly offered to provide a small prize (either a bottle of wine or a kit voucher) to the first person to email the correct answers to alan.dolton@lexisnexus.co.uk. Only one entry per person: closing date 1 March. If nobody gets all 20 correct, the prize will go to the person with the most correct answers (and if there is a tie, the prize will go to the first such entry to be received).

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE



Lisa Harris



Emily Pastos

On the left is Lisa Harris, who was the first woman to finish at the Croydon 10K and the fourth woman to finish the Switchback 5 (where the above photograph was taken). On the right is Emily Pastos, who was the first woman finisher at nine of the Lloyd parkruns between 18 August and 17 November. Has anyone else noticed how similar they look?

TILLY AT THE LLOYD PARKRUN



Our track and field team mascot, Tilly, paces Ella at the Lloyd parkrun

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