

Striders of Croydon

Christmas Newsletter 2008



Flash floods at the Croydon 10K?
(Kerry, Suzy & Steph winning a team prize at
The Grim)

Chairman's Corner

Happy Christmas to all our readers and may you run further and faster in 2009.

Marathon

Marathon training season is upon us and for those entered in the FLM or one of the other Marathons I hope your training goes well and you achieve your goal whether it is just to finish or to beat 3 hours. We will do our best to help you with extended runs on Sundays and some away runs to add extra interest. Also remember there are suggested training schedules for all target times ranging from 3 hours to 5 hours on the Striders web site. These include our planned runs and the pre-marathon races in the area. We now have quite a portfolio of possible routes and I even managed to find a few new ones last year, such as the Regents canal run, but I am beginning to run out of ideas. If anyone else has any good route ideas and is prepared to guide us round them please let me know.

Chairman's Challenge



At the other end of the scale our shortest scheduled run is the one mile time trial run on the first Friday of every month. Over the last five months 35 club members have run it at least once which give a reasonable basis for awarding the occasional spot prize, not for being the absolute fastest, but perhaps most improved, most consistent etc etc.. There is a winner for the 2008 series though I won't say who until the rather modest trophy arrives from Running Imp.. I hope to be able to award it at the Addington 4 on New Years day.

Meanwhile the next prize will be awarded in 6 months time to the person who achieves the biggest percentage improvement over their best time in the 2008 series. So if you ran in 2008 come along and see how much faster you can do it. If you didn't run it in 2008 come and run it anyway you may win the one after. No official prize for being fastest but well done Simon for 5:11 you or those close behind you break the 5 minute barrier? Who is going to be first?

Sandilands

As you will know we are going to paint the changing rooms over Christmas. I am not sure who the mysterious kick boxing club is that manages to put black marks and mud stains half way up the walls but as the club who uses the facilities most regularly I thought it in our own interests to do something about it. So you should return to a brighter, cleaner but still magnolia coloured facility in the new year.

The club "rent" for using Sandilands is relatively modest compared with the Tennis, Hockey and Cricket Clubs. One way of keeping it that way is to make sure we look after the facilities. Another way is to contribute to the ROOF fund. A £20 contribution before Jan 15th entitles you to 12 opportunities to win big prizes and £10 goes towards Sandilands funds – and thus indirectly the material for painting your walls.

The bar is open on Wednesdays, largely for our benefit, in the winter months. I know there are lots of reasons for going straight home after the run – like you are hungry – but don't forget it is there for a post run fluid top up and a chat. It has been suggested that it would be good to be able to order food before we set off to be ready when we return. Would anyone use this if it was available.

And finally

It was proposed at the last AGM that we investigate setting up a half marathon round Croydon. This is on hold at the moment, no-one seems that enthusiastic to pick up the baton. Anyone out there want to rise to the challenge?

And in a similar vein ParkRun, the people who run the Banstead Woods 5K Time Trial every Saturday morning at 9 o'clock think it would be good if there was an equivalent event round Lloyd Park and would Striders like to support it? Anyone out there wake up early on a Saturday morning desperate for an excuse not to go shopping?

Robin

Fancy that ! Strider goes undercover.

Can you guess the identity of the man behind the disguises? Yes I donned fancy dress, for the first time, for the recent Swanley Christmas Caper (4.2 miles) with my 11 year old daughter, Chloe (completing her first road race). Chloe dressed as an elf and me, dressed as Santa, with sack, completed the undulating course on a cold and crisp and even morning (enough of the Christmas spirit – Ed) in 40 minutes. The records will show that Chloe beat her old man to the line.



Ho Ho Ho!!

A stiff easterly breeze greeted the runners as they ran along the seafront for the last 6 miles or so. Galley Hill after 21 miles proved testing. Immediately afterwards runners were steered on to the beach to complete over 1 mile on the shingle which caused lots of runners problems. I suddenly twigged why runners were talking about high tide in the weeks leading up to the race. Never again have any sympathy for those who complain about the (carpeted) cobbles at the Tower of London. Although there were 1908 registered starters, only 1178 finished. This seemed to be a larger than usual DNS/DNF rate.

The official race summary records that a group of runners decided to pull out at afternoon (sounds very sensible really – Ed). Sadly my moustache fell off (hopefully nothing else – Ed) after 4 miles, and I suffered the indignity of shouts of “Nice hair!” and “Go Elvis!” for the next 3 hours and 22 miles. However, I didn’t let this rattle me too much and finished in 259 place in a respectable 3 hours and 35 minutes. Other noted Striders were Dave Shaw (3:19:21), Tina Macenhill (3:55:35) and Thomas Stevens (4:29:23).

A week later, I was kitted out 1908 style for the 100th Anniversary Hastings Marathon. Even a surprised Dave Shaw didn’t recognise me when approached him before the start. This historic race traced the original route, as far as possible, including an early 4 mile hill stage and then through Battle, Catsfield, Bexhill and St Leonards. There were a series of steps to negotiate at Battle and a number of early hills. Just when you thought the major climbs were behind you another tough one cropped up at 12-13 miles.



Recovery drinks at the ready

Club Runs - A Guide to Etiquette

By John Gannon

Since my demise as club chairman the committee has decided that such a talent and large Gob should not go to waste. So have asked me to continue in the role of helping decide what route should be taken and leading certain groups on our club training sessions on Wednesday evenings. A role that I share with Chris Morton and Robin Jamieson amongst others, although it is usually Chris or myself that decide what route we're going to take each week. However it is the more hilly routes that Chris selects so please don't blame me for them! In fact Robin, in almost his first decision as club chairman, has decided to define Chris and my role as 'The Routemasters' I'm not so sure how to take this honour as it reminds me of the Buses I used to catch to school and not that certain that Robin hasn't decided on that name as my backside is becoming as large as back of one of these buses!

So anyway this seemed like a good opportunity, especially as we have gained quite a few new runners over the last couple of years to remind and enforce some of our club rules, or perhaps traditions sounds better, that it would be nice if everyone could follow when on a club run be it a Wednesday evening or Sunday mornings.

One of the first things I noticed and thought was a good idea when I joined this club all those many years ago, was the fact that we run as a group with the faster runners always coming back to those more, shall we say, steadier runners. I'm not sure if we are the only club in doing this but I've not heard of another local club organising their club runs in this manner. Croydon Harriers no longer have a road running side to their club I believe while South London Harriers have their routes posted up on the notice board in their club house from where you chose what route you want to do and as long as there are other runners that there are enough runners that want to do the same route off you go. If you know the route fine if not it's a case of finding someone that runs at your pace if not then you have to try and keep up with someone faster than you or run at slower pace with a slower runner but who knows they way! Looking at the central London based Serpentine running club web site it would appear that they run in groups based upon your ability but the course each week is the same route around a selection of Hyde Park, Green Park and St James Park depending on how far you what to run. It does sound an interesting route, in fact when I once worked in London I use to run much the same route during my lunchtime and can confirm it is but think I might find it boring to do every week!

One disadvantage of running in a group like ours is that some runners will just put their head down and follow the person in front of them. This is fine but stop the run and ask them to get back to the club and they won't have a clue where they were! This does not just affect newer runners to the club but some that have been running with club longer than I have no names, no pack drill but I love you both Michelle and Colin. People who can work out where the route is going normally end up helping or leading the club run itself and this was certainly the case for me. However knowing the route while trying to keep

the group together and get back within the agreed time is not as easy as it looks! So please for Chris's and my sanity or anyone else leading a club run please remember the following:

- Always. always turn back for slower runs in your group once you see the leader of the run turn and run back past you
- Standing around and waiting for slower runners to catch you up is not an option and is in fact discourteous to your fellow runner and club mate – don't do it!
- Jogging on the spot while waiting for said runners is also not an option and is in fact discourteous to your fellow runner and club mate – don't do it!
- Listen and follow any directions given by the group leader or leaders
- Try to remember who the last person in your group is and ensure that they have past you when looping back
- Try to remember your whereabouts and how long you have been running. If for some reason you get detached from the group and have been running not less than 30 minutes, turn and re-trace your steps back to the club, if running for more than 30 minutes keep running in the same direction – hopefully we will find you
- Take care when crossing and running along roads, especially busy ones, we try to keep everyone safe but your safety is your own responsibility
- Always. always turn back for slower runners in your group once you see the leader of the run turn and run back past you

SPORTS MASSAGE THERAPY

HELPS REDUCE MUSCULAR SORENESS AFTER TRAINING OR
COMPETITION

HELPS RECOVERY FROM SOFT TISSUE INJURY

ALAN DOLTON, LSSM Dip, ITEC Dip, MSMA, MISRM
UK ATHLETICS LEVEL 3 CLUB COACH

70 WARREN ROAD, ADDISCOMBE, CROYDON

TELEPHONE 020 8656 0532

DISCOUNTED RATES FOR STRIDERS OF CROYDON

How to upset the Race Secretary

Useful information found by Steve Smith

Follow these 12 tips for guaranteed success...

1. SAE MADNESS

When you send in your entry form forget to include a S.A.E. or include the smallest possible envelope thus ensuring all race details, number etc. have to be multi-folded to get them into this tiny package. If you see a runner with a multi-creased number you will know who I am talking about.

2. DON'T COMPLETE YOUR ENTRY FORM

When filling in your entry form, write YES in the box asking for the runners sex or leave the age box blank then moan about the fact you are not recorded as 3rd over 40 on the results sheet.

3. ENTER AS LATE AS POSSIBLE

Wait until the last week before sending off your entry form thus helping to ensure the race secretary receives over 100 entries each day during the last week, or send in your entry form after the closing date together with a heart rending story about how the dog had eaten the original entry form and had to be rushed to the vets.

4. GIVE HIM/HER SOME HASSLE

Arrive on the race secretary's doorstep with cheque and entry form in hand demanding to be given a race number there and then. If the race secretary is in the middle of eating his dinner and you're the 10th person to call or phone that evening this is certain to upset him.

5. SWAP YOUR NUMBER (BUT DON'T TELL ANYONE)

Make sure no money is wasted. If you paid for a race entry but can't run, give your number to someone else without telling the organisers, then when the person running with your number collapses unconscious halfway through the race and is rushed to hospital the police will turn up on your doorstep to break the bad news to your family. This is a guaranteed laughtermaker at parties for years afterwards! Better still, if you're a woman and can't take part give your number to a very fit man. This is certain to delay the prize presentation whilst the organisers try to work out how an over 50 woman apparently finished in 69 minutes.

6. LOSE YOUR NUMBER

Lose your race number and then hassle the organisers 10 minutes before the start for a new one.

7. ARRIVE LATE

Arrive at the last minute, want to enter on the day, moan about the length of the queues then expect the race director to delay the start thus ensuring those who did arrive on time are left shivering on the start line.

8. STUFF THE SPONSORS

Insist on cutting or folding your race number, thus hiding the sponsors name. When sponsors have generously given financial support which helps keep entry fees down. It is clearly unfair to do this.

9. ANNOY THE TIMEKEEPERS

Immediately you finish the race, approach the timekeeper to ask for your finishing time. This may mean they miss recording the times of some of the later finishers who being slower than you don't matter.

10. FINISH TWICE

Once you've finished jog back down the course to help some of your slower clubmates by accompanying them through the finish thus ensuring finish recorders are sent potty trying to work out how runner 194 finished five times.

11. BACK TO THE ENTRY FORM...

At the race presentation when the race organisers give the team prize to another club, point out how a child of six could see that Bloggsby Harriers should have won, then storm out angrily while the race secretary goes off to fetch your entry form to prove you have left the space for the name of your club blank.

12. BE MISERABLE

Never smile (or thank if appropriate) any race official, who can sometimes come in for a lot of complaint but without whose voluntary efforts the race would not take place.

Attacked jogger takes fox for run

From BBC News Website – found by Robin.

An Arizona jogger had an unwelcome companion on a recent run - a fox, hanging on to her arm by its teeth.

The rabid animal had attacked her foot and then as she grabbed its neck, it bit her arm and would not let go. She ran a mile to her car, where she managed to free herself, wrap the fox in a shirt and throw it in the boot. It later bit an animal control officer and both jogger and vet received anti-rabies injections, and the fox was confirmed as carrying the disease.

The woman, from Chino Valley south of the Grand Canyon, had been running for a mile when she came across the fox in a clearing. Although it did not initially appear aggressive, the animal attacked her feet as she backed away, before moving up towards her knee. When she grabbed the fox by the neck, it closed its jaws around her arm and would not let go, despite her attempts to choke it.

Fearful that it was indeed rabid, she ran to her car and managed to free herself and trap the fox in the boot, before driving to a local medical centre. A statement released by the local Yavapai County Sheriff's Office notes that "it is very difficult to prevent the attack of a wild rabid animal once in progress.

"Although containing the animal for testing is beneficial, immediate treatment is always the priority."

It couldn't happen in Croydon. Could it?

25 YEARS AGO: ATHLETICS IN WINTER 1984

In January 1984 the Surrey Cross-Country Championships were held, for the second successive year, on a hilly course at Frimley. The team event was won by Epsom & Ewell, while South London Harriers had the first Under-20 team. Bob Treadwell, who lived in Warlingham and ran for Surrey Beagles, retained the individual title. 25 years later, Bob still competes as a veteran.

The Surrey Womens Championships were held separately at Morden. The senior champion was Jo White of local club Mitcham AC (who have subsequently been absorbed into Sutton & District). She also led Mitcham to the team prize. Croydon Harriers had two winners in the younger age groups: Niobe Menendez won the Under-17 race while Karen Sutton won the Under-13 race.

The National Championships were held at Newark on 3 March. The race was won by Eamonn Martin of Basildon, a future winner of the London Marathon. Aldershot won the team event for the second successive year. Aldershot also won the Surrey Cross-Country League, for the thirteenth successive year, but only after an unusually close battle with Herne Hill, with each club winning two of the four matches. Belgrave placed third, with Epsom (4th) and South London Harriers (5th) also retaining their Division One status. Metropolitan Police (6th) and Hercules-Wimbledon (7th) were relegated to Division Two.

Division Two saw a three-way battle involving Croydon Harriers and Ranelagh, both of whom had been relegated from Division One the previous year, and Division Three champions Omega, a short-lived club who had been formed as a breakaway from Walton AC. Omega won the division with Ranelagh second and Croydon third.

Croydon Harriers had some consolation by winning the Surrey Womens League for the second successive year. They won three of the four matches and also had the individual winners in three of the four : their outstanding teenager Niobe Menendez won two of the races, while Karen Ellis, a talented 800 metre runner, won the final race. Woking placed second with Ranelagh third. South London Harriers placed fourth with Epsom fifth, Guildford sixth and Herne Hill seventh. Croydon Harriers' success was based on a small group of talented track runners, and they were helped by the fact that only the top four runners from each club scored. However they did not seem to cater for runners of lesser ability, so that (for example) Michele Lawrence was not made to feel particularly welcome when she enquired about membership, and she chose to join Striders instead. Harriers were to pay the price for neglecting slower runners when their women's team disintegrated in the 1990s.

Striders were not yet competing at cross-country (our men did not enter the Surrey League until 1986, and our women did not do so until 1988). However, several of the club's pioneers were busy training for the London Marathon.

The English Schools Cross-Country Championships were held at Happy Valley in Old Coulsdon, not using the well-known SLH course but using a course starting near the Fox, on the Coulsdon/Caterham border, with a descent into the valley early in each race and a steep climb back towards the main road at the end of each race. There had been torrential rain in the week leading up to the event, and the course rapidly turned to a sea of mud.

In January, Croydon's shot putter Judy Oakes won the AAA Indoor Championship at Cosford, with a putt of 17.67 metres. She was selected for the European Indoor Championships, but withdrew because of injury.

The Road Runners Club were well-known as the organisers of an annual London to Brighton road race which lasted from 1952 until 2005. On 4 February they held a 24-hour indoor race in a shopping centre in Milton Keynes. Each lap measured just over 900 yards. The winner was Mike Newton of South London Harriers, who ran 144 miles 1178 yards. This was his first win in a 24-hour race, having placed second in four previous races.

10 YEARS AGO: LOCAL ATHLETICS IN WINTER 1999

At the halfway stage of the 1998/99 cross-country season, Striders' women were comfortably placed in the top half of Division Two, but our men were in the bottom half of Division Three and facing a battle to avoid relegation. Our women's third match was at Richmond Park on 9 January. As usual they were led home by Jane Lansdown. Our other scorers were Elene Kayum, Linda Daniel, Michele Lawrence and Barbara Cole.

Our men had their third match a week later, on very muddy course at Esher. For the second successive match, our first man home was Tony Sheppard. He was followed by Eric Parker, Nigel Davidson, John McGilvray, John Kirby and Simon Smith.

In the Canterbury 10 mile road race on 30 January, club secretary Michele Lawrence set club over-50 women's record of 83 minutes 59 seconds.



The final Surrey Cross-Country League matches of the season took place on 27 February, and saw both our men's and women's teams at Lloyd Park. Once again, our first two women home were Jane Lansdown and Elene Kayum. Our third scorer was Diane Ballard, making a welcome return to form after having missed the first half of the season on a long holiday in Israel. Barbara Cole and Wendy Smith completed the scoring team. Our men made sure of avoiding relegation with their best performance of the season. As in the previous two matches, our first two scorers were Tony Sheppard and Eric Parker. Bob Ewen made his first league appearance of the season to be our third finisher, while Gerry Crispie, who had surprisingly failed to make the scoring ten in either of the previous two matches, made a welcome return to form and was our fourth finisher. He was followed by John Kirby, Alan Dolton and John McGilvray.

Division One of the Surrey Womens League was won by South London Harriers, after a close battle with local rivals Herne Hill. SLH had won the first and fourth matches, while Herne Hill won the second and third matches. SLH's star runner was former Welsh international Alison Wood, who won the final match at Lloyd Park. Thames Hare & Hounds placed third; they had the individual league champion in Rachel Disley who won the second and third races. Veterans AC did well to place fourth, with Dulwich Runners fifth. At the other end of the table, Woking and Dorking were relegated to Division Two. Belgrave and Stragglers, who had been relegated the previous year, both regained their Division One status at the first attempt.

Division One of the Surrey Mens League was won by Thames Hare & Hounds, who won three of the four matches. Herne Hill placed second, while Belgrave and Ranelagh tied for third place. Aldershot placed fifth with South London Harriers sixth. Boxhill Racers and Hercules-Wimbledon were relegated to Division Two. They were replaced by Metropolitan Police and British Airways, the latter club gaining promotion to the top division for the only time in their history.

The Southern Cross-Country Championships were held at Parliament Hill on 30 January. The women's race was won by Hayley Yelling of Hounslow. Ten years later, Hayley is still one of the UK's leading cross-country runners. The men's race was won by Mark Steinle of Blackheath Harriers, who also won the team event. The under-17 race was won by Mohammed Farah of Hounslow, who has subsequently established himself as the UK's leading 5000 metre runner. The under-15 race was won by Tom Bedford of Shaftesbury Barnet. His father Dave had been one of Britain's leading runners 30 years previously, but Tom has so far failed to emulate his father's success, although he has recorded 2 hours 33 for a marathon.

In the Woking 10 mile road race on 7 March, Tony Sheppard ran a lifetime best of 56 minutes 22 seconds.

The East Surrey League held its annual road relay on 20 March. Boxhill Racers won the event, while Striders placed eighth. The team comprised Tony Sheppard (11.03), John McGilvray (12.28), Gerry Crispie (11.57) and Nigel Davidson (11.58).

The Striders' Teams Collect Their Prizes at the Croydon 10K - October 2008



Owen Trophy

The prize winners in this year's Owen Trophy were:

1st Place – Susan Haynes

2nd Place – Robin Jamieson

3rd Place – Julie Shew

Congratulations to all the winners!



Owen Trophy Winners (and a few hangers on) at the Post –Marathon Celebrations

Dates for Your Diary

Thursday 1 January – Addington 4, Start 11am, meet at the junction of Upper Shirley Road and Shirley Church Road

Saturday 10 January – Surrey League Cross Country
Ladies at Farthing Downs
Men at Lightwater

Sunday 11 January – London Bridge to Greenwich Run

Saturday 7 February – Surrey League Cross Country
Men & Women at Lloyd Park

Sunday 8 February – Thames Down Way, 15 mile circular run from Ewell

And finally.....

A Very Merry Christmas to All Striders!



Club Mascot Gordon, Doing What All Good Runners Do Best...



...RESTING!