

Striders of Croydon



Christmas Newsletter



*I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas?
Not if you want a track session at Croydon Arena!*

December 2010



Chairmans Corner

A Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year to you all. Another good year for Striders. I can't list all of our successes this year but looking at the club records quite a lot of names have appeared in the all time best lists for 2010.

Matt Morgan, Steve Starvis, Lee Flanagan Tyler O'Callaghan, Suzy Yates, Josephine Thompson in 10Ks.

Steve Starvis, Tyler O'Callaghan, Richard Lee-Smith and Helen Furze for 10 miles.

Bill Makuwa, Richard Lee-Smith, Lee Wadsworth, Suzy Yates, Alice Ewen & Josephine Thompson for the Half Marathon.

Bill Makuwa, Lee Wadsworth and Suzy Yates for the marathon.

On top of which Bill Makuwa achieved a club all time best in the Marathon of 2:40:38

Helen Furze's achieved a W40 best at 10 miles of 76:49

Lesley Bourke achieved a clean sweep of the W50 records

Margaret Faherty has the W65 10K and Half Marathon and Sue Atkinson the W65 Marathon.

Well done to everyone

The Club Christmas Celebrations was a great success again. Thanks to Steph for organising it and both Steph and Mick for providing the quiz. I think the "Spot the strider" competition appears later in this newsletter.

The annual New Years Day run, the Addington 4 will actually be on Bank Holiday Monday 3rd this year as its Parkruns on Saturday. For a change we thought that instead of you guessing your time and the one closest to their guess winning. We would have a big clock at the start, you decide when to start and the winner is the one who finishes closest to 11 O'clock – More like a normal handicap race but you decide your handicap. It means a rather drawn out start but should make for an interesting finish.

Marathon Training season is about to start. As an experiment we have tried to schedule a longer run of some sort for most Sundays up to the end of March. Roughly in increasing distance and as far as possible with the more interesting away runs on Sundays when there aren't any competing events. This may all fall apart due to the weather but it forms a basis for planning your own training. Many of you will be familiar with the routes but for the newer members of the club there is an article later on giving a brief description of all the runs.

One new route this year will be the run back from Woolwich Arsenal along the Capital Ring/Green Chain Walk. This was prompted by seeing a Capital Ring sign in Beckenham Park at the start of the Backenham Relays – say Woolwich 13 miles. Which given the tram is close by seemed a possibility. So I tried it. Although it looks a bit suburban on the map it really has a nice mix of running along the Thames, across parkland, through woodlands and some superb views across London from the edge of Blackheath. A bit of a trek to get to the start but well worth it.

Another new event this year will be the club orienteering championship on Sunday 12th January. It so happens that there is a major event in the woods round Chartwell being organised by Andy Elliot who is a member of Dartford Orienteering Club as well as Striders. They are putting on a Red course (long and easy) just for us. So come along and have a go. As long as you can recognise a map when you see one you won't find it too difficult. Watch out for more details of this on the notice board – coming shortly.

Planning for the Croydon Half is going well and we already have 160 entries. The real work starts in the new year. Thank you to everyone who has offered to help on the day. We should now have enough helpers between Striders, harriers and the other Sandilands clubs so any who wants run is now free to enter. Follow the links on the web site www.croydonhalf.co.uk Its £15. There is no discount for club members I'm afraid.

As you all know Parkrun has now started in Lloyd Park and is well attended by Striders. It does seem to be struggling a little for helpers. If anyone is willing and able to take ownership of the event say one Saturday a month it would be much appreciated. If you can – contact either Mick Turner or Shelley Ross.

Once again – A Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year to all our readers

Robin

Marathon Training Runs

As the main Marathon season is coming up we have planned some longer club runs runs for most of the Sundays up to the end of March. Many of you will be familiar with these but for the newer members of the club here is a brief description of the various runs. This is all subject to change at short notice mainly depending on weather conditions (snow can be expected at some point during the next few months).

The run are open to all. We will form pace groups on the day depending on numbers and familiarity with the route. I'll provide route maps for the slower groups where needed.

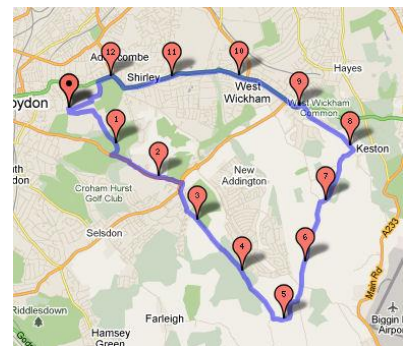
For the away runs we meet at East Croydon to catch the train which gets us to the start near to 8:30.

Sunday 2nd January The “Arctic Run” - White Bear, & Coney Hall passing North Pole Lane and Iceland –13 miles

<http://www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=2479863>

Nearly all on road circular run from the club house.

Start at 8:30 from the club house with the regular Sunday run. Over Gravel Hill and split from the 90 minute group half way up Featherbed Lane. Continue up to the White Bear, turn left round the back of New Addington, along Layhams Road turn right at Nash Lane, past the end of North Pole Lane, down to Gates Green Road and back via Coney Hall and along the A232 through past Iceland in West Wickham and on to Shirley.



Monday 3rd January The Addington 4

The annual 4 mile “race” starts at Shirley Church Road Junction via Gravel Hill, Addington Village, Spout Hill and Shirley Church Road. You guess your time, run without a watch and the winner is the one who finishes closest to their estimate. A variation for this year will be for you to decide when to start and the winner is the one who finishes closes to 11:am. Some warming refreshments for all fiishers.

Sunday 9th January Westerham O event

http://www.dfok.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=185%3A%20westerham-regional&catid=1%3A%20latest-news&Itemid=95

No extended run planned as a rare opportunity to try out an orienteering event – relatively close to home at Westerham. . The event is being organised by one of our members – Andy Elliot who is also a member of Dartford Orienteering DFOK Club. They will be putting on a long easy course especially for Striders which we hope many of you will try out. There will be a prize for the highest placed finisher.

Sun-16-Jan Greenwich 6,11 or 13

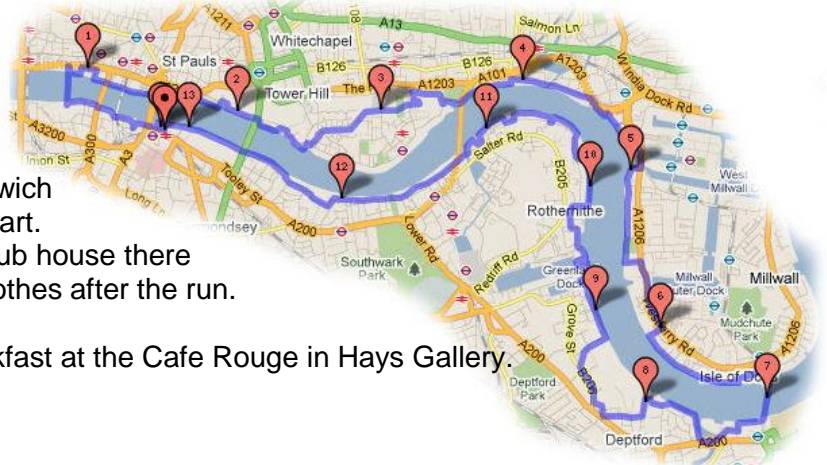
www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=2170782

A circular run from London Bridge away from traffic all on hard surfaces.

The annual club run from London Bridge Station to Greenwich and back down along the Thames Path on the north bank and back along the south bank.

Faster runners take a slightly longer route and there is the option to drop out at Greenwich and catch a train or hitch a lift back to the start.

As the start and finish are away from the club house there will be a support car to carry a change a clothes after the run.



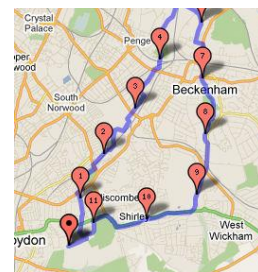
Traditionally we finish with full English breakfast at the Cafe Rouge in Hays Gallery.

Sun-23-Jan Beckenham 10 or 12

www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=4147574

Circular run from the club house mostly mixed surfaces.

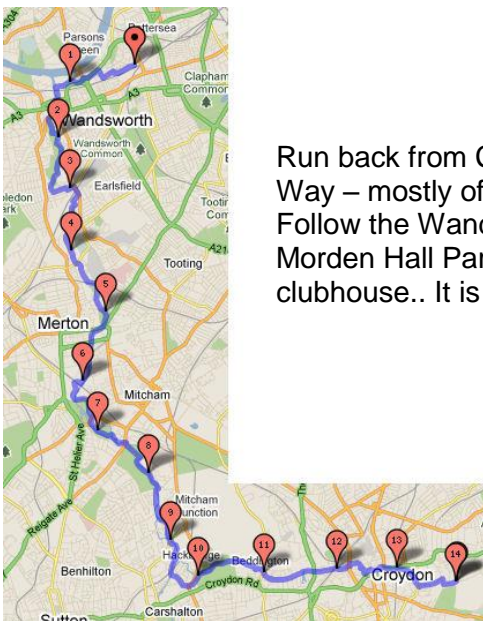
An extended run across South Norwood Park to Cator Park, across Beckenham and back via Kelsey Park with an extra loop for faster runners



to

Sun-30-Jan Wandle 14

www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=2366613



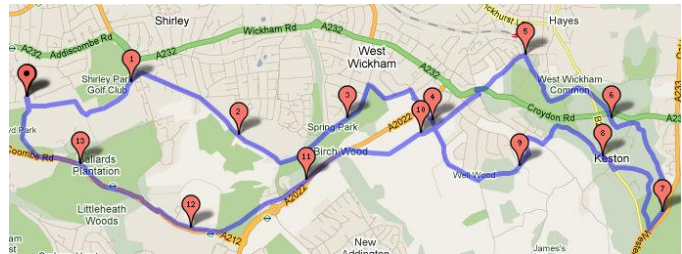
Run back from Clapham Junction to the club House along the Wandle Way – mostly off road on mixed surfaces.

Follow the Wandle from the Thames, via Wandsworth Park, Abbey Mills, Morden Hall Park, Ravensbury Park, Beddington Park back to the clubhouse.. It is possible to drop out and catch a tram at about 8 miles.

Sun 6 Feb Keston Ponds 6 or 14

www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=2558460

Circular run from the club house out to Keston Ponds via Sparrows Den. It is possible to do this as a shorter 6 mile off road run by starting from Sparrows Den. If it is very wet this will be replaced by an extended on road run.



Sun 15th Feb Merstham 15

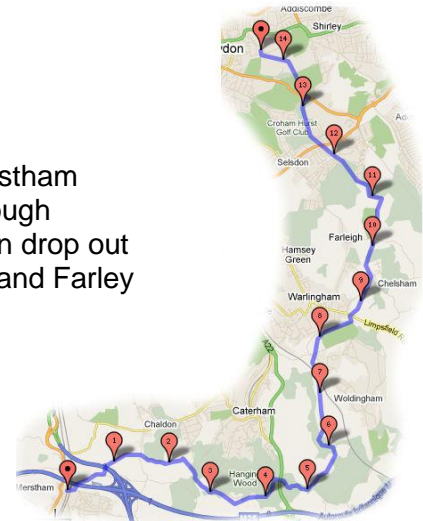
www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=1550627

A long run back from Merstham Station to the Club House

– nearly all off road fairly hilly.

Start with a notorious climb up on to the North Downs from Merstham

then a long scenic run along the North Downs Way, down through Woldingham School then back up to Warlingham where you can drop out and catch a bus or continue across country through Chelsham and Farley to Selsdon Woods and back to the club house.

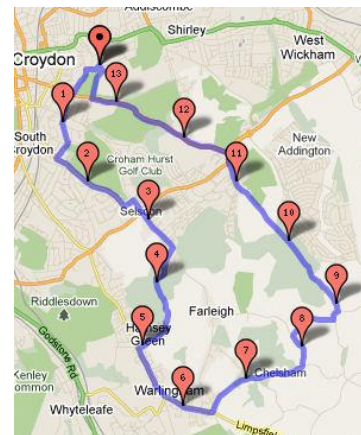


Sun 20th Feb Nothing special planned its the Brighton Half.

Sun 27th Feb Warlingham & White Bear 14

www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=2520180

Circular run from the club house mostly on tarmac via Warlingham, Chelsham and the White Bear



Sun 6 Mar Woolwich Arsenal 14 or 19

www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=4147569

Run back from Woolwich Arsenal via the Capital Ring mostly off road on good surfaces.

A new run for the club following the Capital Ring and Green Chain Walk.

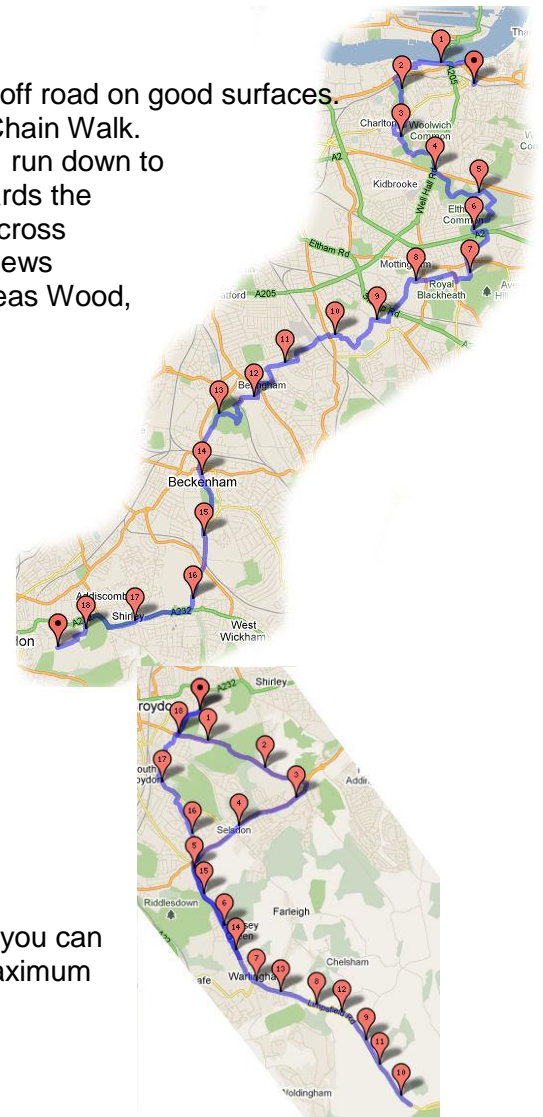
The run starts with a train Journey to Woolwich Arsenal then run down to the Thames through the Arsenal and along the Thames towards the Thames Barrier.

We then head uphill through Maryon Park, across Woolwich To Eltham common where there are spectacular views over Greenwich and London. The run continues through Oxleas Wood, through some up market Etham Suburbia to Eltham Palace.

Then along St Johns Walk with more views of London finishing up at Beckenham Park at 13 miles.

You can then choose to catch the tram back from Beckenham at the 14 mile mark.

Or continue back to the club house via Kelsey Park and West Wickham to make 19 miles.



Sun 13th Mar To be determined

Any requests.. Or its the Spitfire 20 at Cranleigh

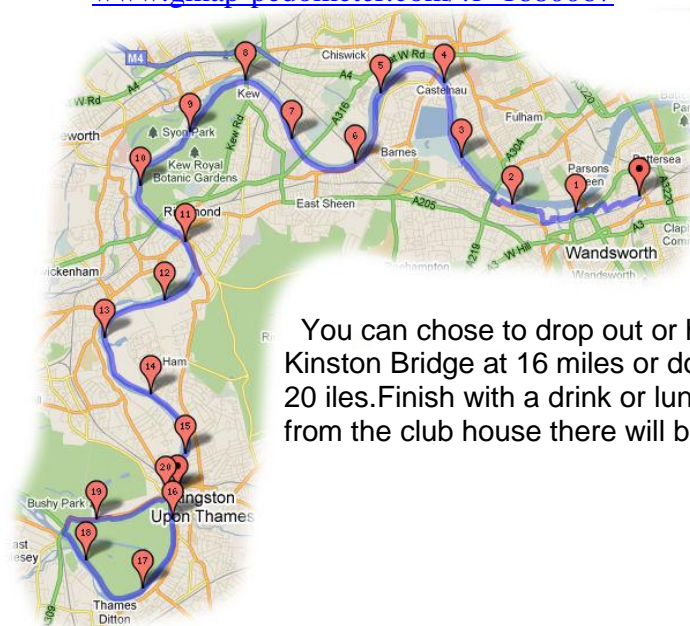
Sun 20th March Botley Hill 18th

www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=2627833

A long out and back run from the clubhouse run out as far as you can from the club house along Limpfield Road to Botley Hill – maximum distance 18 miles.

Sun 27th March The Kingston 11,16,or 20

www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=1680067



Final run of the series along the Thames Path from Clapham junction to Kingston. Off road on reasonable surfaces. Set off from Clapham Junction to Putney bridge then follow the Thames path all the way to Kingston Bridge.

You can chose to drop out or hitch a lift at Richmond at 11 miles finish at Kinston Bridge at 16 miles or do a final loop round Hampton court to bring it up to 20 iles. Finish with a drink or lunch in Kingston. As this start and finishes away from the club house there will be a support car to carry your change of clothes.

Striders Events Over Christmas 2010 and New Year 2011

Normal club runs and speed sessions until

Weds. 22nd Dec. - normal club run (1930)

Thurs. 23rd Dec. NO sprint session at Croydon Arena nor Sandilands & NO swimming at Trinity

Fri. 24th Dec. - NO club run

Sun. 26th Dec. - normal Sunday run (0830)

Mon. 27th Dec. - morning run (1000)

Tues. 28th Dec. - morning hill speed session from Sandilands (1000) - **NO session at Croydon Arena**

Weds. 29th Dec. - normal club run (1930)

Thurs. 30th Dec. NO sprint session at Croydon Arena nor Sandilands & NO swimming at Trinity

Fri. 31st December - evening social run (1900)

Sat. 1st Jan. - parkruns

Sun. 2nd Jan. - normal Sunday run (0830) or option of longer run out to White Bear

Mon. 3rd Jan. [Addington 4](#) (1100)

Tues. 4th Jan - normal evening speed sessions at Croydon Arena and Sandilands

and normal club runs from then onwards

My 2010 Running Highlights - Mick Turner

Looking back on the year I can count the road races I've done on one hand. I've had a couple of periods out, unable to run due to niggling calf issues. I've tried various strategies to get back to full fitness - one that actually worked. Oh and the sexy long socks and tights have helped too!

Jan 3rd - Joined Chris and Richard at the excellent Tadworth 10. Three hardy Striders among the very few vest-only runners on the day.

Feb 6th - Richmond Park Surrey League - Memorable for all the wrong reasons. We weren't very good.

May 24th - The Upton-Fraser 100m battle at the Arena. Donna Fraser false-starting.

May 29th - Dressing up at the parkrun Run Free event. Phil Mazur recently referred to me as a Camp Commandant - I think he was right that day.

Jun 6th - Beckenham 10K. First race for ages. Lots of Striders. Spent the most of the rest of June/July watching the World Cup and doing v little running.

Oct 9th - Lloyd Park Surrey League XC. The target of my latest attempt to get race-fit. Deliberate lack of speed & hill training told. Dropping out of this race was a big wake-up call to do more.

I decided to run 4 or 5 times a week. Recovery run, one speed session, one longer run, Wednesday club run and even tried Chris's lactate threshold session on Thursdays.



Nov 13th - Feeling stronger, the next Surrey League at Wimbledon Common went better



Nov 21st – Hard work rewarded with a PB at the wind-free Brighton 10K in November

As December winds down, so have I. I've made the mistake, in the past, of running too hard, too often and getting run down, especially during Christmas party season. So my advice for 2011 - keep working hard and also try something different. You'll be surprised at the outcome.

Christmas is Coming, The Ref is Getting Fat (before Mazur and Gannon chirp in!!) By Steve Tyler

Cometh the New Year, cometh the Snickers season (or for older members, Marathon).

There will be a variety of vernal events entered by members probably starting in earnest in April with Brighton on the 10th and London a week later followed by the evening jolly down the Builders. Not forgetting Auld Reekie at the end of May with its full, half and relay all on the same day.

Experienced members will have their own regimes on how they build up the mileage for their day but for the uninitiated, it can appear a mountain to climb when reality hits home after the initial euphoria of gaining entry to the big one! Hopefully all will already have some mileage in the legs but you will need to keep a watchful eye on the running magazines event pages such as Runners World UK and also the club site all of which are there to help you.

Speak to ten different club members and you will be given ten sets of different advice i.e. what works for that individual. But all with a general theme so listen, inwardly digest and find out what works for you. There will be something for everyone from everyone.

Hitherto, we have had a succession of Robin's rambles (aka Jameson's jaunts) from various venues heading back to the clubhouse but each helping increase your stamina and therefore chances on the big day. These include the early January London Bridge to Greenwich following the Thames Path in both directions before breakfast at Hayes Galleria. Maybe the Wandle Waddle and then there is the Merstham Meander from the railway station over The Downs to Sandilands plus a myriad of others.

An alternative source is the aforementioned running magazines where you could start off with ten milers in January, half marathons on February, peaking with twenties in March before tapering off before the full distance. A gradual build up, letting your legs, heart and lungs adjust slowly as temperatures hopefully rise towards spring time.

For example (in this general area):

January 10 milers – Tadworth, Dartford, Canterbury (possibly also the Tanners 20 / 30 walks)

February halves – Watford, Wokingham, Brighton, Tunbridge Wells (plus Bramley 20!)

March – Eastbourne half, Leith Hill half, Spitfire 20, Hastings half, Cranleigh 15/21, Kingston 16

April – Croydon half, Thames Towpath 10

Also see Robin's schedule of distance runs on a separate page – the list was received after this had been penned on to and by the PC.

Psychologically, it is much easier to train with others so take advantage of the runs organised by the club especially midweek. Any runner can cheat a 10k or a ten miler by not training and just going out and completing the distance. Likewise, to an extent, the half marathon but try to do that to the full distance and I will guarantee that it will come back and bite you on the bum.

No foundation training leads to no completion (possible injury) and no finisher's medal to hang in the loo for all to see!

And a final thought for you all to mull over and put you off your Christmas dinner, as one cheeky sod asked “When I’ve run seventeen London’s, does it mean that I will end up with a body like yours?”

STRIDERS SUPPORT WORLD RECORD SETTING RUNNER

By Katherine Selby

You may have run a marathon. Or two, or more... But could you contemplate running seven marathons in seven days on seven continents? Sir Ranulph Fiennes did his 7x7x7 in 2005. But until November 5, 2010 no woman had ever achieved this feat.

Striders of Croydon runners Lisa Jackson and Katherine Selby share the privilege of knowing Marie-Louise and were there to witness history being made as she completed her 7x7x7. After an introduction by Lisa, Katherine turned her PR skills to help Marie-Louise gain sponsorship and publicity for her feat. She was so inspired by Marie-Louise, that Katherine then trained up to run the last half marathon with her and used the Croydon 10K as a benchmark run as she returned to form following a 9-month break due to injury. Katherine says was an honour to work and run alongside Marie-Louise and hopes her story will inspire you too...

Inspired by Fiennes

When Marie-Louise heard Sir Ranulph Fiennes speak about his 7x7x7 in 2005 and said that something just clicked in her and she knew this was what she wanted to do. She realised it would be the ultimate test physically and mentally but from that day it was her dream to achieve.

Running base

Marie-Louise, 36, was already a runner, having taken up the sport at university to escape the stress of studying. “I find running relaxing: I get into a zone – almost like meditating – where I can just run and run,” she explains. While running for nearly 20 years was a sound base, building up to the 7x7x7 was a daunting task.

The run up

Marie-Louise had a seven month training plan devised by her personal trainer Juan Pablo Garcia Lopez at Dolphin Square gym in London. He developed a really straightforward plan of

running and gym work to enable Marie-Louise to build her stamina for long distance running while also making her very strong in order to withstand the physical challenge.

While running through Canary Wharf, I literally – and metaphorically – caught up with him and we chatted about his ‘star’ client. He told me Marie-Louise was the most focused, determined person he had ever trained, including a number of professional athletes. She was absolutely consistent, never missed a day of training and kept totally to the programme. He had no doubt she would complete the 7x7x7.

Marie-Louise ran around 100K each week in five sessions that alternated long, slow runs with shorter, fast runs and speed training intervals. For core strength and muscle tone, she did three weight sessions each week. Her plan peaked and tapered twice before the third ‘peak’ of the 7x7x7.

Running clubs rise to the challenge

Marie-Louise planned the entire 7x7x7 herself and found this more taxing than the physical training at times! She had to establish the best route and time of year to attempt the challenge, find the marathon routes on each continent and book flights and transfers. On top of this, Marie-Louise had to ensure all the paperwork was in place to qualify for the Guinness Book of World Records which requires witnesses and photographic proof of her achievement.

Marie-Louise decided to touch base with running clubs in each country hoping they would offer some local guidance and advice. In fact, the response from runners around the world was astounding with people offering to not only plan her marathon route but also to run alongside her. Clearly, it takes a runner to know a runner – and everyone immediately ‘got’ what Marie-Louise was trying to achieve and were only too pleased to support her.

Nutrition

At the height of her training, Marie-Louise consumed between 2,500 and 3,200 calories per day. She enjoyed a carbohydrate-based breakfast – usually porridge which was her pre-run meal of choice. She ate protein at lunch and dinner including fish, lean meat, poultry, eggs, pulses and low fat cheese and enjoyed unlimited vegetables. She had two servings of fruit per day, the equivalent of two tablespoons of nuts and seeds and cooked with extra virgin olive oil and

flaxseed oil. She avoided coffee and alcohol and had a protein shake each day to supplement her diet.

During the 7x7x7, Marie-Louise found it hard to keep up her top quality diet (could you run a marathon on an airline meal?) But the hard work and preparation of the previous seven months stood her in good stead. I witnessed her running fuel of Jelly Babies, bananas, drank flat coke and water. Possibly not quite what her nutritionist had in mind but, clearly, it worked!

From the Falklands to London

Marie-Louise left the UK at 5am on October 28 and flew from RAF Brize Norton to The Falklands where she ran her first marathon on October 30. She then transferred to Santiago, Chile before heading to LA, Sydney, Singapore, Cairo and finally back to London on November 5. She crossed time zones and in doing so ran two marathons on November 3, but none on November 2!

In total, she ran 295.365km in 35.5 hours in diverse climates from the chill of The Falklands to the heat of Chile to (predictably) the rain in London. She took between 4.5 and 5.5 hours to complete each marathon and ran official routes in The Falklands, LA and London, a specially designed route in Santiago and 10K loops in Sydney, Singapore and Cairo, the last two of which were night runs.

Running for Adam

Marie-Louise ran in aid of a charity set up in memory of 13-year-old Adam Rogers who died of a brain tumour. She aims to raise £10,000 for the Adam Rogers Trust (www.adamrogerstrust.org.uk) that helps fund care for children with cancer and assistance for adults with learning difficulties. She hasn't quite yet made her target so if any of you could manage a small donation, that would be amazing. Adam's story is incredibly moving and having met his parents and brothers at the end of the seventh, London Marathon I can truly vouch for their integrity and the importance of their charity.

'Failure is not an option'

When I first spoke to Marie-Louise back in May, she said ‘failure is not an option’ – I came to realise she is a woman of her word! Having had the pleasure of witnessing her run-up to the 7x7x7 and eventual success, I have to say that I’m not sure every runner could do what she did. She has inspired me to step up to a half marathon – having dropped my pace and upped my distance to run the 13 miles alongside her. And running a marathon myself doesn’t seem such a pipe dream now either.

Marie-Louise told me she had learned two key things from her 7x7x7 experience. “First, if you focus all your energy on something you can achieve it,” she said. “Second, there are some amazing people in this world.” She is, without doubt, one of them.



Find out more at www.7x7x7.co.uk

Inspirational Running Quotes from Unlikely Sources: No 2

“Get out there and run or there’ll be no chips for tea” – Roy Blewett (*Your Editor’s Husband*)

Poetry Corner - Selected Verse of John McGilvray

RUNNING (as a Metaphor)

When the course up ahead is a harsh one
With obstacles to clear all the way,
And the fires of Spring have dulled to the
 embers of Fall
And the darkness of hair turned to grey.
When the wind in your face is insistent
And your breath is stolen away,
Though the daring of youth slows to the
 patience of age,
The runner in you won't dismay,
For running can be a metaphor,
For Life with it's drawbacks and pain,
But the insight gained,
By the experienced runner,
Can prepare you for any terrain.

HOW TO ACHIEVE A PEE-BEE

A dashing you Strider named Lee *
Stopped in the woods for a pee
An Alsatian called Gnasher
Thought "I spy a flasher"
And threatened his manhood, you see!

He chased him o'er highways and parks
Cross country and old country tracks
Now Gnasher's no quitter,
Our Lee is much fitter,
Ain't stamina this Strider lacks!

**Lee Morgan*

FIFTEEN REASONS NOT TO RUN

Shoes too tight,
Shoes too slack,
Shooting pain in lower back
Alarm clock did not quite go off,
I have this rather ticklish cough.
My headband's slipped,
My shorts have shrunk,
My spouse has gone and done a bunk.
The pavement's wet,
My throat is dry,
I do believe I've swallowed a fly.
It's far too hot,
It's far too cold,
Today I just feel rather old.
This caper does not look much fun,
----fifteen reasons not to run----

THE ROAD

The twilight road
 was dull and grey
not yet acquainted
 with race day.
The dawning road
 had shed the night
as it raced towards
 the morning light.
The midday road
 shimmered heat
And the patter of
 impatient feet.
The ribboned road
 of multi hue
a kaleidoscopic
 motley crew.
The evening road
 bereft once more
till another race
 can signal encore.

25 YEARS AGO: LOCAL ATHLETICS IN WINTER 1985/86

The Surrey Women's Cross-Country Championships were held at Frimley on 14 December. The individual winner was Sue March of Woking. The leading local runner was Anne Roden of South London Harriers, who placed third. Woking also won the team event, with Croydon Harriers second and Herne Hill third. Two of Croydon's scoring team are still competing locally, but both have subsequently changed clubs: Juliet Waters (14th) is now with Stragglers (and runs under her married name of Cleghorn), while Heather Fenton (21st) is now with Surrey Walking Club. Croydon's Karen Sutton won the under-15 race. Croydon's future international sprinter Donna Fraser, running well above her usual distance, placed sixth in the under-13 race.

The men's Surrey Cross-Country Championships were also held at Frimley, but on 4 January. The individual winner was Richard Partridge of Aldershot. Bob Treadwell (Surrey Beagles) was second with former international Bernie Ford (Aldershot) third. Woking completed a 'mixed double' by winning the team event, with Aldershot second and South London Harriers third.

The Croydon Advertiser held its annual cross-country races in Lloyd Park on 18 January. The senior boys' race was won by Andrew Bate of Stanley Tech and Herne Hill Harriers. The junior boys' race was won by Liam Bulson of Dulwich, with Mark Purser (Edenham) a close second. Mark no longer competes at cross-country, although his wife Sam now runs for Striders.

The South of the Thames Senior Cross-Country Championship was held at Lloyd Park on 25 January. The individual winner was Mel Page of Woking. South London Harriers won the team event, led by Barry Attwell (third) and Andy Evans (tenth).

The Southern Women's Cross-Country Championships were held in very cold conditions at Peterborough on 1 February. The individual winner was South African Zola Budd, running for Aldershot. Bracknell won the team event. The under-17 race was won by Philippa Mason (Guildford). In third place, 48 seconds behind, was future Olympic champion Kelly Holmes of Tonbridge. The Southern Men's Cross-Country Championships were held at Brighton on 8 February, with snow falling during the race. The individual winner was Bob Treadwell of Surrey Beagles, while Blackheath won the team event.

The final match of the Surrey Cross-Country League Division One was held at Coulsdon on 15 February. Aldershot had won the league championship for an astonishing fourteen successive years, but Herne Hill went into the final match with a commanding lead of 144 points. Aldershot won the match by 42 points, but Herne Hill had still done enough to win the league for the first time, with a total of 920 points. South London Harriers placed third (1398), while Woking (1400) and Belgrave (1613) also retained their Division One status. Croydon Harriers (1732) and Ranelagh (1855) were relegated to Division Two. Thames Hare & Hounds won the Division Two championship. The league had decided to expand Division One to eight teams for 1985/86: the other promotion places went to Hercules-Wimbledon and Omega (an elite club based in the Walton area: they no longer exist). Boxhill Racers, in their first year in the league, dominated Division Three, with Camberley second and Waverley third.

The final match of the Surrey Womens Cross-Country League was held two weeks later, at a snow-covered Brockwell Park. Woking had won the first three matches, but Wimbledon Windmilers, in their first year in the league, won the final match. Woking still won the league title

with 51 points. Thames Hare & Hounds were second (49), Herne Hill third (41), Windmillers fourth (37), Croydon Harriers fifth (35) and South London Harriers sixth (28).

February 1986 saw the amalgamation of Mitcham AC with Sutton & Cheam Harriers. Both clubs had been based at Carshalton Arena for many years. The merged club was initially called Mitcham & Sutton AC; in 1992 it changed its name again, to Sutton & District AC.

The National Cross-Country Championships were held on a snow-covered course at Newcastle on 1 March. The individual winner was Tim Hutchings of Crawley. Dave Clarke (Hercules-Wimbledon) was second and Eamonn Martin (Basildon) third.

20 YEARS AGO: LOCAL ATHLETICS IN WINTER / SPRING 1990/1991

The Surrey Cross-Country Championships were held at Coulsdon on 8 December, with snow falling during the races. The men's race was won by Clive Hensby of Woking, while Boxhill won the team event. The women's race was won by Ceri Pritchard of Herne Hill, who also won the team event. The under-17 race was won by Croydon's talented 15-year-old Jeina Mitchell.

The annual Tadworth 10-mile road race took place on 30 December. The race was won by former London marathon winner Mike Gratton of Invicta, in 50 minutes 06 seconds. Bob Treadwell of Redhill & Surrey Beagles was second in 51 minutes 11. Croydon Harriers won the team event. Their team comprised Alan Dolton (16th, 55.06); Alastair da Costa (17th, 55.07) and Julian Dillow (18th, 55.15). For Striders, Gary Wales ran a personal best 59 minutes 01, lifting him to fifth place in the club's all-time rankings (he now places 14th).

At the Canterbury 10-mile road race on 30 January, Striders' Mike Jaras ran 59 minutes 30 with club colleague Mark Thornton finishing just three seconds behind him. Linda Daniel also ran well to set a lifetime best of 71 minutes 05, lifting her to fourth in the club's all-time women's rankings. This raised the number of Striders who had broken the hour on a measured ten-mile course to ten. Twenty years later, that number has risen to 22, while Linda's run still places her eighth in our women's rankings (and she is still competing for us).

1991 saw the Surrey Cross-Country League complete its 29th season. Boxhill Racers gained a convincing win in the third Division One match of the season, at Dorking on 19 January. Heavy snow caused the cancellation of the final Division One match, scheduled to be held at Coulsdon on 9 February. The race was not re-arranged, and Boxhill Racers retained the Division One championships with Aldershot second and Herne Hill third. South London Harriers placed seventh of the nine clubs, ahead of Hercules Wimbledon and Mitcham. The League AGM subsequently agreed that Division One should be expanded to ten clubs for 1991/92, so that only Mitcham were relegated.

The final Division Two match at Tilford went ahead, although the snow prevented many runners from the London area from reaching the venue. Woking won Division Two with Metropolitan Police second. The final Division Three match, scheduled for Hindhead, was cancelled. Hounslow convincingly won the division, while Holland Sports placed second and Striders had their best season so far, finishing third. With three clubs being promoted to Division Two, this meant that Striders could celebrate promotion for the first time.

The National Womens Cross-Country Championships took place at Birkenhead on 16 February. The under-17 race saw a close race between Paula Radcliffe of Bedford and Jeina Mitchell of Croydon Harriers. Paula won with Jeina taking second place.

The Surrey Womens Cross-Country League completed its 12th season with a match at Coulsdon on 24 February, with all 24 clubs competing in the same division for the final time. Thames Hare & Hounds won the league with Mole Valley second, Ranelagh third and South London Harriers fourth. Striders finished 14th and were relegated to the newly-formed Division Two, as were local rivals Croydon Harriers who finished 12th.

At the Hastings Half-Marathon on 10 March, John McGilvray produced an excellent run to set a Striders over-45 record of 1 hour 19 minutes 28 seconds. In the Guernsey Half-Marathon at Easter, Nigel Davidson ran a lifetime best of 1 hour 15 minutes 30 seconds, lifting him to second place in Striders' all-time rankings. Twenty years later, this time still puts Nigel in fourth place in the rankings.

The Surrey Championships were held at Croydon Arena on 18 and 19 May. Croydon Harriers' talented 18-year-old Donna Fraser won the women's 400 metres with a championship best of 54.4 seconds. Among Croydon's other winners were Mark Purser in the under-20 200 metres (22.9) and future Olympic bronze medallist Natasha Danvers in the under-15 75 metre hurdles (12.5).

10 YEARS AGO: LOCAL ATHLETICS IN WINTER 2001

The Surrey Cross-Country Championships were held at Lloyd Park on 6 January. The women's race was won by Kate Jenrick of Highgate, while South London Harriers won the team event. Despite their good league performances, our women were unable to field a complete team: both of our two leading runners were unavailable as Jane Lansdown was spending the weekend in Wales while Diane Ballard was returning from a holiday in Florida. For the second successive year the men's race was won by Dave Taylor of Herne Hill. South London Harriers completed a double by winning the team event with Herne Hill second. Striders placed seventh, led by Tony Sheppard who ran well to place 44th. Simon Alexander, back home from university, made a rare appearance to place 48th. Among the runners in the under-15 race was Croydon Harriers' future Olympic track runner Martyn Rooney, who finished 13th.

Striders' men and women competed in the third round of the Surrey Cross-Country League on 13 January. Our women, who were top of the Division Two table with two matches left, were at Richmond Park. Unfortunately our best runner, Jane Lansdown, had gone down with a heavy cold during the week. She turned up at the venue, but was not well enough to run. In her absence Diane Ballard rose to the occasion with her best run so far, placing sixth, while Susan Bowen also ran very well to place 19th. Our other scorers were Kate Potter, Elene Kayum and Linda Daniel. The team placed fourth in the match, but inevitably our promotion rivals gained ground on us. The overall tables showed that Dorking had moved into the lead with 43 points. We had 42, while Stragglers had 41 and Reigate Priory had 40. Thus we faced a tense final match at Lloyd Park on 17 February.

Meanwhile our men were competing in Division Three at Epsom Downs. We placed fourth in the match and climbed to fifth in the league table. Tony Sheppard again led us home in 10th place,

covering the five-mile course in 32 minutes 34. He was followed by Nigel Davidson (20th, 34.05); Eric Parker (22nd, 34.18), and Neil Furze (23rd, 34.33).

The Surrey Cross-Country League completed its 39th season with matches on 3 February. In Division One, Thames Hare & Hounds gained a clear win with Herne Hill taking second, Belgrave third and South London Harriers fourth. Croydon Harriers and Hounslow were relegated, while Boxhill Racers won Division Two with Reigate second. Meanwhile Striders were competing in Division Three, on our home course in Lloyd Park. We did well to place second in the match and climbed to fourth in the final league table. Epsom and Kingston, who had both been relegated the previous year, gained promotion back to Division Two. Our team was again led by Tony Sheppard who ran well to place seventh. Eric Parker was next home in 15th. Our other scorers were Nigel Davidson (20th), Chris Morton (25th), John Kirby (27th), Gerry Crispie (33rd), John McGilvray (43rd), Neil Furze (45th), Colin Cotton (46th) and Alan Dolton (53rd).

The Surrey Womens Cross-Country League completed its 22nd season with a match at Lloyd Park on 17 February. South London Harriers won Division One with Herne Hill second and Thames Hare & Hounds third. However Striders were concerned with the battle for promotion from Division Two, where we were just one point behind Dorking and one point ahead of Stragglers. Before the race there had been some anxiety about Kate Potter (who had been suffering from a chest cold) and Susan Bowen (who hadn't been seen at training for a while). However team manager Michele Lawrence made the necessary phone calls, and we were able to field our strongest team, cheered on by several male supporters. Jane Lansdown ran well to take second place, behind Janet Ray of Dorking. Diane Ballard also ran very well and with half a



mile to go was in fourth place. She then lost one of her shoes in some deep mud, but battled on to finish sixth. There was then an anxious wait for our supporters, as our rivals Stragglers placed three runners in the first 15. However their fourth runner was closely followed by Susan Bowen in 23rd, who in turn was closely followed by Elene Kayum (24th) and Kate Potter (25th). We were the first team to close in our five scoring runners. Every place proved to be crucial, for the results showed that Dorking had won the match with 78 points while we had 80 and Stragglers had 81. In the overall table Dorking had 56 points while we had 54 and Stragglers had 52. This was the first time that Striders' women had gained promotion since the league was originally split into two divisions in 1991.

FIVE YEARS AGO: LOCAL ATHLETICS IN WINTER 2005

The Surrey Cross-Championships were held at Lloyd Park on 8 January. Striders' best performance came from Sophie Shaw in the under-13 girls' race. She ran strongly to place 10th of the 45 finishers. In the senior women's race Serena Stracey ran well to place 29th of the 75 finishers, moving through the field after a cautious start and covering the five-mile course in 37 minutes 57. Club colleague Faye Stammers was 44th (40.30) with Kerry Backshell 48th (41.21).

Striders' senior men were without several of our leading runners, and had to settle for 12th place. Their best performance came from John Foster who placed 63rd, covering the seven and a half mile course in 50 minutes 14 seconds. He was closely followed by Iain Harrison who also ran well for 67th (50.29).



The penultimate Surrey Womens Cross-Country League Division Two match of the season took place at Petersham on 15 January. Striders' women did well to place third in the match and retain third place in the league table. The team was led by Serena Stracey, who produced an excellent run to finish fifth, covering the 5800 metre course in 23 minutes 46 seconds. Both Clare McFadzean and Faye Stammers also ran well to produce their best performances for the club, with Clare finishing 13th in 25.30, just one place and two seconds ahead of Faye. Patricia Carr ran steadily for 41st place (29.23) and Amalia Da Silva Lima completed the scoring team in 46th (29.46).

Meanwhile Striders' men were hosting a Surrey Cross-Country League Division Three match at Lloyd Park. Our team was weakened by some late withdrawals, and finished in a disappointing fifth place. Our best performance came from Justin Macenhill, who was short of training following treatment for a hip injury, but who moved steadily through the field to finish in ninth place, covering the muddy five-mile course in 31 minutes 20 seconds. John Foster confirmed his status as our leading veteran with another good run to place 15th in 32 minutes 40, just one place and four seconds ahead of the improving Iain Harrison. Team manager Chris Morton was 31st (34.31) with Damian Macenhill 33rd (34.42).

The Surrey Women's Cross-Country League completed its 26th season with a match at Ewell on 12 February. Striders produced an excellent team performance to finish second in the match, and gain promotion to Division One for only the second time in the club's history. Wimbledon Windmilers won the match with 39 points, but Striders' total of 103 placed us ahead of Walton (111) and Holland Sports (129), and well clear of promotion rivals Sutton Runners. Striders' women were led home by Serena Stracey who produced another good run to place fifth, covering the muddy six-kilometre course in 27 minutes 15 seconds. She was well supported by Clare McFadzean, who continued her improvement to place 11th (29.19), and Faye Stammers who was not far behind in 14th (30.02). Patricia Carr ran steadily to place 33rd (33.44), and Pat Edwards completed the scoring team in 40th (34.38).

On the same day Striders' men produced their best performance of the season to win the final Surrey League Cross-Country Division Three match of the season at Wimbledon Common, 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 the consistent Justin Macenhill, who placed tenth of the 122 finishers, covering the five-mile course in 30 minutes 29 seconds. Scott Antony, in only his second race for the club, produced an excellent run to place 13th (31.03), while Iain Harrison continued his improvement to place 15th (31.40). Our team packed very well with the next six scorers finishing within less than 30 seconds. Damian Macenhill was next home for the club in 25th (33.03), closely followed by John Foster (26th in 33.13) and Andy Allison (27th in 33.14). Club stalwart Nigel Davidson was 31st (33.25) while Toby Watson made an excellent debut to finish 33rd (33.29), just one place and one second ahead of team manager Chris Morton. Paul Finch completed the scoring team in 44th place (34.23).

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DISCOUNTED RATES FOR STRIDERS OF CROYDON

Dates for Your Diary

Monday 3rd January – Addington 4 Meet at the corner of Upper Shirley Road & Shirley Church Road for an 11am start.

Saturday 15 January – Surrey League XC
Men at Epsom Downs
Women at Ham

Sunday 16th January – The Greenwich Run, official start of Marathon Training Season

And Finally....

The Striders Caption Competition

Put a caption to this picture of Peter Shew at the Christmas Party for a chance to win a, as yet unidentified, PRIZE!



**A Merry Christmas To All Striders and
Happy Running in 2011!**