

Striders of Croydon

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

21 September 2011

1. Apologies for Absence

Robin Jamieson

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Chairman's Report

In the Chairman's absence the report was presented by the Club Secretary.

It has been another good year for Striders of Croydon. Membership has crept up by 4 since last year and is now 232 – 95 Women and 137 men with 202 First Claim and includes 40 new members. Welcome to all our new members this year and I hope we have been able to offer you all a reasonable variety of runs and other activities to be able to achieve your goals, whether to achieve a PB, finish a marathon or just keep running for an hour.

With 200 plus club members, who fortunately don't all turn up on Wednesday night to run, it is difficult to find out what your preferences and expectations are so as you know we launched our first survey at the beginning of the month. At the time of writing about a third of you have completed it. Mick Turner will be summarising your feedback at the meeting.

Chris Morton will give more details of the club's achievements this year in his report but well done to everyone who has represented Striders in whatever event and well done to everyone who has achieved a personal best over the year. Also a big thank you to everyone who has helped over the year in all the events we are now involved in.

As always a special thanks to all the members of the Committee. Thanks to Chris Morton who does most of the work, manages the website, keeps all the club records, organises all the team events, leads lots of the runs and the Tuesday night speed training. Thanks to Mick Turner for keeping track of all our members and making sure you pay your subs. Also thanks to Mick for organising the Switchback coming up next week and also being our main link with Parkrun. Thanks to Steph Upton who continues to ensure that you are all well kitted out, John Ralf for leading most of the Friday runs, managing the ladies XC team and doing his best to encourage you all to do the summer track and field events, John Humphries for looking after the club's accounts and paying the bills and Susan Haynes as social secretary and Switchback registrar. Also thanks to other club members who make a major contribution to the club. Thanks to John Gannon our other regular Wednesday leader also thanks to Alan Dolton who leads the track session and to Neil Furze who leads the swimming

sessions on a Thursday evening and very rarely gets a swim himself. Thanks To Hannah Musk who has just organised the first Striders Cruise I hope you all enjoy it. Thanks to all the others of you who have led runs over the year.

It may not seem like it at times but we do plan the routes for Wednesday runs so that the different pace groups go in roughly the same direction and you can drop back or speed up if you wish. John and Chris take it in turns to plan the routes to try and provide a bit of variety from week to week. Especially during the winter months you can always tell whose route it is. Chris takes us up the hills, John takes us to the parts of Shirley and Croydon you don't normally get to.

And finally thanks to the team who helped me launch our first Half Marathon earlier this year. Kath Selby, John Gannon, Hannah Musk, Michelle Meech, Susan Haynes and John Humphries and everyone who helped on the day.

As we also do quite a bit of swimming and cycling we affiliated to the British Triathlon Association this year as it gives additional insurance and reduced cost for anyone entering a tri. We also launched our first ever Trinity Triathlon Trial which went very well despite the rain, road works and a crashed car. There are limited opportunities for us to organise this type of event but hopefully this will now become an annual occasion perhaps with an additional duathlon earlier in the year. Many of us do enter the occasional triathlon or duathlon and it would be good if someone could act as co-ordinator of this group and form a Tri section as with some other clubs. Any volunteers?

The Croydon Half Marathon – the clubs first major road race went well in April again thank you to everyone who contributed. In the end we were able to donate £1600 each to Croydon Harriers, The Garwood Foundation and the Sandilands Club house. The balance shown in the accounts will go towards another marquee and more signage for next year so that we are not so dependent on Croydon Harriers for supplies.

The ball has already started rolling for next year's event. The route has been changed so that we can start on Sandilands and finish on the cricket pitch (or close to it anyway). We have a new sponsor in the Streets Ahead estate agent who will cover most of costs so it is now the Streets Ahead Croydon Half. As Streets Ahead support Nightwatch the charity for the homeless in Croydon they will be our lead charity. This seems appropriate as we spend our time wandering the streets of Croydon in the dark on Wednesday and Friday nights. Online entry opened on 1st September and at the time of writing we have a whole 2 entries. As before we will be asking for lots of volunteers but we also want as many of you as possible to run. So as a general principle those who ran last year will be expected to help this year and those who helped last year will get priority for a place. But please don't enter yet - we will start the call for helpers later this year and there will be a block of places reserved for Striders.

The Sandilands club house continues to run at a loss. Last year we lost the rent from the nursery, this year we have had to say goodbye to the Selsdon Junior Football club and to the Lacrosse team. Over the last few years for some reason the grounds have become much more water logged and these two teams in particular were causing a lot of damage to the grass. So this year there has been major expenditure on re-seeding. Also the club failed its electrical certification – turns out the new block is more of a risk than the old block! So there has been significant expenditure on new fuse boxes and there will be more to come on replacing things like the extractor fans in the showers at some point. Our rent to Sandilands is small compared with Cricket, Hockey and Tennis (as we don't use the grounds except to run across) but we are I think the largest club in membership terms so our rent only works out at £6 a head.

So as well as increasing our rent by more than inflation and contributing a share of the proceeds of the CHM we will make additional contributions to Sandilands if required.

And finally my apologies for my absence at this year's AGM I will be in hospital for repairs. I hope to be back running with you in a couple of months.

5. Secretary's Report

The past twelve months have seen the club develop two new events : the highly successful Croydon Half Marathon and the Striders Trinity Triathlon Trial. The former was a great example of the Striders membership offering time and help to organise a large and complex event. The latter was a test to see whether we could do something – for both organisers and competitors - that we had never tried before. Both events also saw us forge stronger links with local running clubs – Croydon Harriers for the CHM and Blackheath & Bromley Harriers for the Tri.. Many thanks to all those who helped make these events such successes.

Individually Striders had many successes over the past season. Most notable was Bill Makuwa's half marathon time of 1.15.08 at Hastings. Not only was this the second fastest ever Half by a Strider but he also finished the race in 18th place in a field of over three thousand. A few weeks before that he finished 10th at the Silverstone Half in a field of over 6000 finishers. While Helen Furze topped a great season by finishing as the first FV40 in the Surrey county championship 10 mile race at Dorking and she also won the Esher 10K.

Other Striders victors were Lee Flanagan at the Hillcrest 10K and Steph Upton at the Valentine's Challenge 10 miler. Steph was also 2nd woman at the Bookham 10K. We had a double one-two at the Harriers Invitational cross country race – with Steve Starvis and Lee claiming the first two spots and Josephine Thompson and Alice Ewen finishing as first two women.

Cara Kayum had a great season, finishing second at the Kenley Airfield 10K and climbing to fifth in our all-time rankings with a 10K time of 41.13 at Richmond. At the same distance Helen ran 40.32 at Epsom which gave her a new club FV45 record. She also smashed the club's FV45 10 mile record by over 8 minutes with a time of 67.34 at Maidenhead.

Other notable achievements were : Richard Lee-Smith's runners-up spots at both the Titsey Trail and the Spitfire 10; Suzy Yates' second place at the Dunsfold 20; John Foster's top MV50 at the Sri Chinmoy 10-miler in 63.03; Steve Starvis finishing third at the Beckenham 10k and 4th in the Croydon Half; Lee Flanagan finishing 3rd in the Switchback; Chris Morton as first vet in the Leith Hill Half ; the winning team of Paul Stanford (5th), Simon Ambrosi (7th) and Chris (8th) at the Green Chain Marathon.

However the best intra-club competition happened in the most unexpected area. On the 10th April Margaret Faherty claimed a new FV65 marathon record of 4.54.44 at Brighton but this record only lasted a week as Sue Atkinson then ran a brilliant 4.50.31 at London.

Elsewhere Lesley Bourke improved her own FV50 club records with 48.23 at the Beckenham 10K and 1.47.10 at the Tunbridge Wells Half.

We only had one sub-3 hour marathon runner this season : Lee Wadsworth at Abingdon, though Krzysztof Klidzia missed out by a few seconds at the Moray Marathon. While Cara (3.28.06) and Suzy (3.29.15) – both at London – were our two sub 3.30 women marathoners.

Other Striders who had great seasons, regularly claiming new PBs, included Karen Connor, Martin Gourlay, Phil Handley, Hannah Musk and Stuart Hills.

Mark Bayliss ran, walked and survived through the 250K Marathon des Sables. While Kate Custis went further than any female Strider before when she completed the three-day 97.5 mile South Downs Ultra and Lisa Jackson and Graham Williams again competed in the Comrades in South Africa.

In track and field our Vets teams, ably managed by Dave Batten, again had good seasons with our women finishing 4th and our men 5th. Quite a few age group records were claimed by : Paul Cripps, Serena Stracey, Sandra Francis, Kim Ford, Kevin Burnett and Margaret Faherty.

Our Rosenheim League team again suffered from lack of numbers. Lee Flanagan sometimes stood in as team captain whilst also competing in six or seven events on the night.

In cross country our men's team finished a creditable fifth in division 2. Steve Starvis, Lee Flanagan, Justin Macenhill and Duncan Lancashire had excellent seasons. Unfortunately each season the opposition improves while our team weakens – next season we will be without Duncan.

Our women's team continued their yo-yoing existence between the two divisions, this time being relegated from division 1. However Helen had a great season – regularly finishing in the top 5 vets in a quality division.

Many of our members also took part in the weekly parkruns and we produced regular winners especially at the Lloyd Park event.

However we are increasingly struggling to get racers out for short distance road and cross country events and I would remind members that there is more to competitive running than just doing a weekly parkrun

Even though we have organised more events than ever in this past season we have also had more helpers than ever. Many, many thanks to all those who have given up their time to help Striders out : without you we couldn't exist in our current format.

Finally, thanks to all those who have led club runs over the past 12 months – especially John Gannon, Robin Jamieson, Mick Turner, John Ralf, Steve Tyler, Victoria Legge, Stuart Hills, Neil Furze, Alan Dolton, Susan Haynes and Steph Upton - you have done a great job

6. Treasurer's Report

The Financial Accounts for 2010/11 are attached to these minutes.

7 Setting of Membership Fees for 2011/12

It was agreed that the Membership fees for 2011/12 would remain the same as those for 2010/11.

First Claim - £25

Family Membership (2 Adults/children) - £45

Family Membership (1 Adult/children) - £35

Second Claim/Student/Freedom Pass Holders - £15

Under 16's - £10

Swimming Only £10

8. Election of the Committee

The Committee were unanimously re-elected by the Membership.

9. Presentation of Awards

Awards were presented as follows:-

Men's Road Ranking	1st - Steve Starvis 2nd - John Foster 3rd - Damian Macenhill
Men's Age Graded Road Ranking	1st - John Foster
Women's Road Ranking	1st - Helen Furze 2nd - Cara Kayum 3rd - Serena Stracey
Women's Age Graded Road Ranking	1st - Margaret Faherty
Women's Cross-Country	1. Helen Furze 2. Steph Upton 3. Alice Ewen
Men's Cross-Country	1. Lee Flanagan 2. Justin Macenhill 3. Duncan Lancashire
Sandilands Cup	1. Lee Flanagan joint 2nd. Mick Turner & Taylor Huggins 3rd : Alice Ewen
Owen Trophy 2009	To Be Determined
First Handicap	1. Elanor Lim
Second Handicap	1. Sonia Dixon
Final Handicap & Overall Winner	1. Corinne Carr 2. Natalie Osher 3. Sandra Francis
Men's Track & Field	1. Kevin Burnett
Women's Track & Field	Joint :. Sandra Francis & Linda Daniel
Club Man of the Year	Mick Turner
Club Woman of the Year	Hannah Musk

10. Items for Discussion

Triathlon Section

As an increasing number of Striders were participating in Triathlons, it was felt that the club might want to develop a Triathlon Section for more specific training. Darren

and Russell agreed to lead this section of the club and will develop a section for the website and some focused tri-training sessions.

Results of the Striders Survey

Mick Turner has undertaken a survey of the club membership and the results were presented to the meeting.

Firstly, thanks to all of you who took time to complete the survey. Tonight we're going to focus on the topics on which received the most feedback – this doesn't mean that individual responses are being ignored

We had 105 responses of which 97 completed it.

Unsurprisingly we discovered we're primarily a road running club – but with nearly of third of respondents having tried a triathlons/duathlons/aquathons in the past year. How did the club rate – on the initial rating question we rated highly (over 85% either good or excellent) for Friendliness, Variety of club runs and Communication - You were however less happy about the website, coaching advice, club kit and socials.

Club sessions

- Of other training sessions you would like us to consider - a few of you suggested more bike rides/cycling.
- 57 of you also said yes to a track and field taster session – so we'll definitely try and make that happen next year

Socials

- 75% said you would like to attend a Christmas social, with Under £30 being the most popular price-point – closely followed by under £40. Traditional Christmas meal was the food choice for 50 or you with Indian and Italian being chosen by over 40. So our Christmas social will most likely be on Dec 12th.
- 50% of respondents would like more socials – with once every couple of months being the mosy popular choice . This is still just 50 people out of a club of over 200.
- Quiz night and BBQ were the most popular choices for socials. We also had some good suggestions from Adventure Days/Go Ape, Theatre nights, Golf days and long walks. Essentially if you have an idea and are prepared to help organise – as Hannah did with the River Boat Cruise – then approach the committee and we'll promote. More 'niche' events obv don't need to attract large numbers to be successful.
- Thanks for the many ideas for encouraging people back to the club bar on a Weds. From free beers to a darts competition. However, the availability of food was unsurprisingly the most popular suggestion, followed by hot drinks. We'll look to beef up the last Weds of the month drinks to include food – plus we're planning to start a series of talks or information sessions on running-related topics – starting with a marathon clinic in October.
- Lastly to mark the club's 30th anniversary next year we're looking at a BBQ coupled with a Olympics/School Sports Day theme.

Striderslist

The vast majority of you are happy with the volume of emails on striderslist and this will remain the primary method that we use to make club announcements. We'll just send out reminders about etiquette when using it. If you have unsubscribed we would recommend you re-subscribe and choose to receive a daily digest – so just one email a day.

As mentioned on striderslist we do also have a FB and now Twitter presence so if you do want to get involved then sign up.

Website

Many of you think the website needs updating/ a redesign. So we'll look into this.

Ease of update for Chris/committee – and potentially members is the key.

A number of you also would like a who's who gallery on the site. This is something we've debated in the committee for a while but understand not everybody will want a named photo publicly available on the web. So if there's a simple way of managing this then we'll look at it again. That or name badges for Wednesday night club runs.

General comments

Over 40 of you commented, a quarter of which were complimentary. Lots of other suggestions from more injury advice to abolishing honorary membership.

BUT The most popular other issues raised were.

- How we introduce new members to the club. This is something we've been aware that we've neglected – so we'll be producing a Welcome PDF for newbies – and also offer them to buddy up with somebody, if they want, in their first few weeks. We need help producing this Welcome pack and to be a 'buddy/mentor' so please contact Mick if you would like to help out on either of these.
- Club runs – Concerns were that the Sunday run discourages slower runners and that the Friday run no longer did what it was set up for – ie a slower social run. Our response to these concerns is that on Fridays there will always be a steadier run. Sunday runs will always start as one group. The club policy is, and will remain for all groups, that run groups always loop and the route is dictated by the pace of the slowest runner in the group. We acknowledge that there is perhaps an issue when we come to the half hour split. Some of you, perhaps thinking of running for another hour, are put off if the hour and a half group consists of speedier runners. We may look at offering two pace groups for the additional hour after the half hour split, but this is obviously dependent on who is running and can lead. It just re-enforces the need to have more run leaders – available to help – for all of our club runs.
- We also had a number of people wanting us to be more competitive and for members to turn out for inter-club competitions. Chris and I would love more of you to – but this, of course, is a personal choice

11. Any Other Business

There was no further business to discuss.