

Striders of Croydon

SEPTEMBER 2022 MAGAZINE

40TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION



**Anna O'Sullivan, our first female finisher in the Banstead mob match on 2 July
(photo by Richard Carter)**

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sunday 18 September – 40th Birthday Celebration – Sandilands

Wednesday 21 September – Striders Annual General Meeting – Sandilands

Sunday 2 October – London Marathon (Striders marshalling)

Saturday 15 October – Surrey Cross-Country League Women's Div 2 – Reigate

Saturday 15 October – Surrey Cross-Country League Men's Div 3 – Reigate

Saturday 29 October – Surrey Masters Cross-Country Championships – Nonsuch Park

Saturday 12 November – Surrey Cross-Country League Women's Div 2 – venue tbc

Saturday 12 November – Surrey Cross-Country League Men's Div 3 – venue tbc

2023

Saturday 7 January – Surrey Cross-Country Championships – Lloyd Park

Saturday 14 January – Surrey Cross-Country League Women's Div 2 – venue tbc

Saturday 14 January – Surrey Cross-Country League Men's Div 3 – venue tbc

Saturday 11 February – Surrey Cross-Country League Women's Div 2 – venue tbc

Saturday 11 February – Surrey Cross-Country League Men's Div 3 – venue tbc

EDITORIAL: SEPTEMBER 2022

Welcome to the September issue of our club magazine. As most Striders may already know, this month marks the 40th anniversary of Striders' formation, and we hope that this issue will help Striders who have joined the club fairly recently to learn more about the club's history.

We begin with an informal quiz about the club's history. The quiz is not primarily intended to test our readers' knowledge, but to inform them of the achievements of the club, and of some of its members, in a less formal way than our usual history articles. Many of the answers to the quiz can be found in subsequent articles in this issue of the magazine, or in the various historical articles which have appeared in the magazine in recent years, but they are also brought together on the penultimate page of the magazine.

We then have an article from one of the club's founder-members, Colin Golding, who was the club's first Treasurer. Colin explains how the club was formed, with the specific purpose of helping runners to prepare for the 1983 London Marathon. Forty years later, we are still helping runners to train for the London Marathon: we hope to have several Striders taking part in the London Marathon on Sunday 2nd October, and several Striders will be helping to marshal at the marathon, as we have done for many years.

Colin's article is followed by another historical article from John Gannon, who joined Striders in 1989 and served as club chairman from 2002 to 2008. It was during John's time as chairman that we began marshalling at the London Marathon.

While many Striders who complete a marathon have no desire to attempt even longer distances, anyone who has read recent issues of this magazine will know that we also have some runners who enjoy competing in ultra-distance races. The June issue of this magazine included an article from Debra Bourne summarising her first 100 'ultras'. This issue includes a follow-up article in which Debra summarises the lessons she has learned in reaching this remarkable milestone.

We also recognise that there are still many Striders who prefer to compete at shorter distances, so Debra also provides an article about the parkrun in Madison (Wisconsin), which she took part in this summer. (Many people of my age will know Madison as the city where Otis Redding died in a plane crash.) We follow Debra's articles with an article about this summer's World Masters Championships and an article about a Finnish parkrun.

We then have our usual 'competitive highlights' article, covering the period from June to August. Our men's team did particularly well in this year's Surrey Road League, where they finished in fifth place out of 38 clubs. This appears to be our best placing in this league since 2003 (when we finished fourth). We conclude the issue with our usual history article, looking back at the club's performances from ten years ago.



40TH ANNIVERSARY QUIZ: CLUB HISTORY QUESTIONS

- 1) What was Striders' official club name from 1982 to 1995?
- 2) Which race did Striders first promote in September 1992, to celebrate the club's tenth anniversary?
- 3) When Striders' members voted to change the club name to 'Croydon Striders' in 1995, which club lodged an objection with the Surrey AA, preventing us from using that name?
- 4) Between 1986 and 2020, how many seasons did Striders' men spend in Division One of the Surrey Cross-Country League?
- 5) Between 1992 and 2020, how many seasons did Striders' women spend in Division One of the Surrey Women's Cross-Country League?
- 6) Which local league, which was originally formed before the Second World War, did Striders win in 2003 and 2017?
- 7) In 1991, which future Strider represented Great Britain at 100 metre hurdles in the World Championships in Tokyo?
- 8) In 1997, which future Strider represented Great Britain in the 4 x 400 metre relay in the World Championships in Athens?
- 9) Which future Strider won the Croydon 10K in October 1986, and ran 68 minutes 59 in the Great North Run in 1987?
- 10) Which future Strider placed second in the Croydon 10K in October 1986, and ran 14 minutes 45.5 for 5000 metres in 1987?
- 11) In 1990, which future Strider placed second in the Surrey triple jump championship?
- 12) In March 1998, who became the first Strider to represent Surrey in the Inter-Counties Cross-Country Championships?
- 13) Which Strider won the Surrey steeplechase championship in 2008?
- 14) Which Strider became Event Director of the Lloyd parkrun in 2011?
- 15) In March 2016, who became the first male Strider to represent Surrey in the Inter-Counties Cross-Country Championships?
- 16) In 2017, which Strider placed second in the M50 age-group in the British Masters Indoor Pentathlon Championship?
- 17) In 2018, which Strider represented Great Britain at 100 metres in the World Masters Championships?
- 18) In August 2019, which Strider placed third in the W60 long jump at the British Masters Championships?
- 19) In July 2021, which Strider won four gold medals in the over-80 age-group in the Surrey Masters Championships?
- 20) In August 2021, which Strider ran from Croydon to Newhaven in less than 17 hours?

(The answers are on the penultimate page of the magazine)

STRIDERS AND THE 1983 LONDON MARATHON (by Colin Golding)

The Gillette London Marathon 1983, according to my old running log, was overcast, cool and wet!! Striders had 16 finishers. Our first man home was Steve Owen in 3 hours 06 minutes and our first woman was Suzanne Eyre in 3 hours 37 minutes. As all good Striders know, the London Marathon 1983 brought about the birth of Striders! So like David Tennant let me take you back in time, to about 40 years ago where the story begins.

For me, it probably began towards the end of 1980. I suddenly realized my weight had got out of hand and although I didn't weigh myself at the time, I was round about 14 stone. So with the support of my wife I went on a cut-down diet. About 18 months later I reached my goal of 12st 7lbs. This would bring us to about the end of August 1982.

At that time we lived in Fawcett Road, Old Town, Croydon. I often used to see my next-door neighbour, Hugh Coppin, go off running with a friend (who later I was to learn was called Ron Carver). Also at that time there was a big boom in jogging to keep fit, inspired by an American keep fit fanatic called Jim Fixx.

So once obtaining my goal weight my thoughts turned to 'So what now?' I immediately thought of Hugh and Jim Fixx and decided to start jogging! The hardest part of my start to jogging was actually donning a tee shirt, shorts and plimsols (I didn't have any trainers then!) and go out into the Croydon streets to run!!! Because even then people would call out things like 'Keep those knees up!' and 'Can't you go any faster?' But out I went, just going round the block from where I lived for about ten minutes and learning to ignore the jibes!

I sought advice from Hugh, whose first tip was to purchase a good pair of trainers, for round about £20, a lot of money then! He also offered to do a few training sessions with me. My next thoughts were that if I was going to spend that kind of money on trainers, I needed an incentive to keep up the new fitness regime.

Working for Philips Electronics in Croydon at the time, I came across a notice on the notice board (early September) asking if anyone was interested in forming a running club to gain entry to the London Marathon 1983. The contact name was a Michael (Mick) Meech working in the Cashiers Department.

'Could this be the incentive I was looking for?' I thought. So at the first opportunity I went and introduced myself to Mick. After telling him I'd literally only just started running around the block I asked him if he thought it possible, a beginner like me, could run a marathon eight months later? His enthusiastic response was of course 'Yes'. (Getting to know Mick later and becoming good friends, I realized that his passion and enthusiasm for running was such that he would have said yes regardless.)

I also asked him for any tips on training. He replied that I should start off with short distances three or four times a week and start increasing the distance gradually. He also suggested I start a running log, listing distance, time, conditions etc. (This I have done ever since, although not in the same format.) So I told him I would be interested in helping to form a running club and enter the GLM 1983. He also told me of others who had said they would be interested, three of whom I knew: Steve Owen, Patrick (Pat) Byrnes and Shashi Dave.

When I heard this, I decided to go and have a chat with Steve. I found out from him that he and some friends had been running together for some time. He said he had approached

Croydon Harriers for some advice and their secretary had been unhelpful. Due to this he had thought of starting up his own running club but had then seen Mick's notice!

After that, we met up a few days later to start the ball/club rolling! An initial committee was formed: Chairman Steve Owen; Vice Chairman Pat Byrnes; Secretary Mick Meech and yours truly Treasurer! We all agreed on a club name: Philips (after the firm), City (part of the name of the building Philips occupied: City House), and Striders (for obvious reasons). Later we would be nicknamed Striders by most of our rivals. The club was also open for friends and relatives of Philips employees to join. Membership fee 50p!!!! It was then left to Mick to register us and affiliate to the various governing bodies.

So once committed it meant I had to knuckle down to some serious training. I started my running log on 19th Sept 1982. The first few weeks I was running three or four times a week, of between 1 to 3 miles. Hugh, my neighbour, told me of the Croydon Fun Run in October and said I should run it. He offered to run the route with me as a training session and this we did on 3rd Oct 1982. I knew I was going to have to increase my mileage rapidly so put in some further training runs of 6 milers.

(Although I did run on my own I also trained with Hugh and Ron on weekends. I think as a club we also started Wednesday and Sunday training sessions, changing from cars in the car park in Lloyd Park. But not sure when as memory a bit foggy!!)

On Sunday 17th October 1982 I ran my first ever race, the Croydon 5 (The Croydon Fun Run was then either a two lap 10 miler or one lap 5 miler). I completed the run in 42 minutes 40 seconds.

Somewhere between the club's first meeting and 9th October we had to obtain our entry forms for the GLM. The entries would be allocated by reference to the date and time the forms were submitted at a Post Office (the current computer-generated selection would be introduced after this). It meant queuing up outside a Post Office overnight to make sure the entries were stamped early enough to guarantee an entry (they had to be stamped between 7am and 9am on Saturday 6th November). One person could submit six entries each. In shifts of three we camped outside East Croydon Post Office to submit our entries. As only 16 Striders were entering I offered to put Hugh and Ron's entries through, thus making our 18 quota.

We learnt sometime in December that we had all been successful with our entries. Hugh said that as we had put his and Ron's entries in they ought to join the club. After the Croydon run I increased my weekly runs to six milers and my weekend runs to eight, ten then twelve milers ready for my next race: the Hogs Back (11.25 miles) on 18th Dec 1982. This I completed in over 92 minutes. My increase in mileage continued in this vein ready for whatever races I entered in my Marathon build up.

The Tadworth 10 on 3rd January 1983 was my next race. For this Hugh offered to pace me round. Something I will always be grateful for, as I believe that is how I learnt to pace my races (most of the time anyway!!). All the way round he kept me in check and I achieved my goal (75 minutes) by finishing in 74 minutes 58 seconds!

Then there was the Mitcham 25km on 23rd January in 2 hours 6 minutes. The Woking 10 on 27th January in 69 minutes 33 seconds. The Beckenham Half Marathon on 6th March in 97 minutes 34 seconds. The Worthing 20 on 13th March in 2 hours 36 minutes 34 seconds and the Roding Valley Half Marathon on 20th March in 99 minutes 33 seconds.

All through my training runs and races my logbook says of my condition when finished, 'Tired', 'Very Tired' or 'KNACKERED!!!!' (The odd 'Good' or 'Tired but Elated' appears now and then!)

With no club colours decided at this point, Philips offered to sponsor the club with new kit to run the Marathon. The committee chose light blue Ron Hill running vests with a mesh midriff and dark blue Le Coq shorts. A logo in dark blue was printed on the vests, over the left breast, which read "Philips City Striders London Marathon '83". I complemented my kit with Saucony running shoes.

(Later we would choose the red, white and blue colours for the club strip and Steve's friend Rob Pinfield would design the club's logo, a running man, using the initials of the club, PCS, to form the figure. I thought it was a brilliant design.)

We were also sponsored by Air Mauritius. They supplied us with yellow Ron Hill running vests and Air Mauritius bags. For this we allowed them to use the club's runners as a way of collecting sponsorship money for charity.

On the eve of the Marathon, Striders arranged a pasta party at Selhurst Park. This was something I had forgotten about until Mick reminded me!! We also arranged for a minibus to drive us up to Greenwich Park on the morning of the Marathon and collect us afterwards for a post-race party to celebrate, again at Selhurst Park.

So the big day dawned on Sunday 17th April 1983. All the hard work of training aimed for this big day. I think all of us in the minibus that morning were excited and nervous at the same time! Being newcomers to the Marathon most of us would be starting in Greenwich Park. Hugh and Ron, having already run the London, would start on Blackheath.

Mick and I had already agreed to run together and support each other round. When the start eventually began, we were just inside the gates in Greenwich Park, so it took us about 4 or 5 minutes to actually cross the start line. Our aim was to run eight-minute miles and try for a 3 hours 30 minutes finish.

The Marathon's two starts merged at around the 3.5 mile mark, with barriers separating the runners for a short distance. On the left-hand side of the road were the Greenwich runners and on the right Blackheath. You can imagine our surprise when we saw Hugh and Ron on their side of the barriers. At the first opportunity we ran up behind them and said "Hello". However, they were moving a little too fast for us and we let them move ahead, eventually losing sight of them.

Mick and I kept up our pace until, somewhere around the half-way stage, we became separated at a water station. Looking forward and behind I could not see him. So I plodded on regardless hoping that I would find him or vice versa! Unfortunately as it turned out we never did. At the 20-mile stage, the furthest distance I had run in training, I started to walk and jog for the rest of the race. And then finally I was in the Mall and running up towards Buckingham Palace. It was nearly over. Turning into Birdcage Walk, I hoped my family and friends would be there to cheer me on. Sure enough they were, cheering so loudly I felt like I'd won. There was a small climb onto Westminster Bridge and over the finishing line in 3 hours 42 minutes 53 seconds. My first thought was "Never again"; however I went on to run another twelve!!

Over the next couple of years I just plodded on, not really making any progress and picking up the first of my many different injuries along the way. Until finally I collapsed at work (after being out for a run) caused by overdoing it and stress!!

That was the turning point, I was so depressed and downhearted about my running I was going to give it up. But in stepped Mick; he said if I followed his schedules he would coach me. Fair enough, I thought, I might as well give it a try – and slowly but surely the improvements began to happen. To be honest I think Mick had more faith in my ability than I did. The realization that I could do it was during the Hogs Back (11.25 miles) race in December 1986. I thought the target Mick had set me was too fast but when I looked at my watch at 10 miles I was surprised how close I was to the target! My finishing time was 68 minutes 40 something (I've misplaced my log for 1986). Rob Pinfield (second fastest after Steve Owen in the club) had finished ahead of me in about 68 minutes 25!!!! The following year Rob didn't run it but I equalled his time of the previous year!

The club also began to grow, membership increasing and decreasing before and after the London Marathon! I think that for several years the average membership was always around the 50 mark?

We also stopped changing in the car park in Lloyd Park and became affiliated with CAASAC. Their clubhouse was attached to the side of the council building in the same said car park!!!!

Mick also had contacts with Hailsham Harriers. Their coach was a good friend of his, Derek Wells. So Striders often competed in mob matches with them, and although we never won we always had good fun. Another time we competed against them was in the Forbanks Relays (are they still being run?). In 1986 the club also began to compete in the cross-country season, although Steve wasn't too keen on us entering as he thought we would be humbled! However, we finished halfway up the leader board on our first outing, which surprised not only him but us!!



Mick Meech, Shashi Dave, Ron Carver, Steve Owen, Colin Golding, Myles Mayne
 Suzanne Eye Sandra Owen
 Roger Dale Patrick Byrnes



Colin Golding



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

**The red, white and blue vests which Striders wore from 1984 until 1997
(The photo is from the club's first Surrey Cross-Country League match in 1986)**



The old CASSAC clubhouse just before its demolition

(This article originally appeared in the June 2007 club magazine, but is republished here – in a slightly revised form – for the benefit of newer Striders)

STRIDERS IN THE 20TH CENTURY (by John Gannon)

It was forty years ago today that they formed the club to run! (Or a few personal early memories of when the club, like myself, was young). Well not quite to the day (and apologies to Messrs Lennon & McCartney) but it was in September 1982, inspired by the first ever London Marathon in 1981, that a group of people who were working for Philips in City House, London Road, Croydon, decided to form a running club with the aim of training for the 1983 London Marathon and hence our club was born! The club was originally called Philips City Striders, after the company and the workplace, with Striders being a trendy name in running circles back in 1982.

Philips have long gone from the Croydon area, City House, once an office block, is now an apartment block for what I understand, but our club is still going, albeit under a different name but with the same ethos at its heart. At first the club was only for employees of Philips but it quickly opened its doors to all runners. As I did not join the club until some seven years later, I don't know many of the founding members as some had moved on by the time I joined but some were still running when I joined, including Colin Golding (still a Strider I understand) and Ron Carver. Characters such as Mick Meech had left just before I joined. The club Chairman at the time was a Scotsman called Steve Owen.

By the time I had joined the club the link to Philips was not as strong as it once was, but I do recall that for the 1989 London Marathon we still all met up on marathon morning at City House to get a lift up to the start. Running the marathon was the reason why I had joined the club in the first place, it was my first marathon so I thought that joining a running club would help with both the training and concerns I had about running the distance, and I was right on both accounts. I knew the club was the right one for me because on my first ever training run on January morning there was a discussion about what route and for how long we should run when a runner turned up with a sort of army bearing (no names, no pack drill, Alan Purchase) to announce that as he was doing the Malta Marathon a few weeks later that he was going to do a 20 mile run down to Westerham and back so we could join him and run part of the way if we liked! Of course we all joined him and were soon making our way up Featherbed Lane, past the White Bear to come out on the Limsfield Road on the other side of Warlingham, where the more sensible ones that were still running, including myself, (well actually if I had been really sensible, I would have turned back at the White Bear) decided to head back, while a few turned left and ended down to Westerham! To this day I'm still not sure if any of them made it that far or if they were ever seen again! Personally, I had run my longest run ever, at about 15 miles!

I had met up for my first club run at the clubhouse in Lloyd Park that the Striders shared with several of sports club, and Striders were part of an organisation called CASSAC. When the club first formed I believe they used to meet and start training runs from City House, but then moved to the car park at Lloyd Park because, as I believe, the streets were more attractive to run around there than at West Croydon! It was here that they found out about CASSAC and asked to join. The clubhouse has long gone; it used to be where the café now stands in the park, and we shared the building with council-run changing rooms for the football teams that used to play in the park. Do they still play? I know that there are changing rooms in the same complex as the Café. As for CASSAC I'm not sure of what has happened, I think the Tennis club that uses the courts at the park is the only sport that belonged to CASSAC that is still at the park.

Of course, a lot has changed in our club and our sport over the last 40 years, especially when it comes to what we run in. I don't think Lycra had put an appearance back in the 80s, and Ron Hill had only just about started up his company that supplied 'breathable' running gear, so it was more cotton T-shirts that we trained in, which when wet often led to a case of bleeding nipples! And that was just the men! Oh the pain! To prevent this you would apply a liberal dose of Vaseline to those part of your body, which in turn lead to two big oily patches on your T-shirts. We also had to run in cotton, and sometimes nylon, shorts so another dose of Vaseline was required between the legs to prevent chaffing there. The club by this time did have its own racing kit consisting of a running vest and shorts that were of better quality. Back then the vest was red with white and blue diagonal stripes with red shorts, which I have to say I think I prefer to our current colours. As for what we wore on our feet, well that has changed beyond recognition: running shoe technology was only just getting started and the choice, although quite varied, was nothing like the choices we can enjoy today. Similarly the running watches available: Casio seemed to be a popular one; my first running watch was a Timex Ironman! (Much to the amusement of my young, at the time, daughters!) GPS watches, with or without HR monitors, were something for the future. As for finding out how far you had completed on your training run, well that was a case of get in your car, set the tripometer back to zero and drive around the course you had just run, if it was on the road. Anything off-road then that was down to string and an A-Z or OS map of the area, either that or a guess of the distance. It was quite remarkable to see how much you had overestimated these runs once GPS maps started to become common place some 15 years later! As for recording your running and mileage, that was down to keeping a paper diary of some description. Once I learnt how to operate a PC I moved on to MS Excel spreadsheets before Apps like Garmin and Strava were introduced. In fact, I'm sure some of our older readers/runners (I hope you are keeping well Colin) still keep paper diaries!

Where we meet for our training runs has also changed, to say that the CASSAC clubhouse at Lloyd Park was dated, even back in the 1980s, would have been an understatement. With no heating it was not the place you wanted to spend any time hanging around after a training run in the middle of winter! There were some showers in the Ladies' changing room that often as not the men would use as the ladies thought they were disgusting and not something they would want to use. Although in the summer it wasn't such a bad place to sit out and enjoy a warm, sunny evening overlooking the park. There used to be a bar in clubhouse with beer on tap, so the clubhouse was used for the Striders' annual summer BBQ when the club's prizes used to be handed out. However, due to a series of break-ins when the beer was actually stolen, the bar had to shut. There were some efforts to improve the clubhouse during the late 1990s, we even got to use the men's showers in the next-door changing rooms! But Croydon Council was unwilling to spend any money on the clubhouse, while the National Grid intended to knock down the clubhouse as part of their plans to update and build a new substation at the park. Although those plans did include new changing rooms plus a café, it did mean that there would be nothing in place for a couple of years, therefore it was time to look elsewhere for the club to meet and train from, which is why, in 2001, we moved to our present home at Sandilands.

We had also changed the name of the club by this time, as it was felt that the original name did not represent the current membership nor did it give us any identity to the area we were based in, so a change of name might well attract new runners to the club, which I like to think it did. At a club AGM in the 1990s it was voted that we should become Croydon Striders. There was some interest in trying to keep a link to the old name by having the same initials, PCS, but suggestions like Purley & Croydon Striders seemed to much of a mouthful so Croydon Striders was agreed on. However, when the name change was registered with Surrey AAA, an objection was raised by Croydon Harriers that the name was too similar to

their name (really??) therefore it was decided at the last moment that we should change to our current name, Striders of Croydon, which to me sounds like more of a department store than a running club!

Races that we ran back in the later 1980s and early 1990s have also changed/disappeared: my first 10K at Biggin Hill as well as my first half marathon at Sevenoaks have long gone. The Hogs Back race on the North Downs near Guildford if not gone has certainly changed since then - it used to be a 9-mile race, which was an unusual distance even then. There are not so many 5- or 10-mile races as there used to be. In the summer there were a number of road relays held in Beckenham, based on the high street banks sports grounds in that area, and usually 2 miles in distance; now all that remains is the Forbanks Relay based in Beckenham Cricket Ground. There also used to be a guy who took photos of runners in local races, then using the mailing list from the race organisers would send you a photo of yourself running during the race. He would ask for you to send money for the photo; if you didn't, then he would not send you any subsequent photos.

So, times have changed over the years since the club first started as well as from when I joined, and from a running viewpoint mostly for the better. One of the things that have not changed for the better are my running times! Looking back over my records and old race results makes for interesting reading not only for my own performances but the club in general, with most if not all club members being able to complete a 10K in under an hour regardless of age or sex. Of course, we were a much smaller club then, I think there were about 50 members or so when I joined; we can get more than that number just on a Wednesday night training run these days!

One thing that has not changed however is the fact that the club is still a great one to belong to: the custom of always looping back for everyone on a club run is still a great one, and I will be raising a glass (or two) to the those that I run with (and against) while celebrating the friendships and have made over the years from being part of this club.



I have taken the liberty of attaching a couple of photos of myself in the full PCS running kit! The one on the previous page is from the Netherne 7-mile road race which took place at the height of summer on a Sunday afternoon, in fact the weather was so hot one year that it melted the tarmac on part of the race course! This led to a very sticky position but also proved to be a perfect excuse for a slower than expected finishing time for the race! The photo below is from a very muddy cross-country in Lloyd Park.



THINGS I HAVE LEARNED IN RUNNING MORE THAN 100 MARATHONS AND ULTRAMARATHONS

(by Debra Bourne)

Consistency is key in training

Your training should never be dependent on one or two 'key runs'. Rather, it's the total of your training, over the weeks and months, that is important.

Avoiding injury enables consistency

Some injuries are sheer bad luck, but often we runners become injured basically through impatience or carelessness. We need to learn to listen to our bodies and to reduce training, even take a day or two off to allow a niggle to settle. This will pay off in reduced time lost to more serious injuries.

Prevention is better than cure

It is well worth spending some time and effort on injury prevention. I find strength work boring, but I have learned that both strength and some stretching are important to minimise my risk of running-related injuries. Self-massage can both help stiff muscles and make you aware of which areas are getting overworked, which probably indicates an imbalance (especially if a muscle is tighter on one leg than on the other leg). Getting a sports massage every couple of months, or a sensible time maybe a couple of weeks) before a big race can help to both treat problems and spot slight tightness before it becomes worse.

Practice fast walking

During ultras you will spend time walking. Practice this! Being able to walk fast – including uphill and downhill – can massively affect your finish time.

Avoid setting off too fast

Trying to 'bank time' by running faster in the first few miles rarely pays off in the end. Generally, that fast early pace means you slow down more later. Resist the temptation to head off with others whose pace is faster than the pace you want to maintain.

Run your own race

Sometimes you can spend miles running with someone else. Other times you're running by yourself for long periods. Avoid getting caught up with chatting and running too fast, or waiting for someone at an aid station and losing too much time. Sometimes you choose to do this (e.g. while 'buddying up' at night), but be sure you know what -you- want to do and don't be afraid to either say 'the pace is a bit fast – please go on without me', or 'I'm worried I'll stiffen up – forgive me for getting going again'.

Eat!

Before, during and after long races you need to get your nutrition right. You can only absorb so much from your gut per hour while running, so it makes sense to start getting the energy in right from the start of the run, not waiting until you feel tired or hungry: Eat early, eat often.

Hydration is essential

Keep hydrated and take enough electrolytes. Dehydration is not going to help, particularly in longer runs. Note that on long days out you can get fed up of even your favourite flavour of electrolytes, so have some alternatives with you – or use something without any flavour, such as Elete or S-caps (or have those with you as back-ups).

Avoid decision-making on an empty stomach

In ultras, if you feel tired and low, and particularly if you are feeling like quitting, you should always eat and drink first. The same when faced with what seems like a huge problem, for example navigation or a problem with your kit. Low sugar levels don't improve decision-making ability, so fix that first.

90% of finishing ultras is in the mind

Use whatever is necessary to get you to the finish. Break the race down and concentrate on getting to the next checkpoint or (on looped courses) the end of the lap. If necessary concentrate on getting to the tree in the distance, the next gate, or even taking the next step. Use whatever keeps you going – think of family being proud of you, the money you're raising for charity, or the medal or T-shirt you want to earn. If you can find a short mantra that keeps you going and you can remember even when tired, that can be great.

Speedwork is useful, even for ultras

I subscribe to the '80:20' rule – that is, about 80% of your weekly miles should be at an easy pace (conversational pace) and 20% should be hard – speed repeats, tempo or progression runs, or hill repeats. Besides stopping you turning into a 'slow plodder', speedwork helps keep leg muscles balanced (e.g. inner versus outer quads). It also helps you to maintain your pace during an ultra: if your aim is to be running 10 or 12 minute miles during an ultra, then you can run at a lower % of full pace if your top-end pace is 7 minutes per mile than if it's 9 minutes per mile.

Take a first aid kit

Think what you will actually need, not just what you need to pass kit inspection. Tiny tubes of antiseptic cream and hydrocortisone cream can be useful. Take pieces of kinesiology tape with – they stick better than plasters or blister plasters.

Caffeine is your friend – so is sleep

If you are running through the night, then you will probably get sleepy. Learn what keeps you awake – for me it's caffeine tablets. But they can't work miracles: they work a lot better if you have had decent sleep during the previous week.

Feet swell

For longer ultras (50 miles and up) in particular, and in hot weather, you might need shoes half to one size larger than your normal running shoes.

Foot care!

Treat blisters early – preferably as soon as you feel a 'hot spot' of irritation developing. If possible prevent them – if you know you have a tendency to blister at a particular point, cover it with kinesiology tape (not stretched) beforehand. If you do blister, a blister plaster can hugely help with comfort – but a piece of kinesiology tape over it keeps it in place much better. On longer ultras it is worth having socks and shoes in your drop bag(s). With them,

you need something to wipe your feet clean - and a waterproof bag into which you can put wet, muddy shoes and socks.

Avoid chafing

Blisters and chafing can be very painful and can ruin a race. Use glide stick (various brands available), Squirrel's Nut butter, Vaseline – whatever works for you. A very small pot of Vaseline and a small glide stick are always in my backpack. Lubricate anywhere that might chafe. For some places such as on your back where a pack chafes, a piece of kinesiology tape placed with no stretch can protect the skin well.

Take a bright light

Don't skimp on your head torch. You want lots of light for night running. Make sure it will last long enough or have spare batteries. Take a spare light – at the least, bright enough to change the batteries in your main light, but preferably one bright enough to use for running if your main light fails or is lost (this may be required kit). DO check that your chosen batteries are compatible with your torch. Discovering in the dark, miles from an aid station that your torch doesn't work with the rechargeable batteries you have packed, is no fun.

Don't skimp on 'required kit' and emergency gear

Race organisers are not trying to weigh you down with unnecessary 'stuff'. They are doing their best to make sure you stay safe. Proper waterproofs and, in the event of emergency, spare base layers, can make the difference between finishing a race or being pulled out with hypothermia. And if you have an accident and need to wait for rescue, can make the difference between being frustrated and uncomfortable on the one hand or hypothermia or even death on the other.

Failure to prepare is preparation for failure

Part of training for an ultra is practicing things such as eating and drinking while running; wearing your pack (containing all the gear you will need to carry during your race); finding out any spots that rub and working out what should be kept in each pocket. If you're dead tired and can't think straight you need to know exactly where everything is. You need to know if you tend to blister anywhere, and put tape on the potential 'hot spots' before they even start to rub – preferably before the race starts. You need to discover what you still want to eat and drink at 40 or 80 miles. What you need to have in your drop bags (bags of your own gear that you can access at some aid stations) and what you never use.

Event organisers are enablers – they are wonderful

These people put in lots of time and effort so we can run races. They encourage us and enable us to complete distances we never thought we could do.

Volunteers are amazing!

For every marathon and ultra that is put on, anything from a few to hundreds of volunteers give their time to help runners do their event. Volunteers at trail ultras do everything from filling water bottles to helping you with foot care(!). Wonderful people.

Runners are great

The vast majority of runners I have met while running (and training for) my races have been friendly and helpful. Out on the trails, we encourage each other and look after one another. You get to hold long conversations and sometimes learn all sorts of things about your fellow

runner – without having a clue what they look like because you’ve been running beside each other in the dark.

Trails are fantastic

Running trail marathons and ultras gives you hours out in wonderful surroundings. Remember to look around and appreciate them!



(Photos from the Keswick to Barrow Challenge)

HOWARD TEMIN LAKESHORE PATH PARKRUN (by Debra Bourne)

I'm not much of a parkrun tourist – too busy as Event Director of Lloyd parkrun, Croydon, and enjoying being with my community there most Saturday mornings. However, I do like to visit other parkruns when I can, and I've managed to run a few different venues in the UK and elsewhere when travelling for conferences.

I spent the last week of July in Madison, Wisconsin, USA, at a conference that finished Friday lunchtime – and my flight back to the UK was not until Saturday afternoon. Perhaps there would be a parkrun I could get to Saturday morning? I knew that there were far fewer parkruns in the USA than in the UK, but Madison, a university city, seemed a likely place to have one. I checked out the parkrun USA website. The map of parkrun venues showed that in the whole of Wisconsin there was only one parkrun. I zoomed in – it was in Madison. I zoomed in further and discovered that Howard Temin Lakeshore Path parkrun started less than a mile from where the conference was being held. How lucky is that?



The Capitol building, Madison, Wisconsin, USA

Saturday morning I checked out of the hotel shortly after 8am and set off down State Street, dragging my luggage so I would be able to go straight from parkrun to the Van Galder bus that would take me back to O'Hare Airport in Chicago (easier than getting out to the local airport then flying to O'Hare to catch an international flight).

It was a beautiful sunny morning, and I was one of the earliest to arrive at the gathering point overlooking Lake Mendota. A couple of the volunteers were already there, and other runners soon appeared – mostly tourists initially, each in turn asking the gathering crowd whether this was the parkrun. As is common, probably, to parkruns all over the world, local runners were last to arrive. One of the other runners had a non-running friend with her who kindly agreed to keep an eye on my bags. The tourists included runners from other USA parkruns as well as some fellow British runners.



View from near where the parkrun starts

The usual briefing from the week's Run Director, who explained that the course was out-and-back, but continuing a little past the start point on the way back, and that there would be two marshals on the course. One was at the turn-around point, the other near the boathouse, where the course has to divert round the back of the building, because of the long rowing boats being carried to or from the water.

We walked a short way to the official starting point. There was just time for my watch to find the GPS signal, then we were off.



Water lilies. The path curves right further up past the parkrun turn-around point and goes along through the trees

I was feeling quite tired after a hectic conference week, and knew I wasn't running well, but it's a pleasant course: very flat along the lake shore, packed fine gravel in parts, otherwise tarmac. The first section is under trees, then it's more in the open, with the lake on your left. The only slight rise is the diversion around the boathouse. I had guesses where the turn-around point might be. It was actually a bit further along, past the stone with a plaque explaining who Howard Temin was and past the cove where I had seen herons on another run. By no means everyone running along the path was taking part in parkrun, and the turn-point marshal was quite active, asking each approaching runner if they were a parkrunner and if so indicating they should turn and head back.



I had been running this path most mornings, usually going further into a pleasant wooded area, where I had seen Wild Turkeys with chicks, and on one wonderful occasion had two Sandhill Cranes fly past me at low level and only about 20 yards away. It felt a bit strange turning around and realising it was quite likely that I would never run this path again.



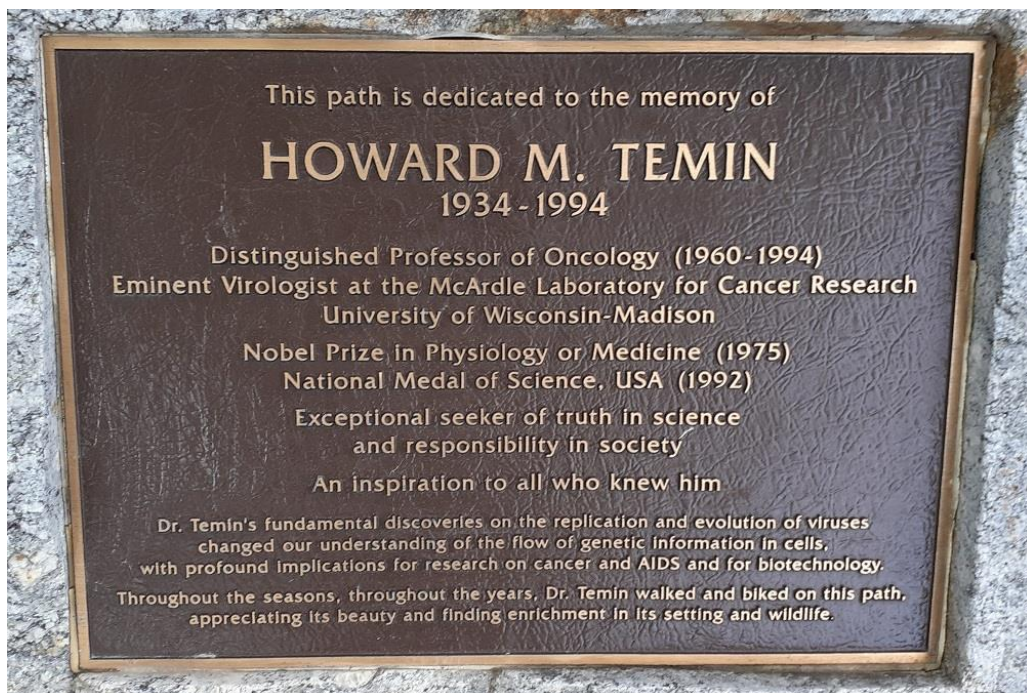
View from further round in the wooded area, back towards Madison

Up the rise again to pass behind the boathouse, then back into the tree-lined section providing welcome shade for hot runners. Finally back past the starting point and to the finish to be clocked in, get a finish token – number 8 (4th female) in a field of 29 – and get scanned in. I had a few minutes to catch my breath and chat with the other runners before thanking the luggage-sitter and setting off for the coach stop.

I would definitely recommend this parkrun if you are visiting the Madison area.



Wild turkeys with chicks!



THE WORLD MASTERS CHAMPIONSHIPS: TAMPERE

(by Alan Dolton)

The December 2018 issue of this magazine included three articles (by Lorraine Hunte, Simon Pannell and myself) about the World Masters Championships which had taken place in that September in Malaga. My article mentioned that the next edition of the World Masters Championships would be held in 2020, in Toronto. Of course, Covid made this impossible, and World Masters Athletics, which administers these championships, asked the Toronto organisers if they could reschedule it for 2021. To many people's surprise, the Toronto organisers declined, and withdrew from hosting the championships.

The Finnish city of Tampere had already been chosen as the host of the European Masters Championships for 2021. World Masters Athletics asked Tampere if they would be willing to host a World championship rather than an European championship. The Finns were more amenable than the Canadians, and agreed to do so. However, Covid proved to be longer-lasting than many people had hoped, so the championships had to be postponed again, eventually being rearranged for late June and early July 2022.

I was keen to enter these championships, partly because I had never been to Finland, and partly because I had entered a new age-group by celebrating my 65th birthday in December 2021. The cost of food and accommodation in Finland is quite high, so I did not want to stay for too long. I decided to enter the cross-country and the 5000 metres, which were both held in the first week of the championships, with one day's rest in between.

Before Covid, there had been regular direct flights from Heathrow to Tampere. However, these did not resume after the pandemic. Therefore I flew from Gatwick to Helsinki, and then travelled from Helsinki to Tampere by train. In view of the problems which Heathrow was experiencing at the time the championships took place, I was very pleased to be able to fly from Gatwick.

I had received some unwelcome news about a week before the championships began, when a British runner pointed out on Facebook that the temperatures for the opening days of the championships were predicted to be between 27-30°C. The train journey to Tampere was uncomfortably hot, with the train being much more crowded than I had expected.

As the runners for the cross-country race assembled in the call room and then again at the start line, it became clear that there was an even smaller field than there had been in Perth in 2016, when I placed 33rd out of 42 runners. In fact there were only 28 starters, including seven British runners and only four Finns. I started cautiously and after about 500 metres I only had two runners behind me, one from Sweden and my British team-mate Kevin Dillon. In the conditions I was reasonably pleased to run the first two-kilometre loop in 9 minutes 48, although I was losing ground to the Brazilian ahead of me, so that it seemed unlikely that I would gain any more places. I subsequently learned that two runners had dropped out after only one lap, presumably because of the heat, so I was actually in 24th place as we began the second lap. I was still 24th at the halfway mark, which I reached in 20 minutes 39, although I could hear that another runner was gaining on me, and I was definitely feeling too hot. Early on the third lap I was overtaken by the Swedish runner who had been behind me, and not long after that I was lapped by the race leader, Bob Bradbury of Woking, who was on his way to an impressive victory in 28 minutes 04. I was lapped by several more runners on the second half of the lap, and not long before the end of the lap Kevin Dillon came past me, leaving me in last place. My third two-kilometre lap had taken me just over 12 minutes,

and I was very tempted to drop out, but I decided that I ought to complete the race and plodded round the last lap in over 14 minutes to finish, very tired and soaked in perspiration, in 26th position.

The organisers had run out of water by the time I finished, although fortunately I had a bottle in my bag and was able to rehydrate in the shade of the changing-room area. It took me a long time to stop sweating, and I was quite surprised by just how much fluid I lost as my body tried to cool down. Having found a chair to sit on, I also felt quite dizzy when I first tried to stand up again.

I was disappointed and embarrassed to have slowed so badly in the second half of the race. However, it was a good day for the British team as we took the gold medals: Bob Bradbury won with Paul Hughes second and Richard Buxton completing the scoring trio in 18th place. Our four non-scorers finished in the last six places. The Finns took the silver medals, with their three scorers placing 10th, 12th and 13th. Sweden were third. Britain also won team gold medals in both the M70 and W70 age-groups: we clearly have some very fit pensioners in the UK.

On the following day I tried to rekindle my enthusiasm by going to the main Ratina Stadium and watching the 800 metre finals. I was particularly impressed by the very first race, where David Carr of Australia won the over-90 title in 3 minutes 41.55. Another impressive run came from Jean-Louis Esnault of France who won the over-80 race in 2 minutes 47.52.



David Carr winning the over-90 800 metres (photo by Doug Smith)

The oldest female winner was Lynne Hurrell of the USA, who won the W85 race in 5 minutes 12.45. The W80 race was won by Viveka Ruffel of Sweden in 4 minutes 16.52. The first British win came from Angela Copson, who won the W75 race in a new world age-group record of 3 minutes 07.19.



Lynne Hurrell winning the W85 800 metres (photo by Alex Rotas)

There was a double British win in the over-65 races. Paul Forbes, who represented Scotland in three Commonwealth Games, gained a convincing win in the M65 race, leading all the way to finish in 2 minutes 14.67. Alison Bourgeois won the W65 race in 2 minutes 47.36.

I had originally entered the 5000 metres which were due to take place on the Saturday, two days after the cross-country. However, the entry list showed that all but one of the other runners had recorded faster qualifying times than me, and the only runner who had a slower time than me was Kevin Dillon, who had just beaten me in the cross-country. The hot weather was forecast to continue, and the 5000 metres was not being held at the main stadium, but at a track about six miles away, which appeared to have no shelter from the sun. So, although being the last finisher in the cross-country race seemed a sad way to mark what will probably be my last appearance in a Great Britain vest, I decided that it would be more sensible to withdraw from the 5000 metres and to do the local parkrun instead.

The next edition of the championships is due to be held at Goteborg in Sweden, in the summer of 2024. If any other Striders would like to take part in international athletics, the first step (in addition to membership of Striders) is to join one of the regional clubs that are affiliated to the British Masters Athletics Federation. For most of us, this is likely to be either Southern Counties Veterans AC (<http://www.scvac.org.uk/index.htm>), who organise the track and field league in which Striders compete on summer evenings, or Veterans AC (<http://www.vetsac.org.uk/>), who are based in London.

THE TAMPERE PARKRUN (by Alan Dolton)

Although I enjoy reading other Striders' accounts of overseas parkruns, only one of my first 500 parkruns was outside the UK. That was the Claisebrook Cove parkrun, in Western Australia, which I ran in 2016 when I was in Australia for the World Masters Championships. I wrote a brief article about it in the December 2016 issue of this magazine.

My second overseas parkrun also coincided with a visit to the World Masters Championships, this time in Tampere, Finland. The parkrun was held on the same day as the 5000 metre track races, and I initially planned to race on the track. But my performance in the cross-country race two days earlier convinced me that I was not fit enough to be competitive in a 5000-metre race on the track, and would probably be having a solo run at the back of field. However, if I ran the Tampere parkrun instead, I would have a good chance of finishing in the middle of the field, as I generally now do at South Norwood.

The Tampere parkrun began in October 2017. It has only had more than 100 runners on three occasions, the most recent being in October 2018 for its first anniversary. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was not held between early March 2020 and early August 2021 (so it had a slightly longer intermission than most UK parkruns). When it was first held after the pandemic, it attracted 89 runners, but it has not reached that number since.

It is an 'out and back' course, starting in Ratinanniemi Park which is in western Tampere, very close to the Ratina athletics stadium and less than half a mile from a tram stop. It follows the north-eastern edge of the Pyhajarvi lake, with the first part of the run being on tarmac, but most of the route being on paths with a similar mixture of earth and gravel to the South Norwood parkrun. The turnaround point after 2500 metres is in the Hatanpaa Arboretum, which is a popular local attraction.



The Pyhajarvi lake (photo by Nina Haikonen)

On the day that I ran it, there were fewer Finnish runners than I had expected, but the numbers were boosted by several British runners who, like me, were competing at the World Masters Championships. These included Paul Forbes, who had won the M65 800 metres the

previous afternoon, and Stewart Thorp, who had placed third in the M70 cross-country. My legs still felt tired after my cross-country race, so I decided to aim to run a fairly consistent pace and to finish in under 30 minutes. I reached the turnaround in 14 minutes 05 seconds, in 46th place. On the way back I began to slow down a bit and was overtaken by two runners, but managed to overtake four other runners who were slowing even more than I was. So I finished 44th in 29 minutes 27. This was slower than any of my South Norwood parkruns up to that point (although two weeks later I ran slightly slower at South Norwood in a heatwave). However, after my exertions in the cross-country race only two days earlier, I was reasonably content to have achieved my pre-run target.



The Hatanpaa Arboretum, close to the turnaround point (photo by Nina Haikonen)

The first finisher was a Finn who ran 18 minutes 25. Four of the runners who finished ahead of me were aged over 70, all of them being British. Two of these, Dot Kesterton and Penny Forse, achieved age-gradings of over 90%. Most of the field finished in under 35 minutes, but there were also five runners between 46 minutes and 49 minutes (including a woman in the W65 category who ran a personal best of 48 minutes 57), and there were four run/walkers who finished in over 57 minutes, with a woman in the W85 age-group recording 58 minutes 02, and the tail walker coming in one second behind her.

I imagine that most Striders who want to do a Finnish parkrun will probably choose to do one in the Helsinki area. However, I would definitely recommend Tampere. It has a very good and inexpensive train service from Helsinki Airport, requiring one change at Tikkurila, three stops away from the airport. A rail ticket from Helsinki Airport to Tampere, catching a fast train from Tikkurila, costs 21 euros: the same route, using a slower train from Tikkurila stopping at several local stations, costs only 13 euros. I travelled to Tampere on a fast train, but deliberately chose to return on a slower one to see more of the Finnish countryside. The ticket machines at Helsinki Airport and Tampere stations are tri-lingual (with screens in Finnish, Swedish and English) but do not accept cash: payment has to be made by debit or credit card. The station at the airport has some machines which are only for journeys in the Helsinki metropolitan area: anyone wanting to travel to Tampere needs to ignore these and use one of the machines which cater for long-distance journeys.

COMPETITIVE HIGHLIGHTS: JUNE – JULY 2022

At Lloyd Park on 4 June, Striders won our mob match against Epsom, Collingwood and Tadworth. Striders had 63 finishers, led by Phil Coales who placed second (18:28).

Seven Striders won medals in the Surrey Masters Championships at Kingsmeadow on 5 June. Steve Corfield won gold in both the M60 800 metres (2:27.90) and the M60 1500 metres (5:01.57), both his times being club age-group records. Sandra Francis won gold in the W65 3000 metre walk in a club women's record of 22 minutes 12.41, and also won the W65 long jump (3.08). Matthew Stone won gold in the M60 5000 metres in a club age-group record of 17 minutes 34.13. Nikki Javan won gold in the W40 5000 metres (21:37.42). Alan Dolton won gold in the M65 800 metres (3:36.94) and bronze in the M65 1500 metres (6:56.61). Lorraine Hunte won silver in the W65 100 metres (18.37). Jay Lidbetter won bronze in the M40 5000 metres (16:54.85).

In the Dorking 10-mile road race on 12 June, Andrew Aitken placed 30th (59:08) with Phil Coales 47th (62:17), Erik Schrijnemaekers 66th (64:42) and Graeme Drysdale 73rd (65:27). Steve Corfield won the over-60 category, placing 88th overall in a new club age-group record of 67:07, and becoming the oldest Strider to run 10 miles in under 70 minutes. Jane Hughes was the 101st woman to finish (1:44.07). In the Richmond 10-kilometre road race on 26 June, Andrew Aitken placed 26th (35:16), Tatsuya Okamoto 28th (35:23), Lee Flanagan 75th (37:24) and Erik Schrijnemaekers 88th (38:09).

The second Southern Veterans League match of the season took place at Kingsmeadow on 27 June. Paul Cripps won the M50 high jump (1.40) and triple jump (9.43). Jon Dean won the M60 1500 metres (5:40.2), and was second in the M60 100 metres (15.7) and 400 metres (72.3). Sandra Francis set a club W65 record in the shot (3.20).

At Banstead on 2 July, Striders had 34 finishers in our mob match against Epsom, Collingwood and Tadworth. Our first man home was James Rhodes who placed fourth (18:03) while our first woman was Anna O'Sullivan who was 114th (24:30).

In the Elmore seven-mile road race at Chipstead on 16 July, Tatsuya Okamoto placed 14th (41:15), with Andrew Aitken 17th (42:08), Phil Coales 20th (42:42) and Erik Schrijnemaekers 26th (44:02). Steve Corfield placed first in the over-60 category and 46th overall (48:21). Jane Hughes was the 52nd woman to finish (78:15).

Striders' men did very well to finish second in their Southern Veterans League match at Croydon Arena on 20 July. In the 5000 metres, Jay Lidbetter was second in the A race in a club M40 record of 16 minutes 33.5, while Tatsuya Okamoto won the B race (16:40.7). Steve Corfield won the M60 race (18:30.4), while Graeme Drysdale was second in the M50 race (19:02.8). Michael Bassett set a new club M70 record of 27:07.8. Paul Cripps was second in the M50 200 metres (29.6), while Steve Corfield was second in the M60 200 metres in a club age-group record of 29.8. There were club W65 records for Lorraine Hunte in the 200 metres (36.5) and Sandra Francis in the javelin (6.56).

In the Elmbridge 10K on 24 July, Striders were led by Phil Coales who placed 19th (35:31). Tatsuya Okamoto was 24th (36:06), Andrew Aitken 27th (36:24) and Erik Schrijnemaekers 42nd (38:19). Steve Corfield was the first over-60 to finish, placing 51st overall (39:32). In the final Surrey Road League table, Striders' men placed fifth out of the 38 clubs in the league, while our women were 23rd. Steve Corfield won the over-60 championship, while Andrew Aitken was second in the over-40 championship with Tatsuya Okamoto third.

40 YEARS AGO: LOCAL ATHLETICS IN AUTUMN 1982

For many years there had been two clubs in the borough of Croydon: Croydon Harriers and South London Harriers. September 1982 saw the formation of a third club in the borough: Philips City Striders. At the time, Philips Electronics were based in West Croydon and were one of the borough's largest employers. Two of their employees, Steve Owen and Mick Meech, had been inspired to train for the following year's London Marathon. Steve had telephoned Croydon Harriers' secretary and was somewhat surprised to be told that the club did not have any long-distance coaches and could not provide coaching for novice road runners. (A 1981 Croydon Harriers club newsletter lists fifteen club coaches, of whom six specialised in sprints and/or hurdles, three in middle-distance running and six in field events. The club did not have a single long-distance coach.) Undeterred, Steve and Mick decided to form a club of their own. Mick placed a notice on the company noticeboard, which produced several responses. A meeting was duly held to elect the club's first committee, which included Steve as chairman, Mick as secretary, and Colin Golding as treasurer. (For more details of Striders' formation, see the article by Colin Golding earlier in this magazine.)

Initially full membership was confined to employees of Philips, with other runners being accepted as 'associate members'. At first the club was only registered with the AAA as a road running club, but the inclusion of the words 'athletic club' in the title seems to suggest that at least one of the club's founders must have had an interest in the possibility of future track and field competition. Striders subsequently registered for cross-country competition in 1986, and registered as a track and field club in 1995.

The Surrey Road Relay took place on 11 September at Brockwell Park. Croydon Harriers competed in this event for the first time for ten years, and placed third. Dave Chettle ran the fastest time of the day on the second leg. The other team members were Gary Bishop, Alan Dolton, Mike Townley, Robin Dickson and Martin Walmsley.

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: Postmill Close now occupies the site). The race was well promoted by Croydon Council, and attracted more than 1000 entrants. The winner was 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. She was more than ten minutes ahead of her nearest rival. Croydon Harriers had four runners in the top seven: Don Faircloth placed third in 51 minutes 39 and was followed by Martin Walmsley (5th, 53:07), Gary Bishop (6th, 53:57) and Alan Dolton (7th, 54:16). 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.

THE youth who died when a brick wall collapsed on him in Canning Road was one of Croydon's most promising young athletes.

Sixteen-year-old Colin Andrew McCauley of Alexandra Road, Addiscombe,

had been shaping into a very good middle-distance runner for the Croydon Harriers Club.

A senior club official, Mr Don Faircloth, said that Colin had been a dedicated member of the club

who had trained regularly in all types of weather.

High winds

The night Colin met his death had been extremely cold and wet.

High winds were re-

sponsible for blowing over the 80ft-long brick wall in Canning Road just as Colin jogged passed - at 8.45 last Wednesday evening.

Few athletes would have trained on a night like that - but Colin was exceptionally keen,

Mr Faircloth said.

Colin had been a member of the top Croydon Borough team which won the recent London Borough Championships.

He had also taken part in this season's Brighton road relay.

LONG DISTANCE runner Colin McCauley's body remained unidentified for two days after he was killed last week by a collapsing wall.

Colin's mother, 38-year-old Mrs Josephine McCauley, told the Comet: "When he failed to come home, I assumed he had stopped off at friends."

Even when Mrs McCauley, a nurse, saw a description of her dead son in the newspapers, she failed to realise that it was him.

"He was just 16½, not 19 or 20 as was suggested by the description," she said.

Eventually, she called the police,

and learned of Colin's death on Friday afternoon.

"Colin was my life, and running was his life," she told the Comet.

She had lived alone with her son since she was separated from her husband, and her 19-year-old daughter Helen had left home.

"I have no words which can describe how I feel at losing Colin," she said. "I never dreamed that anything like this could happen."

Colin had loved running since he was four years old, when he started going out with his father, 41-year-old Mr Michael McCauley, for many years a member of the Croydon Harriers.

Mr McCauley, a local government officer, said: "I could understand him being knocked down by a car - it often happens to runners, but this is almost freakish."

"Unfortunately, runners rarely carry any means of identification in case of accident."

Colin, a sandy haired six footer, had the world before him as a runner, according to fellow members of Croydon Harriers.

Team manager Don Webb described him as "a good colt and a budding young athlete."

"Colin had made tremendous strides this year and we had great hopes for him," he said.

"Everyone was shattered at the news of his death".

Colin held numerous cups and medals, including some gained as a champion for Taunton Manor High School, Coulsdon. He had recently started work at a local garden centre.

He died instantly from head injuries received when he was struck by the falling wall in a footpath off Canning Road.

An inquest was opened and adjourned at Croydon Coroner's Court this week.

Dead runner was 'dedicated'

DEDICATION to running, ironically, cost 17 year old Colin McCauley his life.

For despite appalling weather Colin, one of Croydon Harriers' up-and-coming youngsters, set out for one of his normal training runs on Wednesday, last week.

And it was the heavy rain and wind which are believed to have been responsible for causing the collapse of a wall which fell, crushing Colin to death as he ran through an alleyway between Canning and Clyde Roads in Croydon.

His body lay undiscovered under the rubble for ten hours. It was not until Saturday, two days later, that he was eventually identified by his mother, Mrs Josephine McCauley.

Mrs McCauley, a nurse working at Mayday Hospital, spoke this week of the tragedy. She said she had not given a second thought to Colin going out

for a run on Wednesday evening.

"He often just went off and followed the direction of his nose and ran for miles and miles," she said.

When he did not return home her suspicions were not aroused because he often went off with his running friends and stayed with them overnight.

On Thursday Mrs McCauley still assumed he was with friends and it was not until Friday afternoon that she saw a newspaper with a story about the death of a "mystery jogger."

Following the tragedy Croydon North East MP Bernard Weatherill has called for stricter controls on the building of boundary walls.

In a letter to Environment Secretary Michael Heseltine Mr Weatherill says many people in the area were concerned because walls were not subject to building controls and "many of them do not comply with



good engineering principles."

He adds: "I am the first to appreciate that, it is not feasible or even desirable to control everything, but in the light of this distressing accident, I am naturally concerned to allay the fears of my constituents and to seek . . . to ensure that nothing of this kind will happen again if it can be avoided."

10 YEARS AGO: LOCAL ATHLETICS IN AUTUMN 2012

In the Surrey Road Relays, at Wimbledon Park on 15 September, Striders' best performance came from their over-50 team, who finished sixth. Bob Ewen ran the first leg, placing eighth in 19 minutes 57. Geoff Pennells gained a place on the second leg (19:48) and Alan Dolton held this position (19:45). On the final leg John Foster did well to run 17 minutes 29, which was more than two minutes faster than any of his team-mates. Striders' over-40s finished ninth in their category. Their best performance came from Krzysztof Klidzia who ran 17 minutes 13 on the final leg, which was Striders' fastest time of the day.

Lee Flanagan had an excellent run to win the annual Switchback five-mile cross-country race, in Lloyd Park and Addington Hills, on 23 September. His time of 28 minutes 35 placed him 21 seconds ahead of his nearest rival. Striders' next man home, Andy Marlow, placed eighth (31:37). Lee Wadsworth was tenth (31:59), and Striders won the men's team event.

In the Sri Chinmoy 10-kilometre race at Battersea Park on 29 September, Cara Kayum was the sixth woman to finish, recording a new personal best of 39 minutes 59. She was only the fourth female Strider to run the distance in less than 40 minutes (and only one more has done so since). In the Chicago Marathon on 7 October, Iain Harrison ran 2 hours 45 minutes 42.

73-year-old Kevin Burnett ran well to finish second in the M70 age group in the Surrey Masters Cross-Country Championships, at Richmond Park on Saturday 13 October. He covered the six-kilometre course in 42 minutes 22.

Striders did well to finish third in their first Surrey Cross-Country League Division Two match of the season, at Nork Park on 20 October. Striders were led by Lee Flanagan who ran well to place 15th. Iain Harrison was close behind in 16th, while Krzysztof Klidzia also ran well for 26th. Darren Bird was 32nd, Tyler O'Callaghan 38th, Steve Winter 43rd, Lee Wadsworth 59th, Simon Ambrosi 60th, Matthew Chapman 61st and Chris Morton 73rd.

Striders' women placed ninth in the opening Surrey Women's Cross-Country League Division Two match, at Roehampton on the same day. They were led by Steph Upton who ran very well to place 17th. Debra Bourne made her league debut and also did well to finish 23rd. Andrea Jeffries was 55th, Hannah Musk 69th and Stephanie Moss 71st.

The 37th Croydon 10K took place on the following day. Peter Chambers of Croydon Harriers won in 33 minutes 50. For Striders, Bill Makuwa was third (34:54) and Lee Flanagan fourth (35:31). The first woman was Lisa Harris, who later joined Croydon, in 40 minutes 28.

Striders placed third in the East Surrey League's annual cross-country race at Lloyd Park on 27 October. They were led by Krzysztof Klidzia who placed eighth. Tyler O'Callaghan was not far behind in tenth with Ernie Hann 13th and Lee Wadsworth 14th.

In the second Surrey Cross-Country League Division Two match of the season, at Epsom Downs on 10 November, Striders were led by Iain Harrison who ran well to place 29th. Krzysztof Klidzia was 42nd, Steve Winter 43rd, Darren Bird 45th, Ernie Hann 62nd, Simon Ambrosi 63rd, Lee Wadsworth 64th, Steve Starvis 69th, Matt Chapman 70th, and Taylor Huggins 79th. The team slipped to fifth place in the overall Division Two table.

Striders placed 16th in the Surrey Women's Cross-Country League race at Nonsuch Park on 1 December. Steph Upton was 26th, Andrea Jeffries 50th and Stephanie Moss 68th.

CLUB 40TH ANNIVERSARY QUIZ: ANSWERS

(1) Philips City Striders Athletic Club. (2) The 'Switchback'. (3) Croydon Harriers. (4) One. (5) Four. (6) East Surrey League. (7) Michelle Campbell-Jardine (formerly Michelle Edwards). (8) Michelle Pierre-Carr. (9) Graham Hansen. (10) Alan Dolton. (11) Paul Cripps. (12) Jane Lansdown. (13) Matthew Morgan. (14) Debra Bourne. (15) Peter Mills. (16) Paul Cripps. (17) Lorraine Hunte. (18) Sandra Francis. (19) Kevin Burnett. (20) Ally Whitlock.



Lorraine Hunte competing in the World Masters Championships (question 17)

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