



Garden City Runners News Release

11 June 2023

Please send reports of races and milestones, with photos if available, before early Sunday evening for (almost) guaranteed inclusion, to results@gardencityrunners.org.uk

St Albans Half Marathon

On Sunday 11th June, in blazing conditions, 16 GCRs nipped over to St Albans to take part in the St Albans Half or the St Albans Walking Half. **Sidney Valentine** writes: "The Lollipop race definitely lived up to its name today with some very hot challenging conditions out on the course. Several GCR members took on the course and conditions all completed the race."

Samantha Hastie also reports: "When I decided to do the 12 half marathons in 12 months I kind of forgot about how hot it was going to get. Well today was a great reminder, 32.5 degrees when I crossed the line according to my phone (which had almost shut down by this point, take a look at my Strava for a laugh). I chatted to lots of lovely GCRs pre-race who all had fabulous times in mind but my goal was purely to finish on such

a hot day. Towards the end I definitely started to struggle and walked quite a large part but I am happy I made it, even if it was my slowest time to date. So many of the runners we passed towards the end were waiting for/getting driven off in ambulances so I hope everyone made it through in one piece, even if not across the line. Praying for some unseasonably cool weather for Bedford in July."



St Albans Half Marathon	
Gabor NYERS	01:30:19
Gaetano BASIACO	01:31:33
Chris DUNGATE	01:39:29
Spencer WHITE	01:40:07
Russell CASEY	01:41:55
Fredi GILIBERTI	01:56:31
Malcolm BARON	02:01:13
Sidney VALENTINE	02:04:32
Clare GROVER	02:07:10
Ilona PEVA	02:10:20
James AITCHISON	02:17:10
John APLING	02:24:42
Samantha HASTIE	03:16:46
St Albans Walking Half	
Valerie LEVISON	03:43:05
Charlotte JONES	04:28:39
Emily SHEPHERD	04:28:38
Tendy ST FRANCIS	04:28:41

Full results are available [here](#).

Endure 24

Three intrepid GCRs took on the Endure 24 event in Reading this weekend, held at Wasing Park, set within the beautiful Berkshire countryside. Billed as the UK'S biggest 24-hour ultra trail race, the 8km trail features exciting landmarks and enchanting natural wonders, including the 15th century Church of St Nicholas, the mesmerising Wasing Wood, the infamous 'Heartbreak Hill,' and stunning panoramic views of Paices Wood lake. Participants run against the clock to see how many laps they can complete before time runs out.

In conditions described as "hotter than hell", the three solo runners just kept going and going like Duracell bunnies. Periodically stopping off at base camp to rest and refuel, our GCR teammates were well looked after, under the tender loving care of supporter extraordinaire, **Jacqueline McCallum**. By the end of the event, **Nikki Cowen** clocked up a phenomenal 14 laps (70 miles); **John Warden** achieved a terrific 10 laps (50 miles); and **Alexandra**

Yates completed a superb 7 laps (35 miles). (Pictured below l-r: Alexandra Yates, Nikki Cowen, John Warden.)



MWRRL #3 – Trent Park

GCRs provided a sea of azure and gold at Trent Park on Thursday 8th June, for the third Mid Week Road Race. Congratulations to **Juliet Vine** and **Lizzie Parry** who were the first and second female GCRs (and second and third ladies overall) in (provisional) times of 39:42 and 40:24, respectively. **Bradley Birch** was the first male GCR in a provisional time of 35:50. The men's team scored in 4th place and the ladies' team in 5th place, with an overall placing of 4th. For the vets, the men came 5th place and the ladies joint 5th place, with an overall placing of 4th.

Results are available [here](#).



Ironman 70.3 Stafford

Richard Robinson and **James Dunmore** (both pictured right) took on Ironman Stafford on Sunday 11th June, which comprises a 1.9k swim, 90k bike ride and a half marathon run.

James writes: "A very well organised and supported event (with some great swag). It's a multi transition site so had to get bikes racked and kit bagged and sorted on Saturday. A 4:30am start on Sunday to get bussed to the glorious Chasewater reservoir for the swim. We were in the water by 7.25am, and both had good swims. Onto the rolling hills of the Staffordshire countryside (very picturesque). However, the heat was creeping up on us and by the time we started the run at 11:30am it was boiling! It then became a mission to finish, all thoughts of time went out the window. But finish we did, managing to stage a joint photo finish."



Richard adds: "Amazingly, through the three disciplines we managed to cross the finish line together in the same time 6hrs and 12 mins. It was a very hot day, and this made the run incredibly tough. The event was fantastic and had incredible volunteers full of enthusiasm. That half marathon was bringing back memories of London Marathon 2018 (I always get the hot ones!)."

Full results available [here](#).

Richard's splits were:

Swim (1.9 km) - 40.15

Bike (56 km) - 3.13

Run (13.1 miles) - 2.07

James' splits were:

Swim (1.9 km) - 39.49

Bike (56 km) - 3.17

Run (13.1 miles) - 2.05

Lake District Ultra Challenge

Kath Evans has done it again! Another week, another ultra! Is there no stopping this woman? Kath (*pictured right*) writes: "Friday after work meant a long journey up the M6 to be rewarded with a day out for the Lake District challenge with Ultra Challenges. The views were spectacular and the hills just kept giving! This is definitely one to return to, especially as I was meant to complete the 100k and called it a day at 50k, the allure of hot shower and a decent night's sleep in my hotel bed was too great! Would definitely recommend for more social ultra runners/walkers, super well marked and incredibly well supported, pastries and coffee at the first aid stop and a cracking hot meal at 50k.

Anyone fancy it in 2024?"





parkrun roundup

96 GCRs were out enjoying the Saturday morning sunshine in parks across the country and beyond.

Caroline and **Rob Hughes** completed their parkrun alphabet this weekend. Caroline writes: "After a trip to the Netherlands a few weeks ago to do Zuiderpark as part of the Dutch double weekend, Rob and I completed our parkrun alphabet on Saturday with a shorter journey to Victoria Dock. A very hot and sunny, but scenic, double out and back along the dockside. We've mostly collected letters accidentally with extra trips for the I, Y, Z and V."

The Valentine pirates (**Sidney** and **Sarah Valentine**) have now travelled the seven Cs, completing Church Mead parkrun this weekend. Cap'n Sid writes: "The venue was Church Mead in Amersham, a lovely scenic 2lapper on trails. With all scenic routes come hills of course. Shipmate Sarah Valentine also kept a close eye on Polly to make sure didn't fly off in the woods."



37 GCRs attended Panshanger parkrun. Top ten spots for the ladies included **Lucy Iles** as 2nd lady in 24:48, **Katy Healy** 6th lady in 25:16, **Rebecca Barden** 7th lady in 25:17 and **Sarah Durston** 9th lady in 25:30. **Gary Lehmussaari** continues chipping away at his time, achieving his 5th PB in 25:35, whilst **Gail Munro** achieved her 4th PB this year in 29:28.

At Stevenage, 7 GCRs participated, and **Robin Clementson** bagged a PD of 22:22.

Top ten finishers at other locations were as follows:

- **Caroline Griffin** was 2nd lady at Aldenham in a PB time of 25:23
- **Sean Bowen** was 9th at Rushmere in 22:15
- **Richard Wilcox** was 3rd at Letchworth in a PB time of 19:33
- **James Huish** was 1st at Haverhill in 17:17
- **Bruce Judge** was 10th man (11th overall) at Jersey Farm in 20:28
- **Michael Germany** was 10th at The Pastures in 22:45
- **Andrew Holt** was 2nd at Church Mead in 22:05 (rumours that he was fleeing from two pirates cannot be verified)
- **Daniel Pudner** was 5th man (6th overall) at Edenbrook Country in 18:15

GCRs did their best to cover most of the parkrun alphabet this week, attending these parkruns in addition to those already mentioned: Ally Pally, Barclay, Barnstaple, Burgess, Dunfermline, Dunstable Downs, Evesham, Finsbury Park, Lingwood, Marple, Newbury, Oak Hill, Pocket, Rickmansworth, Rutland Water, St Albans, York, Zuiderpark

Full results for all GCRs taking part in parkruns can be found [here](#).

parkrun extra report – Six go mad in Scandinavia

parkrun takes place on a Saturday morning, right? Except on special days, when it doesn't.

Michael Scutt reports on a European parkrun hat-trick.

"Last week, six of the Run Directors at Panshanger parkrun jetted off to Northern Europe (leaving Barbara Kubis-Labiak to hold the Panshanger fort) while they ran walked and jogged around three different parkruns.

Sue Fletcher, Louise Smith, Lucy Iles and Michael Scutt, all members of GCR (plus other Panshanger RDs Rab Harley and Andy Sturgess) went seeking to take advantage of the extra parkrun days made available by Denmark's Constitution Day (Monday 5th June) and Sweden's National Day (Tuesday 6th June) having spent parkrun day itself on 3rd June at Alstervorland parkrun in Hamburg, Germany.

We were blessed with good weather throughout our visit – definitely warmer and sunnier than back here. Another contrast with Panshanger is that all three of our venues were flat, on tarmac or hard packed trail and next to large bodies of water. Only the Swedish course was a one lapper.

Our tour started in Hamburg with a city centre two lap run next to a large lake. Their usual numbers were swelled not only by a few park runners about to move on to Scandinavia but also by triathletes warming up for the next day's Ironman event, which was being hosted in Hamburg. The first timers' welcome was given both in German and English and the following RD's briefing was a very amusing double act. We all ran or walk/ran, Lucy leading our team home. Sue and Rab came further back but were pleased to have run part of the course. 188 people took part, which was some way above their usual attendance. An excellent brunch followed in a café by the lake.

It was a very good start to the tour. Next stop Copenhagen.

We let the train take the strain and arrived late Sunday afternoon in the Danish capital. We'd booked accommodation in a hotel above a sports bar and the locals were in a good mood as FC Copenhagen had just won the Danish title.

Monday saw us run Amager Strandpark on Denmark's Constitution day. It's a seaside course alongside the Øresund strait and there was a great view of the famous bridge in the background. I kept my eyes peeled for a green Porsche 911 but to no avail. As in Hamburg the course was flat and on tarmac. This was where we started to see parkrun tourists converging. 634 people attended, when their usual attendance is in the 40 – 60s. (In addition to Amager Strandpark, there are three other events in Copenhagen and all were well attended on the Monday, if not quite to the same extent as Strandpark.) It's a two lap course and follows a figure of 8 so you get to see the fast finishers at some point on the course. The pre-event briefing by the RD used a steel drum and we all were instructed in to how to sing the alternative Danish national anthem, written by Hans Christian Andersen. To be honest I can't remember the tune now but the words were all about peace and love so what's not to like?

Having run and walked our individual ways round the course, a quick coffee followed by a dash to the main station for our train across the Øresund bridge and into Sweden. Initially the hope was that Malmo parkrun would run on Sweden's National Day but the landowner bottled out and denied them permission. Växjösjön parkrun, in the small city of Växjö was going ahead so we, and many others, opted to go there rather than to Gothenburg or further up country. There was a growing feeling amongst us that Tuesday's event was going to see some very big numbers.

Växjö is about 2.5 hours by train from Copenhagen and we had a very civilized journey up there, arriving mid-afternoon, giving us time to recce the course and check out the self-proclaimed greenest city in Europe. (And it's pronounced Vek-hwer, if you were wondering!) It's certainly green in terms of trees and grassland and is well worth a visit even if parkrun isn't on.

We continually bumped into other parkrun tourists and it had quite the feel of being a big event. The locals seemed blissfully unaware of why hordes of, mainly, British people had descended on their rather sleepy city.

Tuesday morning arrived and it seemed the whole city was walking to the lake for the final event in this three day parkrun odyssey. Whereas in Denmark we had sung the Danish alternative anthem, here in Sweden we listened to the real Swedish one and then, as part of the briefing and introductions we warmed up to Sweden's most famous cultural export: ABBA and Mamma Mia. At this stage it was clear the crowd was big but the RD team were handling it with assurance. Their usual attendance is around 20-22. After we'd run round the beautiful lake on a mixture of trail, tarmac and board walk, taking in the art installations on the way round, we discovered that 727 people had taken part. The funnel and barcode scanners handled the numbers with ease and the whole event went like clockwork.

Then again it was a dash to the railway station and a train back down to Copenhagen to catch the return flight back to real life. This time it wasn't so civilized - DSB railways hadn't prepared for the numbers on the train so it was rather overcrowded.

It was a lovely few days away and it was a pleasure to share it not just with some friends from Panshanger but also to me other parkrunners from all over Europe and beyond. Many thanks and congratulations must go to all the teams involved at all three events.

I'm just wondering whether I can justify a trip to Germany for Unity Day in October.."



Group Runs - Tuesdays 6.20pm for 6.30pm start, Dance Studio Ridgeway Academy

The group runs are planned to take approximately an hour, the following table gives an idea of the pace. To give variety, especially in the summer, distances will vary a little.

Group/Distance	Pace (mins/km)	Pace (mons/mile)
5k social	A gentle-paced run that would suit those who are still new to running, like a slower pace, are returning from injury or a break from running	
7k	7:30 – 8	12 – 13
8k	7 – 7:30	11 – 12
9k	6:30 – 7	10 – 11
10k	5:45 – 6	9 – 9:30
12k	5 – 5:30	8 – 8:30

Interval Sessions: various locations in Welwyn Garden City, 6:45pm start

Approximately 25 mins of high intensity intervals over distances from 400m to a mile, with rest periods, in various locations in WGC. Runners of all abilities are welcome, pace is dictated by the runners themselves, slower runners will simply do fewer repetitions. Members will be notified of the locations and session format on email and Facebook.

Intervals this coming Tuesday (13th June) will be in the Sherrardswood. Meet at Campus Roundabout in front of the library at 6.30pm or at Sixways for 6.50pm. We will be doing the longer woods loop of around 1k.

Group Runs – Thursdays 6.30pm Campus West

There are usually three groups as follows:

5k social	A gentle-paced run that would suit those who are still new to running, like a slower pace, are returning from injury or a break from running
Introduction to speed session	A training session for those who are daunted by the track. A mixture of intervals, fartlek and speed sessions. Ideal for those trying to improve their 10k time
Steady Group	Steady group run

Track Intervals – Thursdays 8:00pm Gosling Track

Meet at the track for 15 minutes of warm up activities followed by approximately 30 minutes of track intervals. Sessions comprise laps or multiple laps of the track followed by rest

periods. Runners of all abilities are welcome, runners will be formed into groups based on targeted pace.

Save the Date: Welwyn 10K @ Panshanger Park, 25th June 2023

The word is out! This year's Welwyn 10k goes back to its roots as a trail race and is happening in a brand new location – Panshanger Park! This will be the first ever chip-timed 10k race within the park, and the route (ingeniously mapped out by **Chris Eland**) will take in all the main historical sites within the park, including the Great Oak, the Orangery, and the new plantation for the Queen's Green Canopy. As well as an exciting new location, we are aiming to make this race as environmentally responsible as we can, in line with the ethos of Panshanger Park. 2023 also sees the return of the kids' 2k race. As usual, all monies raised will be donated to the Welwyn Festival Charities. We are working closely in partnership with Tarmac and with Panshanger Park to make the event a huge success. This is where we need all the help we can get from everyone in the club! Do sign up to run, and spread the word far-and-wide to encourage others to join us on the day. Registration is open for both the adults' and the kids' races. Here is the link to more information and to enter online <https://my.raceresult.com/235110/info>



Scenic Panshanger park, site of this year's Welwyn 10K

Hatfield 5K race series

The dates of the Hatfield 5k race series have now been confirmed. The fast and flat road route is an excellent opportunity to develop your speed in a competitive field. Race 1 is an Avery race, and details are in the Avery calendar. Dates of the three races are as follows:

Race 1: Wednesday 30th August 2023 (Herts Senior Champs)

Race 2: Wednesday 6th September 2023 (Herts Vets Champs)

Race 3: Wednesday 13th September 2023

Further details on registration to follow.

Circuit Training - Homerswood School

For those interested, former GCR member Steve Livingstone runs a very good one-hour circuit training session every **Monday at 6:30pm at Homerswood School**, Kirklands, WGC, AL8 7RF.

The cost is £5 (free for first timers). Five minutes warm up, 40 mins circuits, 15 mins stretching (great for runners). Bring a towel and some water.

Avery League Competition 2023

Please find this year's events table below. Eight Avery races, marked CC, are also part of the Club Championship competition (best five to score). Races marked V offer a volunteer point equivalent to a competing point.

Event no.		Date	Event	Venue	Cost	Status / notes
1	CC	22/01/2023	Fred Hughes 10	St Albans	£21.20 affiliated	Completed
2		19/02/2023	XC 3	Cassiobury Park, Watlington	free	Completed
3	CC	05/03/2023	Berkhamsted half	Berkhamsted Cricket Club	£33 from 01/01/23	Completed
4		12/03/2023	XC 4	Therfield Heath, Royston	free	Completed
5	V	18/03/2023	Stevenage parkrun	Fairlands Valley Park	free	Completed
6		07/04/2023	St Albans Easter 10k	St Albans	£25.44	Completed
7	CC	30/04/2023	Hitchin 10k	Hitchin	£18.00	Completed
8		17/05/2023	MWRRL 1: Chingford (Orion Harriers)	Chingford	17/05/2023	Completed
9		31/05/2023	MWRRL 2: St Albans (St Albans Striders)	St Albans	31/05/2023	Completed
10		08/06/2023	MWRRL 3: Trent Park	Trent Park	08/06/2023	Completed
11	V	25/06/2023	Welwyn 10k	Panshanger Park	£20; £18 affiliated	https://my.raceresult.com/235110/info

12		29/06/2023	MWRRL 4: Stevenage (NHRR)	Stevenage	free	Club will send out details via email
13	V	12/07/2023	MWRRL Mob Match: WGC	Ridgeway Academy, WGC	free	Club will send out details via email
14	CC	20/07/2023	Fairlands Valley Relays	Fairlands Valley, Stevenage	free	Club will send out details via email
15	V	06/08/2023	GCR Centenary 20.2k	WGC Centenary Route	free	Club will send out details via email
16	V/CC	19/08/2023	Panshanger parkrun	Panshanger Park	free	https://www.parkrun.org.uk/panshanger/
17	V	30/08/2023	Hatfield 5k Race 1	Hatfield	tbc	Details tbc
18	CC	1/10/2023	Standalone 10k	Letchworth	£18.00 affiliated	http://www.nhrr.org.uk/standalone-10k.html
19		15/10/2023	XC 1	tbc	free	Club will send out details via email
20	CC	22/10/2023	Stevenage Half Marathon	Stevenage	£28.00 affiliated	https://stevenagehalfmarathon.org.uk/
21		29/10/2023	XC 2	tbc	free	Club will send out details via email
22		5/11/2023	XC 3	Stevenage tbc	free	Club will send out details via email
23	CC	26/11/2023	Hatfield 5	Hatfield	£22.26	http://hatfield5mile.co.uk/
24		17/12-2023	XC 4	Stevenage	free	Club will send out details via email
25	V	December tbc	Festive 5	Welwyn Garden City	Entry cost tbc	Club will send out details via email

Club Kit

Club kit is available from the Club Kit Secretary Richard Somerset.

We have vests, t-shirts, long sleeve tops and jackets in club colours in all sizes. See club website for photos. All items are £20 (£19.99 if you pay by bank transfer) except for the jackets which are £42.

You can pay by cash or bank transfer. Please Facebook message or text Richard on 07790 591868 or email rich.somerset@ntlworld.com to arrange pick-up.

"Puffa" jackets are also available for £42, please contact Martha Hall on: ma-hall28@hotmail.com for availability and more details.

GCR Strava Group

If you'd like to join the GCR Strava community, follow this link: <https://www.strava.com/clubs/garden-city-runners>

Join Garden City Runners

Do you live in or near Welwyn Garden City? Like running? Garden City Runners is your local running club. It has over 350 members and encourages participation by all. The club has a varied training programme to suit everyone, from working up to 5 kilometres right through to full marathons. Try a few sessions before joining. Membership is only £20 per year and is available on the GCR website via the new Membermojo platform (note that it is no longer possible to join via the old application form). Simply log into <https://membermojo.co.uk/gcr> and follow the instructions. If you want to know more about the Garden City Runners please contact Sean Bowen (Secretary) or Sue Fletcher (Membership) at gcr@gardencityrunners.org.uk, visit our website <https://www.gardencityrunners.org.uk/> or our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/groups/gardencityrunners/