



Garden City Runners News Release

2 February 2025

Please send reports of races and milestones, with photos if available, before 7pm Sunday evening for (almost) guaranteed inclusion, to results@gardencityrunners.org.uk

Watford Half and 10.5K

Rebecca Barden writes: "A contingent of GCRs headed south for the Watford Half, the second race in this year's Avery League and Club Championship, as well as the host half race of the Herts County Vets' Championship. The day dawned bright and frosty with chilly temperatures at the start in Cassiobury Park, although runners were warmed by the winter sun as they made their way out of the park and round an undulating loop on country lanes to the north west of Watford.

The Half is known for its hills and they did not disappoint, coming thick and fast and not seemingly compensated for with an equal number of downs. Even the final slog back into the park is on an upwards incline. Refusing to be defeated by gradients, GCRs put in a strong performance both individually and in the teams competition. First home was **Paul Guy**, crossing the line in 1:20:39, 10th and 1st V50 overall and also 1st V50 in the Vets' Champs. Next was **Martin Mitchell** in 1:24:52; **Chris Dungate** clocking 1:26:03, and **Peter Harvey** not far behind in 1:26:53 and also 6th V50 overall, 4th V50 in the Herts Champs. The four GCR men won gold in the Herts Vets Champs (upgraded from silver after a stewards' enquiry found that non-vets had been counted in the results). **Matt Baker** ran in 1:27:07 and **Steve Ellerd-Elliott** was happy with his course pb of 1:28:46, 6th V50 in the Herts Champs. First GCR woman and 9th lady overall was **Jessica Plant** in a speedy 1:36:24, and Philippa Doughty was 10th woman overall in 1:37:29. **Rebecca Barden** was pleased to run a course pb of 1:43:17, 2nd V55 overall and 1st V55 in the Herts Champs, and with **Rebecca Johnson** who ran in 1:49:10, and **Clare Wildey Grover** who finished in 1:50:28, the three women won bronze team in the Herts Champs.

The race overall was won by Chris Daniel of Harrow A.C. in 1:10:10 and the women's race by Helen Mussen of Watford Joggers in 1:25:24.

A 10.5k event (expanded from the advertised 10K distance after a fallen tree necessitated a course diversion) set off slightly after the half race. **Fredi Giliberti** represented GCR and finished in 53:55.”

Name	Chip time
Paul GUY	01:20:39
Martin MITCHELL	01:24:52
Chris DUNGATE	01:26:03
Peter HARVEY	01:26:53
Matt BAKER	01:27:07
Jamie ROSE	01:28:40
Steve ELLERD-ELLIOTT	01:28:46
Matthew COWAN-DICKIE	01:30:00
Andrew HARPER	01:31:34
John MCDOWALL	01:32:45
Peter JASKO	01:34:30
Jessica PLANT	01:36:24
Philippa DOUGHTY	01:37:29
Daniel HITCH	01:39:25
Rebecca BARDEN	01:43:17
Lee CHAPMAN	01:43:53
Andy MORGAN	01:44:19
Keith MCLELLAN	01:44:49
Rebecca JOHNSON	01:49:10
Clare WILDEY GROVER	01:50:28
Sofie MARCHANT	01:56:42
Amber-Leigh MARVIN	01:59:43
Maggie WRIGHT	02:02:54
Robin CATTLE	02:10:35
Alison MEADEN	02:25:16
Kath EVANS	02:25:31
Alex YATES	02:27:14
Alison PATERSON	02:27:37
Thippawan RASHLEIGH	02:28:57
Jim DAVIS	02:34:33
Tendy ST FRANCIS	03:18:41
Charlotte JONES	03:19:01



Rebecca Barden with her medals



Steve Ellerd-Elliott and Rebecca Barden



Left: Martin Mitchell, Paul Guy and Peter Harvey

Phoenix Running: Tiaras & Tutus Run/Lions & Tigers & Bears Run

Nadine and **Aiden Dwyer** (pictured, below) sent us this run report, from yet another one of their running adventures. **Nadine** writes: Another double weekender for Aiden and I - this time at the Cyclopark in Gravesend. On Saturday, we were on 5.2k trail/tarmac loops for the Tiaras & Tutus Run and ran a half-marathon. We were able to run the Cyclopark Parkrun as our first lap - always a bonus getting a Parkrun credit as part of the Phoenix event. A fun event, with many runners sporting tutus and a pink princess cake at the aid station.

On Sunday, we were back to run a full marathon at the Lions & Tigers & Bears Run. This time we were on the longer 8.5k loop which is all tarmac and has some very long uphill sections. A tough course and having to run those hilly laps 5x is not just hard on tired legs but also mentally challenging. Luckily, we managed to keep spirits up and got it done.

There's method to this madness as I'm training for my next ultra and it's all about getting used to running on tired legs. Looking forward to an easier week this week now!



Hatfield 5k series

The dates for our Hatfield Midweek 5K Race Series are now set. The three-race series sells out with a maximum 300 per race.

Races will be on Wednesdays **27th August, 3rd & 10th September**. If you would like to run, head over to the registration site. If you affiliate to England Athletics, you receive £2 discount per race.

Race One incorporates the Herts Senior Championships (all ages) and Race Two incorporates the Herts Vets Championships (35+ for the ladies and 40+ for the men). Please note that you must be affiliated to England Athletics to be considered for the team awards. If you wish to affiliate, please speak to the membership secretary.

Link: <https://my.raceresult.com/325331/>

parkrun Roundup

This weekend's parkruns saw 105 GCRs visiting local parkruns, or travelling further afield. Our new local parkrun at Oaklands College continues to be very popular, with visitors clearly enjoying their muddy adventure.

- At Billericay parkrun, **Philippa Doughty** was 4th lady in 21:50
- At Stevenage, **Alex Smith** was 5th overall, in 18:37, **Zoe Stephens** finished 21st overall and 1st lady in 21:03 and **Caroline Hale** was 2nd lady in 21:47
- **Andrew Knight** was 10th at Gunpowder, in 19:03
- At Huntingdon, **Jamie Rose** finished 5th in 20:41, accompanied by **Michael Germany** (23:19), **Katharine Farrel** who was 9th lady in 26:28 and **Alex Faulkner** in 26:29
- At Canons Park, **Sofie Marchant** was 8th lady in 27:04
- **Chris Eland** finished 7th at Keswick, in 18:59
- At Panshanger, **Daniel Pudner** was 4th to cross the finish line in 19:51, followed by **Graeme McSorley** in 19:59 and **Jonathan Foan** in 20:47.
- **Sean Bowen** was 3rd at Letchworth, in 23:23

- At Wendover Woods, **Amber-Leigh Marvin** was 2nd lady in 23:42
- **Thomas Buzzard** was 9th at Yarborough Leisure Centre, in 19:37
- At Oaklands College, **Mark Westley** finished 9th overall, in 22:36. **Lauren Potter** was 3rd lady in 26:30 and **Barbara Kubis-Labiak** was 9th lady in 28:46

Full results for GCRs participating in Saturday's parkruns can be found [here](#).

GCR Awards Night

Calling all GCR's!

It's the event you've been waiting for... please book your tickets here and choose your food
<https://buytickets.at/gardencityrunners/1550390>

Sat, 15th Mar 25 - AWARDS NIGHT - 7pm

Shamrock Club

Ridgeway

WGC

AL7 2AD

FYI This event will be held in their private hall/with its own private bar (for our sole use) and not in the bar, with their regulars! (just encase there is any confusion). The drinks are cheap (social club prices) Yayyy!

Food will be freshly cooked on site, so a feast awaits! Our very own talented GCR DJ John will be bring us to the dance floor after the awards so please put your running trainers away for the eve and get your bling and dancing shoes on!

This event is for all GCR's, and at any level so book your place, come along and chat, cheer & dance! It would be lovely to see everyone!

2025 Club Championship

The Club Championship principally consists of races open to the public, although other races may be included as long as they are not hosted by Garden City Runners. The races are ideally chosen from the Avery calendar; however, Race Committee may express flexibility including prestigious events and those facilitating Hertfordshire County Championships. parkruns may be included and should be local. Runners' top 5 scores to count.

For 2025, the Championship races are:

Race #	Event	Date
1	Fred Hughes 10	19 th Jan
2	Watford Half Marathon	2 nd Feb
3	Panshanger Parkrun	8 th Mar
4	Hitchin 10k	4 th May
5	Fairlands Valley Spartans 3k Relays	end Jul
6	Standalone 10	start Oct
7	Stevenage Half Marathon	end Oct
8	ATW Hatfield 5 miler	end Nov

GCR Avery League 2025

The GCR Race Committee has produced the calendar of races for the Avery League Competition and the Club Championships. Details on all of the 2025 races are below, and these will also be published on the GCR website as soon as possible, and on the GCR Facebook group. Happy Racing!

Avery Event #	Date	Event	Venue	Cost Approx.	Notes	Status
1	19 th Jan	Fred Hughes 10	St Columba's College, St Albans	£22	enter at ATW Herts Seniors	completed
2	2 nd Feb	Watford Half Marathon	Cassiobury Park, Watford	£38	Herts Seniors enter at ATW	completed
3	16 th Feb	Watford XC, race 5 Sunday League	Cassiobury Park, Watford	free	Club will send out details by email	
4 V	8 th Mar	Panshanger Parkrun	Panshanger Park	free	see parkrun website	
5	6 th Apr	St Clare Hospice 10k	Hastingswood, Harlow	£16	https://stclarehospice.org.uk/event/st-clare-hospice-10k-2024/	
6	4 th May	Hitchin 10k	Hitchin town centre	£22	Herts Vets tbc enter at Racesonline	
7	mid May	MWRRL #1		free	Club will send out details by email	
8	end May	MWRRL #2		free	Club will send out details by email	
9	start Jun	MWRRL #3		free	Club will send out details by email	
10	end Jun	MWRRL #4		free	Club will send out details by email	
11 V	22 nd Jun	Welwyn 10k at Panshanger Park	Panshanger Park		enter at Racesonline	
12 V	10 th Jul tbc	MWRRL Mob Match, WGC tbc	Ridgway Academy, WGC	free	Club will send out details by email	
13	start Jul	Ware 10s	TheChauncySchool Park Rd, Ware		10k or 10 miler enter at Racesonline	
14	end Jul	Fairlands Valley Spartans 3k Relays	Fairlands Valley Park, Stevenage	free	Club will send out details by email	
15 V	10 th /17 th August	20.20k Centenary Run	Stanborough Park South Lake near railway bridge	free	Club will send out details by email	
16 V	start-mid Sept	Race 3 of the Hatfield 5k Series	Affinity Water HQ, Hatfield		enter at Racesonline	
17	start Oct	Standalone 10k	Standalone Farm, Letchworth		Herts Seniors tbc enter at Racesonline	
18	mid Oct	XC, race 1 Sunday League		free	Club will send out details by email	
19	end Oct	Stevenage Half Marathon	Hampson Park, Stevenage		enter at Racesonline	
20	end Oct	XC, race 2 Sunday League		free	Club will send out details by email	
21	start Nov	XC, race 3 Sunday League		free	Club will send out details by email	
22	end Nov	ATW Hatfield 5 miler	Herts University, Hatfield		Herts Vets tbc enter at ATW	
23 V	start-mid Dec	Festive 5	Stanborough Common, WGC		enter at Racesonline	
24	mid Dec	XC, race 4 Sunday League		free	Club will send out details by email	
25	end Dec	Buntingford 10 miler	Freman College, Buntingford		Herts Vets tbc BMAF tbc	

Note: we anticipate there will be 3 XCs held in 2025 to the 2025/6 season but have shown 4 races to reflect 2024

V – Volunteers get an Avery Point

ATW – enter at Active Training World: https://www.atwevents.co.uk/calendars/sport-events?category_page=1&category_id=21

Racesonline: <https://www.racesonline.uk/>

Marathon Training Runs

Planning to run a spring marathon in 2025? Whether it's your first or your 101st, you'll probably be aiming to crank up your mileage in the weeks leading up to the big day. We've put together a guide to organised marathon training runs and 20-mile races, and, in addition, this year we will be lightly hosting a GCR marathon training run with 10- and 20-mile options for any GCRs wanting to run a scenic local route with other runners of a similar pace.

The GCR run will comprise two 10-mile loops so you can run just one or go for the double. The run will start and finish at an accessible location with parking and toilets. We will plan for a mixture of roads and firm trails depending on weather conditions at the time. A GPX file and a downloadable course map will be provided nearer the time. Any questions or suggestions? Contact Rebecca Barden c/o gardencityrunners@gmail.com

Event	Date	Entry
Gade Valley Harriers' Marathon Training Run: 12 and 17m options	23 February 2025	https://www.gadevalleyharriers.co.uk/marathon-training-runs/
GCR marathon training run: 10 and 20m options	16 March 2025	Details to be circulated in advance
MK Festival of Running inc. 20-mile option	16 March 2025	https://www.mkrun.co.uk/
Gade Valley Harriers' Marathon Training Run: 17 and 20m options	23 March 2025	https://www.gadevalleyharriers.co.uk/marathon-training-runs/
Hillingdon 20	23 March 2025	https://www.atwevents.co.uk/e/hillingdon-20-8921
Oakley 20	23 March 2025	https://theentrypoint.co.uk/events/oakley-20-2025-EkM68eBxP9L3RJ7
Twin Lakes 20	23 March 2025	https://twinlakes20.com/

Dates of races:

- Brighton Marathon: 6 April 2025
- Boston Marathon: 21 April 2025
- London Marathon: 27 April 2025
- Manchester Marathon: 27 April 2025

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. Those attending by car are asked to **park in the school car park (Herns Lane)** and not the Sports Centre car park (Appletree Way).

Group/Distance	Pace (mins/km)	Pace (mins/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 – 6:15	9 – 10
11k	5 – 5:30	8 – 8:30

Hill Reps – Tuesdays Lunchtime

With XC season in full swing now, **Sid Valentine** and **Dom Thomas** are hosting hill repeat training sessions.

These sessions will be open to all members of the club at all paces and are a good way to improve your overall stamina and performance.

You may require a sports watch or timer but if you have not got either of these do not worry you can still come and join in the fun (please see Sid or Dom for the definition of 'fun').

Please be sure to wear bright clothing and or head torches.

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

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.

Group Runs – Thursdays 6:20pm for 6.30pm start, Campus West

Thursday group run meets at Campus West on the steps outside the library. The What3Words location for the start is for start location: <https://w3w.co/eager.bliss.stuff>.

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
7-8km	Route to take approximately an hour
9-10km	Route to take approximately an hour
Introduction to intervals	This is often time-based intervals rather than distance

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.

A reminder to GCRs that there are now parking charges at Gosling Sports Park – this page has details of car parking charges:

<https://www.better.org.uk/leisure-centre/welwyn/gosling-sports-park/gosling-car-parking>

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.

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. Vests, t-shirts and long sleeved tops are £21 jackets 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/

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