



Garden City Runners News Release

30 March 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

Cerne Giant 50K

Last Sunday, **Andrew Ackrill** and **Bel McGinley** (*pictured, below*), took on the Cerne Giant 50K challenge. This LDWA-organised event takes place in the beautiful (i.e. hilly) Dorset countryside around Cerne Abbas (home to the famous chalk giant). **Andrew** writes: "We opted for the 50K route, though a 33K is also available. We started in some sunshine which soon turned to grey clouds, but it stayed dry and the temperature was good for running."

The uphill were pretty severe and many of the downhill had to be taken with care - total climb was 4300 feet. It was Bel's first ultra and her longest run (to date) and she was a great running partner. As with LDWA events it was cheap to enter, well organised with very nice people and the food at the checkpoints was plentiful and excellent."



Fortitude Pippingford 40 miler challenge

On Saturday 22nd March **Rebecca Johnson** (*pictured, below*), completed the Fortitude Pippingford challenge. The race offers a choice of either a 3-, 4- or 5-mile loops around the East Sussex countryside that you must complete every hour, on the hour for 10 hours. If you don't make it back within the hour, you're disqualified.

Rebecca writes: "I attempted and was successful in doing the 4-mile loop, so managed 40 miles in total! Furthest I've ever run by a long way and was a real test of grit and determination. Particularly as the hills were epic!! Great event and challenge."



Phoenix Running: Top Run

Our regular report by **Nadine** and **Aiden Dwyer** (pictured, below – with medal) – this time with a milestone! **Nadine** writes: "It's no secret that Aiden and I are regulars on the multi-lap running circuit. After a busy year of running a mix of half-marathons and full marathons, it was time for me to celebrate a milestone: on Saturday, I ran my 50th half-marathon, accompanied by Aiden and some of our running buddies. We had a fun morning with Phoenix Running at their 'Top Run' event and I couldn't have asked for a better day for this special run: we were blessed with glorious sunshine - an absolute treat after the cold and damp winter runs on the towpath.

For those of you who don't know, there is an official 100 Half-marathon Club...so I guess I'll just have to keep going. And so will Aiden - he is already on half-marathon #55."



Camino ultra marathon

A number of GCRs (*pictured, below*) took part in the 50k run on Saturday, and Clare Wildey sent us her run report.

Clare writes: "I ran the race with Keith McLellan, and we both completed the 50km distance in 5hrs 20 mins, crossing the finish line together. For both of us it was the furthest we'd ever run...for me by 20km!"

There were some very impressive results: first lady **Emily Owen** with a time of 3hrs 58mins, **Martin Mitchell** finishing 6th and **Nikki Cowen** running a very impressive sub 5hrs – an outstanding achievement!"



LFOTM Serpentine 5k

The Last Friday of the Month (LFOTM) 5km is a 2-lapper organised race round Hyde Park and **Paul Guy, Neil Hume** and **Chris Jones** managed to get to this from their respective central London offices on Friday lunchtime. **Chris** reports that it was a beautiful sunny but breezy spring day in the park, and the trio finished with the following times: **Paul Guy** ran a rapid 17:40 (28th), slightly further back were **Chris** in 18:32 (51st) and **Neil** in 18:35 (56th).

parkrun Roundup

106 GCRs enjoyed the sunny weather across various parkrun courses around the country this weekend.

- **Lee Chapman** finished 8th overall at Westmill, in 21:44
- At Stevenage, **Zoe Stephens** was first lady in 20:45 and **Alex Faulkner** second in 24:21.
- At Houghton Hall, **Sofie Marchant** was 10th lady in 26:34
- At Panshanger, **Graeme McSorley** was 7th in 19:10, and **Philippa Doughty** was 3rd lady in 22:28, followed by **Lauren Potter** who was 5th lady in 23:01
- **Sean Bowen** was 10th at Harlow, in 21:06
- At Uditore, **Samantha Hastie** was 7th lady in 32:16
- At Pocket, **Thomas Buzzard** was 7th in 19:46 and **Jess Buzzard** was 12 lady in 26:23
- **Paul Guy** was first overall at Leavesden Country, in 18:44
- **Justin Swallow** reported a PB at Stevenage, finishing in 23:30

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

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	completed
4 V	8 th Mar	Panshanger Parkrun	Panshanger Park	free	see parkrun website	completed
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	Weds 21 st Ma	MWRRL Race 1	Host club St Albans Striders, venue tbc	free	Club will send out details by email	
8	Weds 4 th June	MWRRL Race 2	Epping Forest	free	Club will send out details by email	
9	Weds 18 th June	MWRRL Race 3	West Herts venue TBD	free	Club will send out details by email	
10 V	22 nd Jun	Welwyn 10k at Panshanger Park	Panshanger Park		enter at Racesonline	
11	Weds 2 nd July	MWRRL Race 4	North Herts venue TBD	free	Club will send out details by email	
12	6 th July	Ware 10s	The Chauncy School Park Rd, Ware		10k or 10 miler Enter here	
13 V	Weds 9 th July	MWRRL Mob Match, WGC	Ridgeway Academy, WGC	free	Club will send out details by email	
14	17 th July	Fairlands Valley Spartans 3k Relays	Fairlands Valley Park, Stevenage	free	Club will send out details by email	
15 V	17 th August	20.20k Centenary Run	Stanborough Park South Lake near railway bridge	free	Club will send out details by email	
16 V	10 th September	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/>

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 Michael Scutt (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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He adds, "The route is paved throughout with a bit of a narrow start but is well managed by having pace guides put in place at the start , the course has a moderate elevation too.

"After the race we stopped for coffee then used our National Trust membership for a more leisurely stroll around this wonderful Abbey."

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