



Garden City Runners News Release

8 September 2024

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

<i>In this week's newsletter...</i>	
Race & Run Reports	Great North Run Bullock Smithy Hike / Ultra Bob Graham Round St Albans Stampede White Horse 50K Bedford 20-Mile Peveril 33 and Dunstable Downs Challenge Marathon parkrun roundup
Future Events	Mid-Week League GCR Club Championships 2024 GCR Avery League 2024
Regular Training	Tuesday Group Runs Tuesday Intervals Thursday Group Runs Track Intervals Circuit Training
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Great North Run

Karen Atkinson reports: "The weather forecast for the GNR was 100% accurate: thick fog followed by rain. But that didn't deter 60,000 of us running in the world's biggest half marathon from Newcastle to the coast. GNR regulars **Karen and Nick Atkinson** finished in 2:07:13 and 2:22:46 respectively."

Full results (including those of other GCRs) are available [here](#).

Bullock Smithy Hike / Ultra 56

Kath Evans (*pictured, right*) reports: "This weekend took me North for The Bullock Smithy Hike / Ultra 56, organised by 3rd Hazel Grove Scout Group and the Long Distance Walkers Association (LDWA). It's a challenging 56-mile circular hike or ultra-run, starting at midday on the Saturday with a cut off at midday on the Sunday, resulting in a significant proportion being completed in the dark.

The self-navigational route took participants from Hazel Grove and to various peak district favourites including Bowstones, Chinley Churn, Edale Cross, Edale, Castleton, Peak Forest, Millers Dale, Chelmorton, Earl Sterndale, Brand Top, Wildboardclough, Rainow, and Whiteley Green, before returning for a full cooked breakfast at Hazel Grove.

Whilst billed as 56 miles I did nearly 60, with 8,700 foot of elevation, it was a challenging event yet the company of fellow participants was fantastic and the volunteers supporting fund raising for the scouts were outstanding! If you want a challenging event this definitely fits the bill!"



Further information on the event is available [here](#).

Bob Graham Round

Richard Taylor has sent in this report of his completion of the well-known Lake District challenge, the Bob Graham Round.

"On Friday 30th August at 21:00 I set off from Keswick Moot Hall on an attempt to complete the Bob Graham round, a 100km round in the Lake District with about 8,000m of ascent to be completed within 24 hours.

I was feeling confident as I had recce'd the route a few times and supported others on their attempts during the summer, and the weather forecast was perfect with cloud free summits making navigation easier. For each of the five legs I had two support runners to carry all my kit and help navigate, as well as car support at the four road crossings. This is normal for BG attempts, and had the bonus that I was treated like royalty all day (including having my feet washed for me!).

The first two legs (8 hours) were in the dark and quite wet underfoot but went really smoothly and I began to pick up time against my 23 hour schedule. The sun rose early on leg 3, the longest leg going over the highest fells and rockiest terrain, including Scafell Pike. Leg 4 starts with a 600m climb up Yewbarrow which has finished many attempts (and is why it's known as Yewb*st*rd in BG circles) but my legs still felt great and once that was done I had two hours in hand and I knew I'd complete it.

The last 7 hours were a really enjoyable walk/run across the fells with a mixture of old and new friends, with the Lake District showing its best side in the sunshine. I ran into Keswick 22 hours after starting, to the great sound of clapping and cheering from my support team (special mention for GCR's Johan Preis!) and locals, and as is tradition the barman of The Round pub brought out a celebratory pint! If anyone is interested in doing it in future let me know and I'll do my best to repay the support I had on the day."

More information is available [here](#).



St Albans Stampede

Judging by the photos of herds of smiling GCRs on our Facebook page, the St Albans Stampede 2024 was a wild day, with many GCRs absolutely beasting the the 4-mile laps, either solo or in teams. Most folks are evidently too tired to summarize their day's activity, but **Nikki Cowen** (*pictured, below*) sent in her report on her epic effort of the 12-hour endurance run:

"Friendly atmosphere and Marshals. The route has changed for the better in my opinion, taking in more beautiful country side. You run 4mile loops on hills and flater section. So for me I achieved (not sure how) 52 miles. I was first in my age category, 4/20 females and 15/50 solo participants. Fantastic opportunity to test your own abilities. Definitely worth booking next year if you're looking for your first half, marathon or ultra. See you next year it's been a blast...rest time now!"

Results not yet available at time of producing newsletter, but should be available [here](#) later.



White Horse 50K

Nadine Dwyer has also been galloping around the countryside, and reports: "I'm quite

partial to a scenic 50k. Saturday's White Horse 50k in Wiltshire didn't disappoint - such a picturesque route following sections of the White Horse Trail path, and passing several White Horses and the Avebury stone circle. The route itself was pretty tough due to the terrain. After 3 days of heavy rain prior to the event, the ground was very muddy. Throw in some slippery chalk paths, long stretches over wet grassy fields without any obvious paths and it's certainly a challenge.

This event was self-navigated which was a first for me. I found this really tough as you use so much time checking the course. I managed to get lost a few times but got back

on track - even though it meant having to climb over electric and barbed wire fences to get there. Gin at a check point was also a first. Whilst this was tough one, I did enjoy it and had a good day out. A well organised event, with lots of support from the team and fellow runners.

There's also a 50-mile and 100-mile option if anyone fancies doing this next year."



Peveril 33 and Dunstable Downs Challenge Marathon

Nick Genever sends us more reports of his own countryside capers: "Last Saturday I travelled to Castleton in the Peak District for the Peveril 33 race. It was good to chat to **Peter Jasko** when he stopped at the half-way point of his 100-miler, and later as he led a group of us up a steep climb. I completed the 34 miles and 1,700m of ascent in 06:45 and was 15th out of 145 starters" (*right: Nick being totally focused and not distracted by the lovely scenery*).

"This Sunday I ran the Dunstable Downs Challenge Marathon for the 11th time. There was heavy rain for the first hour making the ploughed fields even worse to run on. I ran with **Lorenzo Franchi** for the first half, and finished in 3rd place in 04:12."



Bedford 20 Mile

John Apling (*pictured, right*) reports on his participation in the Bedford 20-mile race, (part of Bedford running festival): "After cloudy start the thunder and lightening began around the 1-mile mark (which added a nice element of danger to it) and at 3 miles it was torrential rain followed by glorious sunshine. The only thing we didn't have was snow! First 20-mile race I have ever run and Bedford is a good one as it is really flat (apart from one bridge), mostly paved path and some track/grass. Considering injuries I was carrying I was very happy with the 03:33 (technically a PB!)."

Nice one, John!



parkrun roundup

101 GCRs were spotted at parkruns across the country. 35 GCRs navigated the new cattle grids and gates at the Panshanger course. **Graeme McSorley** was 10th man in 19:50 and **Lucy Iles** was 5th lady in 24:40. **Sam Smith** completed his 250th parkrun and **Fredi Gilberti** completed his 200th parkrun.

Top 10 finishers elsewhere were as follows:

- **Lauren Potter** was 4th lady at Grovelands in 23:58
- **Caroline Hale** was 3rd lady at Stevenage in 21:14
- **James Huish** was 2nd at Newark in 19:25 (his 150th parkrun)
- **Alex Faulkner** was 4th lady at Millennium Country in 24:47
- **Thomas Buzzard** and **Jess Buzzard** were 4th man (5th overall) and 8th lady at Henlow Bridge Lakes in 20:59 and 26:59, respectively

Course PBs were achieved by **Penelope Hitch** at Stevenage (34:20), **Joseph Skermer** at Gunpowder (26:23), **Clare Dudley** at Rushcliffe (28:48), **Rachael Everard** at Wimpole Estate (24:39), **Laura Sach** at Cassiobury (26:03), **Tony Harden** at Dunstable Downs (30:46).

Lynette Stewart celebrated the milestone of her 250th parkrun at Grovelands, and **Matthew Renney** completed his 25th at Tyne Green! Well done!

Sid Valentine (*pictured, below*) reports on his Cumbrian parkrun tourism: "Whilst staying in the Lake District I thought I would grab myself a F on the Alphabet Challenge whilst doing a spot of tourism. Fell Foot did not disappoint whilst running alongside Windermere for some of the run the other part of the run loops around a wild flower meadow twice, although sparse on flowers at this time of the year I'm sure it is wonderful in the early summer. The volunteers are super friendly and there is always lots of tourists there. There is also the opportunity to have a dip in the lake afterwards and the cafe which is national trust run is great too with some lovely views over the lake.

Meanwhile, a short hop over the Irish Sea saw a group of GCRs off to Belfast for a weekend of parkrun adventures at Queen's and Ormeau:

Queen's

The Queens of Queen's, **Caroline O'Dwyer** and **Shena Lancaster** report: "Arriving in Belfast with a mission to get Shena her "Q", Shena and Caroline headed off past the botanic gardens and beautiful Queen's University building on a pleasant morning. Arriving after a

“good” walk to be met by a really friendly team of volunteers. The quirky course was surprisingly more challenging than anticipated, various terrains and undulating. Shena rose to the challenge claiming a sub-30 , official time of 29:37 earning her 1st in her age category and Caroline completed in 34.04. Challenge completed, and a trip back by bus followed by a day of exploring Belfast and its history, with good food, wine and company.

Thank you Belfast!”

Ormeau

John McDowall reports:
“Belfast parkrun action for a group of GCRs with some seeking the 'Q' of Queen’s Park whilst others ran the Ormeau parkrun that was nearer to the hotel. A glorious day in Belfast and a lovely 2-lapper run at Ormeau that attracted 583 runners. John McDowall was 35th in 21:03, **Richard Somerset** 50th in 21:35, **Johan Preis** 103rd in 23:41, and **Mattie Labiak** 156th in 25:27. The ladies results were 157th (25:28) for **Caroline Griffin**, 165th (25:39) for **Barbara Kubis-Labiak**, **Sophie Packman** was 180th in 25:57 with **Ann Hayden** home in 338th place in 29:15.”



Other parkrun locations attended by touring GCRs were: Amsterdamse Bos,

Barnstaple, Billericay, Birkenhead, Black Park, Bushy, Castle Park, Durham, Finsbury, Guildford, Hackney Marshes, Hamsterley Forest, Jersey Farm, Kingsbury Water, Lowestoft, Lymington Woodside, Mile End, Moors Valley, Oak Hill, Oxford, Sizewell, Southampton, Southsea, Tyne Green, Ury Riverside

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

GCR Christmas Party Night – Friday 6 December 2024

From **Sophie Packman**: I currently have on hold 60 spaces for our GCR Christmas party on **Friday, 6th December 24 at The View Welwyn** (Panshanger Golf Club formerly and taken over by Tewinbury Farm). Total cost £55 per person and includes a glass of fizz or beer on arrival, x3 course dinner and DJ.

It's only £20 deposit to hold your place and the remainder to pay on 1st November.

I know it's early, but these things suddenly sell out! If you would like to join, please don't delay as the tickets are on hold temporarily and the venue will check numbers in two weeks to see how the bookings are going. This invite is open to GCRs only and/or GCR +1. Please email me ASAP Sophie.packman@meuk.mee.com

If you would like to join and I will send you my bank details for the deposit. Let's make this the best one yet! **(Please let Sophie know when you send money!)**

Nationwide

Anne-Sophie Packman (personal)

07-08-06

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Christmas party venue/details: Christmas 2024 – The View (theviewwelwyn.co.uk)

The View, Welwyn

Old Hens Lane

Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire

AL7 2ED

Contact at The View: (please book your place/deposit with me and not Lewis!)

Lewis Graham

01707 339349

events@theviewwelwyn.co.uk

Club Championships 2024

The Club Championships principally consist 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.

For 2024 the Championship races are:

Race #	Event	Date
1	Fred Hughes 10	21 st January
2	Watford Half	4 th February
3	Panshanger parkrun	9 th March
4	Flitwick 10k	14 th April
5	St Albans Half	9 th June
6	FVS 3k Relay	End July (tbc)
7	Stevenage 10k	15 th September
8	ATW Hatfield 5	24 th November

GCR Avery League 2024

The GCR Race Committee has produced the calendar of races for the Avery League Competition and the Club Championships. Details on all of the 2024 races are below, and these will also be published on the GCR website as soon as possible, and on the GCR Facebook group. Please note that the Avery Rules have been simplified by removing the Tiebreaker - in future, joint winners will share the trophy. Happy Racing!

Aver y Even t #	Date	Event	Venue	Cost <i>Registration fees may apply</i>	Status / Notes
1	21 st January	Fred Hughes 10	St Albans	£20.00 aff.	Completed
2	4 th February	Watford Half	Watford	£31.00 aff.	Completed
3	*cancelled*	SXCL Royston (Race #5 of 2023-2024 season)	Therfield Heath, Royston	Free	--
4 (V)	9 th March	Panshanger parkrun	Panshanger Park	Free	Completed
5	24 th March	Run Fest at Lee Valley (choice of Half or 10k)	Lee Valley Water Park, Waltham Cross	10k: £26.00 aff. Half: £34.00 aff.	Completed

6	14 th April	Flitwick 10k	Flitwick	£18.00 aff.	Completed
7	6 th May	Kimpton Fun Run 10k	Kimpton	tbc	Completed
8	15 th May	MWRRL #1	Stevenage	Free	Club will send out details via email
9	23 rd May	MWRRL #2	Ware	Free	Club will send out details via email
10	4 th June	MWRRL #3	Royston	Free	Club will send out details via email
11	27 th June	MWRRL #4	Trent Park	Free	Club will send out details via email
12 (V)	30 th June	Welwyn 10k	Panshanger Park	tbc	Details tbc
13 (V)	10 th July	MWRRL Mob Match	Ridgway Academy, WGC	Free	Club will send out details via email
14	18 th July	FVS 3k Relays	Fairlands Valley, Stevenage	Free	Club will send out details via email
15 (V)	4 th August	GCR Centenary 20.2k	WGC Centenary Route	Free	Club will send out details via email
16 (V)	4 th September	Hatfield 5k #2 (Vets)	Hatfield	tbc	Details tbc
17	15 th September	Stevenage 10k	Stevenage	£18.00 aff.	Register here
18 (V)	13 th October	SXCL #1	Cheshunt	Free	Club will send out details via email
19	20 th October	Stevenage Half Marathon & Marathon	Stevenage	tbc	Register here
20	27 th October	SXCL #2	Royston	Free	Club will send out details via email
21	3 rd November	SXCL #3	Trent Park	Free	Club will send out details via email
22	24 th November	Hatfield 5	Hatfield	£22.00 early-bird aff.	Register here
23 (V)	Early December (tbc)	Festive 5	WGC	tbc	Club will send out details via email
24	15 December	SXCL #4	Stevenage	Free	Club will send out details via email

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	9 – 9:30
11k	5 – 5:30	8 – 8:30

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

This Thursday (12th September) the 7-8k and 10k group runs will be starting at The Crooked Chimney pub. Start time 6:30pm. The pub have given the okay to use their car park for this run. Some are planning on having a drink at the pub after, all on the run are welcome to join. The Crooked Chimney, Cromer Hyde Ln, Lemsford, AL8 7XE.

5k and intervals session will be going from 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
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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/