



## Garden City Runners News Release

**2 March 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](mailto:results@gardencityrunners.org.uk)*

### **Berkhamsted Half Marathon & 5-Miler**

There was a strong GCR showing at Sunday's 40th running of the Berkhamsted Half Marathon which this year doubled as both an Avery Competition event and GCR Championship race. In somewhat chilly conditions, runners set off from Berkhamsted Cricket Club and after a gentle saunter down the High Street ventured out of the town before soon turning right and onto the quiet country lanes surrounding the town. As promised by the organisers there were a couple of nice hills to test both the legs and heart but a very welcome payback at the end with a fabulous downhill mile at the end before runners crossed the finish line back at the Cricket Club. Great medal and a nice long-sleeved shirt (useful for those chilly stretches). Very well-organized race and super scenic route including Hertfordshire's best kept secret, the castle with integral church and walls at Ashridge.



PETER HARVEY reports that he last ran this race 38 years ago in 1985 aged 17 in 86 minutes. This year he finished in just over 82 minutes so not bad going for an old fella! Peter reports that ... "(the) 259m of ascent and descent produced some interesting mile splits. I did 5 minutes 20 seconds for the last mile which is probably the fastest mile split I have ever done."

PETER was the first GCR over the line in a time of 1:22:22 and was 4th in his age category. VERONICA SHADBOLT (1:40:35)

was first GCR lady and second in her age category. Other finishers included SIMON BOSTOCK (1:23:43), RUSSELL MORRIS (1:28:13), STEVE ELLERD\_ELLIOTT (1:31:19), DOMINIC THOMAS (1:32:57), RICHARD WILLCOX (1:33:54), REBECCA BARDEN (1:47:11), CHRIS HARBRON (1:50:31), BARBARA KUBIS-LABIAK (2:01:20), HOLLY WISE (2:03:49), LEE WOOD (2:08:28), ANN HAYDEN (2:10:17), MELANIE KING (2:13:59), CAROL REID (2:17:03) and DAI SELWOOD (2:28:48)

Those who didn't fancy the whole half marathon distance but still wanted to experience the fun of the "Berko Hills" could sign-up for a 5-mile race labelled rather deceptively as a "Fun Run". Three GCR runners SHARON STEPHENS, PETER LAPHORNE & WILLOW GIBSON did just that finishing in chip times of 48:09, 51:18 and 58:46 respectively. Sharon reports,



*"There was definitely a cool chill to the air so hats and gloves stayed on for the start of the race - the first mile and half in I started feeling warmer and the gloves came off and was I getting into my stride. Just before the 2-mile section you were hit with the big hill, it very much reminded me of the Whitehills in Old Welwyn, steep but longer. Halfway up there was a drink*

*section but I knew I needed to keep focused and push, really pleased as it paid off. Once at the top it was reasonably flat and thinking to myself what goes up must come down, and then just past the Berko golf club you turned left and down the hill you went. It was nice to let the hill take you and use gravity to push me and I trusted the strength in my legs, and went with it, although absolutely amazed at the half marathon runners flying pass me. At this point you*



*could hear the horns being blown and cheers from crowds such a lovely atmosphere. Once at the bottom of the hill you turned the corner and you could see the finishing gantry just a slight incline, to sprint up and job done. I think you can conclude from this that I enjoyed the race and the bonus being I was the first GCR in the 5 Mile fun run with a new PB of 48.32. Peter had a good run despite recovering from injuries and was pleased with his time of 51.43."*

*\* Timings are taken from results website and depend upon Garden City Runners as being the runners registered club. Apologies if anyone is missing. This week's editor appears to have been whisked away by aliens from the official results but not before collecting his t-shirt and bling so he must have been there!*

### **Cambridge Half Marathon**

Those GCRs who still wanted to stay (kind of) local but experience a bit more razzmatazz than even Berko could offer up ventured to Cambridge which offers the chance to run with just under 11,500 other runners up one the largest Half Marathons of the spring season.

Congratulations to ROB CASSERLEY who was first club member over the line in 1:18:48 and came 5th in his age category out of 676. ZOE STEPHENS was first lady and finished ninth out of 680 (or 10th depending on which page you look at) in her age category in a chip time of 1:29:06.

Other GCR finishers were CHRIS ELAND (1:21:41), JAMIE ROSE (1:26:46), NEIL BRITTAIN (1:32:55), NIGEL CAVILL (1:33:45), ALEX FAULKNER (1:34:08), HELEN STAFFORD (1:40:12), BEHZAAD GHOUSE (1:42:44), CAROLINE GRIFFIN (1:57:25), KATHERINE FARRELL (1:44:17), ALI RIZA EROGLU (1:54:25), SARAH HALLIDAY (2:11:11), DAVE DE NAEYER (2:14:23), CATHERINE DANN (2:14:44), ALISON MEADEN (2:21:28) and CAROLINE O'DWYER (2:28:40)

*\* Timings are taken from results website and depend upon Garden City Runners as being the runners registered club. Apologies if anyone is missing.*

### **Paris Half Marathon**

Following last weekend's Brighton Half Marathon, SAMANTHA HASTIE went all *Oo La La* this weekend with a sojourn across the channel to run the same distance in Paris. This is the third in Samantha's 12 Half Marathons in 12 Months Challenge. Samantha reports:

"This was never going to be my best run after spending most of the previous night on the toilet after accidentally eating garlic which I am allergic to. Note to self, must improve my French.

The start was absolutely packed, and the runners staggered from 8am until me starting at 11am. I managed to find the start funnel and then made my way slowly along towards the start line. We had a little warm up and then were off. Despite the lovely location every single mile felt like a slog and by halfway I honestly wasn't sure I would be able to finish. The



course goes along the Seine and then through the city to a large park that you run through and then back through the city and along the Seine. The support was phenomenal for the entire route and the medical staff/first responders were in abundance.

I crossed the line I think about 5 mins slower than last week but honestly was just delighted to get it finished. Must remember not to book 2 halves back to back again. My poor cousin who was also running ended up collapsing unbeknownst to me at 19km and so it was straight to the hospital for me.

Luckily she is fine now despite a pretty scary few hours."

Congratulations on finishing and we're glad to hear your cousin is OK.

### **Chester Ultra Marathon**



There was running on a whole different scale, at least distance wise, when three GCRs ventured to leafy Cheshire on Saturday to tackle the Chester Ultra Marathon.

KATH EVANS reports:

"On Saturday was all about bagging 50 miles of the Cheshire Countryside and it didn't disappoint, the Shropshire canal was a flat start,

and I enjoyed the antics of ducks and varied names and decor of barges along the way. The undulating woodland in the hills in the middle part added a bit of challenge! The Sandstone trails and North Cheshire way were duly covered and spectacular views enjoyed. The route was well marked, and marshals at strategic points helped, along with a trusted Garmin! GB ultras ran a great event, well organised and executed! Many congratulations to speedy GCRs Peter and Malcolm too, who also ran it, admittedly a lot faster than me!

Many thanks to everyone who messaged me along the way with encouragement, it meant the world x./

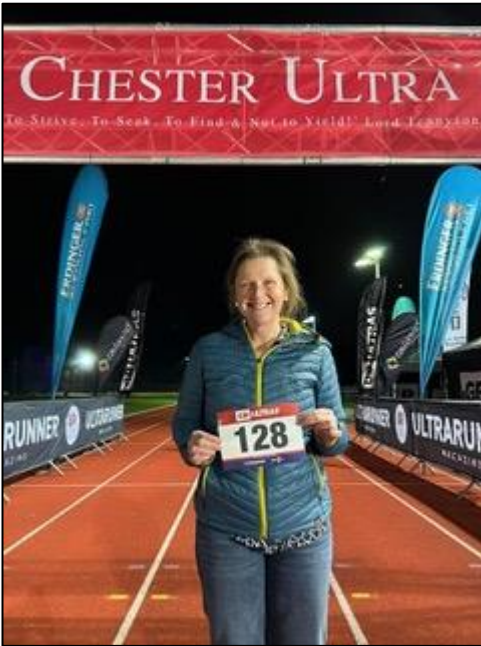
GB Ultras use Lord Tennyson on their bling 'to strive, to seek to find and not to yield'. Yep, we did that! "



Pete sent us this additional report.

"A trio of GCRs headed to the Chester 50 mile ultra, Malcolm Baron, Kath Evans and Peter Jasko. It was perfect weather: cloudy, dry, no wind, 7C. The off was at 6am from Ellesmere Port along the canal through Chester. Malcolm and Peter had a steady start, reaching the marathon mark in about 4h 30 on the flat first half. The second half brought some tasty hills, including at Frodsham, with views of Liverpool. Peter nudged ahead, finishing in 9h 45 in 88th place

with a gold medal for a top 100 finish. Malcolm came in 126th in 10h 20 with a silver medal for top 200. Kath, as steady as ever, finished in 13h 33.



It was Malcolm's first marathon and first ultra-marathon - leaving him teary eyed at the end. Peter's first ultra. Kath's umpteenth. Peter and Malcolm might recommend it, but it is still too early to say if they themselves would do it again!"

### **Oundle 20 Miler**



Four GCRs, ventured up the A1 to run the Oundle 20 Mile Race on Sunday which, according to SIDNEY VALENTINE, takes in some very scenic Northamptonshire countryside albeit a challenging course with a total elevation gain of 260 meters. Needless to say, all GCR members rose to the challenge!

### **Parkrun Round-Up**

Eighty-Five GCRs took part in Saturday's weekly trot around the parks of the UK and beyond.

DANIEL PUDNER was first over the line at Henley-on-Thames in 19:22 while ALEX FAULKNER was first lady at Houghton Hall in 22:31 which was also a PB for this course. RICHARD SOMERSET was fifth finisher at Queen Elizabeth (see below) in 21:30 while BRUCE JUDGE (19:07). LIZZIE BELCHER was third lady at Presint 18, Putrajaya and JULIET VINE was first lady and fourth finisher at Jersey Farm in 19:45.

There were PBs in Sandwell Valley for SANJEEV KAUSHAL (23:16), who was fourth at Castle Park and RICHARD DARLEY at (nearby) East Park in 27:16.



At Panshanger THOMAS BUZZARD was first over the line in 18:37 which was also a PB for him and there was also a PB also for MILES HUBBARD (30:54). Finally, a shout out to COLIN GRACE (25:35) who was the 100,000<sup>th</sup> runner to pass through the finish tunnel at Panshanger since the event started on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2014. Colin ran his first ever parkrun, at Panshanger, the following week.

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

### **Parkrun Tourism - Willow & Friends Bag the "Q"**

WILLOW GIBSON and three others ventured to Queen Elizabeth parkrun on Saturday. She reports,

"Four of us made the trip to Queen Elizabeth Parkrun to get our 'Q' and enjoy a new parkrun as well. RICHARD SOMERSET, BARBARA KUBIS-LABIAK, JOHAN PREIS and myself. Barbara drove us in her Electric Leaf and that was a fun experience. It was only a 1.5hr drive, and we got there with 20 mins to spare. Parking was easy, nice toilets available and only a 5 min walk up the hill to the start.



The run was all on trails, with no mud, so no need for trail shoes really. Very steep hill to start with but a lovely long hill to finish. It was a fairly small parkrun; this week 121 people attended. GCR finishing times were:

Richard 21:30, Johan 25:06, Barbara 29:30, Willow 39:30

I would definitely recommend this parkrun, because Queen Elizabeth Country Park is a beautiful part of the country of visit and actually not too far away.

Well done to everyone who completed a parkrun this weekend.

### **Masters XC, 26<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

Men's Captain **James Huish** is organising entries for the final XC Championship race of the season, which is the Hertfordshire Masters event (Sunday 26th March, Cassiobury Park, Watford).

"V40 & V50 Men go at 11am (9.6K) whilst the Women (all V45+) and V60 Men go at 12pm (7K).

If you would like to enter (the cost of entry is covered by the club's race budget) please send me an email or message on FB and provide me with your:

- DOB
- EA Number

Many Thanks

James: James.huish247@btinternet.com



## **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, Watford	free	Completed
3	CC	05/03/2023	Berkhamsted half	Berkhamsted Cricket Club	£30 before 31/12/22; £33 from 01/01/23	Completed
4		12/03/2023	XC 4	Therfield Heath, Royston	Free	Club to send out details
5	V	18/03/2023	Stevenage parkrun	Fairlands Valley Park	free	<a href="https://www.parkrun.org.uk/stevenage/">https://www.parkrun.org.uk/stevenage/</a>
6		07/04/2023	St Albans Easter 10k	St Albans	£25.44	<a href="https://activetrainingworld.co.uk/event/st-albans-easter10k-2023/">https://activetrainingworld.co.uk/event/st-albans-easter10k-2023/</a>
7	CC	30/04/2023	Hitchin 10k	Hitchin	£18.00	<a href="https://www.letsdothis.com/gb/e/hitchin-10k-189140">https://www.letsdothis.com/gb/e/hitchin-10k-189140</a>
8		May tbc	MWRRL 1	tbc	free	Club will send out details via email
9		May tbc	MWRRL 2	tbc	free	Club will send out details via email

10		June tbc	MWRRL 3	tbc	free	Club will send out details via email
11		June tbc	MWRRL 4	tbc	free	Club will send out details via email
12	V	June/July tbc	Welwyn 10k	Singlers Marsh, Welwyn	Entry cost tbc	<a href="https://www.welwyn10k.org.uk/">https://www.welwyn10k.org.uk/</a>
13	V	July tbc	MWRRL Mob Match	tbc	free	Club will send out details via email
14	CC	July tbc	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/C C	19/08/2023	Panshanger parkrun	Panshanger Park	free	<a href="https://www.parkrun.org.uk/panshanger/">https://www.parkrun.org.uk/panshanger/</a>
17	V	September tbc	Hatfield 5k Race 1	Hatfield	tbc	Details tbc
18	CC	October tbc	Standalone 10k	Letchworth	Entry cost tbc	<a href="http://www.nhrr.org.uk/standalone-10k.html">http://www.nhrr.org.uk/standalone-10k.html</a>
19		October tbc	XC 1	tbc	free	Club will send out details via email
20		November tbc	XC 2	tbc	free	Club will send out details via email
21	CC	November tbc	Stevenage Marathon Half	Stevenage	Entry cost tbc	<a href="https://stevenagehalfmarathon.org.uk/">https://stevenagehalfmarathon.org.uk/</a>
22	CC	November tbc	Hatfield 5	Hatfield	Entry cost tbc	<a href="http://hatfield5mile.co.uk/">http://hatfield5mile.co.uk/</a>
23		December tbc	XC 3	Stevenage tbc	free	Club will send out details via email
24	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](mailto:rich.somerset@ntlworld.com) to arrange pick-up.

"Puffa" jackets are also available for £42, please contact Martha Hall on: [ma-hall28@hotmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:gcr@gardencityrunners.org.uk), visit our website <https://www.gardencityrunners.org.uk/> or our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/groups/gardencityrunners/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/gardencityrunners/)