



Garden City Runners News Release

7 July 2024

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

MWL Mob Match: Message from our Chair, Sean Bowen:



Midweek League Home Fixture: Mob Match and Presentation Weds 10th July

Congratulations to GCR! Another fantastic turnout in the league at Trent Park two Thursdays ago, and a brilliant result. We are promoted as champions of Division 2 – holding off a strong challenge from the new powerhouse Dacorum & Tring AC, who will join us in Division 1 next year.

But before that, there's the small matter of the fifth and final race in the series – and it's our home fixture! As we have done for several years, we will be hosting the Mob Match and end-of-series presentation and after party at our wonderful HQ at the Ridgeway Academy. I always like to think of the mob match as the 'FA Cup' of the MWL. It gives clubs from all three divisions the chance to compete together. And many of the top clubs tend to take their eyes off the ball and field lower-than-full-strength teams. That means there's an opportunity for heroic giant-slaying – and GCR will enjoy home advantage! Last year, we were so close behind champions St Albans Striders, that the shield was initially presented in error to us – until SAS had the temerity to question Results Secretary Paul's arithmetic.

So please do all in your power to come along on Wednesday evening and be part of what will be a memorable evening. Our priorities in order are:

- 1) Put on a race which all runners and all clubs will enjoy, in safety, and with zero route uncertainty. That means marshals, marshals and more marshals. At time of writing, there are still a few critical positions yet to be covered
- 2) Win the Mob Match. This means we want any runner with even the slightest chance of being in the points to race and be in top form. (And yes, that does mean taking it easy on Tuesday or even – gasp! – missing training altogether.)
- 3) Put on the best spread of refreshments in the entire league. Not only do we have our reputation to keep up, but we want to encourage as many visitors to stay for the presentation as possible. And they won't do that if they finish their run to find the food tables already empty. Please bring anything you can – and offer to assist caterers Sophie and Nikki in whatever way they need. Last year, we just about coped with 600-plus customers. It's going to be a challenge. We can do it.
- 4) Enable the MWL Committee to put on a slick and unmissable presentation and prize-giving. Keep the hall tidy, keep the noise down, grab your food & drink and stick around until the final thank-yous. We hope to have a special guest helping RD Peter at race start, and helping to hand out trophies. Let's make it special.

See you all there,
Chair Sean.

An additional plea from our catering supremos

Dear GCRs,

We need you! We are still looking for three more Mob Match kitchen assistants available from 5.15pm on Weds, 10th July (preferably not running or marshalling as we need you for the evening!). Please email: nikkicowen72@gmail.com

Also, we will need your donations! We've had some emails already but we really need you to let us know by email (in advance) what you will be bringing on the night (from 5.15pm). At present we could do with more savoury food. Here's our list anyway. Thank you very much for your support.

Please also include in the below list, vegan/gluten free/dairy etc., Thank you.

1. Sandwiches/baguettes (freshly made & wrapped/cling filled)
2. Sausage rolls
3. Quiches
4. Crisps
5. Mini cheddars
6. Flapjack
7. Cakes – wrapped & unwrapped (shop bought & freshly made)
8. Mini sausages
9. Bananas
10. Apples
11. Pretzels
12. Pizza (cooked/ready to eat)
13. Pork Pies
14. Scotch eggs
15. Carrots/peppers/carrots – Sliced for dipping
16. Dips
17. Naked bars/muesli bars/cereal & fruit bars
18. Popcorn
19. Biscuits
20. Mini cheeses – baby bells/Dairylea triangles
21. Haribos /sweets

Kind regards,

Sophie and Nikki

Ware 10s

Jerry Gilbert (*pictured, below*) sent this report on his Ware 10K race, an event that holds a special meaning for him: "It was five years to the day that I last entered a proper race (other than the Festive 5).



"I had driven over to Ware for the *Festival of Running* with **Hayley Connolly**, having just learnt the devastating news that my wife had been diagnosed with sepsis and was on life support. I decided it was better to be running, than pacing around at home waiting for visiting hours at the Lister — and Hayley was happy to shoot off straight off after the race.

"Fast forward four days ... and I received a surprise phone call from the Ware RD. "Where were you? We had a podium place for you?" As the fastest in my shiny new 70+ age group, instead I had to collect the trophy rather more unceremoniously from the Wodson Park reception desk rather than receive the applause of the gathered assembly.

"These days I can only run a 10K on the wrong side of the one-hour mark, and as for a podium, with arthritic knees I could scarcely climb onto the first step let alone the top of the rostrum.

"But I was pleased to take on the new Ware course this morning in honour of my wife's recovery, happily making a donation to the UK Sepsis Trust in the process.

For the record, my chip time was 1:05:52 — although that was hardly the point." (For the record, Jerry's 2024 time earned him a place on the podium as third-placed MV70 – Ed.)

Philippa Thorogood also ran in the 10K event in 1:13:32.

In the 10 mile distance, **Peter Harvey** (*pictured below, right*) was first in his age group MV50 and 4th overall in 1:01:52.

Huge congratulations to **Nicki Donaghey** who ran a storming time of 1:06:46 to win the women's race. Just in front of her was **Matt Baker** who ran in 1:06:24, 17th overall.

Tendy St Francis, Willow Gibson and Charlotte Jones (pictured below, left) ran 10 miles and then ran back to WGC!

Peter reports that there were “plenty of puddles to dodge and a wet end for some to a well-established race.” Full results for GCRs taking part in the Ware 10 miles are available [here](#).



Nadine does the double

Nadine Dwyer sent a report on not one but two races she took part in this week:

Ricky Races 4

“On Thursday, I was back at Rickmansworth Aquadrome for another marathon in the Ricky Races. This is a small, low-key and very friendly event, mostly attended by the same group of runners. We once again had a lovely sunny day for our run. Unfortunately, some of the paths are still closed after the flooding earlier in the year, so we ended up running the 1 mile course again. These short laps feel harder mentally but chatting with the other runners helps getting around the 26 laps. It's also always a great opportunity to pick up tips from more



experienced runners...and to take selfies with the local wildlife. I'm sure the family of swans was happy to see the back of us after running past them so many times."

Left: Nadine and swans

Phoenix Running 'Day At The Movies Charity Run'

"On Saturday, Aiden and I were back for a lapped event on the Thames towpath - this time for a half marathon in the 'Day

at the Movies Charity Run' event. It was the first time I've run a marathon and a half marathon in the same week (with just 24 hours rest between them) and I wasn't quite sure what to expect but my legs didn't actually feel too bad. Conditions that morning were pretty grim, with heavy rain and strong wind but everyone was in good spirits.

Aiden finished his half marathon distance before me and added an extra lap, so actually ended up running 26k overall. This was another friendly, low-key event and once again, the medal was a bit on the small side!" *Right: Nadine and Aiden show off their undersized medals.*



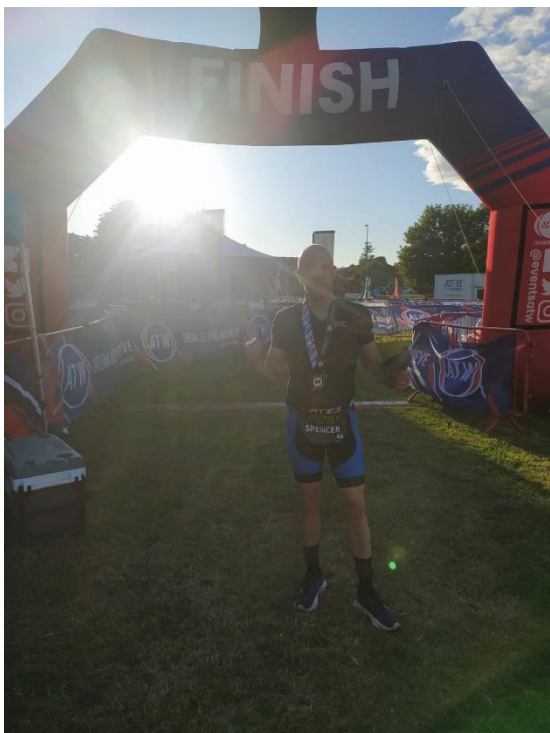
Spencer White vs Odyssey Triathlon

Spencer White sent this report on an epic feat of endurance: "On Saturday 6th July I competed in The Odyssey full iron distance triathlon at St Neots. The event started with the 3.8km swim in the River Ouse at 6.30am. The river was actually quite shallow with a slow current and the swim went well.

"Then I hit the 180km bike ride, four hours of which was in torrential rain! Wet to the core for hours on end, I found that I was shivering incessantly and the tips of my fingers were

constantly pale struggling to warm. At one point my front wheel nearly went under me but by sheer luck I managed to stay on my saddle!

“As the run approached I could feel my legs were exhausted so with relief the sun started to come out and renew my spirit! At 32km on the run I hit the wall and had to refuel which helped. I then managed to slowly trot round and was elated to finish, exhausted as I fell into the comfort of my family.



“The whole event was supported by incredible volunteers who kept everyone going, including one who kept me up-to-date with the England score! There was also a real camaraderie between the athletes. Even though a smaller event I would highly recommend it to fellow triathletes!

Swim - 4.2 km - 1 hour 28

Bike - 180km - 7 hours 6

Run - 42km - 4 hours 36

Total including transitions - 13 hours 26 mins. 4th in age category.

parkrun roundup

102 GCRs did not let Saturday’s downpours deter them from taking part in parkruns in Herts and beyond (very beyond). It was a week where GCR women shone: at Stevenage, **Martha Hall** was 1st female in 20:36, and **Felicity Wadley** was 3rd in 24:46. At Gunpowder, **Helen Stafford** was 3rd lady and **Caroline Griffin** 5th in 22:53 and 25:51 respectively. At Clacton Seafront, **Amber-Leigh Marvin** was 1st woman into the finish funnel in 22:08 and at Panshanger, **Rebecca Barden** was 2nd female in 24:13. GCR men didn’t do too badly either: **Alex Newman-Smith** was 1st at Panshanger in 18:18 and **Thomas Buzzard** was 1st at Letchworth in 19:55. This week’s parkrun tourism prize goes to **Sharon Threlfall** who was 13th female finisher at Yodogawa Kasenkoen Hirakata Chiku parkrun in Japan in 31:45.

Daniel Hitch sent this report about his and **Penelope Hitch**'s Keswick adventure:



“Daniel and Penelope Hitch represented GCR at the Keswick parkrun in the Lake District on Saturday morning. Contrasting to the gloomy weather down south, it was a sunny morning with around 300 other runners on a thankfully rather flat and beautiful out and back tarmac course, running over bridges and through tunnels on the old railway line. With tired legs after a week of mountain walking in the Lakes (including a Scafell Pike summit the previous day!), it was a great achievement for us both to complete the course, with Daniel squeezing in just under 23 minutes.

Unfortunately, Daniel missed the fell race up the 931m tall Skiddaw mountain on the Sunday, but he did successfully attempt a solo effort up into the clouds earlier in the week. It was an incredibly satisfying thing to do, and a leg workout like no other! He is now hoping to fly along on the flats of Welwyn for the rest of 2024.”

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

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	18 th July
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!

Avery Event #	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	£10.00	Completed
8	15 th May	MWRRL #1	Stevenage	Free	Completed
9	23 rd May	MWRRL #2	Ware	Free	Completed
10	New date 4 th June	MWRRL #3	Royston	Free	Completed
11	27 th June	MWRRL #4	Trent Park	Free	Completed
12 (V)	30 th June	Welwyn 10k	Panshanger Park	£20.00	Completed
13 (V)	10 th July	MWRRL Mob Match	Ridgeway 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)	4/11/18 th August (tbc)	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
18a	22 nd September (provisional date)	SXCL #1	Royston	Free	Club will send out details via email
18b (V)	13 th October (provisional date)	SXCL #2	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 (provisional date)	SXCL #3	Cassiobury Park, Watford	Free	Club will send out details via email
21	3 rd November (provisional date)	SXCL #4	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 (provisional date)	SXCL #5	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.

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
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.

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.

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 and in all sizes. See club website for photos. Vests, t-shirts and long sleeve 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/