



Garden City Runners News Release

18 December 2022

With running events and races back on, please remember to share your running accolades and anecdotes with the news editors for inclusion in the weekly news round up. Please send any content for future releases, before early Sunday evening for (almost) guaranteed inclusion, to results@gardencityrunners.org.uk

Pisa Marathon - perfect for running full tilt?

Russell Morris took part in the Pisa, Italy Marathon on Sunday 18th December.

Russell writes: "I was taken aback to receive an email on 17th November from the World Marathon Majors. It said that my Frankfurt marathon time had scored 'highly' in the Wanda Age Group Rankings and that a second 'similar performance at a 2022 qualifying event could result in an invite to run in the World Champs at Chicago in 2023'. This was certainly not part of my plan for the year, but I felt it was worth a shot.

There were only a few remaining qualifiers and just one practical option: a trip to Pisa in Italy in a month's time! That left a week of going straight back up to peak marathon-training mileage followed by a 3-week gradual taper. Clearly not ideal but I still had Frankfurt training in my legs and there's something 'meant to be' about going half-cocked to the home of the Leaning Tower.

Ahead of race day, I was pleased to learn that the route would be about as flat as you can expect from a marathon. It also promised to be picturesque. The race starts among the Romanesque buildings of the UNESCO World Heritage site in the centre of the city, heads out to take in the coastline of the Tyrrhenian Sea before winding back through the San Rossore Nature Reserve and eventual finish in front of the Leaning Tower. There are surely worse ways to spend a weekend and so it proved.

The weather was near perfect (12 degrees and sunny) spoiled only by a meaningful headwind for several miles of the second half. The race was well organised and very friendly, and the combination of factors helped me get a surprising new PB at 3:01:52 (Frankfurt was 3:11:27

and before that my PB was 4:06). It's a small event by city marathon standards but I was proud to finish 99th (including the elites) and come 11th in my (older than I look) category.



As some of you know I suffered a random 2.5cm hamstring tear just 3 weeks ago and was prepared to be saying something like 'I fought the tore and the tore won'. I'm so happy to not need the Clash today and instead close with the more upbeat Italian quote "Veni, vidi, vici" (I came, I saw") - you know the rest.

Totally recommend Pisa marathon. Is it a place to run full-tilt? I think it is. Is it a place to spend a weekend sight-seeing and then just enjoy a jog out to the Italian coastline through some beautiful nature reserve? Abso-flippin'-lutely."

Sounds like a Pisa cake, Russell. (Results should be posted [here](#) in due course.)

Winter Woolley 10k



Jen Denman was proudly representing GCR at the 'Winter Woolley 10k', a trail run in Woolhampton, Berkshire, on Sunday 18th December.

Jen writes: "Starting and finishing in the grounds of the (quite posh) Elstree School, it was a fantastic trail run that included 3 quite punishing hills, significant icy patches and some lovely rural scenery. We started in a hail shower, but it wasn't enough to

dampen the seasonal spirit! With only about 2 miles on lanes, the rest was a mix of footpaths through woods and fields. It was a little nostalgic of school day cross country! There was a nice medal and mince pie at the finish, and thankfully a decent coffee van to help defrost us. I finished in a satisfying 1:00:00 chip time." This is only the 3rd year of this race and very well organised, with 10k canicross and 10k options. Jen (*pictured above left*) was 68th overall, 18th lady and 8th in her age category. Full race results available [here](#).

Portsmouth Coastal Marathon / Half / 5k

Lee Wood and **Donna O'Toole** travelled to Portsmouth for the coastal marathon and Santa runs on Sunday 18th December.

Lee writes: "There was no snow or ice, but the day was cold, wet and windy with a forecast of it only getting wetter and windier! Donna ran the 5km despite a persistent niggling knee injury and was happy to finish in 34 minutes.

Portsmouth was my first marathon in 2014 and I've only missed one year since then and despite being flat, I know just how tough this course is. The infamous muddy beach is a section of seaweed, sludge and shingle that is tackled twice; the rest of the course is on a mixture of on and off-road paths, the whole out and back course is on exposed paths which feels like a head wind in both directions! So, I decided discretion was the better part of valour and dropped down to the half finishing in 1:55. Free post-race beers made up for the smallest medal ever!"

Well done to Lee for his result of 1:56:54 (122/388 overall; 27/55 category and 92/193 gender), and to Donna for her result of 34:51 (86/161 overall; 14/25 category and 45/90 gender). Full race results available [here](#).



parkrun roundup

A number of parkruns were cancelled this week due to the snowy conditions making the courses or the access unsafe. This did not deter 23 hardy GCRs who donned their thermals and ice skates to go in search of an event.

At Southampton, **Daniel Pudner** was 5th in 18:15. At St Albans, **Alex Faulkner** was 5th lady in 25:20 (other GCRs participating were **Andrew Holt**, **Jamie Rose**, **Fredi Gilberti** and

Valerie Levison). Westmill's snowy slopes entICEd **Chris Eland** to whizz into 7th place in 22:30 (**Rob Casserley**, **Paul Gatens** and **Roy Herbert** also skated round). For the ladies, **Helen Stafford** sleighed it as 4th lady in 31:26 (followed by **Stephanie Herbert** dancing in as 7th lady in 34:00 and **Sharon Threlfall** prancing in as 10th lady in 35:53).

Richard Darley escaped the softie southerners at Rothwell parkrun, **Gemma Sloan** ventured to Brentwood, and **Bernard Rockhill** ran at Lullingstone. **Simon Betteridge** and **Tony Harden** both bagged compass point parkruns at Eastleigh and Northala Fields, respectively. Up in the 'other' Garden City, **Jim Davis** and **Steve Grout** and **Asa Moburg Grout** completed Letchworth parkrun (I've heard it's an 'interesting' course in inclement conditions). Last but by no means least, **Samantha Hastie** was over in Berlin at the Hasenheide parkrun.

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

Avery League Competition 2022

After the cancellation of the Stevenage XC due to icy conditions, here are the final standings for the 2022 Avery Competition.

Well done to **Sophie Packman** for just pipping **Charlotte Jones** to first place. Sophie and Charlotte tied on points, but Sophie wins based on the various tiebreakers (details on request). In third place is **Maggie Wright**.

And for the men, **Richard Somerset** beat **Sidney Valentine** by one event to take the top spot. In equal third place, even after applying all six layers of tiebreakers are **Jamie Rose**, **Russell Morris** and **Peter Harvey**.

Well done all who did any of the races in this year's Avery competition. The top 10 are below.

Women	Men
1. Sophie Packman	1. Richard Somerset
2. Charlotte Jones	2. Sidney Valentine
3. Maggie Wright	3. Peter Harvey
4. Rebecca Barden	= Jamie Rose
5. Caroline O'Dwyer	= Russell Morris
6. Katharine Farrell	6. Lee Mansfield
7. Kath Evans	7. Johan Preis
8. Helen Stafford	8. Steve Ellerd-Elliott
9. Willow Gibson	9. Dom Thomas
10. Melanie King	10. Dai Selwood

Avery League 2022 event table

Date	Event	Venue	Cost	Status / notes
16/01/2022	XC 4	Cassiobury Park, Watford	free	Complete
23/01/2022	Fred Hughes 10*	St Albans	£21.20 affiliated	Complete
13/02/2022	XC 5	Therfield Heath, Royston	free	Complete
27/02/ 2022	Welwyn Half*	Gosling Stadium WGC	£28.62 affiliated	Complete
12/03/2022	Panshanger parkrun*	Panshanger Park	free	Complete
15/04/2022	St Albans Easter 10k*	St Albans	£22.36	Complete
24/04/2022	GCR Centenary 20.2k	WGC Centenary Route	free	Complete
02/05/2022	Kimpton Fun Run*	Kimpton	Entry cost tbc	Complete
18/05/2022	MWRRL 1	Stevenage	free	Complete
25/05/2022	MWRRL 2	Ware	free	Complete
01/06/2022	MWRRL 3	Harlow	free	Complete
26/06/2022	Welwyn 10k (V)	Singlers Marsh, Welwyn	£18.00 affiliated	Complete
30/06/2022	MWRRL 4	Therfield, Royston	free	Complete
06/07/2022	MWRRL Mob Match	WGC	free	Complete
21/7/2022	Fairlands Valley Relays*	Fairlands Valley, Stevenage	free	Complete

07/08/2022	Stopsley Trail Race	Stopsley	£21.20 10 mile race; £15.90 5 mile race (affiliated rate)	Complete
14/09/2022	Hatfield 5k Race 2	Hatfield	tbc	Complete
18/09/2022	Stevenage 10k*	Stevenage	£18.00 affiliated	Complete
16/10/22	XC 1 (V)	Cheshunt	free	Complete
30/10/22	XC 2	Trent Park	free	Club will send out details via email
6/11/22	Stevenage Half Marathon*	Stevenage	Tbc (£28 2021)	Complete
19/11/22	parkrun	Westmill	free	Complete
4/12/22	Festive 5 (V)	Welwyn Garden City	£8.00	Enter here
18/12/22	XC 3	Stevenage	free	Cancelled

Races marked * = Club Champs race
Races marked (V) = volunteering points are available

Avery League Competition 2023

As the wintery sun sets on this year's Avery competition, we look forward to a chance to start afresh in 2023. The Race Committee will shortly be announcing the events in next year's Avery competition, but in the meantime, we suggest [getting your entry in](#) for the Fred Hughes 10 on Sunday 22 January 2023, as this will very likely feature as one of the Avery events.

Club Championships

The results of the Club Championships for 2022 have been announced. Our champions for this year are as follows:

Women's Top 3	1st Helen Stafford 2nd Rebecca Barden 3rd Sophie Packman
Women's Vets	1st V40 Caroline Griffin 1st V50 Maggie Wright 1st V60 Veronica Shadbolt
Men's Top 3	1st Peter Harvery 2nd Daniel Pudner 3rd Steve Ellerd-Elliott
Men's Vets	1st V40 Peter Jasko 1st V50 Richard Somerset 1st V60 Dave Desborough 1st V70 Jim Davis

Festive Get Together at Postino Lounge including London Marathon Draw

After last week's planned festive get together was snowed off, our social fairy godmother Sophie has worked her Christmas magic so we can all go to the ball. So, **7pm on Monday 19 December** come along to **Postino Lounge, Howardsgate, WGC**, and swap your running mojo for a mojito*. Your first drink is on the Club. We'll be making the draw for the club places for the London Marathon during the evening. Bring along some cash, as there will be various running goodies on offer in exchange for a donation, which will go to charity. Of course, Christmas jumpers and accessories greatly encouraged for all.
(* alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages available)

All I want for Christmas is XC

Ok, not Christmas exactly. January, to be precise. If you get some shiny new trail trainers for Christmas and want to get them properly dirty, James Huish has some options for you. Get in touch with James by 23rd December with your DOB and your EA number if you'd like to take part – it would be great to get a few teams of GCRs together.

The Herts XC Senior Championships:

- Sunday 8th January 2023
- Cassiobury Park, Watford
- Women – 8km @ 12:30pm
- Men – 11.25km @ 1:15pm

SEAA Main XC Champs ('Southerns'):

- Saturday 28th January 2023
- Beckenham Place Park, South London
- Women - 8km - usually 2pm
- Men - 15km - usually 3pm

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. 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 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, click here for details of the group.

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/