



## Garden City Runners News Release

23 June 2024

### 500 not out for Andy Holt

We're accustomed to reporting some eye-watering parkrun milestones in this newsletter — but few can match **Andy Holt's** achievement. Fellow GCRs, including new club chairman **Sean Bowen**, turned out in force at Jersey Farm on Saturday to support Andy as he lined up at a parkrun for the 500<sup>th</sup> time (almost certainly the first club member to reach this figure).

As announced by the Jersey Farm race director, "Andy ran his first parkrun at Havant in 2012. His second was at St Albans a couple of weeks later, when he ran 17:50. It wasn't at all surprising that he could run parkruns so quickly. He has a marathon PB, from when he was



somewhat younger, of 2:24 minutes, which works out at just a click over 17 minutes for each and every 5km section." According to **Jim Davis**, who sent this report, "this brought a great cheer from all present."

He adds, "If you haven't run Jersey Farm parkrun before, there are a couple of observations I would make ... it isn't flat and there isn't much tarmac. But it is very friendly and it always has a large number of 'tourists.'"

First home for GCR was **Daniel Pudner** (20:50) followed a second later by **Bruce Judge**.

Then came **Rob Casserley** (21:02) before **Andy Holt** entered the finish funnel in 21:16—the first VM60 finisher.

Other GCR's who finished (in sequence) were **Sean Bowen, Rob Hughes, Chris Baylis, Jim Forrester, Robert Cartwright, Aiden Dwyer, Jennifer Williams, Emon Martin, Sofie Marchant, Che Cheriton, Yvonne Jones, Nadine Dwyer, Jim Davis, Wayne Aylott, Caroline O'Dwyer, Laura Stephen, Emily Hammond, Tendy St Francis, Willow Gibson** and **Caroline Hughes**.

After the run there was beer to celebrate, and Andy was presented with an amazing cake, featuring a picture of him running. The cake was organised by Wayne Aylott. "I think it made Andy almost speechless—a rare occasion!" noted Jim Davis. *Andy is pictured above, and below with some of his GCR supporters.*



### **LDWA Herts Hobble**

A number of GCRs took part in the *Herts Hobble 2024*—a trail run in which participants could choose between a 26.2-mile marathon course or an 18-mile course, both featuring a circular route over undulating countryside ... starting at the Baldock Scout Hut.

“ Herts Hobble ... what a fantastic day I had running my first self-navigation XC marathon!” reports **Nikki Cowen**. “I loved it even with the heat. **Roger Adey** [*with whom she is pictured right*] was the perfect guide and navigator!”

The volunteers were so happy to chat and help if anyone needed it. It's definitely one to try if you're first and I cannot wait to do another one with less heat maybe!”



**Belinda McGinley and Andrew Ackrill** (*pictured left*) also ran the full marathon distance together, finishing in a time of 5hr 7min.



**Tendy St. Francis, Charlotte Jones and Willow Gibson**, completed the 18-mile option, again stating that the heat had been the toughest part of the race. As the day progressed, it became more intense, making it crucial to stay

hydrated. *They are pictured below.*



Also taking part in the Herts Hobble was the indomitable **Kath Evans**, who says, "Starting at Baldock Scout Hut, we headed out to Wallington Village Hall, then to Ardeley Village Hall and over to Graveley Village Hall before heading back to Baldock Scout Hut. The sun shone and the tea flowed, the lemon drizzle cake was particularly delicious! The views were fabulous and there were plenty of cheerful wild flowers making us smile along the route! There was a great turn out from GCR, some speedy, some taking in the scenery." She provided the photo below.



### **Midsummer Murder 10 Mile Trail Race**

**Ann Hayden, Gail Munro, Sharon Stephens and Alison Meaden** ran this beautiful 10-mile trail race, which started in the picture postcard village of Hambleden, Buckinghamshire.

This is the backdrop for many film and television locations, such as *The Avengers*, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* and, of course, *Midsummer Murders*.



Reports Alison (pictured above and left with her colleagues), "A half marathon option was also available, but with a strict cut-off time and some serious hills, we went for the 10-mile option. The route followed an extremely scenic route of footpaths woodlands and the

occasional quiet lane, up to Cobstone Windmill, which can be seen for miles around. For the 10-milers, this was pretty much the halfway point, and the route back down from the windmill was somewhat easier, save for one last big climb before descending back into Hambleden.

"Crisps, cola and a very impressive medal awaited us at the finish." The finish time for all four GCRs was 2:34.

"The route was challenging at times but the weather was fine and sunny and this was a very enjoyable event."



## Giants Head Half

The previous week, **Charlotte Jones** and **Tendy St. Francis** (*pictured below*) completed the Giants Head Half Marathon in Sydling St. Nicholas. Tendy reports, "The race was as beautiful as it was brutal, with some of the steepest hills we've ever faced. Luckily we had the perfect running weather and the breath-taking scenery, while fellow runners and marshals, kept us both distracted from the gruelling effort.

"The interactive medal is very interesting too! It features the outline of the Cerne Abbas Giant, the famous chalk figure carved into the hillside. The Giant ice cream at the finish line was the cherry on top! Absolutely worth the effort.

“The day before, we stayed in Poole and ran the Poole parkrun, which was a really enjoyable flat course with a massive turnout of mostly local runners. We spent the rest of Saturday exploring Brownsea Island, the original home of the Scouts and saw red squirrels. It was a fantastic way to unwind before the big race!”

### parkrun News

A car load of intrepid GCRs headed off to Aldenham parkrun for a surprise meet up with **Martin Mitchell. John McDowall** reports, “This was a flat double lapper on trails round a



substantial lake/small inland sea. It’s a nice park that’s 25min drive from WGC with easy parking but with a small negative of a £5.50 charge!

Martin finished 2nd in 19:44; **Richard Somerset** was next in 5<sup>th</sup> (20:49), **John McDowall** 8<sup>th</sup> (21:36), **Johan Preis** 35<sup>th</sup> in 26:29 and **Barbara Kubis-Labiak** (achieving her ‘A’ letter) in 39<sup>th</sup> with a time of 27:11

## **Give us an 'N' ...**

After 11 years of parkrunning, **Jane Molloy** finally achieved her last parkrun letter - N - at New Ross parkrun in Ireland. She reports, "The course is in the lovely John F Kennedy Arboretum and is 1.5 loops run entirely on tarmac, starting with a delicious downhill 1k before a seriously long uphill.

As the first GCR to complete this course, I can thoroughly recommend it; even the drive to the location is a delight. Next week, I will be doing my 250th parkrun at Panshanger. There will be sweet treats to celebrate," she promises, "so please do join me."

## **parkrun Overview**

GCR runners were out in force this weekend, with 116 runners participating. Truffling through the results the following leapt out.

Panshanger as usual saw a huge contingent of GCRs in action, but all unusually finishing outside the top 10.

The most successful runner was **Nicholas Summers**, who finished 11th in 20:05.

**Francesca Di Paola** PB'd in 35:25—well done to her.

**Tony Harden's** time of 32:11 earned him a new PB at Luton Wardown. At Stevenage **Jamie Rose** finished in 19:28, earning him 11<sup>th</sup> place. **Caroline Hale** recorded a mighty 20:53 earning her 19<sup>th</sup> place (and 2<sup>nd</sup> female), and **Justin Swallow** PB'd in 23:54. At Gunpowder **Matt Baker** finished 3<sup>rd</sup> in a creditable 18:30. In Margate, men's captain **James Huish** narrowly missed top spot, finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> in 17:55. At Barclay **Daniel Gordon** recorded an excellent 20:45 to finish 6<sup>th</sup>. Full results for GCRs participating in Saturday's parkruns can be found [here](#).

## **Nick Genever: injury is no picnic**

**Nick Genever** writes that shortly after his last marathon in January he was unable to run for three months due to SI joint pain and sciatica. "I was expecting to do the Picnic as my comeback race but decided to enter the Stour Valley Marathon as a warm-up race. It was





going well until I sprained my ankle at 10 miles but carried on for another 18

miles to finish in 13th place out of 94 in 4:30.



The Final Final Picnic Marathon is billed as Britain's hardest marathon with a total ascent over 2,000m and over 1,500 steps to climb and descend. Runners do two laps of an out-and-back course around the Box Hill Country Park, going down and up Box Hill four times and down 300 steps to the river four times.

The cut-off to get to the half-way point was 3 hours and I made it there with 20 minutes to spare.

"It was hot on the course and I kept pouring water over my head to cool down. On the first river crossing I used the stepping stones, on the second and third time I waded across and on the fourth I swam across underwater which was refreshing. I completed the marathon in 5:52 which was 35 minutes faster than six years ago when I did the Final Picnic Marathon. I'm glad I'll never have to do this one again!"

### **Daniel Follon news.**

**Daniel Follon** parkran at Dunstable Downs on Saturday. "Through sunshine and showers on their new course, I ran 25:21, finishing 27th of 133. A very nice course, undulating as many of the National Trust properties can be. This is a scenic route but I will hopefully go back there for their alternative course. They used a different route this time, like Panshanger it had a load of livestock, many cows on the route and also some sheep."

Daniel followed this up by running the Triffic Trail 10k at Trent Park. "This was a tough trail race with four big hills, the first was one that organisers referred to pre-race as 'Everest', and they described it well. In warm conditions, I came home 108th place out of 412 runners in a time of 50:56. Seemed a well organised run and I'll try and go back next year."

## **Final Bridge to 10K**

This Tuesday will be a final week of the 'Bridge to 10k' course led by **Rob Cartwright**. Everyone is invited to run and celebrate afterwards at the Attimore pub. The group will be running 10km non-stop, estimating time to complete between 65-80 minutes. If you plan to meeting at the pub, arrive 7.45-8pm.

## **Thippi's charity event**

Thippawan 'Thippi' Rashleigh is holding a charity event for her Big Half in the form of a charity yoga in the garden and breakfast on Sunday, July 7 from 9am onwards.

Thippi is running for Barnet Mencap, which offers service and support to learning disabilities adults and children in the Barnet area. Contact her for more information.

Meanwhile, here is her fundraising page.

<https://2024thebighalf.enthuse.com/pf/thippawanrashleigh-bighalf>

## **Mid Week League: Trent Park**

Dates and venues for the Mid-Week League fixtures have been announced – see the Avery league table below.

 MWL Race 4 Trent Park – 27<sup>th</sup> June 

## **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:

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

<b>Avery Event #</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Cost</b> <i>Registration fees may apply</i>	<b>Status / Notes</b>
1	21 <sup>st</sup> January	Fred Hughes 10	St Albans	£20.00 aff.	Completed
2	4 <sup>th</sup> 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 <sup>th</sup> March	Panshanger parkrun	Panshanger Park	Free	Completed
5	24 <sup>th</sup> 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 <sup>th</sup> April	Flitwick 10k	Flitwick	£18.00 aff.	Completed
7	6 <sup>th</sup> May	Kimpton Fun Run 10k	Kimpton	tbc	Completed
8	15 <sup>th</sup> May	MWRRL #1	Stevenage	Free	Club will send out details via email
9	23 <sup>rd</sup> May	MWRRL #2	Ware	Free	Club will send out details via email
10	<b>New date</b> 4 <sup>th</sup> June	MWRRL #3	Royston	Free	Club will send out details via email
11	27 <sup>th</sup> June	MWRRL #4	Trent Park	Free	Club will send out details via email
12 (V)	30 <sup>th</sup> June	Welwyn 10k	Panshanger Park	tbc	Details tbc
13 (V)	10 <sup>th</sup> July	MWRRL Mob Match	Ridgway Academy, WGC	Free	Club will send out details via email
14	18 <sup>th</sup> July	FVS 3k Relays	Fairlands Valley, Stevenage	Free	Club will send out details via email
15 (V)	4/11/18 <sup>th</sup> August (tbc)	GCR Centenary 20.2k	WGC Centenary Route	Free	Club will send out details via email
16 (V)	4 <sup>th</sup> September	Hatfield 5k #2 (Vets)	Hatfield	tbc	Details tbc
17	15 <sup>th</sup> September	Stevenage 10k	Stevenage	£18.00 aff.	<a href="#">Register here</a>

18a	22 <sup>nd</sup> September (provisional date)	SXCL #1	Royston	Free	Club will send out details via email
18b (V)	13 <sup>th</sup> October (provisional date)	SXCL #2	Cheshunt	Free	Club will send out details via email
19	20 <sup>th</sup> October	Stevenage Half Marathon & Marathon	Stevenage	tbc	<a href="#">Register here</a>
20	27 <sup>th</sup> October (provisional date)	SXCL #3	Cassiobury Park, Watford	Free	Club will send out details via email
21	3 <sup>rd</sup> November (provisional date)	SXCL #4	Trent Park	Free	Club will send out details via email
22	24 <sup>th</sup> November	Hatfield 5	Hatfield	£22.00 early-bird aff.	<a href="#">Register here</a>
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 in all sizes, **and \*new\* a cosy GCR-branded woolly hat**. See club website for photos. All items are £20 (£19.99 if you pay by bank transfer) except for the hats which are £12.

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/)

*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)*

