



Garden City Runners News Release

26 May 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

Mid Week Road Running League, Race 2 – Ware



Above: GCRs assemble at the start of the Ware MWL race

Thursday saw another great turn out and another great result for GCR at this season's second fixture, at Ware, hosted by Ware Joggers. GCR women put in a storming performance, achieving 1st place in the women's race and 1st in the vets' race. **Jess**

Timmins was 4th lady, and also in the top 20 were **Martha Hall** (8th), **Zoe Stephens** (10th), **Caroline Hale** (16th), **Amber-Leigh Marvin** (18th) and **Lucy Iles** (20th). GCR men were 3rd in the men's race and 2nd in the vets' race. **Bradley Birch** was 4th overall, and also in the top 20 were **Chris Baylis** (14th) and **James Huish** (17th). After two races, GCR women are 1st and GCR men 2nd in the Division 2 championship, and GCR are first overall, with Dacorum in 2nd place.

Let's try to maintain our strong presence at the remaining two scoring fixtures – the next race is at Royston, on **Tuesday 4th June**. Remember, **it's not just the A teams that count** – every GCR who finishes ahead of another club's runner helps our overall score and helps us maintain our position in the table. There will be a coach to take us to and from Race HQ – look out for Facebook and email updates from our women's team captain **Hannah Frank** for more details.

Link to full results: <http://www.runherts.com/mwrrr.htm>

London 2 Brighton 100k Ultra Challenge

Nadine Dwyer took on the London 2 Brighton 100k Ultra Challenge, starting in Richmond's Old Deer Park and finishing at Brighton Racecourse. Nadine reports: "This was my first 100k and without a doubt the hardest thing I've ever done! From Couch to 5k to a 100k ultra in 3 years - absolutely bonkers!

"I ran/walked/shuffled/practically crawled to get this done. It was hot for the first 3/4 of the route and then heavy rain for the rest. A tough route and for some sections we could have done with a machete, the path was so overgrown. So muddy as well in the last quarter of the route – I've never seen mud so deep, and quite a few people got stuck or lost shoes in the mud. I'm not sure if my legs ever want to run/walk again, and I definitely don't want to see another stile – it felt like there were 100s on this route! What an experience though! I was so lucky to bump into a lovely guy at the halfway mark and we stuck together until the finish - he was a life saver, as running in the dark on my own would have been tough...especially going through fields with cows at night.

"It was a great experience and one hell of a challenge. I've completed a few 50k events but the 100k is a very different beast. This was a brilliantly organised event by Ultra Challenges - we were all well looked after, fed and watered throughout the day and night and everything from the signage to the drop bag transfer and the shuttle bus to the station was just spot on. It was also great to regularly encounter marshals during the night checking everyone was OK.

"Will I do another one? Who knows but I think the next time I fancy going to Brighton I'll probably take the car or a train!"



Above: Nadine with a 'moo' friend, and celebrating at the finish

Greensand Country 50k ultra

There was no chance of GCR's ultra aces **Kath Evans** and **Peter Jasko** taking it easy over the bank holiday weekend. Instead Sunday saw the intrepid duo take what Kath dubbed "a little plod" around a stunning single loop 50K ultra marathon on the Greensand Country trails in Bedfordshire, hosted by Runaway racing.



Kath reports: "We started at Shuttleworth and were immediately treated to deer (who were going a lot faster than me!), bright rhododendrons, along with purple, pink and white foxgloves. The rest of the route brought plenty of wild flowers including glorious poppies, thatched cottages and lots of green fields and a fair bit of mud too! It was a lovely route,



superbly marked and marshalled, and apart from a few showers the weather was kind! Many congratulations to Peter Jasko with a fab time of 5:50:10. I was a lot slower coming in at 7:22:18." (Pictured: some of the glorious sights along the route)

Edinburgh Half Marathon



Michael Germany and **Katharine Farrell** travelled all the way up to Edinburgh to compete in the Edinburgh Half Marathon. Michael reports: "The weather was not on our side with consistent rain and a head wind on the exposed coastal roads. However, despite the weather, we both managed to secure new half marathon PBs of 1:38:25 for myself and 1:39:52 for Katharine."

parkrun roundup

There was a pause in the downpours on Saturday morning and what more excuse did 102 GCRs need to prise themselves out of bed and make their way to parkruns at locations across Herts and far beyond? At St Albans, **Jamie Rose** was 10th in 20:30; **Alex Faulkner** ran in 27:28 and **Clare Wildey** in 28:42. **Caroline Hale** was 2nd lady at Stevenage in 21:22. At Panshanger, **Steve Ellerd-Elliott** was 16th overall in 20:56; **Philip Brooks** was 19th in 21:10; **Hannah Frank** was 4th lady in 25:33 and **Lucy Iles** 7th lady in 26:06. At Letchworth, **Richard Somerset** was 15th overall in 22:24 and **Barbara Kubis-Labiak** 7th female finisher in 25:46. At Itchen Valley Country parkrun, **Sean Bowen** was 16th overall in 22:42, and **Sarah Durston** was 5th lady at Sandringham in 24:47.

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

GCR AGM

The night before the MWL fixture saw GCRs gather for a different purpose: to celebrate the many achievements of the club over the past year and look forward to another year of running community. It was also a bittersweet occasion, as **Jane Molloy** stepped down as Chair after four years of sterling service, and Vice Chair **Louise Smith** also stepped down from her role after many years of service as both Chair and Vice Chair. Fortunately Jane and Lou were able to hand over the reins to the very capable **Sean Bowen** and **Sidney**

Valentine as Chair and Vice Chair respectively, with **Michael Scutt** moving into the role of Club Secretary previously held by Sean. For a full report on Wednesday's meeting, please see the report attached to this news release.

GCR Track Relays: Thursday 30th May

In preparation for the FVS 3K Relays in July, our very own chip timing guru **Richard Sidlin** will be running a test event at our track session on Thursday 30 May 2024. This will be a 4 x 400 metre relay and will take place after the usual drills and warmups. Nearer the time, an entry portal will be available to enter teams. It'll be a fun event and more importantly, free of charge. Teams will consist of four runners and they can either be Senior Male, Senior Female, Vet Male, Vet Female or Mixed Senior or Vets (2 Male & 2 Female).

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	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	£20.00	Register here
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)	4/11/18 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 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/

Run Leaders, for their consistent ongoing efforts, ingenuity and support throughout the last 4 years. To all, she said “You have made this job a joy, and it has been an absolute privilege.”

Financial Report & Statements

Treasurer, David Hale, sent his apologies. His report was read out to the attendees and the P&L and Balance Sheet shared.

In summary, David reported that at the year ended 31 March, the Club remained in a sound financial position with cash reserves of over £27,000. The Committee voted to continue giving back to the membership and the community from this fund, which had been gradually increasing over the years.

This year, expenditure outstripped income by £7,811 and the accounts show how the money has been dispersed. Highlights of additional outgoings are :

- In total, the club made charitable donations totalling £11,620 (£8,370 last year)
- £2,020 was spent on putting run leaders through coaching courses.
- Coach travel to races was subsidised by c £1,000.
- Several ongoing costs have risen, while membership subs at £20 have remained unchanged for over 30 years.

A new accounting package (Club Treasurer) was implemented to future proof financial reporting and aid reconciliation of the bank accounts. Next year, we have the objective of simplifying the membership sign-up by integrating Membermojo with the Stripe payment system.

Questions were raised about the benefits of individual payments to EA. Responses from Committee Members and others cited discounted races, events and apparel, access to EA support services/training, and potential to receive additional London Marathon places.

Membership Secretary's Report

Sue Fletcher, provided an update on current membership numbers, which currently stands at 372, of which there are 17 honorary/life members, 69 family members, 13 second claim and 4 away. Membermojo is showing 82 'expired' members, i.e. those who have not got around to renewing or who may have decided not to renew. There are 12 who have renewed but are 'pending payment'. These figures are similar to last year.

Regarding EA affiliations, GCR officially has 221 members listed, including 16 volunteers, 8 coaches/leadership in running fitness and 1 official. However, 124 have not actually renewed since the 1st April and EA will remove them from our club list if not renewed by end August.

The attendees were curious to understand how to confirm who had fully renewed their membership or not, and Sue responded that if anyone has stopped receiving Club emails/newsletters, this is the best indication that they have not completed renewal.

Captains' Report

Men's Captain, James Huish talked through all the Club's racing achievements over the last year, including last Summer's MWL, Winter's Sunday XC and National and County championship races. He also shared results from the Team Events that happen, including Endure 24, St Albans

Stampede, and the Round Norfolk Relay, as well as summarising some very impressive marathon results over the year. Specific highlights of the year were

- 6 gold, 11 silver and 18 bronze medals in the counties and league events throughout the year
- Record MWL attendance including 104 at St Albans
- Mob Match gold for the Women and Vets overall
- Consistent Sunday XC League participation and close to a 50/50 gender split!

Election of Officers and Committee Members

Club Secretary, Sean Bowen, introduced the election with thanks and a round of applause for the service of those not standing for re-election, namely Jane Molloy (Chair), Louise Smith (Vice Chair) and Sally Laflin. He presented those nominated and standing for election/re-election and the following were fully endorsed by those present:

Re-Election of Officers

David Hale, Treasurer

Election of Officers

Sean Bowen – Chair

Sidney Valentine – Vice Chair

Michael Scutt - Secretary

Re-Election of Committee Members

Sue Fletcher (Membership Secretary)

Markus Allen

Rebecca Barden

Hannah Frank

James Huish

Charlotte Jones

Sophie Packman

Chris Poole

Election of Member – Tendy St Francis

In stepping down, Lou Smith, thanked all the Chairs that she had worked with – Bruce Judge, Brad Smith, and Jane – since joining the Committee in 2016. She sees the club as continuously growing in strength, teamwork and professionalism as each year has passed, and is very happy to be continuing her involvement in other aspects, such as run leading.

The meeting concluded with Hannah Frank, Ladies' Captain, presenting a gift to Jane on behalf of the Main and Race Committees, with warm words of thanks and appreciation.

Meeting closed at 21:05.