

2023 EDITION 2

SEAFORD STRIDERS

We don't just run, we also have fun!



By Bronwyn Ryan

The days are getting longer, the evenings are getting lighter and Spring is nearing. This means we are inching closer to Wednesday Night trail runs and the start of Spring Marathon Season!

The Seaford Striders AGM took place on Tuesday 28th February and the club are excited to have a new Chair on the Committee this year as well as some new faces taking on roles from Sussex Grand Prix to Couch 2 5k Organiser. More details will be shared in the Chair's report and you will meet the new Committee Members over the coming months.

The newsletter will continue to be published once a month and please send in your race reports in time (dates on the final page of the newsletter).

Have a wonderful year ahead and happy running!

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FROM THE COUCH TO THE CHAIR

By Victoria Maleski

Chair's speech at the AGM:

When I set out on 22nd March 2017 to do my first C25k session with Seaford Striders little did I know that it would lead to me to presenting the report from the Chair at the AGM this year. I am so honoured to be in this position today.

I am so proud of all your achievements this year. Whether you have graduated through C25k or have smashed your ultras and everything in between. They are all valid achievements and I know how much they mean to you individually. If anyone says running is easy then they are lying as the competitive side in each of us makes us want to keep improving. It is made so much easier if you know you have the support of other people who know what you are going through. We have that in Seaford Striders, we are all your running family.

This has been a challenging year for our committee.

I would like to thank the previous Chairman Rob Plant for his years of service to the Club and I was personally very sad when he announced he wanted to step aside as Chairman but totally understand that family has to come first.

There have been three Club Secretaries during the membership year. Thank you Graham Jones, Rick Garcia and Leanne Litster. As you are probably aware Rick sadly died at the end of last year. I invite you to join me in a few moments of applause to celebrate his life. The committee decided we would remember him by donating a PB bell to Seaford Beach parkrun.

I also want to thank Becky Souissi who stepped down as Women's Captain, Beverly Sheridan who stepped down as Track/Coach Coordinator and Simon Croucher who has decided not to continue as SGP Rep.

Massive thanks also to Lorraine Quigley who continued to support the Club as Treasurer during the extended period of handover to Martin Crombie.

There is a lot of work that goes on in the background to keep our wonderful Club going and I have every confidence in our committee going forwards. Thank you to all of you who are on the committee, I am sure we all appreciate everything you do for the Club. I am delighted that new people have come forward to join the committee representing all running abilities.

We gave members the opportunity to give their views by having a questionnaire. Over 60 people participated, thank you to all of you who have responded. You will see the results of this come through in a number of different areas.

- We have run introductory Track sessions to encourage more members to try track out for the first time.
 - We are broadening the type of social events being proposed to make them more inclusive.
 - We invited all adult members to submit nominations for our various awards.
- We have provided more information on Club Grand Prix, Sussex Grand Prix and England Athletics affiliation to encourage wider participation.
 - We will put on more coaches for events like the Great South Run.
 - We are in the process of updating the information available on the website.

There is more to be done, but this is a start. We will do more questionnaires in the future. I want to encourage an ethos of openness and the sharing of responsibility. We are a Club and we should support and respect one another.

The Club has funded England Athletics training for both junior and adult run leaders. This is a really positive step for the Club and allows us to ensure that we comply with our Club England Athletics affiliation and insurance requirements. I would like to thank Beverly Sheridan who started off this process and both Darren Evans and Joel Eaton who have seen it through to completion. Thanks also to all of you who have put yourself forwards to be trained and for conquering the England Athletics website! I know they don't make it easy for you.

The Mince Pie 10 was a fantastic event. Thank you to Nick and his Mince Pie Committee and to all of you who volunteered. We always get such positive feedback from the runners and it has a wonderful vibe throughout.

Lots of you volunteer at other events including Beachy Head Marathon weekend, parkrun and Seaford Martello Half - thank you for the support you give to the running community.

The highlights of the membership year for me were the Solstice run seeing masses of both junior and adult Striders enjoying a lovely summer evening, the Striders coach trip to the Great South run, the Beachy Head marathon weekend and Brighton Half Marathon last weekend. In every case such brilliant support was shown for all abilities.

You will all have your favourites, whether they were icy cross country races, baking hot summer ultras or a Wednesday night hunt for Father Christmas. There are so many fantastic memories being created.

SUSSEX GRAND PRIX

The Sussex Grand Prix is back for 2023!!! It consists of taking part in road races organised around Sussex throughout the year with points awarded based on each individual's finishing position. There are 12 races in total and only your top 6 scores will count (individual scoring). There are also two club leagues which are scored differently.

Event	Dates	Event
1	26th March 2023	Hastings Half
2	30th April 2023	Haywards Heath 10 mile
3	7th May 2023	Rye 10 mile
4	14th May 2023	Horsham 10k
5	4th June 2023	Hastings 5 mile
6	18th June 2023	Heathfield 10k
7	2nd July 2023	Bewl 15
8	12th July 2023	Phoenix 10k
9	10th September 2023	Hellingly 10k
10	1st October 2023	Lewes Downland 10 mile
11	15th October 2023	Hove Prom 10k
12	19th November 2023	Crowborough 10k

If you have any questions about the Sussex Grand Prix and how it works please reach out to Ollie Sprague who will assist you.



CLUB GRAND PRIX

The CGP events have not yet been selected for 2023 – update to follow via email!

What is the Club Grand Prix?

The Club Grand Prix is a fun and friendly competition amongst other club members running throughout the calendar year.

What does the Club Grand Prix involve?

It consists of some pre-chosen parkruns, races and virtual events throughout in year. These events are still to be confirmed and will be shared in next months newsletter (if not before).

When will the Club Grand Prix begin?

The events for the CGP are still be decided however it will start around March time. You haven't missed any races don't worry!

How do I score points?

A points system is operated, meaning the first Strider home will score 20 points, the second 19 and so on. These are not always based on the fastest, and could instead be based on age grading instead to level the playing field. Your highest 10 scores will count towards your grand total, and whoever had the highest points wins the competition.

How do I share my results for the event with the club?

Results and scoring will be compiled for you (from race results and parkrun results) unless the event was virtual and then a submission form will be sent around (it's really easy to use).

I don't want to pay to enter races does this mean I'm excluded?

Not at all! Some events in the CGP calendar will be paid races however there will be a fair mixture of parkruns and virtual events that are free to take part in.

I'm worried CGP is just for quicker runners should I take part?

CGP is for all Striders. It is a great way to see your Strider friends and results are based on either time or age grading which means everyone is included. Go along, give it ago and if you love it try another event!

When will the winner be announced?

The 2023 winner will be announced in December. An award will then be presented to the winners in 2024 at the awards evening.



COUCH TO **5K** *is returning...*

Seaford Striders Running Club is pleased to announce its **2023 Couch to 5k group**. It will meet at the Richmond Road Car Park (by the Salts) for 9 weeks from Tuesday 18th April at 7pm. The group aims to celebrate its successful completion at Parkrun (Date TBC).

Taking part in C25K will take you from not running at all, to being able to run 5k, in just nine weeks. This is for you if you want to learn how to run having never run previously, if you have found it difficult to keep up the momentum during lockdown and need a refresher or if you used to run some time ago and fancy getting back into it. It is suitable for any adult who is able to walk non-stop for at least 20 minutes and wants to be able to transition to running.

Will I need any special equipment?

Supportive training shoes and comfortable clothing to run in. We recommend that you download the NHS C25K App so that you can follow the training plan. Ideally you will do two other training runs using the App between each Strider led group.

What will Seaford Striders provide?

Loads of encouragement from our members, many of whom started out by doing C25K themselves. There will be separate groups for all abilities led by experienced runners. They will know exactly how you are feeling – chances are they will have felt the same when they started.

I'm scared I won't be able to keep up!

Don't worry we won't leave anyone behind. There will always be one of our members at the tail of each group.

What does it cost?

It is free to take part! Obviously we would love you to join Seaford Striders but it is not a condition of taking part.

OK, you have persuaded me, what do I do now?

Please register by emailing info@seafordstriders.org.uk. You can also use this email address if you have any questions.

We look forward to hearing from you and helping you on your running journey.

CROSS COUNTRY

The East Sussex Sunday Cross Country League is made up of six races between October and March. Individuals can score within their own age category (your best four races make up your overall points total), and for the team depending on where you finish. We often car share to these races because parking is limited due to the races being held in the countryside.

- 1 - 16-Oct Blackcap, Lewes
- 2 - 27-Nov Snape Wood, Wadhurst
- 3 - 18-Dec Newplace Park, Framfield
- 4 - 15-Jan Warren Hill, Eastbourne
- 5 - 05-Feb Whitbread Hollow, Eastbourne
- 6 - 12-Mar Pett

Details of the up and coming races are released by the hosting running club closer to the time. The flyer with all relevant information will be emailed out to all members once available.

In the last event at Whitbread Hollow we managed to move up to 5th place overall as a team. With only one event to go lets see where we can finish the season!

Individually we have the following people in notable positions after 5 races with their number of races run in brackets;

- SW - Anneka Redley-Cook 4th (4)
- F35 - Jemma Crawford 7th (4)
- F55 - Jackie Baxter 8th (4)
- SM - Josh Nishbett 7th (4)
- M50 - James Marron 4th (4)
- M60 - Dave Dunstall 7th (3)
- M70 - Peter Weeks 3rd (3)



Meet the Committee

Josh Nisbett - Cross Country Rep

Hi, I'm Josh. I joined Seaford Striders at the beginning of 2016 to try a new sport. Previously I had only ever entered a few Seaford Half Marathons and Marathons, which I half-heartedly trained for (three or four runs for each at most). My main sport growing up was swimming, I mainly competed at a Regional Level, with a few National completions here and there representing Sussex a few times also.

I became a committee member in my role of Cross Country representative in 2019, having taken over from Terry Ward and before that Luke Borland. My main role in a Cross Country League is to make our members aware that 1. We participate in a Cross Country League and 2. Everyone is welcome to take part. I'm there as the go to person if anyone has any questions on what is coming up in the near future, about the races themselves, or if anyone has any issues or points that need voicing to the Leagues Committee.

As well as sitting on the main committee I also sit on the Sub-Committee of our Annual Mince Pie 10. In this role I look after the signage for the race and it's build up. I order and make the signage required for the up and coming year, put out the advanced warning signs and then make sure we have the correct number of volunteers to put out the signs prior to the event.



Other than the cross-country events coming up I've actually only signed up to one other running event so far this year. That being the Mid Sussex Marathon weekend in April/May. I always like to run this race, which is made up of three races over as many days totalling a marathon distance, each one being a mixture of road and trail. I have however been roped into doing a triathlon in June by Jeff Young, so that should be a laugh. I might have to remember my lifesaving skills from all those years ago mid race if Jeff is struggling in the swim, let's see.

Outside of running I'm an electrician for a local company and occasionally teach indoor cycling at Brighton College, having previously worked in the leisure industry since I was 16. I enjoy following most sports from F1 to the darts, mainly for their unpredictability, skill and dedication they require. Every other Saturday my day is spent travelling down to Portsmouth where I'm a season ticket holder for my sins. This year I'm taking up golf with my wife, so if anyone has any pointers let me know, I'll need all the help I can get. Myself and Becky share our house (I use this term in all seriousness) with our five (yes five) tortoises, which I'm convinced she likes more than me.

So if you want to know a little more about cross-country or how to enter just send me an email, come find me at a club night, race or Parkrun if you see me.

Club Training Update

By Joel Eaton

“Coaches and leaders are the backbone of our sport. They inspire, support, and work across all events, ability levels, aspirations, and ages to develop all athletes. Through this we aim to produce better athlete enjoyment and performance levels.” – England Athletics

If I could extend our club motto, We don't just run we have fun, then I would add something like, and we also strive to provide a welcoming, supportive, and safe environment no matter who you are or your running ability!, but it doesn't quite have the same catchiness, right?!

In-keeping with this sentiment, the club is supporting members that lead runs and training sessions (and those who want to) to attain knowledge and practical skills, through courses and qualifications provisioned by England Athletics (EA). Through this, we are developing a coaching team to ensure that the club provides appropriate, safe, and enjoyable runs and fitness sessions for our members.

The club has a duty of care to all of our members, and Run Leaders and Coaches are trained, licensed, and insured for their respective levels and areas. Courses have mandatory safeguarding training and deliver advice on recognising common issues in our sport and guidance on how to report them. In addition, all Leaders, Coaches, and Coaching Assistants require a full DBS check.

Senior Program Updates

Over the last few months, 9 members have been working towards the Leader in Running Fitness qualification. This is to support club activities across WNS groups and Couch to 5K.



(From L-R) Sarah, Nick, Tristan, Jill, Russ, Margaret, Tom, and Anneka during their practical assessment for the LiRF qualification.

Who are the club leaders and coaches?

You can view the club's current coaching team on the website at:
<http://www.seafordstriders.org.uk/training-coaching-and-education/coaching-team/>

Those currently working towards qualifications are (good luck to all!):

Phill Stevenson – Coach in Running Fitness
Frances King – Coaching Assistant
Mike Neeson – Coaching Assistant
Simon Homer – Coaching Assistant
Marie Marfleet – Coaching Assistant
Colin Browne – Coaching Assistant
Tristan Daynes – Leader in Running Fitness
Tom Roper – Leader in Running Fitness
Anneka Redley-Cook – Leader in Running Fitness
Gareth Hutchinson – Leader in Running Fitness
Sarah Hoyle – Leader in Running Fitness
Margaret Osborne – Leader in Running Fitness
Nick Farley – Leader in Running Fitness
Russ Hewitt – Leader in Running Fitness
Jill New – Leader in Running Fitness

Junior Program Updates

Over the last 6 months, 6 of the core team have taken the Coaching Assistant course. They should all be qualified by the time the new Junior season starts at the end of March. Parents and older Junior runners are also being offered to take part in the Leading Athletics course to better educate our Juniors community, and to promote awareness of health and exercise from an early age.

I just turn up to run - what does this actually mean for me?

Getting our leaders trained has no impact on the wider schedule of our group runs - WNS, track, and C25K - it's the same time, same place for all!

But you'll likely start to see some changes to the format of your runs - all for your benefit and safety. You may see differences in run preparation - such as specific sessions goals and themes, you may also see more warm up and cool down activities - as these help with injury prevention. And of course, all of our runs will continue to foster our welcoming Striders' environment where everyone is equally valued.

I'm interested in learning more about running fitness and leading or coaching, how can I get involved?

You can view all of the current EA courses online here:
<https://www.englandathletics.org/coaching/qualifications/>

If you're interested in becoming actively involved in leading group runs or sessions, contact me directly (Joel), or Darren Evans if it relates to Juniors. We are particularly looking to support some more Leaders in Running Fitness in 2023 so get in touch!

Putting it into practice - Ladies Captain, Sarah, puts her WNS group through their paces during a warm up.



My journey to becoming a Run Leader

By Tristan Daynes

I've been a Strider for a couple of years now, and I've come to realise in that time that I really enjoy helping others to achieve their running goals. I also lead Sarah's Wednesday Night group on the occasional Newhaven route, so when the opportunity to take the Leadership in Running Fitness (LiRF) course came up, it seemed like something that would help me with both those things. I put my name forward on that basis, and was delighted to be given a place.

I found every part of the course really valuable - the online learning contained some fantastic information on (for example) safely leading and structuring sessions, warming up (and down), safeguarding and first aid. I then joined some of my fellow trainee LiRFs for a great practical session in Seaford, leading each other through our warm-ups and delivering our session instructions under Joel's very helpful supervision. A virtual classroom session wrapped up the course, and presented a great opportunity to reflect on and discuss what I'd learned through discussions with trainee LiRFs from around the country.

I can already see the benefits of the course as we've started to introduce proper warm ups and structured Wednesday PM runs. Having a group of us take the training will really benefit the club going forward I think. It's been useful on a personal basis too - as a historically poor warmer-upper, I'm a lot more conscious of the need to do that properly and potentially save myself an injury, and I've picked up some useful tips on my running form that will no doubt help me in the future too! Definitely a course I'd recommend to others if you get the chance.

The 2023 Martello Half Marathon

MARTELLO ROTARY JOINS WITH SEAFORD STRIDERS

Following the success of the 2022 Half Marathon, Martello Rotary are pleased to announce that it will be making its return in April 2023, but this time organised jointly by Martello Rotary and Seaford Striders, with proceeds being donated to local charities.

This event attracted over 200 entrants in 2022 and looks like becoming a firm favourite with local runners and with the expertise of the Seaford Striders we hope to encourage even more entrants this year.

Martello Rotary will be donating their share of the proceeds to the Kent and Sussex Air Ambulance, whereas Seaford Striders will be supporting Waves (a local charity supporting families during this difficult time) and The Chaseley Trust who run a home in Eastbourne for adults with learning disabilities.

The event will be held on Sunday April 16th with registration at Seaford Rugby club from 8 am onwards. The start will be at 9:30 at Bonningstedt Parade. Given the financial pressure many runners will be facing, we have kept the entry fee down to previous years prices at £21 for England Athletics affiliated runners, £23 for non-affiliated and £25 for on the day entries.

As in previous years this race will offer a beautiful but tough run following footpaths and tracks up onto the Downs. After a section along the Southdowns Way taking in the stunning views there will be an exhilarating downhill run to Bishopstone then a long flat run along the seafront to the cheers of the crowds!

This is a race recognised by England Athletics and as before, will be chip timed, race timing will be provided by the professional race organisers 'NE Timing' of Staplehurst in Kent To enter or for more information go to :-

<https://www.netiming.co.uk/events/martello-half-marathon>

Club Awards 2022

Club Captain's Award - To one man and one woman who have put a great amount of effort into their running during the year, improving but not necessarily winning race.

Margaret Osborne

Margaret took part in many events in 2022, including Cross Country. She has recently completed her Leader in Running Fitness qualification so she can be a future group leader. She valiantly finished the Brighton Half Marathon despite suffering an injury and she took part in an epic running challenge running every day of December, often dressed as a reindeer, raising money for charity.

Dave Dunstall

I chose Dave for the Captain's award for two reasons. One personal and the other because I think he embodies everything that a candidate for this award should have. My personal reason for choosing Dave was because he was the one that first introduced me to the Seaford Striders and without him noticing me as we duelled it out together running around Peacehaven Parkrun I wouldn't be in the position that I am today. My second reason is that I truly find him inspirational. He never seems to diminish and still goes out and performs, winning race after race. All the while Dave is running with me I can never say, "I can't do this anymore", because Dave is living proof that I can and that I should never give up.

Steve Rolland Cup - To the person who has given the Club a lot of time and effort during the year.

Nick Farley

This person epitomises the very nature of Striders. He has put so much into the organisation of Mince Pie 10 and also helps at Juniors.

Bill Young's Memorial Award - To one man and one woman who regularly runs for the Club but never wins, they may be a mid-field runner or someone who is often the last Strider home in races.

Steven Teale

The winner is a great man and has put a lot of work into his running. A positive person who is a joy to run with. He is also the Mince Pie re-run king! As someone new to running he has been a really welcome member of the Club. He has gone from zero to running half marathons on a Wednesday night. He is supportive and just an all round nice chap.

Hazel Tarrant

The winner did all the cross country races last year. She takes part in many races and has just entered her first marathon. She is happy to be tail runner and supporting those towards the back of the group. She supports everyone and is happy to give lifts or help out. A great ambassador for the Club. Particular effort was made on the mince pie signage where she went above and beyond to make sure the participants knew where to go. It has been brilliant to see her running confidence grow since she joined Striders.

Ultra Award - To an individual who has excelled at Ultra distances.

Tristan Daynes

A nominator remembered this person doing something crazy! This award is apparently made for this person! The ultra nutter! Didn't he run for 24 hours on the track?! He is the go to person for long distance running advice, apparently lots of people find him and run with him to get long distance running advice. He is the ultimate ultra inspiration.

Marathon Award – To one man and one woman who have put a great amount of effort into their running during the year, improving but not necessarily winning race.

Ralph Jennings

This person had a great Beachy Head Marathon and didn't let his London Marathon experience get him down.

Victoria Maleski

For taking on and completing the hardest marathon of them all! This person was dedicated in training, which inspired people in itself, smiled the whole way round and has inspired many women to pursue longer distances.

Half Marathon Award – To an individual who has stood out at this distance.

Emily Danvers

This lovely lady has really pushed herself this year and finally beat her HM PB of six years.

10k Award – To an individual who has stood out at this distance.

Ollie Sprague

Our winner could probably have been awarded any of our distance awards, but we selected 10k for his win at Newhaven 10k.

Jemma Crawford

This lady is a fantastic all-rounder as well as can be seen by the variety of distances she competes in.

Tom Roper 5k Award – To one of this year's Couch to 5k graduates.

Jo Robinson

C25k was not easy for this person but she has shown so much determination and didn't give up!

Club Grand Prix Award – To the Man and Woman who have got the most points in the Club Grand Prix

James Marron

A fantastic all-rounder and an asset to the Club.

Jemma Crawford

Jemma has made huge improvements with PB's across shorter distances. She also had a good London Marathon.

Newcomer Award – To the person who has become, in their first full year, a good addition to the Club and has had a positive effect on the Club.

Sarah Hoyle

This person has had a big impact on the club and is much loved by her running group and the other people she interacts with. She promotes great team spirit and is happy to help make our Club a very positive place. This lovely lady motivates and inspires whilst making running a joyful social time.

Dragonfly Award – To the person who has supported the Club by marshalling at running events for the Club.

Julie Taylor

This lovely lady has carried on marshalling and supporting through her injury, she is always so encouraging. It must have been really hard for her having been injured for so long.

Award of Merit - To recognise aspects of success not covered by other awards.

Sam Alvarez

This person ran the equivalent of Lands End to John O'Groats... twice and brought all abilities from our Club together to run with her. I think she must be a little bit crazy but you definitely have to admire her! Defying common sense and her own body - what an achievement! She has been devoted to raising awareness for Mind, the mental health charity.

Striders' Strider Award - To the individual or individuals receiving the highest number of votes from a club wide vote.

Joel Eaton

The first Striders' Strider is really good at supporting all abilities and puts on excellent track nights. He has put so much time into organising LiRF training - stepping in and stepping up!

Victoria Maleski

Apparently the Club would fall apart without this second Striders' Strider winner. She leads a merry group of runners, organised C25k and has stepped up to be Chair.

The Jo Jo Gunne Award was not awarded as there as so many individuals who equally qualify. In case you aren't award it includes anyone who has completed races on three consecutive day at the Mid-Sussex Marathon.

Qualifiers: Nick Farley, Jeff Young, Josh Nisbett, Richard Impey, Colin Browne & Jemma Crawford.



Brighton Half Marathon

By Ollie Sprague

Brighton Half had been a key race of mine for the past 18 weeks, so the pressure was sort of on! I had done a tune up race, Newhaven 10K, and a warm up race, Eastbourne 5 miles, and I knew I was in good shape. Just down to execution. Almost all eggs were in one basket, plus a few broken ones in other races.

In the final build up, I had Friday off work so I was able to rest and carb load. I like to really rest the day before the day before, and then keep a bit active the day before. My taper had gone well, and I felt fresh, which is never usually the case for me! I won't explain my training and taper here, but it's all on my Strava if anyone is interested who wants to see it. Then on the Saturday, I did Parkrun where I was pacing 30, and then an afternoon run where I did some strides, wore all my race clothing including shoes, and released any race day nerves. Then it was time for dinner, and bed!

I woke up at about 4:30 on race morning. I suddenly felt panicked, which I don't usually about running, but I told myself it really isn't important in the grand scheme of things. I got up, and had some toast around 5:30 (four hours before race start), and just drank water.

My warm up was about two miles, including again some strides. I felt unsmooth and unrelaxed, which is exactly what I wanted, as it meant I got it out my system.



At the start, I was in my pen, standing awkwardly as I always do. I was going to start a conversation, but I felt far too out of place to do that. Luckily Phill came along, and as it turns out, Phill knows EVERYONE! He introduced me to a few people, and it seemed a lot of people were targeting sub 1:13. I was going for sub 1:14, so I was left with a decision. To go with them or to not go with them...

I had watched a video the day before by Nick Bester, and I fully recommend his YouTube channel to anyone, he is brilliant, and he had run Seville marathon the week before. His biggest takeaway for me was that pack running is good, but everything. I decided I would run my own race, and if that happened to be with a pack then great.

We started, and I settled nicely. I wanted to go through the first km in around 3:35, and I went through in 3:33. A nice boost. There were no real packs formed yet, as the difference between one minute to the next wasn't separable yet. At the turnaround by Roedean, 4k in, packs started to form. There was a group just ahead, but with a tailwind I saw no reason to rush catching them. I love this bit, as you are surrounded by runners and cheerers. I went through 5k in 17:24, and the plan was 17:27.

I spent the next few kms ticking along, and slowly catching the group in front. It was when I ran past a great group of Striders where Nick shouted 'catch the group' that I decided to go for it. I caught on, and in the group was Gary. I had spoken to Gary at the start, and I knew I was in good hands. He pointed to a spot in the pack and said, 'You sit there and stay there'. So, I did, I was very selfish in my pack running. This was around 6k in.

As we turned to run up to Saint Peter's Church, we were doing a good pace for me. It was slightly fast, but nothing to be concerned about. There were loads of people cheering and saying what a great pack it was, so I knew it was a good decision to catch them. It was deemed the Brighton Phoenix pack, as pretty much everyone was a Phoenix. I had major imposter syndrome. I don't feel I deserve to be with the Phoenix boys!

We went through 10K in 34:27, and so far, I was feeling good! This was the tailwind section of the run, and I wanted to get a good split of banking time, but not burning out. Unfortunately, the group broke up. As usual with these things, I'm not sure how it happened. It was pretty much solo running from here to the end. Looking at the results, I seem to have finished ahead of most people, so maybe it did stay together and just a few went ahead. At 11k, I felt my legs starting to hurt. Not in a bad way, but they had realized we weren't just doing a 10k now. I carried on, and I would occasionally overtake someone but it very lonely running. The crowds also thin out around this point as well.

At 14k, I started to feel a struggle for the first time. I had reached my red line. Knowing I was still riding the tailwind, I broke the race down into two more parts. My plan was to get to 10 miles in as good a position as possible and grind the rest of the way home. I pushed on whilst I could, and my third 5k was 17:02. I was aiming for an avg. of 17:20, so I was banking time in a sensible way with the tailwind.

I reached 10 miles in 55:10, and it was time to focus, think about the work put in, that I did that for this moment, and push on against the screams of my legs to stop. Quick calculations told me I would need around an 18:00min 5k to finish sub 74, allowing the course to be slightly long as well.



I really don't remember much of this part of the run. I remember stumbling with about a mile to go, I have no idea how I didn't fall over, and a man called out 'you don't want to do that with a less than a mile to go!'. Yeah, thanks mate, I know that.

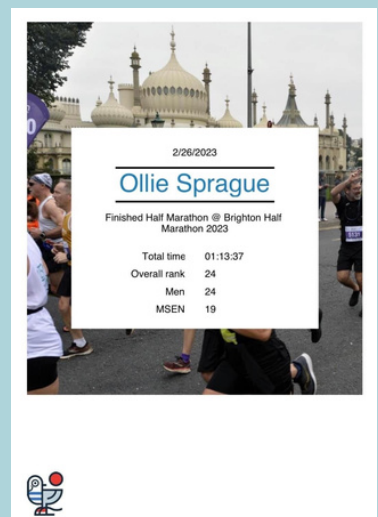
Coming into the finish was amazing! I finished in a time of 1:13:37! I genuinely couldn't believe it!

I went to get my medal, and a few tears came to my eyes. I couldn't believe, and still can't really, that I managed to do it, after dreaming about it for so long. COME ONNNN!!!!

I went to speak to Gary, who finished in around 1:12:30, and then went to meet my Mum who was cheering. It was amazing to see so many Striders coming in, and so many great PB's. Well done everyone.

I went home a happy happy man and finished 24th overall. I am not afraid to say when I am disappointed with a run, and it's so when it goes well like this, it feels even better.

It always hits me at races how great all the Striders are. There are no other clubs that are so present in cheering and putting in great performances. Well done everyone, it was such an amazing and memorable day.



REACH US & FUTURE EDITIONS

Please submit your newsletter articles by the following dates each month to ensure the newsletter can be published on time:

29th March
24th April
26th May
26th June
26th July
25th August
25th September
26th October
24th November
18th December

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