

SEAFORD STRIDERS NEWSLETTER



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Welcome to Autumn

Aah, running in the mud and rain in the gloomy depths of Autumn what a treat! The light's fading, you're squelching through ankle deep mud and the rain's coming down like the heavens are testing your resolve. Every step is a heroic battle against gravity, slipping and sliding like a toddler on roller skates. But you press on, because let's face it you're a marvel of human endurance or at least you will be! The leaves crunch underfoot, you dodge puddles and leap over conkers, imagining yourself in some epic film montage, while quietly puffing like a tired squirrel. You're a beacon of fitness defying the elements while the rest of the world cowers indoors with their slippers and hot chocolate. But not you oh no! You're out there, glorious, determined and slightly mad!





Victoria Runs the Place

I know the heading on my regular article says that I run the place, but that's not really the whole of it. I feel a bit more like a conductor with so many people doing their bit in our Strider's orchestra! That's why this time I want to say a bit about our wonderful committee.

When I first joined Striders on 22nd March 2017 (yes I remember the exact date!), I had no idea how much was going on behind the scenes to keep our fantastic club going. In under a year I had joined the committee and gained an understanding of what was required.

As an England Athletics affiliated club we are required to comply with the EA standards. This includes having a properly formed and documented committee with at least a Chair, Club Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, at least 2 Welfare Officers, Health & Safety rep and a DBS verifier. EA even provides suggested role descriptions for each of these roles.

Our committee includes these roles but goes further as we have our captains, Mince Pie team, junior coach, social reps, track co-ordinator, LiRF reps, social media, cross country, CGP/SGP rep, C25k organiser, special events support, website, PR and last but not least our newsletter team.

That is a lot of people all working behind the scenes to keep our club going. I am so grateful to all of them for everything they do.

The committee minutes are available in the documents section of the Striders website and I put the committee dates in the Diary Dates section of my WNS email.

People do come and go from the committee for a whole variety of reasons and we have been trying to build in a bit of resilience with several roles having back up, but this is not always possible. We ask for your patience and support if there is a gap for a particular committee role and are keen to hear from any of you who may wish to get involved in a committee role in the future.

As a committee we would love to be able to get everything right for all of you. We are only human and sometimes things go wrong, or people think we should have done things differently. I'm always happy to try to help if there is something you don't think is right. Everything we do is a learning curve even if it's something we have organised lots of times before, a different set of circumstances could apply which mean things need a rethink. Help us find a solution.

The committee is formally voted in at the AGM which takes place in February each year. I know it is not the most exciting event to attend but it is appreciated when members do come along.

In the next newsletter I will be talking about our wonderful group leaders.



Congratulations to Amanda Feast and Phill Stevenson on hiking the UTMB, a 100-mile route circling the Mont Blanc Massif in France! Along the way, Amanda checked off every item on Phill's "okay to be my wife" checklist including climbing steel ladders bolted to rock faces and enduring nights in a French log cabin with a dozen other snoring, farting smelly hikers. Phill then proposed amidst the stunning scenery of the French Alps.



*Beneath the sky, so vast and true,
Where mountain peaks brushed heavens blue,
Phill knelt down, heart full of grace,
Before Amanda's smiling face.*

*The air was crisp, the pine trees swayed,
As twilight's gold began to fade.
A gentle hush embraced the land,
As Phill reached out to take her hand.*

*With tender eyes, he spoke her name,
And in that moment, nothing the same.
Amanda, here where dreams run free,
I offer all I am to thee.*

*Through every climb, through every fall,
I'll be with you, my all in all.
In this wild place, where love feels right,
I pledge to stand by you tonight."*

*Her eyes lit up, like stars above,
Her heart aglow with endless love.
And in that sacred, quiet space,
She softly whispered, "Yes," with grace.*

*Together, there on mountain's crest,
Their future bright, their love expressed,
Amanda smiled, her hand in his,
And sealed their bond with heaven's kiss.*

Mince Pie 10



Volunteers Needed for the Mince Pie

Save the date: Sunday December 8th!

We're gearing up for this year's Mince Pie event and are thrilled to introduce a new, more scenic and safer route! While some marshal positions will change, most will stay in their familiar spots.

We have a variety of roles to fill beyond marshalling, including:

- **Car Park Team** (starting at 8 AM with Captain Jeff)
- **Finish Line Support**
- **Goody Bag Distribution**
- **Baggage Handling**
- **Cake Stall Management** (please bring your cakes and cookies, whether homemade or store-bought!)

Your support is crucial for this sold out race with 700 runners, so please encourage your fellow Striders and friends to join in.

If you're able to help, please contact Graham Jones, DRD and Marshal Lead Coordinator, at gmtdcjones@gmail.com to confirm your support.

Thank you for your dedication!

Nick
Race Director



Mince Pie Ten

New recipe for Seaford Striders Mince Pie 10 mile race

Seaford Striders' Mince Pie 10 Mile returns to add some festive fun to the running calendar on December 8, 2024.

This year marks the 31st anniversary of the race and features a small section of the route which has been changed as a result of new development within Peacehaven.

The race starts at Peacehaven Leisure Centre at 11am and is hosted and marshalled by the very merry Seaford Striders. The undulating 10 mile race is known for its festive atmosphere with many runners dressed to impress – from Santa hats to full on Rudolf and turkey costumes.

The Mince Pie 10 mile course is approximately 6 miles off road on farm tracks and bridleways (which can get muddy), with the remaining 4 miles on reasonably quiet roads. There is a testing hill at around 6 miles, but plenty of support and cheers en-route from the marshalling team.

This year's race, sponsored by Intersport and David Jordan Estate Agents, will support two local charities - The Youth Counselling Project provides professional counselling services at no cost to students who are suffering from mental health difficulties in the Seaford area.



The race will also raise funds for East Sussex Vision Support, which aims to promote independence, provide support, prevent feelings of social isolation and maximise opportunities for people with sight loss in East Sussex, Brighton and Hove.



As well as plenty of festive tunes to get runners in the mood, race day will feature the return of the very popular kit swap managed by The Green Runners, photography by Sussex Sports Photography and a pre-run warm-up led by GingerFit and post-race massages by Sea Spray Sports Massage.

Prizes include a Bespoke medal, mince pie and goody bag for all finishers plus Spot Prizes for lucky runners. Trophies will be awarded to the top three male and female finishers, along with Christmas Puddings for the 4th and 5th male and female runners. There will also be a Team award for turn out.

Entries for the Mince Pie 10 (£23-£25) sell like the proverbial hot cakes and there are no more entries. The run is for all runners aged 16 and over, walkers and joggers. To secure your place, please contact: Mince Pie 10 Race Management : MincePie10@nice-work.org.uk <<https://www.nice-work.org.uk/e/mince-pie-10-10017>>]



SOLD OUT

UPCOMING SOCIAL EVENTS

Get a sprint on!

Thirsty Thursday is back

**The Old Plough
Seaford
14th November
19:30
Every Strider is welcome!**

**Striders Bowling
Evening**

January TBC



For enquiries about results
and club records, please
contact Ray Smith
raymondksmith@hotmail.com

RECENT RESULTS

The Big Half (Half Marathon)

01/09/2024

4754	Sam Alvarez	01:52:59
4755	Martyn Craddock	01:52:59
2198	James Dopson	01:40:03
9042	Lucinder Dopson	02:10:23
1499	Fabian Eason	01:35:14
3298	Russell Hewlett	01:46:08
7696	Lisa Parkinson	02:04:32
11198	Darren Wymer	02:20:53

The Gritstone Grind (34.4 Miles)

-	Dan Axon	DNF (20.1 miles)
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Hove Triathlon

01/09/2024

161	Jen Williams			
1.5K	Swim	00:43:50	T1	00:02:33
40K	Cycle	01:19:35	T2	00:01:58
10K	Run	01:04:54	Fin	03:12:53
71	Simon Coppard			
1.5K	Swim	00:42:11	T1	00:03:53
40K	Cycle	01:10:01	T2	00:02:00
10K	Run	00:54:58	Fin	02:53:05

Dorney Lake Sprint Triathlon

01/09/2024

9	Erica Martin			
750M	Swim	00:17:28	T1	00:02:40
20K	Cycle	00:34:52	T2	00:01:44
5K	Run	00:20:59	Fin	01:17:45

Downland 100K

101	Peter Jaques	18:57:58
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Bournemouth Triathlon

07/09/2024

1.5K Swim, 40K Bike, 10K Run

Rolando Hutchinson

Swim +T1+Bike	01:42:06	T2	00:01:34
Run	00:42:06	Fin	02:27:47

Great North Run

08/09/2024

24716	Lauren Stallard	02:15:57
31032	Victoria Maleski	02:27:40

Reading Triathlon

08/09/2024

42	Jennifer Williams			
1.5K	Swim	00:33:46	T1	00:03:56
40K	Cycle	01:23:20	T2	00:02:15
10K	Run	00:55:05	Fin	02:58:23



RECENT RESULTS

Rye Ancient Trails 15K 08/09/2024

194	Justine Ridgway	02:03:29
195	Leanne Litster	02:03:29

Rye Ancient Trails 30K 08/09/2024

8	Jack Hutchinson	02:19:35
11	Ollie Sprague	02:24:15
103	Adam Haverly	03:24:06
138	Steven Teale	03:44:03

Swim Serpentine Lake Downey 14/09/2024 Third part of London Classics(2 mile swim)

1719	Justine Ridgway	01:20:54
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Richmond Marathon 14/09/2024

-	Graham Jones	DNF (fell 16.85M)
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Brocken Hurst Naked 5K 15/09/2024

-	Steve Sprague	00:22.01
-	Richard Preece	00:22.45

Bates Green Gallop 15/09/2024

19	Emily Danvers	05:30:45	28.8M
69	Les Mayger	05:23:18	21.6M
95	Katherine Simmons	04:16:09	18M
98	Sally Mayger	05:23:25	18M
108	Ron van Heuvelen	02:53:21	14.4M

Brighton Run and Rave 5K 20/09/2024

-	Lauren Stallard	00:33:46
-	Janine Bishop	00:33:46
-	Lauren Morgan	00:32:50

Chiltern Wonderland 50 Mile 21/09/2024

195	Adam Haverly	12:18:05
-	Zingy Thetho	13:00:06

Tough Mudder London Sth 5K 21/09/2024 3-5 miles 16 Obstacles

Sue Wallace. Result pending

Vitality 10K 22/09/2024

2945	Justine Ridgway	01:01:39
3834	Debbie Priest	01:05:18
3860	Victoria Maleski	01:05:25
5037	Lindsay Baker	01:10:58
7370	Phil Baker	01:16:03

Hellingly 10K 22/09/2024

1	Ollie Sprague	00:35:44
12	James Marron	00:40:00
23	Luke Borland	00:42:08
98	Richard Househam	00:50:46
117	Kat Warren	00:52:40
122	Alison Househam	00:53:26
153	Leslie Mayger	00:59:17
156	Katherine Simmons	00:59:35
158	Gary New	01:00:08
176	Steven Teale	01:03:35
177	Leanne Litster	01:03:40
187	Kathryn Donkin	01:05:54
197	Lorraine Quigley	01:09:16
198	Anna Tait	01:09:37
199	Janine Bishop	01:10:44
213	Lauren Stallard	01:16:15
212	Kay Crush	01:16:17
221	Jeanette Wells	01:19:02
220	Sandra Standon	01:19:04
223	Sharon Plank	01:21:25

Vichy Triathlon 22/04/2024

24	Rolando Hutchinson			
	Swim	00:28:58	T1	00:02:39
	Bike	01:16:03	T2	00:01:20
	Run	00:40:39	Fin	02:29:42

38 Simon Coppard

Swim	00:32:46	T1	00:03:42
Bike	01:26:34	T2	00:02:29
Run	0043:10	Fin	02:48:43

Hever Castle Triathlon Relay 29/09/2024

12	Sue Leppard
	Gill New
	Karen Feast

5k	Run1	00:33:03	T1	00:02:16
40K	Cycle	02:09:04	T2	00:02:56
10K	Run2	01:12:48	Finis	00:04:10

Hever Castle 10K

132	Gary New	01:09:43
150	Sue Leppard	01:13:27

Taunton 10K 29/09/2024

18	Joshua Rudd	00:38:38
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RECENT RESULTS

Barns Green Half Marathon 29/09/2024

510	Robert Fay	02:05:33
530	Hazel Tarrant	02:05:52
531	Steven Teale	02:05:52
534	Sue Curtis	02:05:54

Berlin Generali 5K 28/09/2024

6058	James Dopson	00:36:59
6065	Lucinder Dopson	00:36:59

Berlin Marathon 29/09/2024

14026	James Dopson	03:35:34 PB
37411	Lucinda Dopson	04:47:01 PB

Bournemouth Run to the Sea 50K 05/10/2024

242	Phil Robinson	05:56:01
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Lewes Downland 10M 06/10/2024

6	Joshua Nisbett	01:05:58
27	James Marron	01:12:35
33	Austin Warren	01:15:16
41	Luke Borland	01:22:55
76	Ollie Card	01:22:55
90	Martin Dallimer	01:24:31

Cardiff Half Marathon 06/10/2024

660	Dave Dunstall	01:27:42
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Lisbon Marathon 06/10/2024

104	Jack Hutchinson	02:58:48 PB
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Isle of Wight Marathon 06/10/2024

43	Dan Axson	03:54:28
-	Rob Sarjeant	DNF(22M)

Spartan Race 10K,25 Obstacles 06/09/024

80	Jen Williams	01:27:46
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Centurion North Downs 100Mile 12/10/2024

98	Kevin Pryde	24:58:07
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Royal Parks Half Marathon 13/10/2024

8871	Shelley Jenkins	03:36:21
2272	Tom Bell	01:44:44

Rise 8K 13/10/2024

-	Sarah McDermott	01:08:14
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Abbott Chicago 5K 12/10/2024

2675	James Dopson	00:29:04
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Chicago Marathon 13/10/2024

16536	James Dopson	03:44:25
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Maverick Jurassic 100K 19/10/2024

66	Ricky Pooley	15:07:37
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Dramathon Marathon 19/10/2024

109	Kristiane Sherry	04:13:26
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Amsterdam Marathon 20/10/2024

129	Ollie Sprague	02:37:13. CR
6719	Rowan Tully	03:56:07 PB
7393	Nick Farley	03:57:48
12964	Darren Wymer	04:23:48. PB

Amsterdam Half Marathon 20/10/2024

9229	Ron van Heuvelen	02:10:39
9230	Katherine Simmonds	02:10:40

Hove Prom 10K 20/10/2024

12	Josh Nisbett	00:37:57
17	James Marron	00:39:23
52	Raymond Smith	00:43:56
117	Kathryn Warren	00:49:43 PB
-	Sam Alvarez	DNF

Leonardslee 10K 20/10/2024

-	Anna Tait	01:17:47(str)
-	Lorraine Quigley	01:18:39(str)

Tirana,Albania Marathon 20/10/2024

9	Joel Eaton	01:19:40
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Palma Half Marathon 20/10/2024

116(c)	Jack Hutchinson	01:28:50
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Lancing 10K 27/10/2024

2	Ollie Sprague	00:34:37
22	Alfie Batchelor	00:41:08
219	Helen Ramsey	01:07:16

Valencia Half Marathon 27/10/2024

2701	Dave Dunstall	01:27:52
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Beachy results next month!!!



Running up down that hill

by Joel Eaton

Following on from an earlier Inside Track article about running uphill, this month I cover some tips and guidance for running efficiently (and fast!) downhill.

Before we start, let's recap the previous article on uphill running: TL;DR - Essentially, running well uphill is all about getting your form right. The more efficient you are when running up a hill, the more energy you save for running back down it, which is where you can really bring in some speed.

This is super useful to apply in races. Especially when you see other runners thrashing themselves up a hill only to be exhausted when they reach the top. If you can make it to the top efficiently and with energy to spare, then the downhills are the perfect time to let go and really push yourself. If you get it right in a race, it's a sweet feeling being overtaken by other runners on an uphill section only to fly past them on the way down, never to see them again!

Form and technique is key to running downhill. And the benefit of perfecting your form on the downhills is that it reduces the force that your body endures, which is significantly more than running on the flat or uphill.

What is good downhill running form?

Again, just like running uphill, getting your form right can maximise your capacity to run downhill and decrease your race times.

Here are 4 tips for improving your downhill running form. Note that these are for hills that allow you to run at speed, not significantly steep descents which require a very different approach:

How can I practise downhill running?

Introducing hills into your long slow runs is a great way to get acclimated to hill running, and we're not short of hills around Seaford.

Just like the uphill training sessions introduced in April's newsletter article, there are some specific downhill sessions for practising and improving your downhill running form.

Example hill training sessions

As always, choose a hill that is suitable for the session, away from busy traffic and avoiding road crossings.

Here are two examples of training sessions where you can focus on downhill form and ultimately speed (both sessions should factor in your normal warm-up and cool-down routines):

Beginner-level

- Plot a route for your long slow run that includes two long downhill sections.
- Jog/walk the uphill sections, focusing on form and slowing the pace right down to make it feel comfortable and not tiring.
- For the downhills, increase your speed to 60-70% of your max speed and mentally focus on the 4 form tips in the diagram above.
- Repeat steps 2 and 3 up to 5 times.

Intermediate-level

- Find a relatively long and straight hill.
- Jog up the hill medium-effort (approx 50-60% of max effort), getting into and maintaining good form.

- When you reach the top (or a suitable point), turn around and run downhill at 80-90% max speed, focusing on the 4 form tips in the diagram above.

- Repeat steps 2 & 3 up to 8 times, using the uphill jogs as slow recovery (it's fine for these to slow down significantly as you progress - just focus on form)

If you have any questions on this topic or want some support with designing a hill session for your own training, feel free to get in touch directly.

See you out there!

Joel



Cross Country

East Sussex Cross Country 24/25 - Sunday

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.

Sunday	13 October 2024	Eridge Park
Sunday	24 November 2024	Snape Wood, Wadhurst
Sunday	15 December 2024	New Place Farm, Framfield
Sunday	12 January 2025	Blackcap, Lewes
Sunday	16 February 2025	Whitbread Hollow, Eastbourne
Sunday	9 or 16 March 2025	Pett or Bexhill TBC

Sussex Cross Country League 24/25 - Saturday

In addition to the Sunday league there is also a Sussex cross country league and championships throughout the winter months that take place on Saturday afternoons.

Future dates are below and more information can be found on their website

<https://www.sussexathletics.net/take-part/cross-country/sussex-cross-country-league/>,

These events can be entered online up to the Thursday morning before the event.

Saturday	12 October 2024	Goodwood	
Saturday	9 November 2024	Glyndebourne, Lewes	League race 2
Saturday	30 November 2024	Ardingly Showground	League race 3
Saturday	4 January 2025	Little Common, Bexhill	Junior and Senior Championship
Saturday	18 January 2025	Coombe Farm, Lancing	Masters Championship
Saturday	8 February 2025	Stanmer Park, Brighton	League race 4

Eridge Park XC



Eridge Park XC

By Josh Nisbett

After a record number of pre-registration entries for adults and juniors this year, we had a great turn out for the first race of the season too. Our six amazing juniors had the honours of racing first this year. They all held their own in the under 11's category, for some this was even more impressive as they had only just turned the required age of 8 a few months ago. I hope they all enjoyed their races, but I reckon not as much as afterwards when they played with Spencer planting and swinging on the trees, and of course cheering us oldies on.

This was the first time a race was put on at Eridge Park just north of Crowborough, so no one knew what to expect other than what the race director had mentioned prior to the gun going off. This race was a little further than others on the calendar at 5.3 miles, probably to allow for all the types of terrain we encountered. We had plenty of mud/sludge (whatever you'd like to call it), short steep hills, gradual climbs, a ford and gravel paths, you name it we had it. Personally, I enjoyed it, I think it's what cross country is all about and far more of a challenge than the likes of Warren Hill where you're just running through fields. I hope to see it back next year. As a team we came 4th place out of 16 teams and we

scored in every age and gender category, which is great to see.

At time of writing this for print I'm waiting on individual age category places to be published for the adults, however the junior results/standings are below.

Under 11 Girls

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.

Kitty Winton 2nd, Eva Miles 3rd, Zoe Chamberlain 6th and Lucy Pollard 7th

Under 11 Boys

Tommy Browne 8th and Harvey Browne 10th

All results can be found here; <https://www.eastsussexcrosscountry.co.uk/results>



Junior XC Eridge Park



Lucy "I did the cross country run and it was great fun, I loved it. I'm looking forward to the next one".

Eva "The cross country race was really fun. It had a really steep hill and was quite hard. It was in the lovely countryside and I enjoyed playing with the other children while my parents ran the adult race."

Kitty "Hi, my name is Kitty and recently I have taken part in a cross-country race at Eridge Park with some other junior striders. I have competed before but the thing that made this one special was that there were other kids I knew running too. We were all representing the juniors at Seafood Striders and it was nice to be a team. We stood together at the start and were all in the same T-shirts. It really made me feel like I was a part of something. Something that was fun was running down the hill but not so much up the hill because it was uneven and slippery, but that is the whole point of cross country. The run at Eridge Park includes a part of the forest. Next time I would like it to be more in the forest rather than in a field. I am really hoping that I can carry on these races through the winter. There are 5 more races. I think it would be fantastic if more Juniors joined us at these events".



Junior Striders

Eva celebrates 100 parkruns at Peacehaven

Eva celebrated her 100th milestone at Peacehaven Junior parkrun this summer.

Eva, who has just turned 8, started parkrunning at the age of 4.

She celebrated her amazing milestone by storming round the course and enjoying her run, followed by ice cream and a play in the park.

Eva is also keen to share her enjoyment of parkrun with others. Mum Lizzy said: "We are so proud of her. Not only is she a fantastic runner who loves running but she will help her sister, friends and fellow junior park runners to get round the course whatever their pace."

Congratulations Eva from the whole of the Junior Striders team – we're super proud of your very special achievement too!



Kitty's Triathlon

Hi, my name is Kitty and on the 15th of September I took part in another triathlon in the Hedgehog Tri series. It was run the same as my previous triathlons, you start with swim then bike then run.

I had to swim 4 lengths, 2000-meter bike ride and then I finished with a 1200-meter run. I started out with a good swim and had a good transition (swapping from swimming to the bike) then went off to complete my laps of the bike. I think that I gave it a bit too much on the bike and then I had jelly legs on the run.

Out of all of them, I think my swim was my best. I'd love it if the run came after the swim as I tired my self out on the ride. I came 7th in my age category, which wasn't my best result but, I was very pleased.

I found it very fun, and I'd really enjoy it if some other Striders would be there to join me in this wonderful event.



Autumn Equinox run

Autumn Equinox run – the Juniors take over!

By Katherine Simmons

With thanks to all our photographers



Runners turning out for the Striders Equinox run were greeted by a sea of yellow as our Junior section outnumbered the Seniors for the Autumn Equinox run.

For many Juniors, Striders' social races are their first taste of a 'proper' race environment. Our goal as Junior Section coaches and helpers is, first and foremost, to create a safe environment and secondly to make it fun!

As Seniors, we can look for races across the country, at various distances and in all months of the year. With fewer opportunities for our younger members, our Club-wide social runs are important dates in their diaries!

Our Junior helper team were on hand to welcome our younger members from registration, to warm up, running with and tail walking the 2.5k. At registration, me and Amanda were on hand to soothe the nerves of parents who had bravely chosen to run with their youngsters while our Juniors proudly gave their names and picked up their race numbers. Kat C and Marie were standing by as marshals at the Ice Cream and Sauna.

After a motivating warm up with Margaret, the 2.5k, mostly run by our youngest Juniors, was the first to set off – up to a turn point

opposite the Salts. On a beautiful, still September evening, our younger members were definitely turning heads!

I had the privilege of being the turn point marshal – and on the receiving end of some lovely comments from members of the public. They told me what a wonderful sight it was to see our bright yellow-clad team streaming towards us, running their best just as the sun was setting.

One couple, who had sat watching in their car, complimented Seaford Striders for creating such a fantastic opportunity for our Juniors (Social Committee - take a bow!) and said what a 'worthwhile' evening I must be having! It definitely was...

There were no medals on offer at the Equinox run, but our youngster's achievements did not go without recognition. Thanks to a bit of ingenuity from Matt W, their efforts were honoured in ink with the 'Finishers' 'stamp'... Resulting perhaps in a few unwashed hands at school the next day!

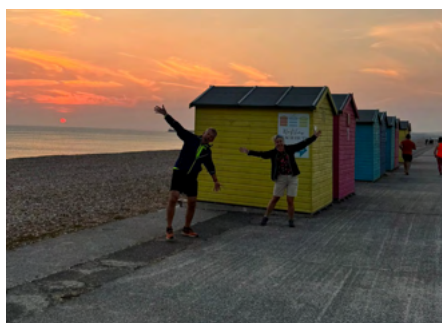
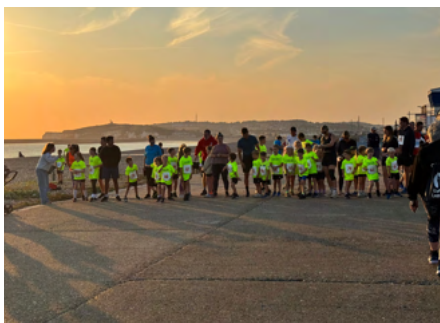
As tail walker Simon H approached, (as it was pointed out, way behind Edith :)) it was time to walk to marshal spot no 2, taking over from Kat C at the Ice Cream van, to wait for the next wave of Juniors and Seniors for the 5k. Our Juniors recorded some phenomenal times over this distance, with some notching up massive PBs.

Support was on offer from our runner-helper team: Alan, Matt W, Amanda and Phill. I lost count of the times our Senior members commented, as they came past, on the Juniors' incredible performance and being completely outpaced by our energetic team in yellow!

We are so proud of all of our Juniors for their running efforts and amazing times, but the biggest result for the Junior Coaching team is hearing feedback from parents on how much their youngsters enjoyed the Autumn Equinox Run.

While it may be a little while away, we're definitely looking forward to the next one!

Autumn Equinox



Spotlight on a Strider

Lauren Stallard (Aka Lolly)

As an introduction; I enjoy drawing, cooking, crochet and looking after my 3 chickens (Kiev, Tilly & Dolly) and cat Smudge. I travel as much as a can, and love exploring new cultures. I am always looking for a new way to push myself.

I have been known as Lolly by friends, family for as long as I can remember and now by my little 4 year old nephew, Alfie. So thought it fitting for the back of my Striders tops!

The 1st September 2021 is when my running journey began. It all started as I was looking for a new challenge and came across '60 miles in September' for Cancer Research, a charity close to my heart, so of course I signed up! I quickly got the running bug & before I knew it I was managing at least 3 miles a day, sometimes more. It was great to get outside in the fresh air, appreciate my local surroundings, have some time to myself and my thoughts, and get fit. I've not looked back since getting & it's now hard to imagine life without running and 2 years of being a Strider.

Never in my dreams did I think I could ever run the distance of a Marathon! But once I got the idea into my head, and had a few half Marathons under my belt, I soon made this a target and was determined to complete one whatever the time. I followed a rough training plan initially and got some invaluable advice from friends and Striders. Building up to the day, I had steadily increased my distance. One run I particularly remember is when I aimed to run for 3 hours non stop. I loved it so much and managed 18 miles in 3 hrs 45 mins. I was so happy!

April 23rd 2024, it was race day. All the training had been done and it was time to focus. I was prepared, excited and ready. I never really had a completion time in mind (but was secretly hoping for sub 5.5 hours). I was raring to go and as some of you know I loved every minute of the event. The support from Striders wishing me luck the weeks prior and at Ovingdean was incredible. I took Janine and Kay by surprise to get there with the 4 hours pacer just in front of me. The hug from Kay gave me even more of a boost and made me more determined to do myself and everyone else proud.



The supporters made me feel like a celebrity, shouting my name and cheering and I was chuffed to my first marathon in 5 hours 18 minutes.

But running isn't always easy, and things happen that give you a set back from it and exercise in general. We all experience such times and throughout my time running I have had a car accident, an epileptic seizure and a few niggly injuries, not to mention major hip surgery I had back in 2019. I have found these pretty frustrating, however, they have also helped me learn to rest and reflect. Long term they have made me mentally and physically stronger, more resilient and definitely extra determined when I do get back to running!

I cannot thank my cheerleaders and fellow Striders enough. Danny my partner has been by my side throughout all events and injuries and my parents and brother have always been extremely supportive.

A special shout out goes to Mrs Crush, who has been so encouraging and originally introduced me to Striders!



I have recently taken part in my first XC run (loved it), am now a keen track runner and have recently joined the Striders Committee... and so my running journey continues.

Besides running I am a Product Packaging Designer for a well known puzzle and games company. I've enjoyed graphic design since school and after graduating from Northumbria university I have been fortunate to have been in the industry ever since. Over my career I have worked with brands including RHS, Disney, Sainsbury's and more, and of course had the opportunity to design the medal for this years Martello Half Marathon, which I was extremely proud to receive when I finished!

As 2025 approaches I plan to take part in as many events as I can next year, including another Marathon and an Ultra, Bring it on!



Kay & I running at Arundel 10K, 2023

My events so far...

24.05.22	Worthing Half
16.10.22	Rise 8K
29.12.22	Rathfinny Christmas 11K
26.02.23	Brighton Half
16.04.23	Martello Half
23.04.23	Rathfinny 10K
24.06.23	Pretty Muddy 5K
27.08.23	Arundel 10K
21.01.24	Newhaven 10K
25.02.24	Brighton Half
07.04.24	Brighton Marathon
14.04.24	Martello Half
28.04.24	Worthing 10K
09.06.24	Leonardslee 10K
08.09.24	GNR Half
21.09.24	Hellingly 10K
21.09.24	First X Country
21.10.24	GSR (Cancelled)
27.10.24	Beachy Head Half

... and many more to come!

The Great North Run

A bucket list race...the Great North Run

By Victoria Maleski

I was very lucky to get into the Great North Run (GNR) via the ballot in only my second attempt. Once I got the email confirming my place I knew I wanted to be able to put in extra training to ensure I could give myself the best chance of running well. I set myself the target of getting a PB – my PB of 2 hours 34 minutes had been set at Brighton HM a few years back.

Other than knowing it was a big half marathon I didn't really know that much about the event. I was very grateful to Bronwyn for sharing her experiences of the GNR, this spurred me on with my training.

I worked with Phill and he devised a challenging but achievable programme for me which I tried to follow. Some of the seafront runs in the dark on wet and windy evenings were so tough, but if it was on the programme for me to do I did it. Similarly, if Phill had instructed me to run twice on the same day, even after I had "raced" a 10k in the morning, I somehow found the energy to go back out for my scheduled second run.

My major step up in my running ability came when I decided I wanted to move on from my usual run /walking to running nonstop. This was a big step for me but I persevered and got there. I slowed down my running pace and just kept going using the flat seafront to enable me to keep an "easy" pace. Gradually the distance I could run nonstop increased culminating in achieving 10 miles nonstop towards the end of the training programme. I was so pleased with this achievement – it gave me so much confidence in my ability to complete the GNR and hopefully get the PB I had been aiming for.

I had booked a package at a hotel on the outskirts of Newcastle which included coach



transport to a hospitality location near the race start and hospitality near the finish and coach back. Me and my support crew (Lance) travelled up on the Friday, did a bit of gentle sightseeing on the Saturday and had the obligatory carbs on Saturday evening.

We were up bright and early on the event day. The hotel had laid on a special buffet breakfast which was great. The bus set off to take us to the hospitality location which was in one of the university buildings. It was all a bit surreal with running themed disco music, balloons on the table and lots of snacks available. We chatted to the other people and then at 10am it was time for a last visit to a proper loo, then I set off towards the event start.

My start wave wasn't due to go until at least 11:56 so I knew I had plenty of time but nothing had prepared me for the sheer volume of people to contend with. Luckily most of them were heading in broadly the same direction but I felt like an ant in a massive anthill. After about 25 minutes I had made it down to the road where the start was and as there was a handy block of portaloos I thought it sensible to take advantage of the facilities especially as the queue was relatively short. It then took another 15 minutes to reach the turnaround point so I could join the wave start queue.

It was grey and raining gently but as we carried on waiting the rain got heavier and heavier. I was totally soaked through before I started even with my rain jacket on. As we approached the start line I tied my jacket round my waist and proudly displayed my Striders vest. Over the line I went, I was on my way.

I was lucky to be in the start wave that went down and under rather than up and over as that meant I was under cover for a while. We then emerged back into the rain and headed towards the iconic bridge. There was definitely "fog on the Tyne" or was it just murky?!



The supporters throughout were amazing and were offering all kinds of things - I saw blister plasters, Vaseline, cake, sweets, orange quarters, drinks, ice creams and ice pops. Lots of them must have been soaked through as well, although there was a good variety of umbrellas to help.

I knew the min/mile rate I needed to stay under and the first few miles felt really good. I had given up trying to avoid the puddles but just tried to avoid the deeper "rivers" running down the hills. I was overtaking lots of people, all was going well. Then at about 5 miles in somebody swerved in front of me and I had to jump out the way to avoid them. I landed awkwardly and pulled something in the front of my right ankle. It didn't feel too bad so I kept going but as I got further through the race it started to hurt and I was limping when I finished.

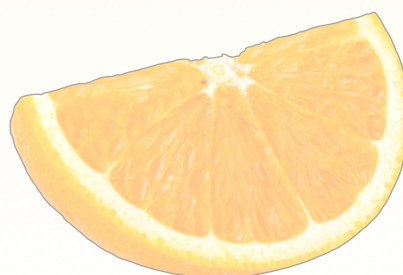
There was so much support to keep everyone going. Did I run it all? No I didn't but the walking part was kept to a minimum. I felt so determined to get a PB, I didn't want to let myself down by slowing up too much. So much of taking part in an event is mental... it was me against the minutes and the miles! I had done all the training and I knew I could do it. It wasn't easy though. The weather gradually improved and at last we started turning towards the last couple of miles. I saw Lance about a mile or so from the finish and stopped briefly for a chat and a photo. Then it was a run / walk until I got close enough to do a sprint finish.



I stopped my Garmin and could see I had done it, I'd got my PB! The Strava time was 2 hours 27 minutes and 17 seconds, but as the distance came up long my HM distance PB was 2:25:18— that was about 9 minutes off my previous HM PB.

Getting back to the hotel and our train journey home were adventures in themselves, but that's another story!

The whole event was just immense at around 60,000 competitors and I was so pleased to have been part of it. A real bucket list event!



London Big Half

By Martyn Craddock

People use the expression “still waters run deep” to describe someone who is wise but has a placid exterior. That said, this would not have been an accurate description of the four Seaford Striders who had assembled outside a Peckham railway station on the last evening of August, to take part in the next day’s London Big Half.

Brimming over with excitement and child-like energy, this fearless foursome checked into South East London’s finest free boarding house, their simple conversation and cackles blending into the sounds of a Zone 2 evening.



We were:

Sam Alvarez, her west Yorkshire accent refreshed by a recent trip up t’north.

Russ Hewlett, the boy from Ealing, lost in the reverie of planes going to Heathrow.

Lisa Parkinson-Bunce, Duchess of Bishopstone and Windsor.

Martyn Craddock, Ultra DFL, Lord of the Bell End

Feasting ourselves on a classic pre-race diet of Italian cheeses and Coke Zero, we retired early to sleep, dreaming of cockney streets, and jellied eels. Shh!! not even a squeak from the empty cat’s bed.

The usual morning alarm of screeching seagulls had changed to squawking parakeets, but nevertheless served its purpose. We fuelled up with black coffee and toast, and set off for the race start. We took to the bright Lime hire bikes, navigating the quiet streets of Bermondsey. Arriving at Tower Bridge, we joined the melee of 16,000 runners.



The Big Half starts at Tower of London, heads out to Canary Wharf, then returns back over Tower Bridge and onwards to the Cutty Sark in Greenwich. It’s a proper London event, with noisy crowds, bridges and tunnels, amazing views and plenty of iconic sights. We were ready.

The team set off together. Russell soon found his comforting solitude at a decent pace. Lisa hot on his heels. Martyn and Sam stuck together, exemplifying that true Strider team spirit. The weather was sunny but not too warm. Lisa started to struggle around mile 5; her magic trainers were more Paul Daniels than Debbie McGee,* but her grit and determination still got her through to an impressive 2hr 04m finish.

The Big Half



Russell, putting himself in charge of group bag collection, had run ahead and finished in 1hr 46m, giving him plenty of time to have a long friendly conversation with the bag drop people.

A summer of consistent training, and consuming the correct amounts of Gran Padano and Chianti, had paid massive dividends for Martyn, who got his fastest finish time in many years of 1hr 52m. Sam, having spent the entire 13.1 miles helpfully telling Martyn how far he still had to go, coolly breezed in alongside him to finish in an identical time.



Medals and T-shirts collected, photos taken, sweaty bits sorted out, we walked up the steep Greenwich Park hill, heady in our success. We emerged at the summit of the glorious Blackheath, with final views back over London, where our drive back to the coast awaited us.

See you next year London.



*Paul Daniels and Debbie McGee

For those of you who were too young to remember or who didn't live in the UK at the time, The Godfather of Magic, Paul Daniels was known for his catchphrase "You'll like this... not a lot, but you'll like it!", and for his marriage to his assistant, Debbie McGee.

Debbie McGee was famously asked by comedian Caroline Aherne's character Mrs Merton "what first attracted you to the millionaire Paul Daniels?" a joke considered one of the best comedy one liners of all time.

Hove Prom 10K SGP

Five Striders took part in the Hove 10k, the penultimate event of the Sussex Grand Prix (SGP). The course is fast and flat and in recent years some members have set PB's. This time though with atrocious conditions forecast this looked unlikely. Attendance from the club was low, as many members had committed to the Great South Run, which was unfortunately cancelled due to bad weather. However, the Hove race went ahead despite the conditions.

At the start, the weather seemed manageable. It was dry and while there was some wind, it was a crosswind, neither helping nor hindering the runners. But halfway through the race the skies opened, the wind picked up, turning the event into what was likely the wettest race of the year.

Despite the tough conditions, Kat Warren powered through to claim her second personal best (PB) of the year aided by fellow Striders Sam Alvarez who gave up on her race and help Kat. Josh Nisbett battling rib pain still managed a strong performance, contributing to his overall SGP standing. While there were no medals on offer, runners were rewarded with plenty of free chocolate.



Eastbourne & Uckfield Parkrun CGP



On 21 September 2024, Striders took over Eastbourne parkrun as part of the Club Grand Prix series. Samantha Alvarez hit two significant milestones, officially completing her 50th parkrun and being the first female across the line with a remarkable time of 21:44. Her performance earned her an incredible age grade score of 81.1%, Not to be outdone, Dave Dunstall also posted an impressive age-graded result of 81.5%, finishing in 20:01.



Uckfield Parkrun celebrated its 20th anniversary on 5 October 2024 and Seafood Striders marked the occasion with a strong turnout at Buxted Park.

Despite the tough conditions, Strider Josh Nisbett stole the show, crossing the finish line first with a personal best time of 19:46. His impressive performance was just one of many on a day filled with Striders spirit and friendly competition.

Sussex Grand Prix

With one race to go Ollie Sprague is currently leading the mens overall. Will he be crowned Seaford Striders Sussex Grand Prix Champion? Potentially there are few that can still catch Ollie but they will need to turn up! Josh Nisbett and James Marron also look to place highly.

Kat Warren is the clubs highest placed female (63rd) and with two more qualifying races to be added looks set to climb even further. In the team event after a great turn out at Hellingly 10k where we placed 3rd the club are sitting 8th overall (after Lewes 10mile).

Dates	Event
17 November 2024	Crowborough 10k

Don't forget to wear club colours on race day

For Information

Contact James Marron

or visit the website <https://sussexgrandprix.co.uk/>

Club Grand Prix



Remaining races for 2024



Date	Event	Criteria
2 November 2024	Bevendean Down Parkrun	Age Graded
17 November 2024	Crowborough 10K	Fastest Time
24 November 2024	Snape Wood XC	Fastest Time
7 December 2024	East Brighton Parkrun	Age Graded
December 2024	Virtual Mince Pie 10	Fastest Time

The Club Grand Prix is a year long competition within Seaford Striders aimed at engaging members in a friendly and inclusive way. It is open to all senior club members regardless of their speed or running ability.

For information or any questions about the Club Grand Prix, please contact James Marron.

Club Grand Prix Standings

Male Results																			
	Greater d Beach Parkrun	Dream Mile	Hastings Half	Brighton Marathon	Martello Half	Peebles Parkrun	Clair Parkrun	Greater d Beach N/Prun	Bowl 15	30 minutes	Arundel 10k	Bacchus HM	Portsmouth Equinox Run	Clairborne Parkrun	Field Parkrun	Vol Bonus	Total Points	No. of Runs	10 Score
Name																			
James Marron	18			15		19	20	4	18			20	20	19	19		172	10	172
Richard Preece	15	18			9	18	18	20			16		13	16	16		159	10	159
Austin Warren	19	20	17		16			11			17		17	17	20		154	9	154
Jeff Young	17				14		19	10		19	18		18	18	18		151	9	151
Pete Jaques		16	8	10	4	17	15	5	16				6	14	15		126	11	122
Ralph Jennings		19				15	16	7		20			8	15			100	7	100
Steven Teale			9	8	1	9	13	19	15		14				11		99	9	99
Martin Dallimer			12		5			14	17	18			15		14		95	7	95
Dave Dunstall	20					20		13					12	20			85	5	85
Ollie Sprague	1		20	20	12	7		3	20								83	7	83
Jack Hutchinson			19	18	17						19						73	4	73
Josh Nisbett					19						20				17	1	72	4	72
Russ Hewlett		11	13		8			2					14	12			60	6	60
Nick Farley	16			11	15								16				58	4	58
Joshua Rudd			18	19	18												55	3	55
Paul Swinnerton						11	12	8					2	10	10		53	6	53
Fabian Eason	13				13		17	6									49	4	49
Ron Van Heuvelen	1						14	15							12		42	4	42
Ray Smith		17	11		11												39	3	39
Robert Ewen						16		18									34	2	34
Leslie Mayger	11			9				14									34	3	34
Phill Stevenson	12				20											1	33	2	33
Kevin Tant	1					10		17					4				32	4	32
Steve Sprague			15		2	14											31	3	31
Trevor Jones	1		5			12								11			29	4	29
Mark Andrews	8												7	13			28	3	28
Simon Newman	1							14							13		28	3	28
Darren Evans	14				3								9				26	3	26
Alan Browne	6			13									5			1	25	3	25
Simon Wattam		14			10												24	2	24
James Dopson	7		16														23	2	23
Paul Willis				14				9									23	2	23
Darren Wymer				7	1	13											21	3	21
Matt Clare								1	19								20	2	20
Matthew Winton	1	9												9		1	20	3	20
Luke Borland													19				19	1	19
Lindsey Stirton		13		6													19	2	19
Colin Laidlaw	1							16					1				18	3	18
Rolando Hutchinson				17													17	1	17
Lance Maleski											15					1	16	1	16
Ollie Card				16													16	1	16
Martin Robards								15									15	1	15
Rob Sarjeant			14														14	1	14
Kevin Ives	4	10															14	2	14
Aaron Pooley											13						13	1	13
Damian Partridge	1							12									13	2	13
Dominic Hinds		12			1												13	2	13
Richard Impey	1			12													13	2	13
Tom Bell													11				11	1	11
Graham Jones	10																10	1	10
Phil Robinson			10														10	1	10
Steve Ramsey													10				10	1	10
Colin Browne	3				7												10	2	10
Martin Robards	9				1												10	2	10
Gary New						8										1	9	1	9
Mark Woolford		8															8	1	8
Martyn Craddock	1		6					1									8	3	8
John Foster			7														7	1	7
Tom Roper						6										1	7	1	7
Dan Axson					6												6	1	6
Jay Vile	5																5	1	5
Kabir Kenth						5											5	1	5
David Westcott						4											4	1	4
Gareth Hutchinson													3				3	1	3
Simon Homer	1															1	2	1	2
Simon Peck	2																2	1	2
Alex Dawson													1				1	1	1
Andrew McDonald	1																1	1	1
Carl Howard	1																1	1	1
Chris Le Beau	1																1	1	1
Martin Craddock					1												1	1	1
Phil Baker													1				1	1	1
Tom Forristal													1				1	1	1

Sweet Potato & Chicken Traybake

Easy One Tray Dish for All the Family!

Submitted by Nick Farley

Ingredients:

500g sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into small chunks
2 red onions, cut into wedges
350g broccoli, broken into florets
8 cloves of garlic, unpeeled (reduce if preferred)
2 tsp dried thyme
1 sprig fresh rosemary
1 ½ tbsp olive oil
8 skinless chicken thighs, cut in half (or plant-based chicken alternative)
2 lemons (1 juiced, 1 cut into wedges)
1 tsp smoked paprika
150ml chicken stock (or vegetable stock alternative)
Salt & pepper to taste

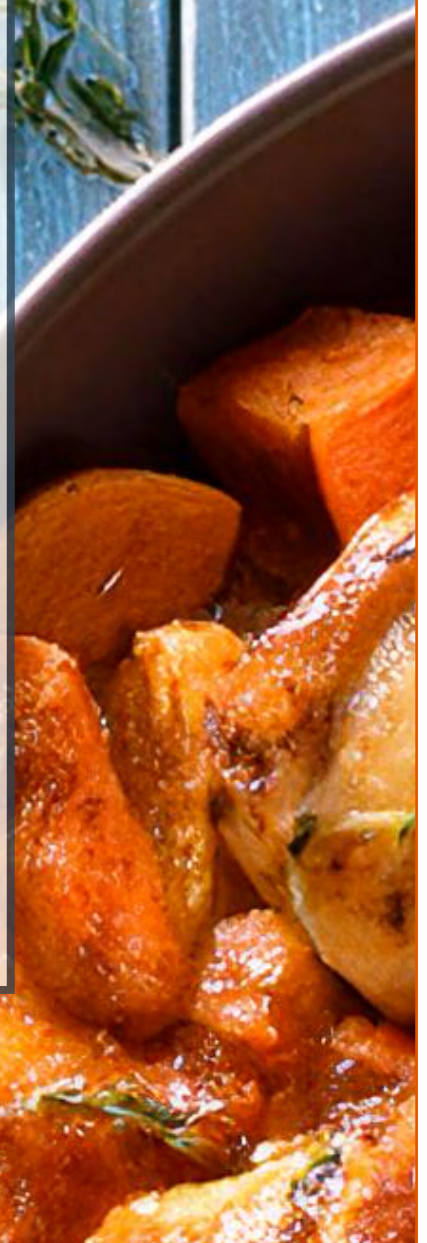
Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan) or Gas mark 6.
2. Add the sweet potatoes, red onions, broccoli, and garlic to a large roasting tray. Sprinkle with dried thyme, season with salt and pepper, and drizzle with 1 tbsp olive oil. Mix well.
3. Spread the vegetables evenly in the tray and bake for about 15 minutes.
4. Remove the tray from the oven, stir the vegetables, and add the chicken thigh pieces. Drizzle with the remaining ½ tbsp of olive oil.
5. Squeeze the lemon juice over the tray, add the lemon halves, sprinkle with smoked paprika and fresh rosemary leaves, and return to the oven for another 15 minutes.
6. Pour most of the chicken stock over the tray and bake for an additional 15 minutes, or until the chicken is fully cooked. Add more stock if needed to keep the dish moist.
7. To finish, squeeze the garlic from the skins, discard the lemon halves, and serve.

Optional Suggestion:

Top with balsamic dressed rocket leaves for extra flavour!

Enjoy!



Centurion Chiltern Wonderland 50

Centurion Chiltern Wonderland 50

By Adam Haverly



For those of you who don't know I'm trying to do the centurion "50 mile slam" this year. 4 x 50 mile races. After doing SDW50 for the first time after COVID, I wanted to experience more of these races and see how far I can push my body. I included the SDW100 too this year for good measure 🤔

The Chiltern Hills is an area of outstanding natural beauty near Reading. There's some glorious running to be had there. Incredibly varied terrains and views. Probably one of the most expensive areas to buy property outside of London - chocolate box charm villages, picturesque view points and a stones throw from the capital .



The race was on the Saturday and I travelled up on the Friday evening after work with Zingy. Zingy has such a great view on life and challenges, she's just incredible. After some

lovely driving I dropped Zingy at her B&B. I'm way too tight to pay for a bed the night before and I thought it would be mild so I grabbed some fish and chips and slept in the back of my van. I brought coffee and an Aeropress for the morning before as well as double porridge and felt surprisingly prepared (even though I checked my mandatory kit 5 times! Time penalties if you miss something!)



The race starts in the village of Goring by Thames (beautiful and very sleepy). The village hall held a familiar collection of not-quite-sane soles early that Saturday morning. It was a lovely morning though and everyone seemed in good spirits. Excellent selection of mascot dogs in attendance. Hugs and well wishes exchanged we were ushered down to the Thames path for the start.

The klaxon sounded at half eight and we were off! Around 450 runners heading out along the Thames path hoping to return to that village hall before sundown/cut off . The first few early miles passed by really nicely as I chatted to runners I'd met before and got introduced to others (this is a long game half way down the field, time to chat



I'd been checking the forecast all week and it looked fairly dry and decent. This was a blatant lie. I was so glad for mandatory kit with this race, the waterproof jacket was out. I hate getting soaked early on in a race, the jacket just seems as waterproof as a tea bag but holds the sweat in a treat!

I meandered my way along ticking the miles off slowly. I cocked up my music. I assumed there would be data and I'd be able to listen to the radio all day but alas they was none!

The aid stations on Centurion are fantastic, you volunteer to gain a free race entry so most people are from the ultra community. My phone got waterlogged and that was the end of that 🤦 no music but let's keep ticking those miles off. I got to around 25 miles and my legs had had enough, I'd get a shooting pain then stop to walk for a bit then carry on. This is how I continued, I worked out fairly quickly that I could make the cut off even if I was moving slowly.



Thankfully the weather improved later on in the race and everything dried off a bit, hurrah! I went through the last aid station, I don't know about you but there's not much I want to eat and that stage. I worked out I could walk and make it but I carried on run walking for a bit longer. I got talking to a Belgian chap and this was his first race. Ever. Mental. He'd definitely lost the bet. I took a call from my wife who said "it doesn't matter if you don't win" trust me, that was never a worry! Whilst on the phone I got lost, luckily someone shouted this way!!!

One of the mandatory items I didn't think I'd need was a head torch, I thought I'd be done in daylight. I was very thankful to have one and a spare, the temperature was dropping and I was



really keen to get this over and done with. I was very relieved to see the little lights of Goring village, the end was in sight! Back in Goring there was a very warm welcome, 50 miles done, 12 hours and 16 minutes later. Not my best time for sure but all I'm worried about this year is finishing within cutoffs.

A beaut of a medal, a bowl of pasta and one of the best cups of tea you'll ever have greets each finisher. Sit down, daze, it's over for now.



I decided to wait around as I wanted to see Zingy finish. Time was ticking on and she was getting very close, someone said she had taken a wrong turn on the tracker, I willed her to finish and I saw her come in around 13 hours. The cut is 13 hours. She was 6 seconds over, I was gutted for her. Had she not taken that wrong turn just before the end she would have been in. I nearly made the same mistake, it wasn't very clear and was a 50/50 choice. These races are strict and if they bend the rules here I guess where do you draw the line?

A lot of lessons were learned that day. I made it round but it wasn't pretty. One more to go this year. Fingers crossed!



Bates Green Gallop

By Emily Danvers

On 15th August, 5 Striders (and honorary Strider Bronwyn's Dad) took part in the Bates Green Gallop. Starting at Arlington farm, where in May you can visit the beautiful bluebells, the course was a 3.6-mile scenic loop featuring the woods, a pond, corn fields, cows and a couple of stiles. These features became important markers as the race involves as many loops as you choose within a 6-hour cut-off. Each loop started and ended back at a barn stocked with crisps, vegan sausage rolls, flapjacks and watermelon. Once you decided you'd had enough, you rang a bell, picked up a medal (if you'd chosen one) and received an alcohol-free beer and a cake. Lovely!



What attracted me to this race was its eco credentials (local, cup-free, vegan and you can request not to have a medal) and how inclusive it was to all runners of all abilities. While now and then I like the thrill of a race, life is busy and pressured enough sometimes, for me this run was chilled and friendly, with no expectations around pace or performance. That said, my husband Joel said he'd collect me in exactly 6 hours so I knew I might as well keep running. I completed 8 laps, totalling 28.4 miles. I didn't quite have time for another (though I was up for it I promise) as we had to leave for a family party. I felt strong throughout, though my toe started to hurt in my new trainers about halfway. One trainer had the timing chip on it, so I just stuck with changing one shoe. With mismatching shoes - one trail and one road also - I set off for the other half. Apart from looking a little ridiculous, it worked out fine.

I recommend this race to anyone looking for a more personalised kind of challenge. 3 runners managed 11 laps, but the majority seemed to do 3 or 4 laps. It would be fantastic to have a team of Striders next year.

Leslie Mayger did 6 laps, Sally Mayger did 5, Katherine Simmons did 5 and Ron Van Heuvelen did 4.

Sally's 100th parkrun



Tough Mudder



By Sue Wallis

On Saturday 21st September 15 of us took on the Tough Mudder course in Crawley. We were participating to raise money for a charity called FND : Functional Neurological Disorder. A young lady we know has this condition and it has been devastating to their family.

The course was 3-5 miles long and had 16 obstacles to negotiate. First obstacle was to crawl under barbed wire, the mud was full of grit so scratched and bleeding knees and elbows to start. Woohoo! The hardest obstacles were Hero walls and Everest. Block Ness monster and Mudderhorn were a lot of fun. We were all there to enjoy ourselves and everyone helps each other. There is no way you would get over half of the obstacles without the help from the people in front of or behind you.



I managed to complete 12 out of the 16 obstacles. I gave Electroshock therapy a miss (see photo).



My little group of 7 completed the course in 2 and a half hours. We are all very proud of our achievement and had some impressive bruises to show for it. One of the mottos was "We don't whine, kids whine" to which someone added "I drink wine".



Tri, Tri, Tri Again

By Jen Williams

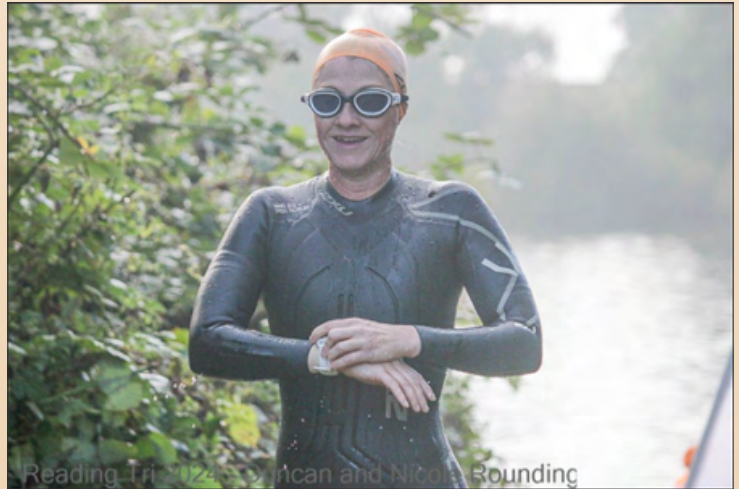
In September 2023, I participated in my first ever triathlon (sprint distance). At the time, I was the fittest I'd ever been and the whole experience went really well for me. I placed 3rd in my age category, which was also a nice surprise. I then came up with the crazy – and maybe delusional, I've not yet decided – idea to try and complete an Ironman. To do this, I thought I'd work my way up the triathlon distances, so I signed myself up for the Brighton and Hove standard distance triathlon with a whole year's notice.

After the success of the sprint, I did feel a little bit of pressure that of course I put on myself, rather than anybody else. I tried to fit as much training in as I could to prepare myself for the big day. When the day arrived, I carried this pressure with me and decided I was going to attack as hard as I could.

The swim was horrendous! Mass swim starts are not my friend and it was pretty manic. I had decided to take my swimming pool goggles, rather than my open water goggles for the crucial reason of the fact that they look better than my open water goggles. How hilarious is that? And they just leaked in one eye for the entire duration. I kept having to stop swimming to try and push them onto my face but I just had to accept in the end that they were going to leak and worry about the potential disease my contact lens was going to give me later! Luckily, my eyes were fine. I also had to battle a current, which was moving the buoys, making it really confusing. I just told myself to get to the bike and I'd be fine.

When I got to the bike, I went full welly. Big mistake. It was scorching and I was craving liquid. I had three gels over the duration, which felt amazing. The bike went well and I was pleased and looking forward to my run, which is my strength.

Having reached the run, I was ready to go, but after a kilometre or two, I realised that everything was going to go wrong. I had pushed far too hard on the bike and had nothing left. Those three gels, which had felt so good, now made me feel



like I was running on an entire Sunday roast dinner. And the heat became unbearable. I couldn't even run, I was reduced to a walk or if I had a good little block, a shuffle. The only saving grace, which did help, was passing Simon Coppard multiple times on the run loop. Unlike me, Simon looked incredibly strong on his run! Every time he passed me, he gave some serious words of encouragement, which helped me so much in that moment.

I did finish, but not how I'd wanted to, with a time I was really disappointed with, and the worry that if that's how my standard distance went, how the heck am I going to manage a full Ironman??? So I did the only rational thing I could do – find last minute entry to another triathlon the following weekend. You know how the saying goes, a new week, a new triathlon! Luckily, Reading still had spaces. I do find it funny that I booked Brighton and Hove a year in advance and booked Reading with 6 days' notice!

The main reason I wanted another go is because I've booked a half Ironman distance event for the start of next summer, and I really didn't want my confidence to be so low going into that. So my plan this time was to be sensible and remember that I'm a very inexperienced triathlete so just calm things down and Heaven forbid, actually enjoy the experience!

The swim was amazing. It was the first time I'd done a lake swim and my goodness, what a difference! I also wore my trusty open water goggles.

The bike was beautiful. Whereas Brighton and Hove was 8 loop laps on the seafront, this was a one loop gorgeous country ride. It felt like I was just going for a Sunday morning bike ride, which I love doing. It took all the pressure off and I really loved it.

I was really nervous about the run after the week before. It wasn't the most fun part of the course, being 6 laps, so very repetitive. It was also on uneven grass, which wasn't particularly desirable. I made sure I didn't push it too much and just kept going. I kept repeating to myself 'you are completing, not competing'.

Finishing Reading tri felt amazing. I even felt a little emotional after the disappointment I'd experienced the week before. I managed a sub 3 hours, which I was super happy with, even though I wasn't there to race. I definitely learnt a lot of lessons with this one and am going to take them forward to my longer triathlons next year. I'm taking my competitive hat off and just trying to complete the events for me. I get so much more enjoyment out of it that way and also appear get better results!

I'm doing Ironbourne middle distance triathlon in Eastbourne 20th July 2025 and will be begging for a support crew! So any tri fans, save the date!



Spare a Thought for Russ

New Strider Russ Davis hasn't yet got a club T-shirt and was worried that nobody would recognise him when he stopped at the Exceat water station, which Seaford Striders volunteer at for the Beachy Ultra/ Marathon. Julie alerts us when a Strider is approaching, so I suggested Russ shout "I'm a Strider!" on the way through to guarantee the proper Strider welcome, which can be heard all the way from Bo Peep.

There were plenty of Striders manning the water station this year, with others out on the course, including Darren with his loud, encouraging whoops and Sarah and Leanne with massive signs that their friends and runners couldn't miss. Nick provided music at the Exceat water station while Ladies' Captain Amanda served up hot drinks, homemade flapjacks and cookies for the volunteers. Kat kept the runners well stocked with sugar, bringing jelly babies and Haribo, which her boys helped to hand out. Sandra started off offering chocolate with little uptake until Colin, the joker, turned up with a full cardboard box sized stash of chocolate treats that the runners couldn't get enough of. He was probably as sore from holding the box all afternoon as the Beachy runners were the next day! Runners were slightly disappointed there were no Crunchies, Double Deckers, or Curly Willies, though.*

Back to Russ. He managed only 1.5 miles of the race before his hamstring gave out, forcing him to make the "walk of shame" back to the start. Maybe next year, with a Strider T-shirt, you'll cross that finish line.

**Club Secretary Kay was mortified when her predictive text accidentally renamed her friends' favourite post race chocolate bar in the WhatsApp group. Careful, Kay! This type of smut will get you banned!*

AI STORY

Every month for a bit of fun we ask AI to write a story for the Newsletter.

Disclaimer : This is a work of fiction. Unless otherwise indicated, all the names, characters, businesses, places, events and incidents in this article are either the product of the author's imagination or used in a fictitious manner. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, or actual events is purely coincidental.

Stefan Vellung Spragg adjusted his shoes, standing among a crowd of runners who like him were completely naked. The cool morning breeze against his skin was something he was trying not to think about, but the thought of running 5K without a single stitch of clothing was still surreal. This was supposed to be a fun freeing experience. That's what he had told himself when he signed up. He glanced around making sure no one from his running club Sleaford Sliders had somehow entered too. He'd never live it down if someone recognised him here. It was supposed to be a secret a little personal challenge outside his comfort zone.

"Stefan?". He froze. That voice was all too familiar. Turning slowly, he came face to face with Ricky Priest, another member of his running club. Ricky was long, tall, lean and very much naked.

"Ricky?" Stefan's voice cracked as he spoke. His face immediately flushed, and not just from the chill in the air.

Ricky raised an eyebrow clearly just as surprised. "I didn't expect to see you here," he said, his usual confident smile quirked at the edges. "This... isn't something I thought you'd be into."

Stefan rubbed the back of his neck his face still burning. "Yeah, well, I didn't expect to see anyone from the club."

Ricky laughed, the sound carrying easily through the nervous chatter of the other runners. "Yeah, that's one way to put it." He gave Stefan a once over, not in a judgmental way, more like he was still trying to process the situation. "I'm guessing you signed up on a whim too?"

Stefan nodded. "I needed something to 'shake' things up. Running in the same old races got boring after a while."

"Same," Ricky agreed, stretching his arms. "Thought it'd be a good way to let loose. Can't say I expected to bump into you like this though."

The starting horn blasted cutting off their conversation and the crowd surged forward. Instinct kicked in and they both took off at a comfortable pace running side by side, the same way they had so many times at the club.

For the first mile, neither spoke. They focused on their breathing, the sound of their feet hitting the dirt path, and the odd sensation of the wind brushing against their bare skin. It was strange but it almost felt like just another run — almost.

After a while, Ricky broke the silence. "This is... actually kind of nice."

Stefan glanced over, surprised. "Yeah, it is. Feels different, but good different."

Ricky smirked. "You mean besides the obvious?"

Stefan chuckled, shaking his head. "Yeah, besides that."

They continued to run in comfortable silence after that, but there was a different energy between them now, like the strange situation had peeled back a layer of formality they didn't even realise existed. They weren't just two guys from the running club anymore — they were two guys who had taken on something ridiculous exposed and utterly human.

As they neared the finish line, Ricky turned to Stefan with a grin. "So, sprint finish?"

Stefan laughed, shaking his head. "You really want to race me while we're naked?"

Ricky grinned. "Why not?"

Without another word they both picked up the pace pushing each other like they always did, the competitive spirit between them stronger than any lingering embarrassment. They crossed the finish line neck and neck breathless and laughing their awkwardness from earlier completely forgotten.

As they slowed to a walk, Stefan wiped the sweat from his brow, still catching his breath. "You know, I never thought running naked would be... kind of fun."

Ricky nodded, smiling. "Same. Maybe we'll make this a tradition."

Stefan chuckled. "Let's not get ahead of ourselves."

But as they walked away from the finish line, two friends stripped of all pretences, Stefan couldn't help but think that maybe, in some strange way, this was exactly what he needed.



On This Day or Thereabouts (by Ray)

Earlier this month, while browsing the Seaford Striders website and looking into our club's history, I came across a note that the club's first ever race was the Crowborough 10K. It took place at the end of November 1986, just six weeks after the club was founded. Out of curiosity I decided to search for information for the race online, not expecting much. To my surprise, I found a photo of the 1986 event on a Crowborough history site. As I scanned the image for familiar faces, I spotted early member Chris O'Hea, recognisable by his signature parting and moustache. Though there may be a few more photos tucked away in someone's drawer, this could very well be the earliest photo from a Striders race. Thirty eight years later, the Crowborough 10K remains a favourite among our members, consistently drawing a large turnout. I doubt those early members could have imagined the size and enthusiasm of today's Striders at this now iconic event.



Where's Julie?

Where's Julie?

Fear not this month after her well deserved holiday Julie is back and hiding harder than ever.
Can you find her.

Answer will be revealed in the next edition!



Here's Ollie

For the eagle eyed among you Ollie was hiding amongst the pebbles and sand on the Hailsham Harriers Beach Run write up on page 20



The Amsterdam Experience

The Amsterdam Experience...

By Katherine Simmons

The Amsterdam Half was the one race that I hadn't cancelled or deferred this year.

It was something to look forward to after a year disrupted by a severe infection, lots of scans and my left kidney being removed.

I was determined to get round the race which took place four months after this major operation. Following a first couple of weeks, where I could barely manage a shuffle, my aim for the Amsterdam Half was to enjoy the sightseeing and stay ahead of the sweeper.

Myself and Ron had heard on the Striders grapevine that Ollie S, Nick, Rowan and Darren W were also going to be in the Dutch capital at the same time as the Amsterdam Half and Amsterdam Marathon take place on the same day.

Landing at Schiphol later than planned due to fog, we headed straight to the race Expo to pick up our race bibs. We were delighted to spot our first Strider - Darren making his way out!

We'd made loose plans to head to Amsterdamse Bos parkrun on Saturday morning. Turning up at the parkrun, we were greeted by Ollie and Rowan and soon found Nick. Rowan's marathon effort was a true family affair with mum and dad, Eleonora and Stephen and brother and sister Morgan and Bronwyn all tackling the 26.2 miles. We spotted Darren near to the start...and then there were 10!!



This was a lovely parkrun against the backdrop of autumn colour and a nice opportunity for a catch up with Darren and other runners having a leg stretch before the marathon or half. After popping our finish tokens in a Dutch cheese, we regrouped and headed for a post-parkrun coffee and chat.

Ron's sister Sonja lives on Churchilaan, around 11k into the route. With the Amsterdam Half not getting underway until 1.30pm, we turned on the TV to watch the start and not long after, went down to watch the elite runners fly past.

We then set ourself the goal of spotting and cheering all of the Striders/Peacehaven Run Club runners. Ron kept an eye on the tracker and I had the phone ready to capture them on camera. Ollie was approaching at a blistering pace (crossing the line in an incredible 2:37) – we didn't have too long to wait for him!

We also caught Rowan and I probably squealed when Darren came over to say 'hi' en route to his marathon PB. Stephen, Eleonora and Bronwyn were all together and cheered back at us. Sadly a tracker glitch meant we missed Morgan.



After the excitement of Strider and PRC spotting, it was time to get ready for the half. We were supposed to get going at 1.30pm but the funnelled start meant waiting until 2pm. It gave us more chance to chat to other runners, including a chap from Hove Hornets.

The Amsterdam Half is a single loop starting near the Olympic Stadium. The early part passed through Churchillaan, where Sonja was at 2k cheering us on with another of Ron's sisters, Marielle. We then went through Amsterdam's business district, before turning back towards the city. Aside from very brief stretches down an underpass and over a canal bridge, it's a flat race.

It was a busy weekend in Amsterdam with a DJ festival and dance festival taking place at the same time. I lost count of how many DJ booths there were adding beats around the corners. I also spotted two Dutch Barrel Organs (one tinkling out Coldplay) and at least one drumming band on the route.

The fun really began in the city centre. There were lots of young people out cheering, families with young children waiting for high fives and plenty of banners. We spotted spectators in it for the long haul, with tables laid out, enjoying their wine next to the route.

Ron discovered that pink was the new orange, his Striders top with his name in enormous letters got him so many shout outs for 'Rooooon'. Some of the most enthusiastic cheers were from a lady also wearing pink – we spotted her at the beginning and were delighted to spot her again towards the end of the race.

Landmarks on the way include the Heineken Brewery and Rijksmuseum and also the city's canals, so there was plenty to look at along the way. The highlight of my race was through the

Vondelpark. Here the crowd were at their most energetic and cheering absolutely everyone on. The Amsterdam Half was my first non-stop long run since I ran the Brighton Half in February. I got to the point of 'I'm a bit tired and want to stop now' at exactly 12.66 miles. But I knew there was another highlight around the corner. The finish was in the Olympic Stadium, halfway around the track, cheered on by spectators.

After a topsy-turvy running year, I was delighted to finish in 2 hours 10 minutes.

After some more sightseeing on Monday, we said goodbye to Amsterdam, not only with a sense of achievement, but also having experienced the power of running - of making new friends and exploring new places.



New Club Records

The Marathon record is one of the longest standing records in the club set way back in 1993 at London by Brian Tickner in a time of 02:37:54. Some of you may know Brian from when he owned the Newsagents near the railway station up until recently.

Ollie Sprague who is still registered as a first claim Strider has asked for now for his new marathon time to be included on the Club records page. Congratulation Ollie, a fantastic achievement.

Ollie Sprague 02:37:13

Hellingly 10K



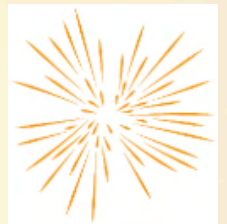
John Faulds Hellingly 10K 23 September 2024

Despite a night of torrential rain, nearly 300 runners lined up under clearing skies for the 37th John Faulds Hellingly 10K hosted by Hailsham Harriers. This popular Sussex Grand Prix event took participants through the scenic undulating country lanes of Hellingly, finishing at Roebuck Park Cricket Pavilion.

After Hailsham Harriers the second highest club turnout came from Seaford Striders, with Ollie Sprague claiming victory in 35:44 and many other Striders enjoying the challenging course.

The day was extra special for Kay, who chose the race as part of her birthday celebrations and the post race refreshments, complete with tea, coffee and cake were a welcome reward.

As always, the event combined competitiveness with community spirit, making it a perfect celebration of the Harriers' 40th anniversary.



Bushy Park 1000th Parkrun



PARKRUN LIFE: BUSHY PARK 1000TH EVENT By Richard Preece

31st August 2024 was a momentous occasion in the history of Parkrun. Bushy Park, the birthplace of Parkrun, hosted its 1000th event. To celebrate this landmark event was an opportunity not to be missed. Parkrun has become an international phenomenon.

As a big fan of Parkrun I, along with a few other Striders, decided that this was too big an experience not to be a part of. So, along with Ollie Sprague, Paula Tiller, Paul Swinnerton and Zingy Thetho (with Ralph & Barry to cheer us on) we made our way up to London in the early hours of the morning. We knew that it would attract a large crowd on this special day and car parking would be an issue, hence the early start to ensure that we could find a space. Glad we did arrive early, as later the car parks were full. Crowds of people swarmed into the Royal Park where Bushy Parkrun is held.



As more and more people gathered, there was a sense that something truly magnificent was about to unfold. The whole park had a festival vibe about it.

There were many other run clubs in attendance as well as couples, family groups and friends. People were having their photos taken in front of the Bushy Park Parkrun sign and using their phones to film themselves among the hordes of people. Everyone was happy and excited. Runners had travelled far and wide just to take part. The Eastbourne based run club "Run Wednesday" was there in force, arriving by coach. I heard that there were people from the various parts of the world like the Netherlands and Minneapolis, USA to name but a few places.

As 9am drew closer, there were masses and masses of people gathering on the start line. I had been to Bushy Park once before and there was just under a thousand runners on that day. However, on this occasion there was way more than that. I couldn't see where the crowd ended. This was going to be big; **I mean REALLY big!**



Race director gave his welcome talk, surrounded by thousands of people. Bushy Park is lucky to have a very wide start line and it needed to be! Then we were off, the run had started, A stampede of people raced across the field to the course path around the park. What an amazing feeling. The buzz of all the people surrounding you was exhilarating.

The path wasn't wide enough to accommodate the sheer volume of runners so I found myself keeping to the edge which allowed me to pass people without getting stuck in a bottle neck. I've never run with such a large volume of people from start to finish. A huge army of runners, joggers and walkers snaked their way around the course, savouring the atmosphere. Truly awesome.

Talking of awesome, our own Ollie finished in 4th place with a PB of 15m41s! As for the rest of us mere mortals:

- **Me:** 931st place at 23:31
- **Paula:** 3516th place at 33:34
- **Paul:** 3517th place at 33:34
- **Zingy:** 3949th place at 36:11

And now for some stats:

- A staggering 6,204 people took part, officially earning a place in the Guinness Book of Records for the largest number of participants in a single Parkrun event.
- 136 volunteers
- First finisher: 15:26
- Final finisher: 1:01:55
- 1,892 first-time attendees
- 490 PBs
- 625 different running clubs

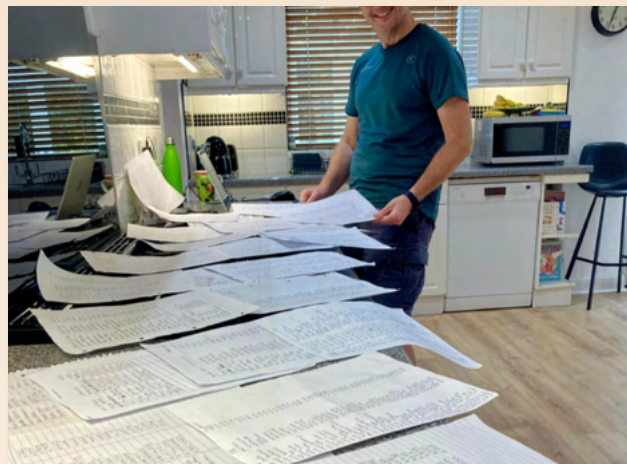
Event history:

- Event 1: 13 runners
- Event 100: 226 runners
- Event 500: 1,184 runners
- Event 1000: 6,204 runners



Usually, the run results are published within a few hours of event completing. However, due to the enormous number of participants the results were not released until the following Tuesday. The organisers had anticipated that there would be a large turnout. They had thought about 3000. They

came prepared with extra tokens and books of raffle tickets. However, even that was not enough. They ended up writing on participants' hands as they came through the finish funnels and the barcode scanners had to write the times on paper. It took the core team of 9 people 6 hours to transcribe all the handwritten results into the computer and another 4 hours to cross check results with HQ



The organisers had been planning this event for months, liaising with the keepers of the Royal Parks. They ensured there were extra volunteers, car parking marshals and extra finish funnels. At one point, runners were queuing to cross the finish line, with some spending longer in the finish funnel than it took them to complete the 5k.

Despite this, everyone remained good humoured.

What an amazing day! One that I will remember for a long time. On 5th October 2024 Parkrun celebrated it's 20th Anniversary. This means that within another 20 years, many other Parkrun venues will have reached their own 1000th event. However, nothing will compare to the first one. In another 20yrs will Parkrun still be going? I like to think so. The thought of attending event number 2000 at the age of 80 is mind boggling.

Keep Running.



What's that smell?

Smelly Trainers

by Jo Robinson

I had planned to write a race report about the Great South Run, either celebrating how I beat last year's time or whinging about struggling around the 10-mile course due to injury and lack of training. Unfortunately, thanks to the adverse weather predicted for Sunday, the race was cancelled.

Although disappointed, Striders still made the best of it. Those who had booked hotels for a more civilised weekend in Portsmouth treated themselves to a jolly good night out. Meals, drinks, and laughter made it a proper *Thirsty Saturday on Tour*, leaving the rest of us wishing we'd joined them.



Some Striders decided to create their own 10 milers, including a group that ran the Mince Pie route, giving themselves a head start for December's CGP race. I briefly considered entering the Hove 10K SGP race, but seeing the weather and feeling far from 10K ready, I opted for a lie-in instead.

Now, here's the bit that *stinks*...

As Ray was leaving for Hove, he commented on an awful smell coming from somewhere. Concerned it might be my own questionable hygiene, I gave my pits a sniff. It wasn't me (this time).

It turned out to be my second-best and favourite pair of trainers. After a rainy Wednesday night hobble (thanks to a toenail slicing into my foot, but that's another story) and marshalling in the rain at Seaford Parkrun, my trainers had become both soggy and smelly. I assumed drying them indoors would be enough, but apparently not. I mean, Ray does it, and he's a far more experienced runner than I. And smellier.

Determined to fix the stench, I turned to my trusted sources: ChatGPT, Reddit, and the Asics website. Here's what I found:

- **Baking Soda:** Sprinkle a thin layer of baking soda in each shoe and let it sit for 24 hours. It absorbs moisture and neutralises pH levels.
- **Soap:** Place a bar of soap in each shoe and leave overnight. I didn't try this because I don't own two bars of soap.
- **Vinegar:** I only had chip shop vinegar, which is too smelly, and I'd still have to let them dry — which was half the problem to begin with.
- **Put them in the freezer:** NO! Not with the fish fingers and Cornettos.
- **Rubbing Alcohol:** Who has that lying around? Does vodka work? According to YouTube, apparently yes. I also have some 70% proof hand sanitiser I've had knocking around since COVID.
- **Teabags:** Some sources said used, others unused. Ray warned me I'd end up running around in brown liquid if I used the wet ones.

I thought about throwing them in the washing machine, but Asics doesn't recommend that. I tried it once with Ray's trainers and completely destroyed them. I accidentally set the dial to 'dry' while washing, basically boiling them. In a panic, I tried to fix them with a hair dryer, but Ray found out when they turned up at the ends and became a size too small.

In the end, I went with the baking soda option and added a few drops of tea tree oil and lavender. This didn't really work and I ended up with a smelly paste, so I tried the hand sanitiser alongside the dry teabags. The result? *Good enough*.

If anyone has any better ideas, drop me a line!

Brocken Hurst Naked 5K

Brocken Hurst Naked 5k: A Body Positive Experience

By Richard Preece

Ok, OK, OK!! So, I ran a 5K event naked. So what!

Back in September this year, I went to Brocken Hurst Nativist Site to take part in one of their Naked 5k running events. Naturally, I posted it on Strava as I normally do for any other activity. As usual, I received the kudos that people kindly give. However, I also received more comments than any other Strava post. Thankfully, they were curious or humorous comments. Then, over the following weeks, I had fellow Striders ask questions about it or make comments like, "Glad to see you've got clothes on this time." All in good humour.

Then Ray asked me to write about it for the newsletter. At first, I was a bit doubtful. Some of you probably know another Strider also takes part in these events. I didn't want the article to be for anyone's titillation. After discussing it with him regarding Ray's request, he didn't mind me writing about it.

We can all have a laugh and make humorous innuendo jokes, which is fine. As a big fan of the "Carry On" films, I love innuendo and bawdy comedy. After all, it's in the British psyche. Being able to laugh at oneself, in my mind, is an admirable quality. However, there is a serious point, which I will come to later.

I guess, as I have a career in healthcare, I am used to seeing people in various stages of undress. To me, the naked body is just another naked body. I've seen it all before. Therefore, in the right environment, I have no issues with being naked myself. After all, we are all born without clothes, and we shower/bathe naked. I am sure a few of us have gone topless or naked on the beach while sunbathing or have gone skinny dipping. If you go to a health spa in Europe, it's standard practice to be naked in the sauna or steam room. It is considered unhealthy to wear a swimming costume, as it harbours bacteria. In that warm, moist environment it's perfect for bacteria to multiply in your costume.

I had been aware of a naked 5k run for a while and wanted to take part. However, other events had prevented me from attending. Then Steve

Sprague posted a naked run on his Strava account. Naturally, I asked him about it to gain some inside information about how the event is organised. After that, I booked it before anything else got in the way. Brocken Hurst has two events each year. One in May and the second in September.

Come September, the weather the week before the race had been terrible. (I have a history of running big events in terrible weather). However, on the day in question, the sun came out and it was reasonably warm. Brocken Hurst is a secluded 50-acre campsite near Orpington. It has woodland trails, a covered swimming pool, a cafeteria, a tennis court and plenty of green spaces to sit. I drove through the gated entrance, and marshals indicated where to park. I went to the registration tent, where I had my race number written on the top of my arm and chest in bright red lipstick. I deposited my clothes back in my car and walked around the area to familiarise



myself with the surroundings. Then, I sat in the café and had a cup of tea, watching more and more people arrive. People of all shapes and ages. Men, women, and children. In the crowd, I spotted Steve. Oddly, neither of us were aware that we were both attending. It was good to see a familiar face, as I didn't know anyone else.

The course is run over three laps around the site. A combination of concrete path and woodland trails, with some steps thrown in. For us newbies, we were given a tour of the route. The whole place felt like a festival as the music started to play to the build-up of the run.

About 160 of us gathered at the start line. We had been given a chip band to go around our ankle. This meant we would get a gun and a chip time. All very professional, just like any another race that I have attended. The race then began and just like any other race, the fast runners were at the head of the pack. What an amazing feeling to be running naked, surrounded by other like-minded people, without the fear of being judged. As always, I run to the best of my abilities and crossed the line in 21st place. I collected my finishers medal, exhausted but happy to have taken part in a friendly and positive environment. Naturally, Steve has crossed the finish line ahead of me. Later I collected my certificate, which confirmed my finish time. (Chip time 22:43)

I stayed to enjoy the sunshine, food and drink. I chatted with a few people and discovered that people had travelled from all over the UK to attend this event. I found the whole experience liberating and am looking forward to going again, not just for the running but to be in a safe space.



Now to the serious point that I alluded to earlier. In today's Western culture, we are obsessed with perfection. But what is perfection? We body shame people. We become so self-conscious about our bodies that it can lead to low self-esteem. We are made to feel ugly because we don't look like Adonis or Aphrodite, but who are these people. They are mythical beings. The media plays a huge part in dictating what beauty and perfection are, airbrushing photos to hide blemishes. The fashion industry also plays its part in defining a perfect body. This has led to young boys and girls become physically and psychologically unwell, anorexic, self-harming and at worse suicidal. People undergo cosmetic surgery in a bid to change the shape of their bodies or to stay looking young. We have also

seen Hollywood actors who have gone that step too far and look totally ridiculous.

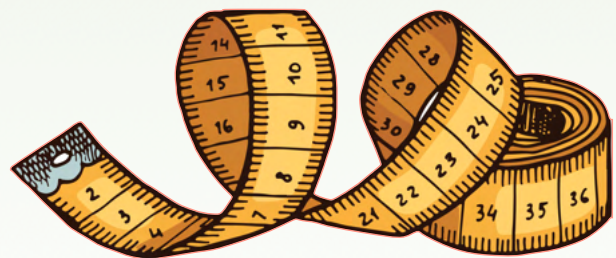
Our bodies change with age, pregnancies, illness and disease. We need to learn to embrace this, accept who we are and not be shamed by society's values. My intention is not to preach and I'm not trying to recruit people to be nudists/naturists. I find that the experience of not being ashamed of my body is helpful to my wellbeing, and sharing that with other like-minded people is affirming.

British Naturism is an organisation that promotes the acceptability of social nudity in the UK. Brocken Hurst is the home of The Nudist Foundation. (www.naturistfoundation.org)

It is not illegal to be naked in public in the UK. However, it is illegal if the intent is to offend people. Attending a nudist/naturist area removes that ambiguity and fear of being naked in front of others. For some, being a naturist is a way of life.

For me, its chance to be at one with nature from time to time and not feel bad about the way I've been put together.

Therefore, why not combine being naked with going for a run? Dare to bare?



Scavenger Hunt



Last month the annual scavenger hunt took place bringing teams of all running speeds to the streets of Seaford to snap photos of various items and complete fun tasks. After a somewhat chaotic start partly due to windy conditions and my own struggles to communicate clearly, teams kicked off with a one lap egg and spoon race around the Martello Tower to split up the groups. The social team, Kat, Dorinda, and Jo, ensured everyone completed a lap around Martello Tower while balancing their eggs. From there, teams had to complete the rest of the evening's tasks while carrying an egg without breaking it. Leanne Litster had a hiccup, dropping her egg and needing to start over whilst James Dopson optimistically tried running with his egg in his pocket but quickly returned within three minutes to pick up a replacement. Meanwhile the Social Team and Victoria, who helped plan the event but couldn't participate headed to the pub to await the teams' return.

To level the playing field, teams were given certain advantages but ultimately careful attention to instructions proved most valuable. Team Poverty Bottom collected the highest number of street names, though they discovered a bit too late that they needed to make it to their final destination before returning to the pub and therefore incurred a hefty penalty. Nonetheless, they did manage to complete one of their tasks, giving Jeff his birthday bumps! Meanwhile, the winning team, Splash Point impressed everyone by finding a remarkable 10 blue plaques.

All teams returned to the White Lion before the cutoff at 7.45PM, where drinks were shared as results were tallied and the winners were announced. Once again those who read the instructions most closely emerged as the top finishers.



Scavenger Hunt Favourite Moments Seafronters

What we learned....

How competitive some of our team members are ... especially when they saw and heard the other teams approaching 😂

Funniest moment...

We found what we thought was a great representation on graffiti in an alleyway. Then a rather juvenile one just a bit further on. The first picture was nicely posed by Kabir, the second is pure improv by Anna and Casie!



The 'Taking it for the Team' award'...

We found a deceased pigeon near The Crouch and Sue picked up the best looking feather, not far from the body!

The multi-tasking award...

Carla - for ensuring safe carriage of the egg whilst also checking Google Maps for road signs and running. All at the same time!

Epic fail...

That there was no limit on the number of blue plaques, not only did we miss out on points, but we also missed out on the opportunity to learn more about Seaford's local history!

What we loved...

All working together, no matter how long we'd been a Strider, it was a great way to get to know our group members better.

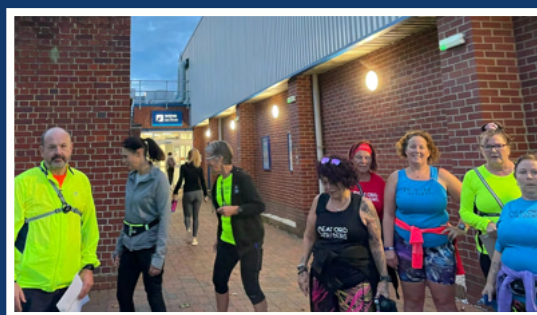
And, of course, seeing and hearing all the other groups running around Seaford!

Thank you Social Committee – we can't wait for the next one!!!





And the winner is...



Sharon's Farewell Drinks



A night out to celebrate our legendary Strider, Sharon Plank, who is leaving for new adventures. Sharon's positivity, support and encouragement have inspired us all. We'll miss your infectious smile, your determination and the countless moments of joy we've all shared.

Thank you for being a shining example of what it means to be a Strider. As you step into this new chapter, we hope you carry with you all the laughter and the good times.



Contact Us

Striders: Your Newsletter Needs You!

We want to hear your stories. Your running experiences can inspire and uplift others in our community.

Need Inspiration?

Running with heart Share how love, positivity, or community support has fuelled your running journey.

Distance isn't everything: Whether you've completed your first 5k or discovered a new parkrun, your experience is valuable.

Neither is article length: Don't worry about length—quick summaries are welcome!

Take a bite-sized approach: Use headings or brief Q&A formats for easy reading.

A picture tells a thousand words: If you have memorable Striders moments captured, send them in with permission.

Send your text in an email or attach it as a Word document, and let's make this newsletter dazzling.

Deadline for next issue
24 November



Contact Jo on
jojor73@hotmail.com