

Overton Harriers



& Athletic Club

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Visit us on our Web Site at www.overtonharriers.org.uk

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You can view or print this and previous editions from our website

FIXTURES

MARCH	5th	CHRISTCHURCH MAD MARCH 20 miles	READING half marathon
	9th	FOXDOWN HANDICAP	
	19th	EASTLEIGH 10km	FLEET half marathon
	25th	COMPTON DOWNS 40 miles	
	26th	COMBE GIBBET RACE	
APRIL	2nd	TOTTON 10km	WOKING 10mile LYMINGTON 10km
	9th	READING half-mar	THAMES TOWPATH 10mile
	14th	MAIDENHEAD 10 mile	
	15th	NEWPORT to RYDE 7 mile	
	17th	WEST WIGHT 3 HILLS 8 mile	
	23rd	LONDON MARATHON	

FRANNYS BITS.

Another fantastic training weekend superbly organised, as usual, by the Clark & Vosser families. Piles of food consumed, many beers downed, loads of miles logged and several club members scared witless by me. Nick Dalton is arranging therapy at Oakley Surgery for those who were emotionally scarred.

While the majority were toiling away on the cliff top paths of Bude, Dave and Geoff gathered enough runners to ensure promotion for the men's team in the final Hants. XC league fixture at Wimbourne. Congratulations to Dave & Cath who won individual trophies.

Included in this edition is the latest report from our roving correspondent Mike MacMahon. Last months report did not make it in time for the newsletter but there is a copy on the notice board and I believe it is also on the club web site.

If anyone else would like to contribute an article, E Mail me at the above address or hand me your hand written article and I will type it up. It was mentioned on the training weekend that perhaps the female club members could contribute a recipe of the month, starting with Nicky's recipe for Steak & Kidney Pie.

CLUB PERSON OF THE YEAR.

It's time to start thinking about who will win this coveted trophy awarded at the club presentation dinner. Who do you feel has made the most significant contribution to the club over the past 12 months? Nomination forms are available from Franny.

South of England Cross Country Championships Bicton College Exmouth Saturday 28th January 2006

This was the first time in the clubs 31 year history that a complete team of 12 male athletes was fielded to run in these championships.

The course at Bicton was a typically challenging cross country route consisting of 5 undulating laps covering a total of 9 miles. First home for the Harriers was Club Captain David Vosser in 164th position followed by Maz Firouzi, who is currently training hard for the London Marathon, in 234th. An injured Mike Bliss ran steadily to finish 296th, his first race since November. Lee Tolhurst in his first major cross country race for the club finished in 313th closely followed by Richard Clifford, making a welcome return from illness. The next five Harriers all finished within 2minutes of each other with Dave Bush leading the charge in 356th position, Richard Francis 383rd, Keith Clark 392nd, Martin Allen 403rd, Piers Puntan 407th and super Vet Eric Tilbury in 416th.

Steve McNair completed the Harriers team of 12 to finish 446th out of a field of nearly 600 runners.

The team narrowly missed out on winning the Hampshire cup and were beaten into second place by last years winners Stubbington Green runners who benefited by finishing 6 runners in the top 300, even though they had to wait until 480th to complete their team.

Within the Ladies Championships Nicky Clark continued to show excellent racing form finishing in 63rd with Penny Abbott struggling with a sore Achilles over the rough terrain finishing 77th out of 231 runners.

Results

164th	D.VOSSER	59m 00sec	383rd	R.FRANCIS	68m 41sec
234th	M.FIROUZI	62m 13sec	392nd	K.CLARK	69m 09sec
296th	M. BLISS	64m 59sec	403rd	M.ALLEN	69m 46sec
313th	L. TOLHURST	65m 27sec	407th	P.PUNTAN	69m 58sec
324th	R.CLIFFORD	66m 07sec	416th	E.TILBURY	70m 38sec
356th	D.BUSH	67m 32sec	446th	S.McNAIR	72m 20sec
63rd	N. CLARK	33m 34sec	77th	P. ABBOTT	38m 53sec

FOXDOWN HANDICAP.

2nd FEBRUARY.

Several grudge matches were included in the penultimate race of the series with Martin giving Nicky a good thrashing (as he put it) to take victory on the night. Piers had an improved run to take second spot ahead of Chris. The well-beaten Nicky was fourth ahead of Greg who is challenging for medals in both leagues and boosted his chances in the time league by clocking the quickest time on the night. Dave was 10 seconds behind with a fine run from "wet ear" Clifford taking third. The other grudge race was a non-event with Dorothy having a comfortable 2-minute gap over Eric who may have been easing down for Bude.

Dave Vosser tops the time league with a 2-point margin over Greg. Keith Vallis has slipped back over the last 2 races but a reasonable finish in the final race should clinch the bronze. The handicap league is a much tighter affair with Lee holding a 5-point lead ahead of Dorothy and Greg. The medals could go to any of these three with Piers looking to sneak in at the death should he finish well up in the last race.

Pos.	Name	Time	H'cap	Act Time	Pos on Time
1	M.ALLEN	32.13	9.07	23.06	9
2	P.PUNTAN	32.30	8.37	23.53	12
3	C.WOODS	32.38	3.08	29.30	21
4	N.CLARK	32.39	9.08	23.31	11
5	G.ENGLAND	32.40	11.38	21.02	1
6	B.HARVEY	32.41	3.08	29.33	22
7	R.CLIFFORD	32.45	10.57	21.48	3
8	K.CLARK	32.47	10.44	23.00	8
9	L.TOLHURST	32.49	10.29	21.52	4
10	R.KENCHINGTON	32.57	6.32	22.13	5
11	A.HARTLEY	33.01	5.04	22.32	7
12	D.WICKE	33.03	12.07	26.31	14
13	M.WEST	33.11	9.36	28.07	17
14	D.VOSSER	33.19	11.28	21.12	2
15	R.FRANCIS	33.34	6.34	23.58	12
16	K.VALLIS	33.46	10.47	22.18	6
17	A.PAUL	33.53	4.51	27.19	15
18	D.MAUGHAN	34.02	10.47	23.15	10
19	E.SANDALL-BALL	34.06	4.51	29.15	19
20	M.WOODS	34.19	5.44	28.35	18
21	G.CLOKE	34.32	5.03	29.29	20
22	S.COOK	34.36	2.00	32.36	23
23	E.TILBURY	35.05	7.30	27.35	16

Hampshire Cross Country League Wimborne, Saturday February 11 from Geoff

A comfortable victory in the final Hampshire Cross Country League match at Wimborne, Saturday February 11, earned the Senior Men promotion to Division 1, as emphatic League Champions, with five wins in the five monthly outings since last October.

A clash of dates weakened the Vet's team, but the Seniors turned out in strength to the make sure of the result they needed, and were once again led home by Aaron Harris in 31st place. Aaron was followed very closely by Chris Jones, making a welcome return, in 33rd place, and Club Captain Dave Vosser 38th and 6th Vet, earning him the bronze medal in the individual Vet's League Championships. Chris Minter continued his good form in finishing 45th, and the consistent Greg England completed the senior team in 58th spot. Lee Tolhurst finished in 70th place, and Martin Crawshaw made up the Vet's team in 51st place and 126th overall. This was not enough to win the Vet's League title, but was easily enough to take the runner's up spot behind Reading AC. Geoff Cloke completed the Harrier's team in 153rd place.

In the Ladies race, Cath Wheeler ran a determined race battling with the leaders from the start, finishing 6th overall and 2nd Vet. These positions earned her a bronze in the Ladies Championships and silver in the corresponding Vets Category. Penny Abbot finished 14th with Ladies Captain Audra Dennison 17th and 9th Vet, which earned her fourth place in the Vets Championships. The Vets team was completed by Dorothy Wicke in 20th place, and Liz Sandall-Ball in 50th place, which secured the runners up spot in the Vets Ladies League Championships behind Reading Roadrunners. The Ladies finished the season fourth overall in the League.

Results

6th	C.WHEELER	23m 26sec
14th	P.ABBOT	24m 25sec
17th	A.DENNISON	24m 46sec
37th	D.WICKE	27m 12sec
56th	E.SANDALLBALL	29m 54sec

31st	A. HARRIS	31m 58sec
33rd	C. JONES	32m 04sec
38th	D.VOSSER	32m 31sec
45th	C. MINTER	33m 03sec
58th	G.ENGLAND	33m 44sec
70th	L. TOLHURST	34m 38sec
126th	M. CRAWSHAW	39m 04sec
153rd	G. CLOKE	44m 32sec

Hampshire Cross Country League Summary from Dave Vosser

Congratulations to everyone who competed in the Hampshire Cross Country league this year. The Men finished the season as champions of Division 2 and the ladies took an excellent fourth behind Reading, Winchester and AFD. A special mention must be made of those who scored in the individual overall tables competing in at least four of the races. Individual placings were as follows.

Hampshire Cross Country League 2005/6

Men - Individual Aggregate

Pos		Matches					Aggregate
		1	2	3	4	5	
20	D Vosser	51		42	40	38	171
30	G England	87	83	47	53	58	241
49	M Firouzi	139	95	66	72		372
69	R Francis	164	161	105	104		534
72	D Bush	166	175	117	114		572

Veteran Men - Individual Aggregate

Pos		Matches					Aggregate
		1	2	3	4	5	

3	D Vosser	5		2	6	6	19
6	G England	18	14	3	10	12	39
26	R Francis	65	57	30	35		187

Senior Women - Individual Aggregate (Prizewinners)

Pos		Matches					
		1	2	3	4	5	Aggregate
3	Cath Wheeler	14	13	9	4	6	32

Veteran Women - Individual Aggregate (Prizewinners)

Pos		Matches					
		1	2	3	4	5	Aggregate
2	Cath Wheeler	5	4	2	2	3	11
4	Audra Dennison	11	10	7	10	9	36

Final Hampshire League Tables (extracts – full tables on www.overtonharriers.org.uk)

Hampshire Cross Country League 2005/6

Senior Men - Team Aggregate

	Division 2	08/10/2005		05/11/2005		03/12/2005		14/01/2006		11/02/2006		Totals	
1	Overton Harriers	238	1	405	1	241	1	156	1	205	1	1245	5
2	New Forest Runners	389	2	521	2	338	2	376	2	273	2	1897	10
3	Eastleigh RC	542	4	687	4	510	6	456	4	530	4	2725	22
4	Poole Runners	727	6	810	7	483	3	440	3	371	3	2831	22
5	Farnham Runners	735	7	797	6	549	4	506	5	537	5	3124	27

Hampshire Cross Country League 2005/6

Senior Men - Team Aggregate

Veteran Men - Team Aggregate

	Division 1	08/10/2005		05/11/2005		03/12/2005		14/01/2006		11/02/2006		Totals	
1	Reading AC	144	8	29	1	16	1	10	1	18	1	217	12
2	Overton Harriers	27	1	53	3	22	2	20	2	69	7	191	15
3	Stubbington Green	72	4	51	2	36	3	43	3	60	5	262	17
4	Southampton RC	44	3	77	5	138	7	157	9	32	2	448	26
5	Bournemouth	92	5	67	4	0	10	96	5	47	3	0	27
6	Poole Runners	97	6	125	8	79	4	102	6	58	4	461	28

**Senior Women - Team
Aggregate**

		08/10/2005		05/11/2005		03/12/2005		14/01/2006		11/02/2006		Total
1	Reading AC	79	6	50	3	27	2	14	1	28	1	13
2	Winchester & District	10	1	12	1	7	1	107	8	44	3	14
3	Aldershot, Farnham &	14	2	25	2	41	4	18	2	53	4	14
4	Overton Harriers	54	3	56	4	32	3	41	4	60	5	19
5	Reading Roadrunners	71	5	119	9	50	5	35	3	40	2	24
6	Havant	82	7	92	6	95	7	107	8	70	8	36

Veteran Women - Team Aggregate

		08/10/2005		05/11/2005		03/12/2005		14/01/2006		11/02/2006		Total
1	Reading Roadrunners	23	2	44	3	57	5	13	1	22	1	12
2	Overton Harriers	51	5	39	2	34	1	36	2	32	2	12
3	Farnham Runners	93	6	62	4	51	3	40	3	55	5	21
4	Poole Runners	48	4	101	9	64	6	47	4	40	3	26
5	Victory	117	10	70	5	72	9	71	5	99	7	36

Winchester 10k Sunday 26th Feb 2006 from Dave Vosser

Overton Harriers collected another set of trophies to continue their successful road racing season by winning four of the age category prizes at the 24th annual Winchester 10k. Nine Harriers took part in this popular event with over 700 runners starting in the centre of the city. The quality of the field was boosted with the 2005 European Cross Country champion Hayley Yelling using the event to complete her preparations before heading off to compete in the Commonwealth Games. Club Captain David Vosser was first home in 10th spot and taking 1st place in the over 45's category. Greg England, who continues to maintain good form, followed closely in 19th place. The next three athletes all posted personal best times on a difficult course, Richard Clifford broke 39mins for the first time and was a full 2minutes quicker than his previous outing at Stubbington to finish in 34th place. Martin Allen broke his personal best by 90 seconds to finish 48th in 39min15 and is now looking to go under 39minutes at the Eastleigh 10k, Martin was followed by Nicky Clark who ran a tremendous race to finish 3rd Lady in a personal best time of 40mins05. Nicky has set her sights on breaking the 40minute barrier at Eastleigh.

A below par Richard Francis ran well to finish in 77th place followed by super Vet Eric Tilbury, who finished 1st over 60 in 42min41, Dorothy Wicke, claimed 1st Lady over 50 and Moira West 1st Lady over 55.

Results

10th	D.VOSSER	35m 42sec
19th	G.ENGLAND	36m 46sec
34th	R. CLIFFORD	38m 29sec
48th	M. ALLEN	39m 15sec
64th	N. CLARK	40m 05sec
77th	R. FRANCIS	40m 47sec
115th	E. TILBURY	42m 41sec
235th	D. WICKE	46m 13sec
348th	M.WEST	49m 47sec

PRESENTATION DINNER 2006 from John Hoare

This year's Presentation Dinner will be held at Test Valley Golf Club on Friday 25th May and I hope you will be able to join us for the occasion.

Copy of menu attached. If you wish to attend please let me have your choices by Thursday 10th May together with a deposit of £5 per head.

Meet at the Golf Club at 7.30pm for 8.00pm (app) dinner.

Any queries please give me a call on 01256 770489.

MENU

Cream of Carrot and Coriander Soup

Served with Sliced Sunflower, Apricot and Honey Loaf

**Duck and Orange Terrine Served with Seasonal Mixed Leaves,
Cumberland Sauce and Melba Toast**

Seared Asparagus Served with Hollandaise Sauce

Fanned Galia Melon

Served with Summer Fruits and a seasonal Salad

.....
**Roast Leg of English Lamb with Sage and Onion Stuffing
And a Port and Redcurrant Jus**

**Chicken Supreme Stuffed with Marscapone and Fresh Basil
With Provençal Sauce**

Cod Loin glazed in Olive Oil and Mixed Herbs

Brie Pesto and Cherry Tomato Filo Tart with Provençal Sauce

Stuffed Peppers with Cous Cous

.....
English Cheese and Biscuits Served with Celery and Grapes

Cappuccino Bavorois Served with Fresh Double Cream

Toffee and Apple Meringue Roulade with Fresh Double Cream

**Exotic Fresh Fruit Salad
Served in a Brandy Snap Basket with Chantilly Cream**

.....
Freshly Brewed Coffee and After Dinner Mints
.....

£16.00 per Head

RAMBLINGS FROM MAZAR by Mike McMahon

My apologies for not having put “pen to paper” for about 3 weeks, but this is the first Friday (20 Jan) that we have had the opportunity to pause for breath, and have a down day, since the New Year. So, working on the great military assumption of not knowing when having the next five minutes to oneself will occur again, I thought that I would compile another few ramblings from Mazar.

I suppose the highlight, if one wishes to use that word, of my travel since the beginning of the year, has been the recent 9 hour journey by road through the Hindu Kush and Salang Tunnel, to Kabul for a two day conference that was postponed whilst I was en route. So what’s the fuss, I hear you say. Well, the fact that the journey was done in the worst weather to hit the central and northern regions of the country this year, creating 2 metre high snow drifts in the Pass, with the road looking like a vehicle scrap yard for most of the journey, would be my answer to that question. The fact that mobile phone coverage is also non-existent in many of the rural areas did not help, nor did the fact that the organizers chose to postpone the event late in the morning of the vary day that most people would be starting their travels. Anyway, the journey was a fascinating experience, not to be repeated if you are of a nervous disposition, and the Salang Tunnel and the Kush are both amazing to see in any weather. The Tunnel itself is, at 11,030 feet above sea level, claimed by the Afghans to be the highest road tunnel in the world. It was built by the Russians in 1965 and proved to be an extremely convenient route for Soviet tanks during their occupation of Afghanistan in 1979. Until this tunnel was built, northern Afghanistan was effectively isolated from the south during the winter when the other passes froze. That is why you will find even better snow and ice clearing equipment in the Pass than that used by most local councils in UK.

Having managed not to get stranded in Kabul for too long; far too many military rules, regulations and petty bureaucracy for my independently-minded approach (!), my next excursion was to the main border crossing point with Uzbekistan. Hayratin Town is about 2 hours drive north of Mazar and is on the River Oxus which marks the border. The Friendship Bridge (800 metres long) provides the only reliable road and rail link between the two countries. The Bridge was built by the Soviet Union (hence its name) and, like the Salang Tunnel, proved to be very useful in 1979! This relatively small town provides a microcosm of Afghanistan’s security bureaucracy; a total of no less than 7 different official police and customs organizations control the town, the border crossing itself and the immediate local area. It was a very pleasant surprise to see, albeit on the surface, that despite the confusion, they do actually manage to maintain pretty good security. However, there are more vehicle check points on the last two mile stretch of the main road leading to the crossing, each operated by a different official department, to ensure that each gets their cut of the pie so to speak.

After the sad loss of a British soldier in late October last year, followed by a suicide bomber blowing himself up in the grounds of the Blue Mosque in Mazar, our presence actually in the Mosque’s grounds has been non-existent. Nevertheless, the mullahs and the officials associated with the Mosque are really important and influential members of the community. They can reach far more people than any information campaign which we might organize. Having made the decision to visit the Mosque’s leaders and re-establish the links in this potentially difficult area, I made arrangements to meet with one of the deputy leaders of the Mosque today (Friday 20 Jan). I chose a Friday as the Mosque and surrounding area would be busy and therefore reducing the likelihood of any attack against us. From the second that we arrived in just two civilian-type vehicles, we all felt at ease and not threatened in any way by the locals; if anything, they were, as usual very welcoming if a little curious. We walked freely around this beautiful Mosque, obviously not entering the actual shrine and I, and my small group of soldiers, were very well entertained by the deputy leader.

The Shrine of Ali, located in the Blue Mosque compound, has a curious history. Ali, the Prophet’s son-in-law, is reputed to be buried here after his assassination in AD 661. One other site vies with Mazar for the honour, nearer to the actual place of death in Kufa, Iraq. The Mazari’s story is that Ali’s companions placed his body on the back of a white she-camel which wandered until she fell, exhausted on the spot where the shrine is and where his body is now buried. All knowledge of the final resting place was lost until the beginning of the 12th century, when its existence was revealed in a dream to a mullah. The shrine was originally built in 1136. Genghis Khan destroyed the building, having heard stories of the great treasures buried under its pillars. Once again the grave lay unmarked until a second revelation occurred and the current buildings were constructed in 1481. None of the 15th century decoration remains, but the modern restoration replicates the decoration used over 500 years ago. The tiles are individual squares that have been handpainted and dazzle in bright sunlight. It is a truly spectacular place and one in which you really feel a sense of calm.

Well, my weekly down time is rapidly coming to end, so I will stop rambling now; yippee I hear you cheer! Tomorrow (Sat 21 Jan) I am off to address a local Shura (council) deep in the Sholgara Valley south of Mazar; another relatively unknown, but difficult area for our teams to operate in. On Sunday 22 Jan I am off to prison so to speak, but only as a visitor to the local “nick”; then a session with the Mayor of Mazar (another appointee who says a lot but does very little to improve the locals’ quality of life) and finally, a live recording on Radio Balkh. Busy and at times frustrating as life is here in Afghanistan, it sure beats commuting to work in central London!



Training Weekend 10th to 13th February from Frank Kenny

Run? I thought we were here for the beer!

Every year we arrange a trip to the West Country that by all accounts should be cold, bleak and thoroughly miserable. Every year we seem to get the right weekend for the weather, and this year was no exception. Having searched long and hard to find the right combination of accommodation, catering and running our second pilgrimage to Marhamchurch, nr Bude in Cornwall almost felt like coming home.

The shrine of the Red Cow in Honiton was visited by most. The food was, as always very good and the beer matched it admirably. With over half the distance gone the remaining trip past Exeter, Okehampton and Holsworthy provided a nice afternoon drive for those who stayed awake.

Everyone involved in last year's training weekend was really wowed by the whole trip. This year, because everyone knew where their favourite bits were it was more relaxed as everything was there, in place and ready to go. That is until the Friday night when, after a splendid meal in the Buller's Arms it took a discussion of about 30 minutes involving at least 10 people to decide what the rep session was for the following morning.

Overnight, disturbances were heard in Sycamore when our venerable (I think that's the word) President, who got out of bed to make sure his kidneys were still working, was challenged very loudly with "OI!!! WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING"!! from our resident Saints supporter. When JT told him what was happening ET apologised very sheepishly. For me, at 02:08, this had a surreal quality, where you don't know if you are dreaming or everyone else is.

Saturday morning there was a reprise of the discussion before the reps started but eventually it was agreed and the session got under way with John and Ian doing a sterling job in marshalling us up and down the path. And Nicky, the longest rep was only two minutes, not three.

Saturday afternoon was free for everyone and some chose to stay locally, some chose to walk (the distances were elongated as the weekend wore on) and some went much further afield. Chris and I chose the Eden Project nr St Austell, which was excellent. A late run on the Saturday was well attended and the evening meal was a joyful affair as several of the runners returned from the final Hampshire Cross Country league meeting with a hatful of team and individual trophies. Well done to all concerned.

Overnight rain didn't spoil the Sunday run and compared to last year most runners were able to go "heads up" along the coast path that had been so treacherous 12 months ago.

Confusion was rife, again in Sycamore when our elder statesmen appeared were wearing the same shirt. (No! the same style of shirt, not the SAME shirt) there was some under the breath mutterings from both long the lines of "Oi,!! What do you think you are doing"?

Lunch at the Falcon hotel was just delightful and it is clear to see why the club is so successful. It really is a community club with an age range approaching 70 years. I'm sure there are not many activities that could bring this age range together, especially in the harmony and enjoyment that was so obvious. The children were playing happily, the grown ups were relaxed and chatting and the whole atmosphere was just sublime.

By Sunday evening the pub was beginning to creak under the strain of so many healthy beer drinkers. They were moved from 5 real ales to just 2 by the Sunday evening but this went up to 3 after the meal. Not since the trip to Timberscombe and The White Lion have we been able to drink a pub dry but we came mighty close this time. Good effort guys but must try harder next year!

As usual the weekend was over too quickly. The Monday run was a speedy session. Some took part, some jogged out and back others packed for the journey home. Further homage was paid at the Red Cow and the trip back to Overton was, by and large carried out in companionable silence. For those of you who may be interested the trip back via M5, M4 is about 20 miles longer and rather dull. Let's hope the A303 upgrade happens sooner rather than later.

Well done again to Nicky & Keith, Dave and Madeleine for making all the arrangements. Hopefully, the facilities will still be available to us next year but there is some doubt on the catering. However, our President's kidneys can't be doing too bad as he allegedly offered 75% of the asking price for the Buller's Arms. This was providing the club made up the remaining 25%. Anyone prepared to make him an offer he can't refuse?