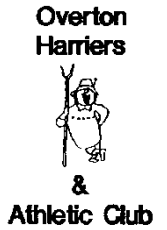


HARRIERS NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter of Overton Harriers and Athletic Club



Roundup

Well if your thing is Cross Country January was definitely your month. The Hampshire Championships were what cross country should be; wet, muddy and tough.

The Hampshire League is only over four events this year so a good turnout, especially from the Ladies, at Reading meant that the club is holding its own mid pack, which given the standard in what is basically a 4 counties league, is pretty impressive for a club of our size.

The club's Combe Gibbet Race will be run on the 27th March. You should have received an email from the organising team asking for volunteers to assist on the day; please support if you can.

Social nights every first Tuesday of the month have been well attended and in March we will be looking at possibly going to the Old House for Thai, look out for the email.

Enjoy your running
Piers

Hants Cross Country League, Race 2: Aldershot

4th December

Ladies Race (4 Miles) from Rachel Whitfield

Aldershot was my second cross country race after Aldershot was my first XC race since I was at school and I was definitely a little nervous about what I had gotten myself into. As an adult, my running mostly consists of plodding through the countryside listening to music, a way to escape listening to 'Mum!' for the 95th time, with the odd half marathon or 10km thrown in. So the idea that others would be going fast, was a little off putting. I have to say this fear was not helped by the whippets lined up in proper XC kit at the start line.

Still, I was greatly encouraged by the fact that I had not been at a hen party the night before - as Claire had - and so could surely manage just to plod round... massive kudos to her for running!

I lost sight of Gaby in the first few metres as she was well ahead of me- well done for some great running! One thing that was really encouraging was people lining the course cheering you on- thanks to the men's team who were there early to encourage us on the way round- it really helped.

At the end I was happy to have finished, having run my fastest 2km since I was a teenager, but definitely made a note to myself to get a running watch so I can even my pace out. A fast (for me!!) first 2km had me close to crawling by the finish line.

Still the woman I was following (who was a good 30 years older than me) didn't get too far away!

It was a great event, with all ages and abilities taking part and I would definitely encourage anyone new to just give it a go. Looking forward to seeing you all at the next XC event!

Harrier	Time	Pos (Vet Pos)
Gabby Titcomb	28:21	76 th
Rachel Whitfield	31:40	111 th
Claire Spencer	32:46	116 th (35 th)

Ed. Apologies, this report should have gone into last month's newsletter

Hants Cross Country Champs Botley

8th January

Ladies Race (5 Miles) from Immy Collins

The 2022 Hampshire Cross-Country Championships took place at Fairthorne Manor, Botley on Saturday 8th January, after a pandemic-induced hiatus in 2021. Keeping an eye on the forecast in the days leading up to the race, I was relieved to watch the wind speed drop from 45mph to the low 20s.

I had been warned beforehand that Botley was typically a muddy meet, so the wet weather we had been having was not boding well for a clean race. As my first ever cross-country meet and debut outing sporting a Harriers vest, I was a little nervous. The wind and rain made for bitterly cold conditions which did not offer much comfort either..."proper cross-country".

The course for the Senior/Vet women consisted of two undulating laps of the 'Arena'; kept entertaining with a few steep sections before heading out around the golf club taking in a narrow weaving climb through woods littered with hidden tree roots and very 'sticky' corners. The 10 races already run that day made for a well-churned course and there was little hope of a fast race. The aim was simply to stay upright and to finish without losing a shoe; whilst appearances may have suggested otherwise, I am pleased to say I managed both.



As the 6 ladies shivered at the start line, the wind picked up bringing the rain in sideways; I had already questioned my choice of weekend plans more than once by this point.

Around the halfway mark, the muddy, water-logged terrain was definitely taking its toll on my legs, and a river had formed along one of the steeper downhill sections. Cheery supporters were spread all around the route and offered much appreciated encouragement throughout.

Cath Wheeler had a fantastic run to finish 35th overall and claim the ladies Vet 60 Champion title! The women's team placed 9th, and special mention to Ali Wheeler for finishing strongly despite a rolling 'crunch' to the ankle in the middle of the second lap.



It was then over to the men to face an even hairier slip-slide around an extended 12km course. The sun however did make an appearance for the 5 Harriers in this race. Peter Mitchell was the first back across the line and the vets team came in in 10th place. It was a great effort by all who ran in the challenging conditions, and a mug of tea and long hot soak was never more deserved or needed.

The idea of 'enjoyment in retrospect' absolutely ran true for me at Botley, and with fingers thawed and mud scrubbed from feet and face, I'm sure I'll be signing up for my next XC before too long.

Harrier	Time	Position	Vet
Cath Wheeler	39:33	35 th	1 st V60
Imogen Collins	41:36	46 th	
Ali Wheeler	44:41	56 th	
Sarah McCann	51:09	70 th	7 th V50
Monique Van Nueten	54:36	74 th	2 nd V65
Olivia Cox	54:44	75 th	9 th V40

77 finished
8th Team, 8th Vet Team

Men's Race (6 Miles)

from Stuart Searle

MARMITE..... Cross Country is the Marmite of running (you either love it or you hate it). Personally, I love it, but the County Champs were set to test that relationship. Unfortunately, the 2021 race was cancelled due to the pandemic, so it was good to be back again at Fairthorne Manor in Botley for this year's race.

It had been a relatively dry November and December, so the first two league races were not very muddy. However, over the Christmas/New Year week we did get quite a bit of rain, then on the day of the race itself, we had significant rainfall, which was going to impact the race.

There's always some debate on what shoes are best to wear, trail, studs or spikes, however on this occasion, by the time we had walked from the car to the harriers tent, we knew it was spikes, the next question was how long a spike can we use.



Overton put out two teams for the race, senior ladies and senior men.

Admittedly the ladies had the worst of the weather with some horrendous downpours during their race. But with some solid performances they all got round and did well.

Cath Wheeler was first Harrier and first W60, followed by Immy on her first (and hopefully not last) outing for a harrier's cross-country race. Next was Ali Wheeler, then Sarah, with Monique and Olivia.

The senior men's race was supposed to be 12000 metres, but with some minor alterations to the course this year, it was cut to around 10k, which wasn't a bad thing. The attempted warm up was cut short, due to the course and surrounding areas being waterlogged and muddy.



Hants XC Championship photos courtesy of Hammy8241

It's probably an exaggeration to say the weather brightened up for our race, let's just say it had stopped raining. Whilst the rain had subsided, the damage had been done and as we were the final race the course was well and truly churned up.

Loads of mud, deep muddy puddles and very few places you could get a decent pace going. Sean was an early casualty of the mud as he lost his shoe and took over a lap to catch up.

The entire race was spent struggling for grip and constantly watching where you put your feet. I've done harder and muddier cross-country races, but the county champs took it out of us. A tough race but the men put in a good performance, with Pete Mitchell leading us home, closely followed by Ash, then Sean (who had fallen twice), myself and Keith, who was suffering with fatigue but never gave up.

Well done to both teams and thank you to the Harriers who were out supporting and volunteering on the day.

Harrier	Time	Position	Vet
Peter Mitchell	49:07	71 st	6 th V45
Ash Coxden	50:02	76 th	
Sean Holmes	52:41	91 st	6 th V50
Stuart Searle	56:17	105 th	10 th V45
Keith Vallis	78:48	156 th	12 th V55

156 finished
10th Vet Team

Hants Cross Country League, Race 3: Reading

15th January

Ladies Race (4 Miles)

from Jasmine Kalton

Despite having done a cross country race before in Bournemouth, I was nervous as I made my way to Reading. I didn't know what to expect from this course and it was hard to tell how the conditions were going to be. Having packed two pairs of shoes, sunglasses and a snood, I felt prepared for almost anything British weather could throw at us. When I arrived it was clear that we would be sliding around in the mud. But the sun was out which was nice!



The race started facing a nice looking flat field but I had been warned about a hill. I was wearing some new cross country spikes and was having great fun trying them out in the thick sticky mud. However, once we got around the field and made our way towards the steepest hill imaginable, I realised this was going to be a tough race. Going up the hill, I felt like I was putting everything in, yet was going about the same speed as those who had chosen to walk it. It was really tough getting up to the top but it felt like a great achievement once I was there. What was disappointing was that once you make it to the top, around the corner was another hill!

The course continued up and down for a bit and one of the down sections was so muddy it was pretty scary getting down it. I followed the runner in front who chose to go through some shrubs to maintain some traction with the ground. Once finally recovered from the worst of the hills, we were all directed right back to the first hill again. Everything felt a little easier on the second lap and it was good knowing that this was the last time we had to go through this section.

The easiest part to run was the last kilometre, as we were directed around the park. It was tough as this point as I had used so much energy on the hills. However, I knew this was near the end and carried on pushing.

Once it was finished, it felt great to be done and cheering on the other finishers. I think we all deserved chocolates and biscuits after that! Well done everyone for completing a really tough challenge. At least the course was short by 1K!

Harrier	Time	Position	Vet
Cath Wheeler	24:21	55 th	13 th
Gabby Titcomb	24:45	61 st	
Ali Wheeler	26:24	84 th	
Claire Daly	26:36	85 th	
Jasmine Kalton	29:44	104 th	
Sarah McCann	30:55	106 th	40 th
Amy Jewell	31:21	107 th	
Monique Van Nueten	31:34	108 th	41 st

*119 finished
11th Team, 6th Vet Team*

Men's Race (6 Miles)

from Piers Puntan

Reading is a tough course, nowhere near as tough as that experienced the previous week at Fairthorne, but it has some sharp climbs and enough boggy stuff to sap the energy.

The men managed to get a team out, which was great considering that it was Stubbington 10k the next day and that most of the team had only competed at the XC Champs the week before.

The race pace was a bit subdued and no one set off at a blistering pace. I enjoyed the event; the choice of spikes definitely helping and I was able to pass other runners on the hills, especially the steep downhill muddy bank which can lead to a tumble if you get it wrong

The Harriers just about managed to get a men's team together with Lee joining the usual quartet of Keith, Sean Stuart and myself.



We are now sitting mid table in Division 2 and are 11th in the Veteran's League again mid table.

Roll on Popham on 19th February.

Harrier	Time	Position	Vet
Sean Holmes	38:01	85 th	21 st
Lee Tolhurst	41:58	140 th	44 th
Stuart Searle	43:46	156 th	55 th
Piers Puntan	48:39	200 th	87 th
Keith Vallis	53:32	218 th	104 th

*230 finished
18th Team, 10th Vet Team*

Dates for your diary

Hampshire Road Race League

Salisbury 10	3 rd Apr 2022
Alton 10	8 th May 2022
Netley 10k	15 th May 2022
Alresford 10k	19 th June 2022

Hampshire Cross Country League

Popham Airfield, Basingstoke 19th Feb 2022

Southern (Track and Field) Athletics League

Sun 22nd May - Swindon
Sun 12th June - Swindon
Sat 16th July – ANDOVER – Home Fixture
Sat 13th Aug – Winchester

Southern Vets (Track and Field) Athletics League

Monday 25th April - Portsmouth
Monday 6th June - Winchester
Monday 20th June - Southampton
Monday 11th July – Aldershot

Monday Night Fixtures commence at 18:30

Winter Handicap – Race 4

16th January

from Richard Francis

There a close finish to this month's race with Gabby edging out Immi by 7 seconds with Neil McCann grabbing the family bragging rights in third. Sean was again the fastest runner but I believe history was made as Gabby and Immi took the next two places in the Time league. I don't this has happened before.

Overall both the tables are taking shape with one race to run (in March). As usual, Sean tops the Time league 3 points ahead of Gareth (10) and Immi (12) with Louis leading the chasing pack.

Immi leads the Handicap on 10 points ahead of Lucy (13) with Neil McCann in third place with 14 points.

#	Harrier	Time	H/Cap	Actual	Time #
1	Gabby Titcomb	33.01	7.35	25.26	3
2	Immy Collins	33.08	8.08	25.00	2
3	Neil McCann	33.16	1.23	31.53	15
4	Richard Clifford	33.22	6.42	26.40	7
5	Lucy Pearson	33.31	7.30	26.01	6
6	Cath Wheeler	33.36	7.49	25.47	5
7	Sarah McCann	33.59	3.54	30.05	10
8	Jasmin Kalton	34.19	3.26	30.53	13
9	Sean Holmes	34.22	12.21	22.01	1
10	Lauren Dennison	34.22	3.35	30.47	12
11	Dave Titcomb	34.58	4.22	30.36	11
12	Gareth Juliff	35.05	9.35	25.30	4
13	Louis McCann	35.06	7.49	27.17	8
14	Amy Jewell	35.22	3.54	31.28	14
15	Olivia Cox	35.34	0.42	34.52	17
16	Monique Van Nueten	36.11	0.50	35.21	18
17	John Harrison	37.03	7.35	29.28	9
18	Rachel Whitfield	38.41	3.54	34.47	16
19	Luci McCallum	39.07	0.50	38.17	19

Winchester Off Road Half Marathon

23rd January

from Lucy Pearson

On the 23rd January was the Winchester Off-road Trail Half Marathon organized by UK Running Events. The event had two distances a 14km and 21km with both starting from Sparsholt College.

The morning was dry and slightly cold which were ideal conditions. The previous couple of weeks it had rained quite a bit and I was pleasantly surprised that the ground had dried out nicely. It was a mass start so the first kilometre which was a lap around the college was a bit crowded before breaking into a stubble field which allowed everyone to spread out.

The path led down to Farley Mount Country Park where the wide forest tracks the path quickly turned into single track footpath. This meant I had to keep up with the runners in front as there were three or four runners directly behind me so I was determined to keep pace.

After a while the rolling hills and a drinks station this meant people began to slow and fall back but I managed to keep pace with the runner in front of me. Around 10km there was a course split and those running 14km turned right while the 21km runners went left towards Farley Mount.

From about 11.5km until 15km it was a constant uphill all the way to the top of Farley Mount. Having reached the top (which was tough) it was around the monument and then time to head back to Sparsholt. The downhill was a welcome relief and then it was back onto the single track. I was following a couple of runners and they both tripped on roots and fell, but army rolls got them back on their feet quickly.

The route back was on tracks and bridleways back the up the field to the college. I crossed the finish line in 1 hour 55 minutes and 29 seconds, which I was happy with given the 354m elevation. The goodies consisted of a buff and a pair of socks along with the race medal.

Harrier	Time	Position	Vet
Lucy Pearson	1:55:29	86 th	6 th V30

Stubbington 10k

16th January

No report received as the newsletter went to press. Results below

Harrier	Chip Time	Gun Time	Pos.	Vet Pos.
Ash Coxden	0:36:31	0:36:36	55 th	34
Pete Mitchell	0:36:52	0:36:57	64 th	8 th V45
Sean Holmes	0:36:35	0:36:37	57 th	4 th V50
Hannah Bliss	0:39:32	0:39:43	168 th	6 th F
Gareth Juliff	0:42:17	0:42:27	277 th	52 nd V40
Gabby Titcomb	0:44:22	0:44:53	395 th	26 th F
Lucy Pearson	0:45:34	0:46:05	446 th	16 th V35
John Harrison	0:46:53	0:47:26	519 th	63 rd V45
Dave Titcomb	0:51:22	0:52:01	771 st	38 th V60
Sarah McCann	0:50:58	0:52:11	775 th	11 th V50
Neil McCann	0:55:12	0:56:28	997 th	94 th V50
Monique Van Nueten	0:58:54	0:59:32	1172 nd	8 th V65
Susanne Hurst	1:00:45	1:03:04	1321 st	58 th V50

January's Parkrun Results

	01/01/22	08/01/22	15/01/22	22/01/22	29/01/22
Basingstoke					
Terry Clarke	24:56	25:45	25:06	27:34	25:10
Hannah Bliss	20:45				
Amy Jewell		34:14		32:44	32:48
Julia Cottrell				30:53	29:19
Cath Wheeler					22:21
Andover					
Peter Mitchell	22:01	26:42	38:00	18:56	
Jasmine Kalton	36:58	29:38		28:28	28:45
Sarah McCann				25:55	
Portrush					
Piers Puntan	24:35				
Frimley Lodge					
Dave Bush	20:00	20:41		19:58	20:07
Great Dunmow					
Matt Wateridge	25:52				
Seven Fields					
Neil Martin	21:52				
Black Park					
Claire Spencer		19:30 (K9)			
Didcot					
Gavin Roberts			22:49	22:12	21:52
Bartley Park					
Claire Spencer			20:19 (K9)		
Roding Valley					
Claire Spencer				22:59 (K9)	
Dallas Burston Polo Club					
Mark Wateridge		38:35			
Delamere					
Katie Brothers	26:09		25:51	25:38	
Thurrock					
Mark Wateridge			23:03		
Central Plymouth					
Steve McNair			27:03		
Fulbourn Hospital					
Matt Wateridge				25:14	
Southampton					
Mel Hodkin					28:01
Fulham Palace					
Peter Mitchell					18:49
Wyre Forest					
Matt Wateridge					24:33
Marlborough Common					
Claire Spencer					21:53 (K9)
St Mary's					
Monique Van Nueten					28:37