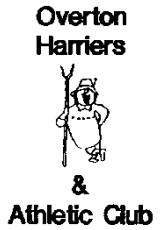


HARRIERS NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter of Overton Harriers and Athletic Club



Roundup

The Cross Country season was completed this month with the final race at Popham. The Ladies' team had an excellent turn out, which has been the case all season. The Men's team struggled to get a team out with Neil McCann being press-ganged on the day more about that in the newsletter.

We have the date for the Annual Presentation Dinner, Friday 13th May, and it will be held at the Test Valley Golf Club.

We also have the dates for the Southern Vets Track and Field with the first one on 25th April. These events are on Monday evenings and are great fun. Most of us do events that we wouldn't normally consider such as discus and javelin and there is never a problem doing an event "just for a point". If you are a Vet (>35) and fancy giving it a go then contact Monique or Sean for encouragement.

Enjoy your running
Piers

Hants Cross Country League, Race 4: Reading

4th December

Ladies Race (4 Miles)

from Lauren Dennison

As Georgia Vallis once said, you know you've made it when you get asked to write a report for the Overton Harriers newsletter.

It seemed very fitting that I made my Cross Country debut for the 2021-2022 season on what happened to be the last Cross Country race of the season. I had made an internal note to myself that I wasn't going to race this season; however, after a bit of friendly banter and persuasion from some other Harriers, (I mention no names... Stuart, Gareth, and Piers), I dusted off my spikes and decided to take part in the Popham Airfield race. What was the worst that could happen?

As it turned out, the race was the day after Storm Eunice, so conditions were interesting to say the least. What you would call a 'proper cross-country'; very windy, wet, and muddy! Jasmine and I already had wet feet after the warm up!

Having run the Popham course before as an U17, this boosted my confidence slightly as although the distance for the senior women's race was longer, I at least had some idea of what I was getting myself into. It was 2 complete laps for the senior women's race which helps because once you have completed 1 lap, in your head you know that you only have to repeat what you have just done a second time! There are also no major hills; mostly gradual inclines which although can be deceiving, are more appreciated than long, steep hills.

It was a good turn out from the ladies as we were all huddled together on the start line; I was questioning my choice of only shorts and a t-shirt at this point. On a positive, once we got going, the rain cleared up so it was only the wind and mud to deal with.

Despite thinking I knew the course, I seemed to have forgotten about the 'small bank' halfway round which did almost stop me in my tracks; you have to just go for it and hope you don't fall over.

Spikes were definitely a good decision as sections of the course through the wood and around corners especially on the second lap were particularly muddy.

The wind was intense and when running against it, it



felt like you were hardly moving, especially towards the end of the second lap when fatigue was starting to set in, so I knew my time was never going to be my best, also because I was still managing a small calf injury.

The shouts of encouragement from spectators throughout the course were appreciated and as my Dad pointed out, because Popham is a fairly open course, it is a good race to watch as you can see the runners at multiple points. Although funnily enough, he didn't want to hang around for long after my race had finished!

Hannah Bliss had a fantastic run, finishing in 33rd place, followed by Immy and Cath, closely followed by Lucy and then Ali, Jasmine, myself, and Sarah. Having had Jasmine in my sight most of the race and although she was a useful wind shield, I would have liked to have gotten past her (as she does seem to be 5-10 seconds in front of me in every rep session/race) but I didn't start my 'sprint finish' early enough this time. Having put a lot of pressure on myself during races when I was younger, I had low expectations for this race aka just get round the course as best as you possibly can so overall, I was pleased with my performance having not raced in a cross country since 2017!

Well done to everyone who raced in the challenging conditions!

Harrier	Time	Position	Vet
Hannah Bliss	29:23	33 rd	
Immy Collins	30:56	50 th	
Cath Wheeler	31:19	51 st	14 th
Lucy Pearson	32:02	58 th	
Ali Wheeler	34:40	86 th	
Jasmine Kalton	35:44	93 rd	
Lauren Dennison	35:50	94 th	
Sarah McCann	36:40	97 th	42 nd

114 finished
9th Ladies Team

Men's Race (6 Miles)

from John Hoare

This was a weekend when the weather threw everything possible at us. Normally we help mark out the course on the Friday but the storm put paid to that and we were left with the whole course having to be set out on the Saturday morning. Many thanks to Steve Spence, Bliss and Eric who took on the onerous task from early morning and to everyone who helped clear up after the event. The meeting could not have taken place without the efforts of all concerned.

In the men's race we were again indebted to the trio of Sean, Lee and Stuart who have manfully borne the pressure of the men's team over the season and this occasion was no exception. But with late withdrawals we were left scratching for a team; and so to two more heroes. Neil was expecting to support Sarah but ended up borrowing shorts, vest and a pair of shoes which were too small and provided a couple of huge blisters, to help make up the team, while Piers was plainly not well enough to run but with great determination struggled round the course to ensure we finished a team. It was worthy of note that we managed to finish in sixth place and maintain our position in Division 2 for another year, thanks to their efforts.



The whole weekend was a great example of dedication, determination and club spirit and well done to all concerned for a fabulous day.

Harrier	Time	Position	Vet
Sean Holmes	44:54	81 st	21 st
Lee Tolhurst	46:54	112 th	34 th
Stuart Searle	49:53	135 th	50 th
Neil McCann	62:47	202 nd	103 rd
Piers Puntan	67:21	205 th	106 th

207 finished
14th Team, 9th Vets' Team

Stubbington 10k

16th January

from Monique Van Nueten

After having run Reading cross country the day before deciding on what footwear to choose was a no-brainer for this road race as there would be no mud to deal with unlike the 2 previous races, I did which were complete mud baths.

It was an earlier start than usual for me on a Sunday morning as Lucy was picking me up at 8am and we were on route to Stubbington.

Although there were obviously far less runners gathering than the previous editions it was still pretty busy at the Race HQ so we started the process of queuing up. Standing in the queue for race numbers I receive a call from Sarah asking me if I could pick her and Neil's number as they got stuck in a bit of traffic.

This meant of course that I had to dash backwards and forwards 3 times between the tables with the names listed on one end of the hall and the tables with the actual numbers at the other end of the hall. Luckily, I managed to get all the right numbers but maybe not necessarily in the right order.

Once outside again we met up with Lucy's friend, Lee and together we joined the queue for the luggage where I also could hand over the numbers to Sarah.

The next queue was for the toilets and for once I was lucky with a faster moving queue so I told Lucy and Lee I was heading off to the start which is a good way of warming up for this race.

As a general rule for races I always make sure that I am not too far away from the start line where possible without interfering with the faster runners but at least avoiding a very slow start.

Once the race was underway, I settled into my rhythm and within the first few kilometres was passed as usual by first Sarah and then Neil who both gave me a nice cheer.

I worked my way round the course, up the hills, trying to recover on the downhill sections and eating my way through the kilometres.

I always enjoy the bit where you turn towards the sea and start running along the seafront and once you get to the top of the last hilly section there you know that the worst is over and you have only got around 1.5k to go.



A few reports from Ali Wheeler from January's Races

Hants Cross Country Champs, Botley

from Ali Wheeler

The Hampshire XC Champs was going to be my 1st XC race (and my 1st race for Overton Harriers).

And what a race... talk about a baptism of fire!!

I discovered that not only was it 8k rather than the 6k for the league but being at Botley and we had had loads of rain it was apparently going to be wet.

It was indeed wet.... biblical rain during the ladies race and so much standing water we were all soaked before we'd even started the race!!

The mud was bottomless and contained hidden tree roots or holes (into which I eventually managed to turn my ankle over) It was indeed a complete slog for us all (well done all those who competed and especially those who were like me running for the 1st time.

After crossing the finish line it was nice being greeted by some of the other Harriers and finding Lucy again who finished way ahead of me.

A special mention goes out to Sean, Gaby and Sarah who also doubled up at the weekend with running two races in two days.

I hope everyone who competed was happy with their achievements.

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

*1570 finished
11th Men's Team
14th Ladies Team*

Hampshire Road Race League Standings

Men's:

A Team Div 1: 9th
B Team Div 2: 11th

Ladies':

A Team Div 1: 1st
B Team Div 2: 10th



I had been given strict instructions by Mum aka Cath which was DO NOT come past me in the 1st mile.... as it turned out it was sound advice as after a mile of ploughing through the mud it was a case of finishing at all costs and any wasted energy early on would have been a very bad move!

Mum finished 1st Overton Harrier with Immi a close 2nd and I was delighted to finish in the scoring team despite my injury! Apologies to everyone as we were so wet and cold we hurried back to the car to change and have cup of tea but we were able to shout encouragement to the men who had even further to run than us and we'd already churned it up a treat.

Despite all the mud and rain I knew I'd be standing on the start line for the next race...the reading xc now what did mum say about a little hill there???

Hampshire XC League, Reading

from Ali Wheeler

What a super turnout from the ladies for the penultimate XC run of the season!! The first time that I've raced with both Claire and Mum so we felt in party mode! I was taken to see "the hill" and wasn't sure which would be worse the steep up or the ridiculously short sharp hill down. As it turned out we all survived without any falls which was better than some poor runners who came back muddied and sore, I'm sure.

I was delighted to make the Overton team again...I think the xc championships had made me realise that this wasn't soooo bad!! Mum was 1st Harrier home, Gabby had a great run for 2nd place, me 3rd and Claire, despite an Achilles problem, coming in as 4th Harrier just behind me!! The men were a little thin on the ground this time but were led home by Sean and supported by Lee, Stewart, Piers and Keith. Well done to everyone who ran and let's hope the next race will throw up some good results too.

Ryde 10

6th February

from Sean Holmes

It seems so long ago, but Ryde 10 in 2020 was the last race before the country went in to lock down and the Hampshire Road Race League for that season was suspended. With things back to near normal, it was good to be making the trip over to the island to take part in this hilly race which I wouldn't say enjoy, but cope well with it.

We were going to be a team of three men, Myself, Ash and Neil. Prior to the race, Neil had to pull out due to injury, but still went over for the weekend and came along to support.

The weather on the day was not the best, whilst the rain held off for the race, the wind on the coast was very strong and always seem to be running into it.

The start of the race was the normal lap of the boating lake for 1 km on the flat, before heading out on the roads, where if you're not climbing a hill, you're running down one. Unusually for me I didn't charge off at the start and waited until the hills to start moving up in the places. Most of the race I was passing people going up the hills, before being passed going down them. One day I will learn to run downhill.

The race was won by Max Costley from Southampton AC who was over two minutes in front of former Overton 5 winner Matt Sharp. With the windy condition, I was very happy with my race and time. I finished sixth overall and was first M50. Ash also had a good race and finished twenty sixth overall.

Before getting the ferry back to Portsmouth, and now traditional, me and my Family stopped off in the Fishbourne Inn for Sunday Lunch and Beer with Neil and his family. You have to re-fuel!

Wokingham Half Marathon

27th February

from Ali Wheeler

After running Southampton Half in September 2021 I was adamant I would never do another until some of my friends mentioned they were doing one and did I want to join them...my initial thought was definitely not but after some thought, I thought why not, so the training began and with only a couple of weeks before the race I hurt my ankle at the XC champs, but that wasn't going to stop me not only doing the rest of the XC' but also this Half. With a bit of R&R I was back out there and training was well under way.

I'd been really pleased with how my training was going until getting pneumonia and it almost put me out of the race but I went with the plan to take it steady and see how I feel. But I got to the start line on a beautiful sunny but chilly day with very little wind. A 10am start meant it should get a little warmer....

Route was up to start with but told myself that what goes up must come down and really enjoyed the race!! In fact the last few miles went up again but I managed to hold on and achieved an amazing pb of just under 1hr 45mins knocking off 13 mins off my previous time.



I was 64th in my age category and 249th female finisher out of nearly 3000, I loved every minute of it and can't wait for the next one

February's Parkrun Results

	05/02/22	12/02/22	19/02/22	26/02/22
Basingstoke				
Terry Clarke	24:22	24:36	24:56	25:18
Liam Webb				32:41
Andover				
Peter Mitchell	19:54	18:38		
James Cowley	23:26		23:21	
Sarah McCann	24:49			24:53
Jasmine Kalton	27:39		33:57	28:33
Neil McCann	27:45			
Gareth Juliff				21:08
Canterbury				
Matt Wateridge	25:05			
Frimley Lodge				
Dave Bush	21:08	20:35		20:15
Delamere				
Katie Brothers	26:21			
Didcot				
Gavin Roberts	21:39		22:03	
Central Plymouth				
Kieran Maynard	22:57			
Reading				
Julia Cottrell		28:32		
Newbury				
Dave Titcomb		24:59		
Amy Jewell		31:27		
Ormeau				
Ash Coxden		18:27		
Bartley Park				
Mark Wateridge		22:52		
Hove Prom				
Gavin Roberts		21:39		
Great Salterns				
Claire Spencer		19:49 (K9)		
Southampton				
Mel Hodkin			28:13	26:26
Amy Jewell				25:13
Guildford				
Dave Bush			20:47	
Whiteley				
Claire Spencer			25:08	
Katie Brothers				25:23
Edgbaston Reservoir				
Matt Wateridge			23:11	
Dalby Forest				
Claire Spencer				20:20 (K9)
Bideford				
Mike Peters				21:03
Teignmouth Prom				
Holly Martin				29:33
Neil Martin				29:33
Trelai Park				
Matt Wateridge				51:15
Zuiderpark (NL)				
Maciek Hulme				19:23