



## **Garden City Runners**

### **News Release**

**3 March 2019**

# **Vets brave Storm Freya and reap rewards Neil Hume strikes gold for MV40's**

### **Herts County Vets XC Championships**

The big question was who would arrive first at Cockfosters' Trent Park for the *Herts County Vets' Cross Country Championships* ... Storm Freya or GCR's RUSSELL CASEY.

While the former didn't deliver quite its full storm force, only depositing the worst of its squally winds during the earlier MV40 race, Casey (*pictured right, medalled up*) left himself with a great deal of catching up to do. Getting his timings wrong, he didn't make it to the start until 11 minutes after the gun! However, joining the race late he managed to catch the tail enders—and despite recording his least flattering result ever (18<sup>th</sup> of 22 in the MV40s category, in 53:49 for the 6.13 miles) it was still good enough to help GCR to the silver medal for second county foursome! NEIL HUME took the individual gold in 38:55, with MARKUS ALLEN 8<sup>th</sup> in 40:48, and GCR's newest vet ROB DILLEY—only eligible by six weeks—16<sup>th</sup> in 49:14. To spare Russell's blushes, if he had started on time, it still wouldn't have pushed GCR up to gold against a strong Watford quartet.



In the V50 category in the same race, SEAN BOWEN was 11<sup>th</sup> of 42 in 43:39, MIKE RUSSELL 15<sup>th</sup> in 44:51, and PAUL GATENS 42<sup>nd</sup> in 1:00:30. Matt Adcock of Watford Harriers took gold in 38:25, and Harpenden the team title.



**The three faces of Gold winner Neil Hume**

This muddiest of courses in places resembled the Somme Battlefield, and it was a day when the importance of accurate foot strike on the gloopy terrain required as much mental application as physical to prevent slaloming. *"Course designer Rob Scott of Barnet had used every up and down, every twist and turn of the south side of Trent Park to create an exciting new route, with uneven bits, slippery bits, stony bits, narrow woodland sections, tree-root-hazard descents and tricky stream crossings,"* states Sean Bowen. *"Add to that the south-westerly threat of Storm Freya blasting the rain into the runners' faces, and you had one of the toughest races of the season."* Pity poor KAY METCALFE of GCR, who kindly volunteered as a marshal, standing out in it for a couple of hours and gaining the sincere gratitude of Herts and Middx AAA's organisers. Pity too, GCR's CRAIG STEPHENSON and RICHARD SIDLIN, providing their peerless chip timing service at the most complex event in their calendar, on a morning when several numbers and one or two expensive chips came off, and Craig's van required a push from several runners to extract itself from the boggy top field.

In the MV60+ and FV35 race over 4.5 miles, STEVE WILLIAMS was 9<sup>th</sup> MV60 of 21 in 39:23, DAVE EDWARDS 12<sup>th</sup> in 41:06, STEVE BUTTON 13<sup>th</sup> in 41:15, MICK WISE 14<sup>th</sup> in



Left to right: Steve Button, Steve Williams and Dave Edwards with their medals

41:55, and ALI EROGLU 16<sup>th</sup> in 42:41. Sadly, ROB CARTWRIGHT and JERRY GILBERT were misdirected to the finish before completing their second lap. But top trio Steve, Dave and Steve took bronze behind the Watford Joggers and Herts Phoenix trios.

RICHARD BLOOM won the MV70 individual gold in a brilliant 38:18 and DES MICHAEL of Barnet AC retained his MV60 gold in 34:51, at 69, one of the oldest in his age group.

For Sean Bowen, it was his last cross-country as GCR captain. He said, *"Watching Steve, Dave and Steve and the others slogging in to finish and win their county medals was immensely satisfying. I train on the track with these guys and they're wonderful people. It was tough out there and just to get round at their age is a massive achievement. They did me and the club proud."*

*Thanks to DEBBIE MORRIS and SEAN BOWEN for photos. See further selection below.*





From top (left to right clockwise): Mick Wise, Sean Bowen, Steve Williams, Ali Eroglu, the mass start, Rob Dilley

### **Cambridge Half Marathon**

ADAM WADLEY ran the Cambridge Half Marathon along with many other GCRs, an event that he says was well organised, with excellent support. *"The only hiccup for me was self-inflicted as nature called just before the start, which meant I managed to be late to my starting pen to find it closed ... and had to join the back of the next one. A good lesson learned as it made for quite a zig-zaggy first few miles as I tried to catch back up again."*

However, ADAM still managed a PB of 1:25:40 which he was delighted with, especially given that he is in peak training for the Manchester Marathon in five weeks' time.

Others in action included the RYAN family. With JUSTIN, JULY and son RYAN part of the GCR group competing in the drizzly, breezy conditions. RYAN finished in 1:38:26—an excellent result for his first Half—JUSTIN in 1:56:57, and JULY came through the funnel in an also commendable 2:01:26.

Other results were: RICHARD SOMERSET 1:25:37; NIGEL CAVILL 1:40:35; SALLY LAFLIN 1:51:59 (*pictured right, after recording a splendid PB*) and VICKY DODMAN 1:53:25.



### **Abbott World Marathon Major**

DAVE HEAL (*pictured below*) ran his 27th Marathon at Tokyo this weekend, and his sixth and final in the Abbott World Marathon



Major series in 4:49:15 on a flat, undulating chilly, rainy circuit. The atmosphere and camaraderie amongst the race officials, marshals, volunteers and other runners he describes as "fantastic". There were 38,000 runners taking part and almost half as many race officials, with marshals and volunteers in grey, red, green, blue and yellow jackets, which was an

amazing spectacle. According to Dave, security was extremely strict with many checkpoints. *"After being awarded my two medals we then had a chilly 2km walk from the finish area to baggage collection and I almost got hypothermia for my endeavour,"* Dave concludes. Many congratulations to him on an amazing feat.

### **2019 Belvoir Challenge**

STUART WHITFORD attended the 2019 Belvoir challenge which is aimed at runners and walkers covering a choice of 15 or 26 miles around the Vale of Belvoir, a few miles north of Melton Mowbray. *"I understand this event sells out super quick so I was very lucky to have been gifted a place which otherwise would have gone to waste,"* says Stuart. *"It's a great race organised by the parents and friends of the local primary school, raising funds for*



*extra curricular activities."*

It was a tough event, with the 15 miles being off-road, following public footpaths and bridleways, with lots of stiles and undulating terrain (292m of gain). *"But to ease the pain the course had a number of check points with lots of homemade cakes, fruit, sweets, hot and cold drinks. Although I resisted the temptation at the first check point, I succumbed to a nice slice of banana cake at the second."*

With Gade 17-mile pre-marathon training the previous weekend, followed by this event, he says he is not a fan of big hills at present.

### **Steyping Stinger Marathon**

The Steyping Stinger Marathon is a trail race on the South Downs, known for its tough climbs and mud. Conditions were brutal with Storm Freya producing rain and high winds on the exposed downs, and the paths were very muddy. NICK GENEVER finished in 4:53 and the total ascent was 780m.

### **parkrun tourism**



Many GCR's travelled to Aldenham for the latest leg in their 'parkrun tourism' season. PAUL GUY was pipped into 2<sup>nd</sup> place in a time of 18:19, closely followed by TOM WACKETT in 18:27. There were further impressive performances from SEAN BOWEN (20:16), MARTHA HALL, first lady home in 20:58, ROB HUGHES (21:18) and RICHARD SOMERSET (23:33), all of whom finished in the top 20. One

second behind him was ROB CASSERLEY (23:34), pursued by HANNAH FRANK (24:01), TOM PARMLEY (27:14), RICHARD DARLEY (28:05), NICK ATKINSON (29:10), CAROLINE HUGHES (30:58), KAREN ATKINSON (32:06), and CHARLOTTE JONES (33:37).

For the remaining GCR parkrun tourism dates this year see:

<https://www.gardencityrunners.org.uk/parkrun-tourism/>

### **Other parkruns**

DANIEL PUDNER won the Westmill parkrun in a new PB of 19:56, leaving him well ahead of the field. Congratulations to him. CRAIG BROWN led the GCR charge at Panshanger, finishing 3<sup>rd</sup> in 18:33 and good to see club legends DENNIS and ELEANOR DRAPER running together at this location. NEIL HUME was beaten to the line at Ellenbrook Fields by his nemesis PIETER VERMEESCH, but still recorded 16:50, not far outside his PB. A long way behind in 3<sup>rd</sup> was PETER MACKENZIE, recording a new PB of 17:48, while PETER JASCO also dipped under the 20-minute barrier to record a new PB in 19:51. The evergreen ANDY SHADBOLT kept up his recent purple patch, with another PB of 24:23. Finally, at Dunstable Downs ANDY HOLT was again in good form, recording a PB in 21:31 to earn him 4<sup>th</sup> place. For the full results this weekend click [here](#).

### **St. Peter's Way Ultra (special report by Kath Evans)**

Cheese and marmite sarnies, buttered fruit bread, prophylactic Compeed applied, route plotted by expert navigator-in-chief ELAINE GILES and we were off on the St Peter's Way Ultra last Sunday WEEK at 8am, which we completed just before 7pm (hence the delayed write up!).



**Kath Evans (left) and Elaine Giles by day and in the night-time gloom**

We started in misty Chipping Ongar at 8am and travelled to the 12th century Church of St Lawrence in Blackmore, through Mill Green with its beautiful tranquil ponds with moorhens and Mallard ducks; we paused for a photo by Stock Windmill, through thrift woodland nature reserve and Purleigh vineyard (who needs to do the Medoc Marathon when we have this in Essex?!). Then onto Maylandsea to the marina with enticing icy blue water and bobbing boats, after that we reached the saltmarshes and witnessed glorious sunsets,

popped on our head torches as we completed the final leg of the sea wall in inky darkness surrounded by a blanket of bright shining stars. St Peter's Chapel does I'm sure look wonderful in the daylight but at the end of 11 hours lit up by torches, with hot tea, coffee and biscuits it was spectacular!

It really is a beautiful route, we were blessed with the glorious weather and slick organisation by 'Challenge Running'.

It was 43mile route, each section was broken up into approx 10mile blocks making this achievable with plenty of opportunity for a run/walk approach to meet the cut off of 13 hours.

Sometimes on long runs I'll admit I can get a bit bored and fed up, there was none of that here, superb views, changing landscapes and with great company from so many along the way, Elaine and I had a challenge and we conquered it! This for us is what running is all about! Perhaps next year you'll think about doing it too? ....

*Kath live tweeted the route, take a look at #StPetersWayUltra for more info*

## **GCR Spring Party & Awards**

As if anyone needs reminding, the GCR Spring Party and Awards evening takes place this Friday, kick off 7.30pm — and a record attendance in prospect. See: <https://www.racesonline.uk/race-entry/gcrsocial/>

## **Forthcoming events**

Below is the list of future events. If you know of any others that you think your fellow members would enjoy, please send details to [results@gardencityrunners.org.uk](mailto:results@gardencityrunners.org.uk).

Event	Avery Race #	Date	Time	Online entry
<b>GCR Social &amp; Awards Evening</b>		<b>8<sup>th</sup> March</b>	<b>7.30pm</b>	<a href="#">Click here</a>
<b>Harpenden Half Marathon</b>		<b>10<sup>th</sup> March</b>	<b>9.00am</b>	Sold out
<b>The Big Half</b>		<b>10<sup>th</sup> March</b>	<b>9.00am</b>	<a href="#">Click here</a>
<b>Welwyn Half Marathon</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>17<sup>h</sup> March</b>	<b>9.00am</b>	<a href="#">Click here</a>
<b>Milton Keynes Festival of Running – 5K, 10K, Half, 20 Miles</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17<sup>th</sup> March</b>	<b>From 9.50am</b>	<a href="#">Click here</a>
<b>Oakley 20</b>		<b>24th March</b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<a href="#">Click here</a>



<b>Gade 20 mile marathon training</b>		<b>24<sup>th</sup> March</b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<a href="#">Click here</a>
<b>Dorney Lake marathon prep</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>31st March</b>	<b>9.30am</b>	<a href="#">Click here</a>
<b>Ellenbrook Fields parkrun</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5th April</b>	<b>9.00am</b>	<a href="#">Click here</a>

### **Join Garden City Runners**

Do you live in or near Welwyn Garden City? Do you like running? Garden City Runners is your local running club, has over 250 members, and encourages participation by all. The club has a varied training programme to suit everyone, from working up to 5 kilometres and right through to full marathons.

Try a few sessions before joining. Membership is only £20 per year. Membership forms are available on the GCR website [www.gardencityrunners.org.uk](http://www.gardencityrunners.org.uk). Please ask if you would like a paper copy.

If you want to know more about the Garden City Runners please contact Helen Paine (Secretary) or Sue Fletcher (Membership) at [gcr@gardencityrunners.org.uk](mailto:gcr@gardencityrunners.org.uk), visit our website [www.gardencityrunners.org.uk](http://www.gardencityrunners.org.uk) or our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/groups/gardencityrunners/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardencityrunners/).

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