



**Garden City Runners
News Release**

1st March 2020

**PERFECT CONDITIONS FOR THE BIG HALF
Club Runners and Volunteers unbowed by Rail Engineering
Works and Storm Jorge**

Vitality Big Half

GCR provided a sizeable pack of runners plus a crack volunteer team for this high-profile London race.



GCR Team of Volunteers at the ready for the arrival of Baggage Lorry 9

The Club once again provided a team of 15 to man a baggage lorry, greeting triumphant and weary runners at the end of their 13.1 miles and rapidly reuniting them with their bags. Several runners reported taking around 40-50 minutes to clear a bottleneck at the end of the race, so arrived with us desperate for warm layers. Thankfully, the team were more than prepared, and received many votes of thanks and appreciation.

Among the huge field from all corners of the globe were 11 GCR runners, and **full results are on the next page**. REBECCA BARDEN travelled with BRAD SMITH and reports "It was an early start from WGC but once we made it to London via a circuitous underground route, Brad and I enjoyed sparkling sunny views over the River Thames as we headed to the start just north of Tower Bridge. We were lucky with a lovely sunny day with a wind gusting to about 24mph which felt quite gentle after recent stormy conditions. The route takes runners through the Rotherhithe Tunnel, something that sent my Garmin into conniptions with the result that I apparently ran two 6.30 minute miles, did a lot of zigzagging in Docklands and an

extra half a mile overall. It wasn't my fastest half although I did manage to overtake a human black cab to finish in 1:42:58. There was excellent support along the route, with steel bands and choirs as well as enthusiastic spectators and cute small children giving high fives. Amidst fierce chaos at baggage pickup, it was a delight to reach the calm and friendly welcome of Baggage Truck 9, staffed by LOU SMITH and her elite team of GCR baggage ninjas."



RICHARD ROBINSON (L) who achieved a PB with REBECCA BARDEN & BRAD SMITH



TOM ROGERS (so hungry he's eating his medal) with JOHN DAVIS

JOHN DAVIS and TOM ROGERS set off together, missing their two injured running buddies, NIKKI COWEN and ROB JONES. "The day began with a dark cold start at silly o'clock heading for Stanmore tube station which was phase one of operation "we've paid for this and we're getting that flaming medal". Pleased to report both of us navigated good old London Town and even went south of the river. Of course, every race has to come with some sort of reward, so Tom dragged John the Taller kicking and screaming into a pub and forced him to drink a post-race pint."



LOUISE O'DONNELL (left) after supporting LINDA HAMM in completing her first ever half marathon

FULL RESULTS FOR THE VITALITY BIG HALF

JAMES HUIISH	1:19:41
JAMES DUNMORE	1:28:23 (faster than last year)
RICHARD ROBINSON	1:38:21 (PB)
BRAD SMITH	1:41:59
REBECCA BARDEN	1:42:58
JOHN DAVIS	1:56:26
TOM ROGERS	2:00:55
GEMMA SLOAN	2:17:00
JEN DENMAN	2:21:52
LINDA HAMM	2:40:51
LOUISE O'DONNELL	2:40:54

Berkhamsted Half Marathon

KATE WALKER stayed in Hertfordshire to compete in this fairly local half, finishing (unofficially) in 1:46:37.

Another Ultra for Dave Heal

DAVE HEAL ran his 57th marathon/21st Ultra and made it a 50k-31 miler in 6:24:58 at a Saturn running event named "I run and I know things" at Wraysbury Skiff & Putting Club beside the River Thames at Egham. He reports "The event was to run as many 3.28 mile trail laps in 7 hrs beside the River Thames with sunshine and winds to start spring off to a good start!! There were lots of mud & puddles, which made it tough going underfoot. I chose to run 9.4 laps 50k distance and was pleased to get another 50k distance under belt this year!"

Bath Two Tunnels 10k

As part of her preparation for the London Landmarks Half Marathon at the end of March, CHRISTINE HALL travelled west to Bath, completing the 10k distance in 1:08:15.



parkrun roundup

The rare opportunity to do a parkrun on 29th February attracted 56 GCRs to 8 different locations this weekend. RICHARD DARLEY and LYNETTE STEWART vied for the most glamorous international location, with Richard at Franschoek in South Africa and Lynette at Wanaka in New Zealand. Congratulations to Richard for finishing 9th overall and 1st VM50-54. An interesting contrast in weather conditions between South Africa and UK is illustrated below



RICHARD DARLEY at Franschoek parkrun in the sunny South African vineyards



TERRY FOWLER in front of the Ellenbrook Fields start-and-finish lake

Ellenbrook Fields marked the rarity of the occasion by reversing the course. TERRY FOWLER writes "Ellenbrook Fields parkrun this morning was absolutely bonkers. Leap Year so we ran the course in reverse. Couldn't believe the conditions, the runway was flooded, as was the rest of the course and ankle deep in mud on the grass bits. Massive high five to all the marshals, helpers and to TIM COOKE (Race Director) for making it happen."

Given the conditions, this was not a week for course PB's, so many congratulations to SARAH GREENWOOD for achieving one at Panshanger in 33:34. Also at Panshanger special kudos goes to JACK TANN who finished first in 19:16, with ROB CASSERLEY third (20:13) and CHRIS ELAND fourth (20:20). Panshanger also saw two club runners, SHENA LANCASTER and KATH EVANS celebrating their 150th parkruns.

Full results from this weekend's parkruns can be viewed [here](#).

GCR Party and Awards Night

Last chance to book your tickets for the social event of the year, the GCR Party and Awards night on Friday 13th March from 7.30pm at the Fairway Tavern, Old Hens Lane. At the time of going to press, there were only 17 tickets left. To avoid missing out, book your place by clicking on [this link](#). There is also a link on the website [here](#), to vote for the Club Member of the Year – it's a bit like football's 'players' player of the year'. All members can vote and each can have two nominations.

First Monday Club

A reminder that any available Club Members are invited to The Stanborough at 2 p.m. on Monday 2nd March (and the first Monday of every month), to chat with like-minded friends over a cuppa, look at the fascinating Club photo albums, and get updates on what's going on. The last two months, orchestrated by MAUREEN STEED, have been a huge success. Highly recommended for a most enjoyable couple of hours.

Club Kit

A reminder that new club kit is available from Kit-Meister Richard Somerset. All items cost £20, you can pay by cash or bank transfer, either FB message or text Richard on 07790 591868 or email rich.somerset@ntlworld.com to arrange pick-up. Kit available includes:

- Men's vests, from XS to 2XL
- Men's t-shirts from XS to 3XL
- Men's long sleeve tops S to XL (please contact Richard if you want XS or 2XL and he will place an order)
- Women's vest from XS to 2XL
- Women's t-shirts from XS to 2XL
- Women's long sleeve tops, from XS to XL

Weekly Training Runs

Here's a reminder of the different training groups with the distances and paces on offer.

TUESDAY – 6.30 – 7.45 PM

Social 5-6k	7-8k	9-10k	10-11k	11-12k	Intervals
A sociable, gentler-paced run of about 45 minutes for those who prefer to stick to c5k.	Steady running pace approx. 8-8.5 min Ks / 11-11.30 min miles	Steady running pace approx. 6.5-7 min Ks / 10-10.30 min miles	Steady running pace approx. 5.5-6 min Ks / 9-9.30 min miles	Steady running pace approx. 5-5.5 min Ks / 8-8.30 min miles	All abilities, drills / venue published on Facebook

THURSDAY – 6.30 – 7.30 PM

While Thursdays are traditionally much quieter at RA, there are still options available for a steady run, in addition to the popular weekly track session. There will always be a Social 5k Run Leader at RA. The other groups will be self-organising and self-leading. All sessions start at 6.30 p.m.

Sunday Social Run

Keep an eye out on the GCR Facebook page on Saturday evening for details of the regular Sunday morning "Social Runs". There are often a couple of distances and paces to choose from.

Avery League 2020

Details of the Avery League races and rules are on the GCR website [here](#). The next Avery League race is the **Hatfield House Half on 29th March**. See the Forthcoming Events table for more information.

GCR parkrun tourism

Details of the 2020 parkrun tourism calendar are available on the GCR website [here](#) - the next outing is the **Cassiobury parkrun on 7th March**.

GCR Strava Group

If you'd like to join the GCR Strava community, [click here](#) for details of the group.

Forthcoming events

Below is the table of future events. If you know of others that you think fellow members would enjoy, please send details to results@gardencityrunners.org.uk. For all 'See your captain' events, you should receive race information from your Captain or Vice Captain:

Men's Captains:

TOM WACKETT thomas.wackett@hotmail.co.uk 07817 708888

JAMES HUIISH james.huish247@btinternet.com 07835 527027

Vice Captain: RICHARD DARLEY Richard_Darley@hotmail.com 07766 238416

Women's Captains:

CHARLEE CHAPMAN charlotte.chapman27@live.co.uk 07986 326518

Vice Captain: HELEN PAINE helenpaine@hotmail.co.uk 07817 975916

Event	Avery Race #	Date	Time	Online entry
Parkrun tourism – Cassiobury		7 th March	9.00am	Free
Hawkshead Hobble 5k and 10K		8th March	10.30am	Click here
GCR party and awards night		13 th March	7.30pm	Click here
Woodhall Off-Road Run 5k and 10k		29th March	10.00am	Click here
Hatfield House Half / 10K	4	29th March	9.30am	Click here
Panshanger parkrun	5	4 th April	9.00am	Free
Welwyn 10k / 20:20k	9	28 th June	tba	tba

Spring Marathon Training Runs and Races

Here's a list of marathon training runs and races that may be of interest to anyone training for a Spring marathon or ultra. If you know of any others, do let us know by emailing gcr@gardencityrunners.org.uk

Event	Date	Time	Online entry
Hillingdon 20	8th March	9.00 am	Click here
Milton Keynes Festival of Running (includes a 20 mile race)	15th March	9.50am	Click here
Thames Riverside 20	15th March	8.00am	Click here
Oundle 20 mile road race	15th March	9.30am	Click here
Gade Valley Harriers Marathon Training Runs: 20 miles	22nd March	9.00 or 9.30 am	on the day
Oakley 20	29th March	10.00am	Click here
Dorney Lake marathon prep	29th March	9.30am	Click here

Fairlands Valley Spartans 20 mile marathon training run	29th March	tbc	tbc
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Join Garden City Runners

Do you live in or near Welwyn Garden City? Like running? Garden City Runners is your local running club. It has nearly 300 members and encourages participation by all. The club has a varied training programme to suit everyone, from working up to 5 kilometres right through to full marathons. Try a few sessions before joining. Membership is only £20 per year and is available on the GCR website via the new Membermojo platform (note that it is no longer possible to join via the old application form). Simply log into <https://membermojo.co.uk/gcr> and follow the instructions. 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, visit our website <https://www.gardencityrunners.org.uk/> or our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/groups/gardencityrunners/

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