



Garden City Runners: News Release from a Distance

Issue 20: 10th August 2020

In these strange and worrying times, we're here to keep you in touch with your fellow club members, bringing you news and views of solo runs and challenges, plus tips and info to keep you fit and motivated. Please send any content for future releases to results@gardencityrunners.org.uk

Dave Heal's "Marathon" Weekend

GCR's marathon runner extraordinaire, Dave Heal, wasn't just content with a marathon on Friday this week so he ran a second on Saturday and topped off the weekend with a gentle warm-down half marathon on Sunday, all on the hottest weekend of the year.



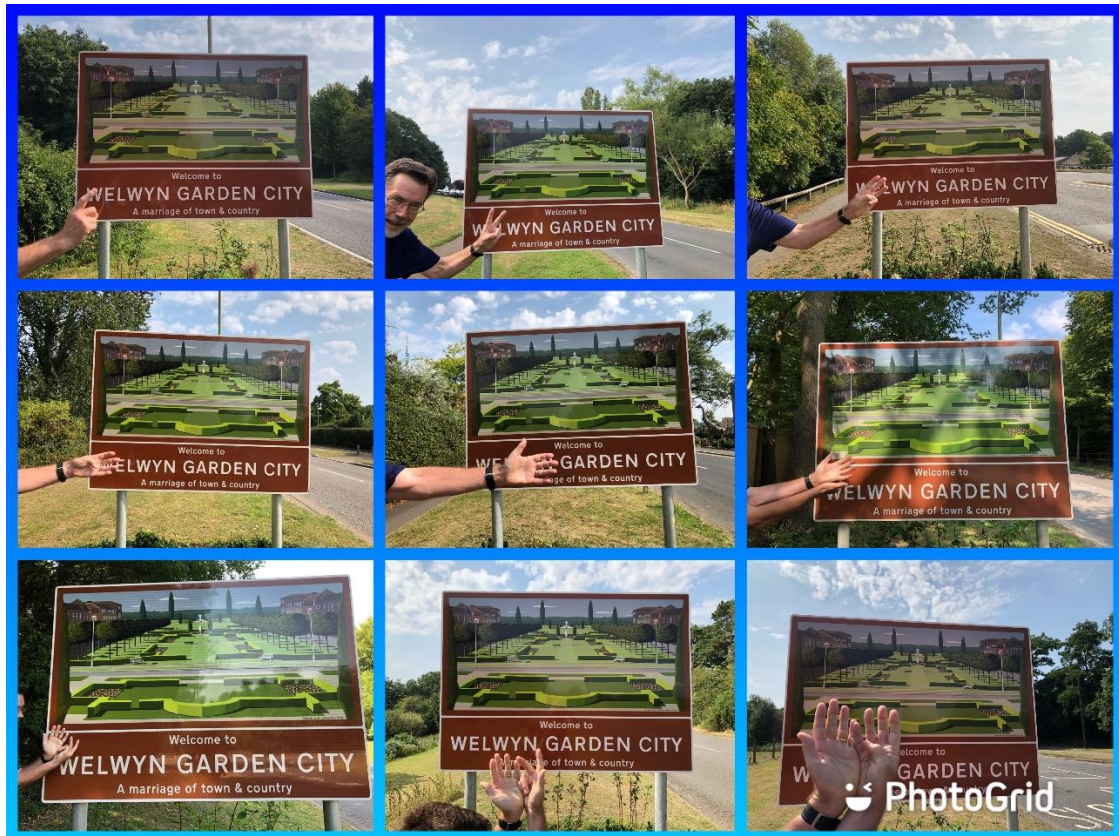
With some event starting to open up with limited race numbers, and strict health checks in place, Dave's Friday marathon was a Saturn Running Event "Planet Run" at the Wraysbury Skiff & Punting Club beside the River Thames at Runnymede Pleasure Grounds; 6 laps of a 4.37 miles out-and-back laps. Dave completed six laps in a time of 5:11:

On Saturday he ran his 60th marathon; Phoenix Running's "Hercules Labour 3" at Fullerton sports ground in Addlestone; Dave completed eight 3.28 mile laps beside the Basingstoke canal in a time of 5:31:55.

Finally, on Sunday, he ran again at Fullerton sports ground. This time 4 trips round the same circuit in 2:17:42 saw Dave complete his 116th Half Marathon.

WGC Centenary Signs

Nick and Karen Atkinson took on Daniel Pudner's recent challenge to visit the nine new signs which are located on all the main road entrances to Welwyn Garden City. The Atkinson's reported an approximate 20km distance depending which route you follow and makes for an interesting trip around the town. Maybe don't try it when it's over 30 degrees though!



Editor's Snaps of the Week



RUNNING INJURY REHAB: A Patient on the Perils of running through Pain

Jerry Gilbert

During this glorious recent weather, the last place a runner wants to be is on a massage bench or rehabbing an injury in the gym. Unfortunately for runners of a certain vintage, body parts wear out as inexorably as car parts (the main difference being that the emergency call goes out to the physio rather than the AA man).

But this time there is no instant Roadside Relief. The first words you will probably hear from your medical practitioner, particularly in the event of a cartilage tear such as mine, is "it's degenerative" and an "overuse" injury, especially if not triggered by a specific incident. In other words, it will never fully resolve and you are staring into the chasm of arthritis. At that point it's easy to compound the felony with one false move, and failing to heed the body's warning signs could double the already extensive rehab time you are facing (you will have heard all this before, from Terry Fowler et al).

In my case, fueled by a bloated ego, I spectacularly managed to check every 'DON'T DO' box. In August last year I decided to carry a right knee niggle into *Leila's Run*. While my head said "pull out", my heart said, "Nah ... just run it with a knee brace." What could possibly go wrong? The run itself was ok but the damage was already done, if largely invisible. Three days later, trying awkwardly to extricate myself from a tight parking space at Tesco, I tore my knee cartilage good and proper. The pain was excruciating, the leg swollen, the knee 'locked'. A Doppler scan revealed a ruptured Baker's Cyst. I thought my running days were over.

This diagnosis was supported by something called a McMurray's test. However, my genius osteo, Chris Tyler, managed to free the locking, and aided by some sage advice from GCR member (and fellow practitioner) Julia Wiper about the perils of arthroscopic surgery, I set out on the long road to recovery via a lot of exercise-based therapy, resistance bands and ankle weights. After five months of mental hell I was ready for winter treadmill running. During that time I threw everything at the problem, while managing to side-step orthopaedic surgery, as well as hyaluronic acid and cortisone knee injections. I did flirt with a series of medical ozone injections, which might have helped, but realised there are no short cuts when it comes to knee health and the wonky biomechanics brought on by old age.

By Spring this year, while still not quite 100%, the knee felt sufficiently stable to run on (although the crepitus, which had now developed, was complaining audibly). A few tentative parkruns soon saw me back up to regular seven and eight-mile trail stretches and my performance was much as it had been pre-injury. This was followed by a couple of back-to-back, socially-distanced Half Marathons with the redoubtable Kath Evans, including the Centenary Route (distances that were mere warm-ups for her). I was at one with nature again

and felt back on top of my game. But I had stupidly gone from 0 to 100 in the blinking of an eye and I was soon to pay the price.

After two months of delightful early summer off-road running the unthinkable happened. Following a Sunday run with a GCR group my left calf started to ache. I put it down to fatigue and excess, but despite a deep tissue massage, over the coming days it got progressively worse. Again failing to heed all logic (in the absence of an actual snap, crackle or pop, as the cereal ad goes) I decided to stretch out the calf (a cardinal sin with calf tears). This time it did properly rupture and I ended up on crutches, unable to weight bear.

An MSK Ultrasound, ordered by the excellent Dr. Groom in QEII's Ambulatory Wing, revealed a serious Grade 3 calf tear, haematoma and probable ruptured Baker's Cyst. In other words, a veritable cocktail of bad shit. Diagnosis? Another 12 weeks out of action with resistance band and balance work, mind numbing sessions on static bikes and slow death by treadmill walking.

Having put in the hard yards, I now aim to be back running by mid-September.

Will I heed the advice of my physio who wants my 'restart' to be in the form of a Couch-to-5K session? My petulant response was that I'd rather do Community Service. And for that idiotic response I deserve to be sectioned.

I know that all too soon I will build up to distances that he frowns upon. I have been warned against undertaking anything longer than a parkrun, and when I say I want to average 30 miles a week his eyes glaze over. Will I be back on his bench before the year is out? Most probably. Am I too young to actually be the wrong side of 70? Most probably not!

Running is an addiction every bit as dangerous as gambling, alcohol and cocaine. I am a terminal sufferer of TMTS syndrome ('Too Much, Too Soon'). It's incurable.

Each season of the year is beguiling in its own way. If I miss the remaining months of summer I will simply look forward to cooler Autumn runs, with the changing smells and colours that accompany the Fall (*something that I pray I don't experience*) ... a soft bed of crisp brown leaves concealing an ankle turn that's lying in wait on every footpath and bridleway.

I sympathise with everyone nursing any of the above, as well as dodgy hip rotations, ankle tendonitis, painful plantar fasciitis etc etc. And I relish the day when I am back, sometime post-lockdown, interacting again with GCR's at club HQ or race meets rather than in the reception hall of our local physio practice.

GCR Intervals

Please let Martha Hall at mahall28@hotmail.com know if you would like to join GCR Intervals this week and indicate if you are happy to lead a group.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS:

Virtual Run Events

For those that love a bit of bling or the challenge of a race or competition to spur them on, please find below a list of upcoming virtual races of various distances, a number of which are for charity.

Don't forget to share results of any virtual events for inclusion in the newsletter.

Fairlands Valley Challenge: distances from 5K to a 50K Ultra; run from 4th July to 6th September <http://www.fvchallenge.org.uk/>

5k

<https://www.runfly5k.com/> (for runners in Herts, Beds and Bucks – run a 5k of your choosing, submit your results, see yours and others' results on the website)

10k

<https://www.virtualrunneruk.com/product/run-the-rainbow-2020-challenge/>

Half Marathon/Marathon

High Mileage

<https://endtoend.run/> (**N.B. Starts Monday 1 June**)

Any distance

<https://www.saturnrunning.co.uk/post/run-for-heroes-virtual-challenge>

<https://whitestarclothing.co.uk/products/virtual-races>

<https://racethedistance.com/collections/all-current-challenges>

Complete against someone or collaborate in a team to achieve a goal, or just run solo

<https://findarace.com/plan-b-virtual-race>

Running safely

We love to see club members being active in inventive ways in these difficult times. We urge everyone to exercise safely – not just for their own benefit, but especially that of more vulnerable members of our community and our NHS. As a club we have an opportunity to set the best example in how we exercise. Ways you can help:

- New government guidelines allow us to exercise in groups of up to six from separate households.
- While out running, keep a safe distance of at least two metres from others, stopping if necessary to allow others more room to go by

- If possible, plan routes that take you away from town centres and out into the countryside
- Try to run outside popular times when larger family groups are likely to be out and about
- If you cough or sneeze while running, it's extra important to cough or sneeze into your elbow
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home.

Happy and safe running everyone!

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

Avery League 2020

The Avery League is currently suspended.

GCR Strava Group

If you'd like to join the GCR Strava community, [click here](#) for details of the group. It's a great way to keep in touch with your fellow club members during this time of isolation.

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 Karen Atkinson (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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