



## Garden City Runners: News Release from a Distance

### Issue 21: 16 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](mailto:results@gardencityrunners.org.uk)*

### **Barbara races Tennessee**

GCR ultra-running royalty **Barbara Kubis-Labiak** sent this report from the finish line of The Great Virtual Race Across Tennessee – a challenge to run 1000k between 1<sup>st</sup> May and the end of August: "I finished on the 8th, 23 days ahead of schedule. This meant running 1000k in 14 weeks, on average 70k a week: 92 runs and 30 walks in total.



Of course my running buddy Kenji was involved - and sometimes even my son Mattie joined! My main goal was to do fundraising for animal charities, as well as something to keep me focused on - this challenge seemed perfect.

I'm still waiting for my medal - but the certificate (*below*) has arrived!"

*Left: Barbara looking strong with Kenji leading her through Fields of Wheat*





*Above: Barbara with two trusty companions, canine and human*

### **Dave Heal runs his 61st marathon – then adds some extra**

The unstoppable **Dave Heal** didn't let this past week's extreme weather hold him back, taking on his 61st Marathon and 23rd ultra at a Phoenix Running event. Runners assembled at King's College sports ground, and then ran as many laps of a 0.53 mile circuit as possible in six hours - 50 laps made a marathon distance, but Dave chose to push on further, completing 52 laps of the all-grass field – an official distance of 27.6 miles in 5:36:38 - although Dave's Garmin watch recorded 29.2 miles.

Dave reports: "The Phoenix team did say it was going to be a long marathon, meaning over 26.2 miles, but under 27 miles – the marathon distance was more like 26.5 miles, and those like me who wanted to do a ultra would have to run an extra two laps to make 27.6 miles. It was a first for me - I have never run a marathon or an ultra marathon on an all-grass circuit before.





Conditions were challenging - it was slippery underfoot from the rain and humidity was high. We started with fifty elastic bands on our arms (I asked for an extra two) and each time we completed a lap, dropped a band into a plastic box. Going around 52 times around a field was mentally tiring, and I got quite giddy a few times to say the least.

I must say I never want to see an elastic band ever again! I was very tempted to aim a band at the race director Rik Vercoe (*pictured above, with Dave*) on several occasions, but I didn't want to get disqualified!"

### **Midweek Lockdown League medals**



The exquisite Midweek Lockdown medals (*above*), designed by Louisa Forte, have arrived! Those who qualify to receive one of these unique mementos are the 83 runners who participated in all five MWL runs, plus all the children who took part in our medal design competition. Your first chance to collect your medal is next Sunday at Stanborough, where many of you are participating in the handicap event. You can have the added delight of picking up your MWL medal afterwards – as well as the participation medal that you will receive for the handicap. If you are not running or volunteering, you can still pop down to pick up your medal between 1015-1130 a.m. We will have a table set up around 50 yards from the handicap start/finish location. For those who are unable to pick up their medals next Sunday, we'll agree how to get them to you over the following couple of weeks, including at training runs on Tuesdays.

### **GCR Centenary and 10K handicap races**

Don't forget to let Race Director Richard Somerset - [rich.somerset@ntlworld.com](mailto:rich.somerset@ntlworld.com) – know if you would like to take part in either the Centenary route event (approximately 20.2K) or the 10K event next Sunday, 23<sup>rd</sup> August. Runners will set off from Stanborough Lakes from 9am

(Centenary route) and 10am (10K). Both events will have a staggered start. Please also let Richard know if you are able to help out at the start.

### **This week's Tuesday group runs**

News of this week's group runs - all groups meet at 6.30pm

Quick reminder - the longer the distance the faster the pace - the distance is roughly what is covered in an hour.

9/10k - meet at Moneyhole park car park

7/8k - meet at TBA

5k - meet at TBA

EXTRA SESSION! Helen Paine will be leading a group round the handicap 10k route - pace approx 9.30-10.00 min/mile. Meet Stanborough south lake car park - please remember to check car parking charges.

We are running in groups of six. To book your place please either reply to the Facebook post or email [runleaders@gardencityrunners.org.uk](mailto:runleaders@gardencityrunners.org.uk)

### **Covid 19 – Please Read the Following**

As we all know, the advice and guidelines about Covid-19 continue to change. The club is affiliated to England Athletics and the Association of Running Clubs and we follow their guidelines to help reduce the risk of spreading Covid-19. The booking systems we use for group runs and interval sessions mean that we can ensure the group sizes keep within the latest guidelines. It also means that we have a record of who ran so we can support NHS contact tracing if that ever becomes necessary.

When booking a place and joining a session please always do the following for your own and others' safety:

- do not attend if: you are feeling unwell; if you have any Covid-19 symptoms or have had a positive test; if you are self-isolating for any reason. Always follow any relevant medical guidance you may have received
- if you have any Covid symptoms or a positive test after attending a session you must inform the club immediately so we can contact the rest of the group you ran with
- maintain social distancing at all times including at the start and end of the session
- try to avoid touching anything eg a gate or stile but if this unavoidable use hand sanitiser and avoid touching your face afterwards
- look out for pedestrians, horse-riders, cyclists etc and move to one side to let them pass and maintain social distancing

## **Can you help? – run leaders and ‘stadium watch’**

The Club is always on the look-out for more volunteers to keep us going and improving. At the moment we’ve got a couple of specific needs:

1. **Run Leaders.** With the limited group sizes (we’re sticking with groups of 6 at the moment) and some regular Run Leaders currently unable to lead, our small band of Leaders are spread dangerously thin. So we’re looking for people who might be willing to help out for the next 2-3 months. Anyone can do this, whatever your speed, as we have different groups from Social 5k up to 9-10k. If you give it a try and find you enjoy it, then GCR will pay for you to get a Run Leaders qualification and licence. Of course, there will be no pressure to continue, if it’s not your thing. If you’d like to find out more and give it a try, please email Karen Atkinson, who is the Run Leaders Co-ordinator, at [runleaders@gardencityrunners.org.uk](mailto:runleaders@gardencityrunners.org.uk)
2. **Gosling Track.** In order to restart training at the track, we’re collaborating with Welwyn Wheelers and Herts Phoenix to (a) do some basic tidying/maintenance in response to recent neglect and a lack of funding, and (b) provide a ‘stadium watch’, walking by and keeping an eye out for any intruders and alerting the relevant people. If you are able and willing to help with track housekeeping or ‘stadium watch’, please email Jane Molloy at [chairman@gardencityrunners.org.uk](mailto:chairman@gardencityrunners.org.uk)

All offers of help will be very welcome. Thanks to those who have already been in touch and offered to help, as well as our regular Run Leaders and other volunteers. If you have any other ideas or suggestions for how you would like to do more for the Club, we’re always delighted to hear of ways we can keep on improving – so do send them through to Jane at [chairman@gardencityrunners.org.uk](mailto:chairman@gardencityrunners.org.uk)

## **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.

<b>Fairlands Valley Challenge</b>	Distances from 5K to a 50K Ultra; run from 4 <sup>th</sup> July to 6 <sup>th</sup> September <a href="http://www.fvchallenge.org.uk/">http://www.fvchallenge.org.uk/</a>
<b>5k</b>	<a href="https://www.runfly5k.com/">https://www.runfly5k.com/</a> (for runners in Herts, Beds and Bucks – run a 5k of your choosing, submit your results, see yours and others’ results on the website)

<b>10k</b>	<a href="https://www.virtualrunneruk.com/product/run-the-rainbow-2020-challenge/">https://www.virtualrunneruk.com/product/run-the-rainbow-2020-challenge/</a>
<b>Any distance</b>	<a href="https://www.saturnrunning.co.uk/post/run-for-heroes-virtual-challenge">https://www.saturnrunning.co.uk/post/run-for-heroes-virtual-challenge</a> <a href="https://whitestarclothing.co.uk/products/virtual-races">https://whitestarclothing.co.uk/products/virtual-races</a> <a href="https://racethedistance.com/collections/all-current-challenges">https://racethedistance.com/collections/all-current-challenges</a>
<b>Other</b>	Complete against someone or collaborate in a team to achieve a goal, or just run solo <a href="https://findarace.com/plan-b-virtual-race">https://findarace.com/plan-b-virtual-race</a>

### **Continuing the GCR coronavirus weekly challenges and running sessions!**

While our usual group running routines are out because of social distancing, we are inviting club members to take on specific challenges on certain days of the week. The overall aim is to help us all to be as fit and strong – if not more so – when we come out of the other side.

<b>Tuesday</b>	<p><b>Run Leaders Challenge</b></p> <p>As members are missing out on all the fun of our regular training sessions, each week a different Run Leader will come up with an idea for club members' solo sessions that day. It's a day to work on your own personal goals, the reason why you come to the club each Tuesday. It's also a day when the Run Leader's challenge will aim to bring us closer together virtually in our running community.</p> <p>Please keep an eye on the GCR Facebook page for the weekly challenge.</p>
<b>Thursday</b>	<p><b>10k Training Challenge</b></p> <p>We were all set to initiate two different 10k training regimes – and we're not going to let a pesky virus stop us! 10k is the average distance for both Midweek League and Sunday Cross-Country League, where we aim to shine for both performance and inclusivity.</p> <p>If you've just completed your Beginners programme, or maybe you've never run a full 10k, then there is the Bridge to 10k programme, thanks to Helen Harrison.</p> <p>If you're keen to improve your current 10k performance, then follow the excellent plan devised by Tom Wackett. The aim is to dazzle with our league performances next available opportunity.</p> <p>For more info - <a href="https://www.gardencityrunners.org.uk/covid19-2/">https://www.gardencityrunners.org.uk/covid19-2/</a></p>
<b>Saturday</b>	<p><b>Not –your-average-parkrun Challenge</b></p> <p>Run 5k. Wherever you want. Simple.</p> <p>Let's continue to get 60+ members out doing their best 5k on Saturday mornings, come rain or shine. Wouldn't it be amazing if GCR achieved a host of course PBs on the first official day of parkrun's return?</p>
<b>Sunday</b>	<p><b>Long Run Challenge</b></p> <p>Sunday is traditionally the day when endurance runners gambol far and wide, often going further than anticipated as a result of joyfully getting lost. This is your opportunity to get an impressive number of miles under your belt.</p>

Maybe you have had a marathon or half-marathon cancelled – do one anyway! Without the encouragement of the crowds or companion runners, what are the things that make you want to keep going?
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There'll be weekly reminders on our Facebook page, and we want to see lots of submissions to [results@gardencityrunners.org.uk](mailto:results@gardencityrunners.org.uk) of photos, reports of personal achievements and stories for future newsletters.

## **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.

Government advice is changing regularly. Please check before you run. At the time of writing:

- Exercise on your own, with someone you live with or with up to six people from another household so long as social distancing recommendations are met;
- You can now travel to your preferred run route and can exercise as many times or for as long as you wish;
- 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, and give a wide berth when overtaking;
- If possible, plan routes that take you away from town centres and out into the countryside, the fields and footpaths are nice and dry so take advantage;
- Generally, places are quite quiet due to social distancing but it is best to avoid busier areas – Stanborough Lakes is a bit of a no go on a sunny day;
- If you cough or sneeze while running, it's extra important to cough or sneeze into your elbow;
- Avoid touching or contacting other surfaces with your hands, like gates or stiles, use your sleeve or gloves to open gates if necessary;
- Wash your hands before you head out and as soon as you get home;
- It is due to be hot this week – please think before heading out for a run and carry water.

## **Route planning**

Struggling to find a suitable route without your run leaders guidance? Check out the GCR Strava members group for inspiration from your fellow GCRs! Strava have also just realised a route planning feature for Summit members. The following apps and websites also come recommended by club members:

- Footpath (app)/ MapAMeter (online): Editors recommendation! Footpaths and distances across the UK and Europe with a handy "snap to path" feature for the less-diligent route planners amongst us;
- OS Map app – basic version free; if you buy printed maps you can upload them to the app for full features
- Map My Run: Also has others saved nearby routes for inspiration.
- Plot A Route: Same as above.

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](mailto:gcr@gardencityrunners.org.uk), visit our website <https://www.gardencityrunners.org.uk/> or our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/groups/gardencityrunners/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/gardencityrunners/)

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