



Garden City Runners News Release

13 July 2025

Sizzling finish to hot evening's racing in WGC

Mob Match draws 623 area runners to Ridgeway Academy

In case anyone needs reminding, the traditional Midweek League Mob Match, the final race of the season, is hosted by Garden City Runners where teams from all three divisions compete. The event may have moved location from the Garden City's West Side further East over the years, but it has remained ever popular as a staggering 623 runners participated this time. GCR not only managed to toast the success of the event but also retained its status in Division One, after a nailbiting finish to the race.



One constant feature has been race director

RD Peter Harvey gets them underway

Peter Harvey. He reports that the 10km race again attracted club runners across much of Hertfordshire and parts of North London as well as Essex. "Herts Phoenix also helped and there was assistance from Enfield Chasers, Fairland Valley Spartans, as well as Bishop's Stortford and Trent Park running clubs."

He described the course as a "mildly undulating lollipop two lapper, starting and finishing at the Ridgeway Academy ... snaking through Shire Park and The Mundells on pavement and cycleways."

GCR's **Bradley Birch** was just pipped on the line to first place by **Jude Bell** of Watford Joggers in a thrilling finish, with both athletes timing a scorching 32:24. **Danny Figg** was second GCR, and Harvey says, "he had a tremendous race improving to 35:03, which was good enough for 9th. **Paul Guy** finished 20th despite being in the MV50 age category in which he came 2nd for the four-race series in Division 1.



GCR trophy winners, Caroline Hale (left) and Paul Guy

"Of the Ladies teams, **Philippa Dougherty** was first GCR home, clocking 41:26—placing her 9th. **Caroline Hale** was next in 15th and she won the Division 1 Series MV55 age category. Third GCR was **Alex Faulkner** in 27th helping the women's team to place 4th whilst the men's were 2nd. GCR just narrowly missed out on the Mob Match team victory by only three individual places to St Albans Striders. Solace was had by staying up in Division 1, finishing 4th out of six teams, yet very close to finishing 2nd." Full results at: www.mwrri.org.uk.

Garden City Runners also hosted the League Presentation at the end of the Mob Match. Panshanger Golf Club and Morrisons helped make the event a success with Burnt Hare sponsoring the League.

Of course the event is as much about the catering as it is about the competition—and this was one cohort of the vast army of volunteers necessary to pull this event off. The cast of

often unsung heroes, as credited by **Peter Harvey**, is as follows:

Mobsters Deluxe

Ever present as Chief Marshal **Sean Bowen**—assisted by **Barbara Kubis-Labiak** and **Katharine Farrell**—organised over 40 marshals. Lead cyclists **Michael Tandy** and **Richard Somerset** led the runners around again

whilst **Sophie Packman** was in charge of the tail as well as delivering all of the letters to local residents. Marshal **Juliet Vine** spontaneously became a dog looker-after.

Once more, Transport Manager **Rob Jones** was imperious, chauffeuring Race Director **Peter Harvey** and supplies in his spacious black cab, as well as marshalling.

Sarah Durston led the car park team with **Jacob Kallergis**, **Belinda McGinley**, **Daniel Follon**, **David Ivie**, **Robin Cattle**, **Lee Chapman**, **Martyn Perrin** and **James Aitchinson**—who also put up the course signage with **Russell Morris**.

Nicola Smith stepped up to be Site Manageress; **Penelope Hitch** and **Will Carr** were also busy on site as well as **Richard Taylor**, **Justin Swallow**, **Daniel Figg** and **Mike Scutt**.

Regular Water Manageress **Alison Paterson** along with her boys, plus **Sharon Stephens** and **Deb Kirby**, were the key personnel at the on-course water station.

Catering Manageress was **Thippawan Rashleigh**, assisted by **Willow Gibson** and a plethora of ladies, including **Elizabeth Dean**, **Gail Munro**, **Delphine Gibbs**, **Debbie Pearson** and **Beth Casserley**. “They took on the task of feeding the five thousand,” says Harvey. “This was not easy considering the great turnout.”

Elsewhere, **Richard Bloom** was in the thick of timing and recording again; **Tim Cooke** helped execute the League’s presentation with military precision, and **Charlotte Jones** recorded the event, posting a wonderful set of photos took plenty of photos on Flickr.

“Finally,” concludes Harvey, “thanks are due to all the marshals whose contribution was very much needed. Excluding those listed above the roll of honour is:

Richard Darley, **Elaine Moore**, **Tendy St Francis**, **Johan Preis**, **Clare Wildey Grover**, **Michelle Goodheart**, **Dave Edwards**, **Sue Coveney**, **Anna Lillie**, **Russell** and **Holly Casey**, **Carol Reid**, **Daniel Hitch**, **Maggie Orme**, **Chrissy Johnson**, **Richard Sidlin** who also provided the gantry, **Emily Shepard**, **Nikki Cowan**, **Mick & Sandra Wise**, **Helen Paine**, **Alison Meaden**, **Dai Selwood**, **Lee Mansfield**, **Jennifer Williams**, **Helen**



Lead-off cyclists, Michael Tandy and Richard Somerset





Stafford, Hannah Frank, Dave de Naeyer, John Apling and Peter

Lapthorne who also did a great job cutting back the never-ending hedge on Black Fan Road."

*Enjoy a selection of **Charlotte Jones**' photos of the event (above).*

Who couldn't be happier than Hannah Frank!

Angie Curtis

We are sad to report the passing of one of our co-founder members, **Angie Curtis**. **Val Fieth** pays the following tribute:

"I watched the First London Marathon and thought "we could do that". I remember asking Angie if she would like to join? She was incredulous at such a daft idea! "I have arthritis," she said. "Well you don't have to run very fast," I said. **Tricia Siberi** and **Jill Scrivens** were early members . It was only women at the beginning. We met at 7pm at Campus West on Tuesdays, and then on Sundays. It was 1981 and we all had phones but it was long before Internet.

"We learned about New Balance running shoes and we had to draw around our feet and post the drawing to a Post Box number with a cheque or postal order for £25. I loved mine and did a cross country run with Verlea and had the kinaesthetic power of floating.

"We did a Boxing Day run from my house on the circular route past the hospital. We did it both ways so we passed members on the way and aimed to return together. Then we had mulled wine and mince pies.

"It was a very supportive group from the beginning. The hares at the front returned to the back to support the stragglers.

"After it grew to be a substantial group I asked Verlea if they would like a women's group of joggers? And they laughed derisively. And men asked to join and we were fine about that, as it was a kind club.

"We ran the second Marathon by learning which special post box would be used. And the third one by sleeping outside the post office in Hemel Hempstead from Thursday evening. 5 at time. I was number 7 in the queue which grew to 500.

"We met some of them in London on the streets. Great conversations took place while running.

"A magazine was created for runners events and Angie informed them of our club and races. We did a three-legged race through Welwyn and a drink in every pub."

Club chairman Sean Bowen adds, "Angie came to our 40th birthday celebration at the Ridgeway three years ago and gave a great little speech about the beginnings and inspirations. I'm grateful that I had the chance to meet her."

Race to the Stones

The hottest day of the year was never going to be the greatest day to do an ultra along the Ridgeway, reports **Alex Yates**. "The exposed, chalky trails were brutal for the intrepid **Elaine Giles**, but she got it done, covering 50km from Lewknor to Wantage. People were leap-frogging each other to stop under bushes to rest under shade, and sheltering under hedges at the aid stations.

"Luckily for Elaine (*pictured right*), she did have me crewing for her, with bottles of ice water and a chair for the shady areas. And I had a great time! I had a lovely dip in the Thames and enjoyed the regassed air-conditioning in my car. I did do a few miles with Elaine as well ... but I'm glad I wasn't doing anything more though!"



No Man's Land/Summer Party Run

Aiden and **Nadine O'Dwyer** (*pictured below right*) visited Kent for a fun double weekender. Writes Nadine, "On Saturday, we took part in the No Man's Land event, jointly hosted by Phoenix Running and Runbelievable Challenges. It was a race with two separate start points/ base camps: Gravesend Cyclopark and Ranscombe Nature Reserve, and the route in between was 'No Man's Land'. Runners were allocated to their team and starting points and then the battle was on as each team ventured into enemy territory.

"Well briefed by our leader, aka Race Director Rik, we threw on our 'best' camouflage and headed out to tackle the self-navigated route between the two base camps. It was a day of reconnaissance, infiltration and espionage, with lots of secret missions to complete along the way. The heat on Saturday was brutal and there wasn't a lot of shade but the route was lovely and we passed a couple of pubs which plenty of runners took advantage of to stay hydrated.



"On Sunday, it was time to unwind at the Runbelievable Summer Party at the Cyclopark—a chilled event in fancy dress, with a party themed aid station and prize giveaways.

"Two fun events and another two half-marathons ticked off."

parkrun roundup

Some 117 GCRs participated at parkruns around the country, including some shameless tourism. Whilst staying away for the weekend near Chorley **Sid** and **Sarah Valentine**

(*pictured left*) decided to take in a bit of parkrun tourism and opted for Tawd Valley. He reports, "Unlike most parkruns it has a mixture of urban and rural along the course. It starts outside a shopping mall and from there you head to a fast downhill section that then heads into a wooded rural section before heading back up the hill towards a housing estate then back down towards the river. The course is a one lapper and as always everyone is very friendly.



“If you want something different in your parkrun portfolio this is definitely for you. After completing this Sarah and myself headed to Blackpool to watch the British Lions win there game against AU/NZ and some refreshments.”

Here are some performances that stood out around the other courses. **Tom Wackett** ran 20:11 at Gorleston Cliffs, earning him 15th position. **Dan Pudner** and **Rob Casserley** both broke the 20-minute barrier at Oak Hill, chasing each other home respectively in 19:44 and 19:47. At Stevenage the evergreen **Caroline Hale** was first lady in 21:15. No fewer than 43 GCRs were on show at Panshanger where **Charlie Marchione** took bragging rights, finishing in 19:48, while **Graeme McSorley** recorded 20:09, **Adam Wadley** 20:16 and **Steve Ellerd-Elliott** 20:33. Across the county in Aldenham **Andy Morgan's** time of 20:59 was enough to see him finish in 7th place (with a fantastic PB). There's no stopping **Paul Guy**. Following his Mob Match achievement he was first through the funnel at Letchworth in a staggering 18:28, making light of the heat. At Jersey Farm **Martin Mitchell** recorded an excellent 19:18, and a new PB for him also. At nearby Oaklands College **John McDowall** also PB'd in 21:10, to finish 7th. Finally, congratulations, congratulations to **Grace Hickey-Carson** for the longest journey, running the Milano Nord parkrun

And finally ...

Mick and **Sandra Wise** were also on duty, marshalling at the Mob Match. But rather than picture them in sweaty recreational gear, we thought we would embarrass Mick—who is the newly elected Mayor of Hatfield. We reckon they are sporting running medals rather than mayoral regalia, however.



Club Championship (competing for the Westlake Trophy) - 2025

The Club Championship principally consists of races open to the public, although other races may be included as long as they are not hosted by Garden City Runners. The races are ideally chosen from the Avery calendar; however, Race Committee may express flexibility including prestigious events and those facilitating Hertfordshire County Championships. parkruns may be included and should be local. Runners' top 5 scores to count.

For 2025, the Championship races are:

Race #	Event	Date
1	Fred Hughes 10	19 th Jan
2	Watford Half Marathon	2 nd Feb
3	Panshanger Parkrun	8 th Mar
4	Hitchin 10k	4 th May
5	Fairlands Valley Spartans 3k Relays	17 Jul
6	Standalone 10	5 Oct
7	Stevenage Half Marathon	19 Oct
8	ATW Hatfield 5 miler	30 Nov

GCR Avery League 2025

The GCR Race Committee has produced the calendar of races for the Avery League Competition and the Club Championships. Details on all of the 2025 races are below, and these will also be published on the GCR website as soon as possible, and on the GCR Facebook group. Happy Racing!

Avery Event #	Date	Event	Venue	Cost Approx.	Notes	Status
1	19 th Jan	Fred Hughes 10	St Columba's College, St Albans	£22	enter at ATW Herts Seniors	completed
2	2 nd Feb	Watford Half Marathon	Cassiobury Park, Watford	£38	Herts Seniors enter at ATW	completed
3	16 th Feb	Watford XC, race 5 Sunday League	Cassiobury Park, Watford	free	Club will send out details by email	completed
4 V	8 th Mar	Panshanger Parkrun	Panshanger Park	free	see parkrun website	completed

5	6 th Apr	St Clare Hospice 10k	Hastingswood, Harlow	£16	https://stclarehospice.org.uk/event/st-clare-hospice-10k-2024/	completed
6	4 th May	Hitchin 10k	Hitchin town centre	£22	Herts Vets tbc enter at Racesonline	completed
7	Weds 21 st	MWRRL #1	St Albans, Highfield Park	free	Club will send out details by email	completed
8	Weds 4 th June	MWRRL #2	Epping Forest	free	Club will send out details by email	completed
9	Weds 18 th	MWRRL #3	Stevenage	free	Club will send out details by email	completed
10 V	22 nd June	Welwyn 10k at Panshanger	Panshanger Park		enter at Racesonline	completed
11	Tues 1 st July	MWRRL #4	Ashlyns School, Chesham Road, Berkhamsted HP4 3AH	free	Club will send out details by email	completed
12	6 th July	Ware 10s	The Chauncy School, Park Rd, Ware		10k or 10 miler enter at Racesonline	completed
13 V	Weds 9 th Jul	MWRRL Mob Match, WGC	Ridgway Academy, WGC	free	Club will send out details by email	
14	17 th July	Fairlands Valley Spartans 3k Relays	Fairlands Valley Park, Stevenage	free	Club will send out details by email	
15 V	17 th August	20.20k Centenary Run	Stanborough Park South Lake near	free	Club will send out details by email	
16 V	10 th Sept	Race 3 of the Hatfield 5k	Affinity Water HQ, Hatfield		enter at Racesonline	
17	28 Sept tbc	XC Sunday League Race 1	Cheshunt	free	Club will send out details by email	
18	5 Oct	Standalone 10k	Standalone Farm,		Herts Seniors tbc Enter here	
19	19 th Oct	Stevenage Half Marathon	Hampson Park, Stevenage		enter here	
20	2 nd Nov	XC, race 2 Sunday League	Trent Park	free	Club will send out details by email	
21	30 Nov	ATW Hatfield 5 miler	Herts University, Hatfield		Herts Vets tbc enter at ATW	
22 V	start-mid	Festive 5	WGC		enter at Racesonline	
23	14 Dec	XC, race 3 Sunday League	Panshanger park	free	Club will send out details by email	
24	end Dec	Buntingford 10 miler	Freman College, Buntingford		Herts Vets tbc BMAF tbc	

V – Volunteers get an Avery Point

ATW – enter at Active Training World: https://www.atwevents.co.uk/calendars/sport-events?category_page=1&category_id=21
Racesonline: <https://www.racesonline.uk/>

Group Runs - Tuesdays 6:20pm for 6:30pm start, Dance Studio Ridgeway Academy

The group runs are planned to take approximately an hour, the following table gives an idea of the pace. To give variety, especially in the summer, distances will vary a little. Those attending by car are asked to **park in the school car park (Herns Lane)** and not the Sports Centre car park (Appletree Way).

Group/Distance	Pace (mins/km)	Pace (mins/mile)
5k social	A gentle-paced run that would suit those who are still new to running, like a slower pace, are returning from injury or a break from running	
7k	7:30 – 8	12 – 13
8k	7 – 7:30	11 – 12
9k	6:30 – 7	10 – 11
10k	5:45 – 6:15	9 – 10
11k	5 – 5:30	8 – 8:30

Hill Reps – Tuesdays Lunchtime and Evenings

Hill reps are enjoying a summer break and will be back soon – watch this space.

Interval Sessions: Tuesdays 6:45pm start, various locations in Welwyn Garden City

Approximately 25 mins of high intensity intervals over distances from 400m to a mile, with rest periods, in various locations in WGC. Runners of all abilities are welcome, pace is dictated by the runners themselves, slower runners will simply do fewer repetitions. Members will be notified of the locations and session format on email and Facebook.

Group Runs – Thursdays 6:20pm for 6.30pm start, Campus West

Thursday group run meets at Campus West on the steps outside the library. The What3Words location for the start is for start location: <https://w3w.co/eager.bliss.stuff>. There are usually three groups as follows:

5k social	A gentle-paced run that would suit those who are still new to running, like a slower pace, are returning from injury or a break from running
7-8km	Route to take approximately an hour
9-10km	Route to take approximately an hour

Introduction to intervals	This is often time-based intervals rather than distance
---------------------------	---

Track Intervals – Thursdays 8:00pm Gosling Track

Meet at the track for 15 minutes of warm up activities followed by approximately 30 minutes of track intervals. Sessions comprise laps or multiple laps of the track followed by rest periods. Runners of all abilities are welcome, runners will be formed into groups based on targeted pace.

A reminder to GCRs that there are now parking charges at Gosling Sports Park – this page has details of car parking charges:

<https://www.better.org.uk/leisure-centre/welwyn/gosling-sports-park/gosling-car-parking>

Circuit Training - Homerswood School

For those interested, former GCR member Steve Livingstone runs a very good one-hour circuit training session every **Monday at 6:30pm at Homerswood School**, Kirklands, WGC, AL8 7RF.

The cost is £5 (free for first timers). Five minutes warm up, 40 mins circuits, 15 mins stretching (great for runners). Bring a towel and some water.

Club Kit

Club kit is available from the Club Kit Secretary Richard Somerset.

We have vests, t-shirts, long sleeve tops and jackets in club colours in all sizes. See club website for photos. Vests, t-shirts and long sleeved tops are £21 jackets are £42.

You can pay by cash or bank transfer. Please Facebook message or text Richard on 07790 591868 or email rich.somerset@ntlworld.com to arrange pick-up.

“Puffa” jackets are also available for £42, please contact Martha Hall on: ma-hall28@hotmail.com for availability and more details.

GCR Strava Group

If you'd like to join the GCR Strava community, follow this link: <https://www.strava.com/clubs/garden-city-runners>

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 over 350 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 Sean Bowen (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/

Please send reports of races and milestones, with photos if available, before 7pm Sunday evening for (almost) guaranteed inclusion, to results@gardencityrunners.org.uk