



## Garden City Runners News Release

**21 January 2024**

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

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### **Fred Hughes 10**

Over 40 GCRs travelled to nearby St Albans to take part in this popular road race, which for many marks the start of the road racing season, and for GCRs was the first race in both the Avery League and the Club Championships. The event also hosted the Herts County Vets' Championships 10-mile race.

The one-lap course follows an undulating path through country lanes to the south east of central St Albans, with a long slog of an uphill in the middle. Despite a tough course and blustery winds heralding the arrival of Storm Isha, GCRs put in a strong performance. **Benj Carr** was first GCR and 21<sup>st</sup> overall, coming in under the hour in 58:25, and **James Huish** was not far behind in 1:00:20, 39<sup>th</sup> overall. **Paul Guy** was first for GCR vets, finishing in 1:01:33, and **Peter Harvey** ran in 1:02:17, scoring a silver in the M50 competition both overall and in the Herts Vets County Championships. The men's team of Guy, Harvey, **Chris**

**Jones** (1:02:20) and **Martin Mitchell** (1:05:56) also won a silver team prize in the Herts County Vets' competition. For the ladies, **Rebecca Barden** was first female GCR into the finish funnel, in 1:19:57, sixth in her age group W55. Rebecca commented: 'After a spell of sluggish form I was relieved to finish sub 1:20 - no thanks to the hills but I appreciated the excellent support and encouraging marshals around the course, and of course the stylish technical t-shirt for finishers.' **Sam Males**, clocking a big pb at this distance, was next in 1:23:08, with **Katy Healy coming** in at 1:24:00.



*Pictured: Jo Grant, Katy Healy and Sam Males*

Seyfu Jamal of London Heathside won the race in an incredible new course record of 00:49:30. Apparently, Seyfu was so fast that the lead bike had to have a head start up the hills to keep up!

Results from GCRs are listed below, with full race results available [here](#).

Benj Carr	00:58:25	Rebecca Barden	01:19:57
James Huish	01:00:20	Samantha Males	01:23:08
Paul Guy	01:01:33	Katy Healy	01:24:00
Peter Harvey	01:02:11	Sofie Marchant	01:27:55
Chris Jones	01:02:20	Sophie Packman	01:27:04
Jamie Rose	01:04:53	Clare Grover	01:27:36
Martin Mitchell	01:05:56	Sarah Durston	01:29:23
Steve Ellerd-Elliott	01:09:15	Jo Grant	01:31:02
Peter Jasko	01:10:33	Maggie Wright	01:31:17
Mark Westley	01:13:01	Holly Wise	01:32:06
Ricardo Neto	01:13:44	Chrissy Johnson	01:40:24
Spencer White	01:13:34	Karen Atkinson	01:41:39

Michael Grant	01:14:42	Carol Reid	01:42:38
Daniel Van De Walt	01:21:28	Sharon Stephens	01:44:28
Steve Mowles	01:20:53	Thippawan Rashleigh	01:45:44
Keith McLellan	01:22:47	Gail Munro	01:45:47
Andrew Morgan	01:24:04	Melanie King	01:47:34
Andrew Pocock	01:26:22	Kath Evans	01:49:54
Mathew Lutkin	01:28:14	Caroline Odwyer	01:53:57
Sid Valentine	01:28:57	Louise Quantick	02:02:53
Roger Adey	01:30:30	Willow Gibson	02:08:05
Richard Darley	01:33:01	Valerie Levison	02:08:34
Robert Cartwright	01:34:39	Charlotte Jones	02:16:53
Dave De Naeyer	01:38:41	Tendy St Francis	02:16:56
David Selwood	01:41:15		
Michael Scutt	01:46:25		
David Goosetree	01:46:07		
Paul Watts	01:46:09		
Nick Atkinson	01:47:27		
Robin Cattle	01:49:08		
Ben Donnelly	01:49:39		



*Pictured: Some of the many GCRs who participated in the Fred Hughes 10*

## **North Cornwall Marathon Trail Run**

**Kath Evans** has sent in this report of her latest adventure, with an excellent lesson in how to carry on when things don't go to plan. Kath writes: "Last weekend took me off on the Endurance life North Cornwall Marathon trail run. The race (13/1/24) started at Polzeath on the rugged North Cornwall coast and headed north eastwards across miles of unspoilt coastline which packed a punch with some significant elevation gain along the stunning Pentire Peninsula. The route passed through peaceful fishing villages including Doc Martin country, Port Isaac and picturesque valleys before arriving back to the safe haven of Polzeath. With the wild and dramatic Atlantic Sea as a backdrop it was a spectacular setting for a trail running adventure! Now I have a confession: I was meant to do the marathon route but I missed the cut off at 20 miles (it was technical & the elevation tough!) but I was feeling great. I have endurance, but lack speed! The brilliant Endurance Life team said "let's give you a lift to the next check point so you don't miss out the last few miles" - how brilliant is that?! Hence, a brilliant recommendation for Endurance Life, committed to providing a great day out which I absolutely had! I also sadly bagged my first ever DNF!"



*Kath Evans, still smiling*

## parkrun roundup

96 GCRs were not deterred by the low temperatures (we're a hardy bunch) and went out for the weekly parkrun fix, with almost half opting for Panshanger. **Daniel Pudner, Jamie Rose** and **Bruce Judge** achieved top 10 finishes for the men (18:55, 19:33 and 19:56), and **Katherine Lees, Alex Faulkner** and **Rebecca Cullers** finished in the top 10 for the ladies (22:16, 26:06 and 26:06). Just outside the top 10 for the men, **Jonathan Foan** and **Nick Summers** both achieved new course PBs (20:03 [11<sup>th</sup>] and 20:09 [12<sup>th</sup>], respectively).

Top 10 finishers elsewhere were as follows:

- **Katharine Farrell** was 7<sup>th</sup> lady at Stevenage in 23:53
- **Chris Eland** was 2<sup>nd</sup> at Keswick in a new course PB of 18:30. Also achieving a top 10 finish and a new course PB was **Rob Casserley** (9<sup>th</sup>, in 19:34)
- **Lucy Iles** was 4<sup>th</sup> lady at Wendover Woods in 25:45
- **Andrew Holt** was 6<sup>th</sup> at Leavesden Country in 22:17

New course PBs were achieved by **Laura Sach** at Cassiobury (27:32), **Samantha Males** at Luton Wardown (23:46), and **Alison Paterson** at Stevenage (30:38). **Samantha Hastie** celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> parkrun at Mount Stuart where she was 8<sup>th</sup> lady to finish.

**Sid Valentine** writes: "On Saturday whilst on the way to the running show at Birmingham NEC, Sarah and I used the opportunity for a bit of parkrun tourism and opted for Warwick racecourse parkrun. The going was firm and the course itself runs out along the furlongs and then comes back the opposite direction. It's a very fast course with just the one hill to negotiate each way. I'm happy to report that both GCR runners negotiated the course without falling at any of the jumps."



**Willow Gibson** writes: "A few of us travelled to Southend to run Chalkwell parkrun and have a dip in the sea as well. This was a nice flat out and back course along the promenade, with lovely sea views. Well done everyone and especially the crazy ones who decided to swim on a cold 2 degrees January day!" Well done to **John McDowall** on his new course PB (20:49).



Other parkrun locations attended by touring GCRs were: Alton Water, Armley, Babb's Mill, Barclay, Barnstaple, Bournemouth, Braunstone, Dunstable Downs, Hackney Marshes, Houghton Hall, Jersey Farm, Kingdom, Letchworth, Mount Stuart, Newcastle West, Raphael, Southampton, St Albans

Full results for GCRs participating in Saturday's parkruns can be found [here](#).

## **Foodbank Run**

### **Volunteers needed!**

Foodbank Run is an initiative that encourages running groups to partner with local food banks to organise a run and get participants to bring donations. GCR are getting involved by planning a parkrun take-over the first weekend in February (3-4)—providing pacers at Panshanger, and volunteering at both Panshanger and Beehive.

The club is asking members, whether running or walking, to arrive with donations for the Food Bank. GCR will be providing pacers at Panshanger on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> February – most slots are now filled, but **if you could pace 18 or 19 minutes please email [panshanger@parkrun.com](mailto:panshanger@parkrun.com)**

Joining the volunteer roster at Panshanger parkrun will also provide an excellent rest day opportunity for those doing the Watford Half the following day. Please email [panshanger@parkrun.com](mailto:panshanger@parkrun.com)

On Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> February there is the opportunity volunteer at Beehive Junior parkrun. Anyone interested in volunteering should email [beehivejuniors@parkrun.com](mailto:beehivejuniors@parkrun.com)

Over 2.1 million people use food banks—up from 1.5m five years ago. February has been chosen, as it is a key time of the year when families are hardest hit, with utility and food bills up, and the arrival of all the post-Christmas bills. More information on the Foodbank Run initiative can be found on their website and their Facebook page using these links <https://runr.co.uk/pages/foodbankrun>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/foodbankrun/?mibextid=c7yyfP>

There are some inspiring stories of runs already completed.

More information on Hertford & District Food Bank can be found at <https://hertforddistrict.foodbank.org.uk/>

## **GCR Awards Night**

This year's GCR Awards evening has been announced. It will take place on Friday, March 15 at the Cocktail Bar, Misya Meze & Grill, in WGC.

"Tickets at £12.50 each will buy you a wonderful evening with running buddies, celebrating all the magnificent achievements and contributions of Club Members over the last year," says Jane Molloy. "This is when we have the chance to clap and whoop to show our admiration and gratitude for those who have done amazing things for and with the club. Delicious food, a bar and a disco are all promised. Don't delay, as capacity is restricted to 100 people.

Tickets are available [here](#).

## **2023-4 Cross-Country Fixtures**

The last of the 2023-2024 Sunday League cross-country fixtures will be:

- 18 Feb 2024 – Royston (Therfield Heath)

Details of past and future fixtures are on the runherts website:

<http://www.runherts.com/xc.htm> which has a link to previous years' results. The XC races also form part of GCR's Avery League.

The Sunday League is for all runners, irrespective of pace, experience or ability. League placings are determined by the first eight men and first five women in each club, but there are B/C/D teams as well. The races are an enjoyable way to spend a Sunday morning, with events always being a distance of five to six miles (usually 8km).

All five venues are challenged for parking spaces at the venue, and the popularity of the League means ever more cars trying to park. After the popularity of the MWL, we have arranged for a coach to take runners from WGC to each venue. Further details on how to book to be issued shortly.

Please note the dates of country, regional and national cross-country fixtures over the 2023-24 season:

- 27 Jan 2024 - Southern Main Champs - Beckenham
- 24 Feb 2024 - Nationals - Telford
- 26 Mar 2024 - Herts Vets – Watford

Any queries about the wider series should be directed to GCR captains: James Huish, Dan Pudner, Hannah Frank or alternatively Rebecca Barden.



## Club Championships 2024

The Club Championships principally consist 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.

For 2024 the Championship races are:

Race #	Event	Date
1	Fred Hughes 10	21 <sup>st</sup> January
2	Watford Half	4 <sup>th</sup> February
3	Panshanger parkrun	9 <sup>th</sup> March
4	Flitwick 10k	14 <sup>th</sup> April
5	St Albans Half	9 <sup>th</sup> June
6	FVS 3k Relay	End July (tbc)
7	Stevenage 10k	15 <sup>th</sup> September
8	ATW Hatfield 5	24 <sup>th</sup> November

## GCR Avery League 2024

The GCR Race Committee has produced the calendar of races for the Avery League Competition and the Club Championships. Details on all of the 2024 races are below, and these will also be published on the GCR website as soon as possible, and on the GCR Facebook group. Please note that the Avery Rules have been simplified by removing the Tiebreaker - in future, joint winners will share the trophy. Happy Racing!

Avery Event #	Date	Event	Venue	Cost <i>Registration fees may apply</i>	Status / Notes
1	21 <sup>st</sup> January	Fred Hughes 10	St Albans	£20.00 aff.	Completed
2	4 <sup>th</sup> February	Watford Half	Watford	£31.00 aff.	<a href="#">Register here</a>
3	18 <sup>th</sup> February	SXCL Royston (Race #5 of 2023-2024 season)	Therfield Heath, Royston	Free	Club will send out details via email
4 (V)	9 <sup>th</sup> March	Panshanger parkrun	Panshanger Park	Free	<a href="https://www.parkrun.org.uk/panshanger/">https://www.parkrun.org.uk/panshanger/</a>
5	24 <sup>th</sup> March	Run Fest at Lee Valley (choice of Half or 10k)	Lee Valley Water Park, Waltham Cross	10k: £26.00 aff. Half: £34.00 aff.	<a href="#">Register here</a>
6	14 <sup>th</sup> April	Flitwick 10k	Flitwick	£18.00 aff.	<a href="#">Register here</a>
7	6 <sup>th</sup> May (tbc)	Kimpton Fun Run 10k	Kimpton	tbc	Details tbc

8	Mid-May (tbc)	MWRRL #1	tbc	Free	Club will send out details via email
9	End May (tbc)	MWRRL #2	tbc	Free	Club will send out details via email
10	Start June (tbc)	MWRRL #3	tbc	Free	Club will send out details via email
11	End June (tbc)	MWRRL #4	tbc	Free	Club will send out details via email
12 (V)	End June (tbc)	Welwyn 10k (if going ahead)	tbc	tbc	Details tbc
13 (V)	Start to mid July (tbc; poss. second week)	MWRRL Mob Match	Ridgway Academy, WGC	Free	Club will send out details via email
14	End July (tbc)	FVS 3k Relays	Fairlands Valley, Stevenage	Free	Club will send out details via email
15 (V)	4/11/18 <sup>th</sup> August (tbc)	GCR Centenary 20.2k	WGC Centenary Route	Free	Club will send out details via email
16 (V)	4 <sup>th</sup> September (tbc)	Hatfield 5k #2 (Vets)	Hatfield	tbc	Details tbc
17	15 <sup>th</sup> September	Stevenage 10k	Stevenage	£16.00 aff. (before 31 Dec) £18.00 aff. (from 1 Jan 2024)	<a href="#">Register here</a>
18 (V)	Mid October (tbc)	SXCL #1	tbc	Free	Club will send out details via email
19	20 <sup>th</sup> October	Stevenage Half Marathon & Marathon	Stevenage	tbc	<a href="#">Register here</a>
20	End October (tbc)	SXCL #2 (poss. Jersey Farm parkrun as back-up)	tbc	Free	Club will send out details via email
21	Start November (tbc)	SXCL #3 (poss. Jersey Farm parkrun as back-up)	tbc	Free	Club will send out details via email
22	24 <sup>th</sup> November	Hatfield 5	Hatfield	£22.00 early-bird aff.	<a href="#">Register here</a>
23 (V)	Early December (tbc)	Festive 5	WGC	tbc	Club will send out details via email
24	Mid December (tbc)	SXCL #4	tbc	Free	Club will send out details via email

## **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.

***Please remember to charge your head/chest torches***

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	9 - 9:30
12k	5 - 5:30	8 - 8:30

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

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 6.30pm Campus West**

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
Introduction to speed session	A training session for those who are daunted by the track. A mixture of intervals, fartlek and speed sessions. Ideal for those trying to improve their 10k time
Steady Group	Steady group run

## **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, **and \*new\* a cosy GCR-branded woolly hat**. See club website for photos. All items are £20 (£19.99 if you pay by bank transfer) except for the hats which are £12.

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

"Puffa" jackets are also available for £42, please contact Martha Hall on: [ma-hall28@hotmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:gcr@gardencityrunners.org.uk), visit our website <https://www.gardencityrunners.org.uk/> or our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/groups/gardencityrunners/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/gardencityrunners/)