



Garden City Runners News Release

21 April 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

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Race & Run Reports	London Marathon Not the London Marathon Ultra Tour of Arran South Downs Way 50 Mile Race Chester Ultra 100 Miles parkrun roundup
Future Events	Mid-Week League GCR Club Championships 2024 GCR Avery League 2024
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London Marathon

Sunday 21st April – London Marathon Day. Arguably one of the biggest days of the running calendar, yesterday saw dozens of GCRs travel to the capital to run, volunteer or cheer on this awesome event.

Lee Mansfield, (*pictured, right*) who won the GCR draw for the club's EA-affiliated place, reports: "Cracking day at the London Marathon today - thanks to GCR for the place and all the help and support - for the group runs, intervals, the advice and loan of training plans and the chats along the way - hugely appreciated!"

Barbara Kubis-Labiak , more usually found in rainy, cold muddy fields, summarized her experience: "All of my friends know I love trails and I stick to trails, and I keep on saying no to road marathons - but London Marathon is an entirely different experience and has to be considered on a different merit. When I got the place in the ballot, I had to do it and today was the day and I loved it. Having all my friends supporting at mile 13 and 22 made it all even more special (thank you all ❤️) It really felt like a giant street party, the music, the parties, the people cheering on, not a single stretch of the route was without spectators. London is a truly special city and the day was all about experiencing every minute of it."



Barbara Kubis-Labiak, and her bling

Results of GCRs taking part are as follows (it was not possible to filter results for 'Garden City Runners, so apologies if anyone is inadvertently missed off the list):

- Rebecca Barden 03:44:28
- Benj Carr 02:35:29
- Rob Casserley 02:48:10
- Chris Eland 03:05:48
- Ann Hayden 05:02:51
- Chris Jones 02:52:35
- Barbara Kubis-Labiak 04:22:38
- Mathew Lutkin 04:25:46
- Stuart Mann 03:58:19
- Lee Mansfield 03:34:57
- Louise O'Donnell 06:29:00
- Caroline O'Dwyer 06:03:27
- Jason Pike 03:24:34
- Hiran Rana 06:19:29
- Vikki Rogers 05:37:09
- Helen Stafford 03:48:49
- Huw Waeland 04:18:11



Helen Stafford and Rebecca Barden



Vikki Rogers, and new BFF Romesh Ranganathan



Caroline O'Dwyer, and her chief cheerleader

And not to forget our fabulous baggage crew, who had a very long day. Baggage Team Leader **Michael Scutt** reports "hard work, great fun and really satisfying to get the bags into order. Lovely to see all the GCRs who'd finished as well." The volunteer team comprised:

Matt Baker, Richard Darley, Dave De Naeyer, Steve Ellerd-Elliott, Kath Evans, Colin Grace, Caroline Hughes, Rob Hughes, Charlotte Jones, Claire King, Wendy Leversuch, Anna Lillie, Chris Loveys, Sofie Marchant, Belinda McGinley, Alison Meaden, Gail Munro, Maria Murden, Tom Parmley, Alison Paterson, Johan Preis, Thippawan Rashleigh, Brian Robbins, David Roberts, Helen Robinson, Tandy St Francis, Ran Takhar, Alexandra Yates



Not the London Marathon

Nadine Dwyer (*pictured, below*) writes: "Didn't get a place in the London marathon, no problem...entered the "NOT the London Marathon Run" instead. Laps along the Thames towpath and worth it for the plate size bling alone - a whopper of a medal! The dodgy knee wasn't happy 25k in but quitting was not an option 🍊. That's marathon/ultra #17 done , if I make it to 25, there will be a party!"

Ultra Tour of Arran

Two intrepid GCRs, **Martin Mitchell** and **Gareth Askey**, travelled to the Isle of Arran for the Rat Race 'Ultra Tour of Arran'. With Arran being described as Scotland in miniature, the race itself is billed as "From dense forests and coastal scenery in the south to crumbling castles and dramatic mountains in the north, the isle of Arran delights at every turn. The Ultra Tour of Arran is a 2 day off-road running adventure that belongs on every runners bucket list." The event covers 60 miles (97km) over two days, with Day 2 described as "a truly mountainous environment".

Martin finished Day 1 in 5:42:18, and had an overall finish on Day 2 of 16:16:25

Gareth finished Day 1 in 6:29:49, and had an overall finish on Day 2 of 16:40:08

South Downs Way 50 Mile Race

Last Saturday **Matt Baker** (*pictured, below*) completed the South Downs Way 50-mile race. Matt writes: "The Centurion South Downs Way 50 takes you from Worthing to Eastbourne along the trail and takes in some 1,750m+ of elevation gain. Weather was great on Saturday, even if a bit windy on the top of the climbs. This year's race saw its largest number of entrants and finishers and was a well organised event with some excellent aid stations. I was happy to finish in 9hr 39mins and 129th overall. I channelled Thursday night Gosling energy to finish the last 400m which sees you complete a lap of Eastbourne Sports Centre track."



Chester Ultra 100 Miles

Last weekend (13-14 April) **Peter Jasko** (*pictured, below*) embarked on an epic journey, completing a 100-mile run.

Peter initially sent this report: "100 mile. Done".

Once suitably recovered, Peter sent this additional, more descriptive summary: "I completed a 100-miler!!! 30:57:28 official time. The canal paths were pretty but monotonous. The muddy fields were out of this world, with pace dropping to below 4 km/h at one point. One long muddy section had slip marks where others had fallen; and barbed wire one side, canal the other.

I ran the first 45 miles. The remaining 55+ was a walk with the occasional run shuffle. Nutrition all good. Weather almost all dry. Cold at night - too cold when walking. Feet got wet mid-way and a change of socks was not enough to dry them out. Serious (for me, but not really serious) trench foot. Four massive foot blisters at finish; swelling and pain afterwards.

Met some lovely folk along the way; sadly, not all of them finished. Almost 50% DNFs. Chuffed that Richard Taylor crewed me. A real pal in times of need."



parkrun roundup

103 GCRs felt the best way to start the weekend was to blast out a 5k at a parkrun (the trick is to keep breathing). Down at 'the local' (Panshanger), **Katherine Lees** was 2nd lady in 21:58, and **Jess Timmins** was 9th lady in 25:23, while for the men **Chris Baylis** and **Bruce Judge** came in 2nd and 3rd in 19:10 and 19:19, respectively.

Top 10 finishers elsewhere were as follows:

- **Jonathan Foan** was 5th at Great Yarmouth North Beach in 25:04
- **Russell Casey** was 10th man (12th overall) at Tyne Green in 21:49
- **Richard Somerset** was 10th man (11th overall) at Great Denham in 19:54
- **Michael Grant** was 6th at Thurrock in 22:10
- **Nigel Cavill** was 8th man (15th overall) at Walthamstow in 21:57
- **Lucy Iles** was 4th lady at Wimpole Estate in 24:24
- **Thom Buzzard** was 3rd at Gunpowder in 18:14
- **Dan Pudner** was 3rd overall and **Caroline Hale** was 3rd lady at Stevenage in 18:42 and 21:44, respectively
- **Amber-Leigh Marvin** was 7th lady at St Albans in 24:41

Course PBs were achieved by **Brian Robbins** at Jersey Farm, **Aiden Dwyer** at Panshanger, **Steve Grout** at Ally Pally, **Jas Newington** and **Adam Wadley** at Stevenage.

A bit further afield, **Val Levison** (*pictured, right*) did a spot of parkrun tourism at Hermanus parkrun in South Africa. Val writes: "After the two oceans I just stuffed my face with food and drink. So when I woke up this morning I thought why not try a parkrun. The event takes place in Hermanus Forest. What is not to like about that? I did it like a proper tourist stopping and taking videos and photos."

Other parkrun locations attended by touring GCRs were: Aldenham, Amager Strandpark (Copenhagen), Barnstaple, Bolberry Down, Eastleigh, Finsbury Park, Great Cornard, Great Dunmow, Lancaster, Market Rasen Racecourse, Newbiggin-by-the-Sea, Newbury, Rickmansworth, Rutland Water, Sheringham, South Oxhey, Southsea. And last but by no means least, our Uptown Girls (**Jane Molloy** and **Jac McCallum**) were at Upton Court 😊

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

Mid Week League

Dates and venues for the Mid-Week League fixtures have been announced – see the Avery league table below. Further information will be sent out nearer the time.

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 st January
2	Watford Half	4 th February
3	Panshanger parkrun	9 th March
4	Flitwick 10k	14 th April
5	St Albans Half	9 th June
6	FVS 3k Relay	End July (tbc)
7	Stevenage 10k	15 th September
8	ATW Hatfield 5	24 th 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 st January	Fred Hughes 10	St Albans	£20.00 aff.	Completed
2	4 th February	Watford Half	Watford	£31.00 aff.	Completed
3	*cancelled*	SXCL Royston (Race #5 of 2023-2024 season)	Therfield Heath,	Free	--
4 (V)	9 th March	Panshanger parkrun	Panshanger Park	Free	Completed
5	24 th 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.	Completed

6	14 th April	Flitwick 10k	Flitwick	£18.00 aff.	Completed
7	6 th May (tbc)	Kimpton Fun Run 10k	Kimpton	tbc	Details tbc
8	15 th May	MWRRL #1	Stevenage	Free	Club will send out details via email
9	23 rd May	MWRRL #2	Ware	Free	Club will send out details via email
10	6 th June	MWRRL #3	Royston	Free	Club will send out details via email
11	27 th June	MWRRL #4	Trent Park	Free	Club will send out details via email
12 (V)	30 th June	Welwyn 10k	Panshanger Park	tbc	Details tbc
13 (V)	10 th July	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 th August (tbc)	GCR Centenary 20.2k	WGC Centenary Route	Free	Club will send out details via email
16 (V)	4 th September	Hatfield 5k #2 (Vets)	Hatfield	tbc	Details tbc
17	15 th September	Stevenage 10k	Stevenage	£18.00 aff.	Register here
18 (V)	Mid October (tbc)	SXCL #1	tbc	Free	Club will send out details via email
19	20 th October	Stevenage Half Marathon & Marathon	Stevenage	tbc	Register here
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 th November	Hatfield 5	Hatfield	£22.00 early-bird aff.	Register here
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.

*****Tuesday evening's 10k group run will be meeting at the carpark next to the viaduct in Digswell for their run this week (postcode is AL6 0BB), the route will be mainly road but there will be some trail sections.*****

*****All other steady groups, including the 11k, will start as usual at Ridgeway Academy.*****

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 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/