



## Garden City Runners News Release

**3 March 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)*

### **A Tale of Two Halves**

After Saturday's rain, Sunday dawned bright and cold, perfect weather for running two very different half marathons. GCR had a strong showing at the **Cambridge Half**, a famously flat course that starts and ends on Midsummer Common, taking in Granchester, Trumpington, and some of Cambridge's dreaming spires. First three for GCR were the trio of **Chris Jones** (1:19:11); **James Huish** (1:19:19), and **Jamie Rose**, running a pb of 1:23:09. **Adam Wadley** and **Felicity Wadley** both stormed to new pbs, Adam in 1:24:44 and Felicity in a fabulous 11 minute PB of 1:46:07. Also putting in strong performances for GCR ladies were **Alex Faulkner**, who ran in 1:38:41; **Helen Stafford** in 1:41:37, and **Sofie Marchant** in 1:52:15. **Ali Riza Eroglu** ran in 2:01:12. **Michael Scutt** reported from his first half marathon: "It was a very well run event, a great course with very little in the way of bumps or inclines let alone hills. It was my first half marathon event and good preparation for Brighton next month. I was pleased with my official time of 2.15.11." Also running her first half marathon was **Gail Munro** who finished in 2:18:38.



*Above left: James, Chris and Jamie, (right) Gail Munro*

Full results for GCRs registered as running at Cambridge can be found [here](#).

Meanwhile, further west, a group of brave/foolish GCRs tackled the hills and hills of the **Berkhamsted Half**, which sets off from Berkhamstead Cricket Pavilion, passing through Nettleden, taking in the splendid scenery of the Ashridge Estate, before heading back to Berkhamstead a speedy downhill finish. First home for GCR and 13<sup>th</sup> overall in a strong 1:18:12 was **Benj Carr**. **Gaetano Basiaco** was next in 1:23:27, with **Chris Eland** only seconds behind in 1:23:32, a time that earned him MV50 silver. First for GCR ladies was **Rebecca Barden** in 1:50:13, with **Kath Evans** next in 2:30:22. **Wayne Aylott** brought it home for GCR in 2:39:23.

## HYROX World Series of Fitness – Russell and Liz Do The Biz



**Russell Morris** and **Liz Watson** (*pictured above*) joined forces to compete as a Mixed Doubles team in the HYROX total fitness competition that attracted thousands of athletes from around the World at the Glasgow SEC Indoor Arena on Saturday 2 March.

Russell writes: "HYROX is the fastest growing fitness competition in the world. It features pro athletes and everyday fitness enthusiasts of all ages racing a consistent format of 1k run followed by a functional strength exercise repeated 8 times. The strength exercises are total body workouts ranging from 1k ski and row machine efforts to pushing and pulling heavy sleds and running 200m while carrying 7-8 stone of weight or doing lunges over 100m with 3-4 stone on the shoulders.

The Glasgow event was extremely popular following a very successful first event at the Scottish Exhibition Centre last year. The enthusiastic Scottish hospitality was on full display and I'm sure helped many participants achieve great performances over the course. It certainly helped Liz and I who gave it all we had and managed to finish

in 1 hour and 14 mins which was enough to get an amazing 2nd place in our over 50's age category.

There's a slim chance that we get invited to compete in the HYROX World Champs in Nice based on this performance but time will tell. We just feel great to have a chance to test our running and strength fitness and learn that we don't do too badly for a couple of oldies."

### **parkrun roundup**

Numbers at this weekend's parkruns were no doubt impacted by Saturday morning's torrential rain. Nevertheless, 72 hardy GCRs tackled parkruns at home and abroad.



*Left: GCRs at Brandon Country Park parkrun*

**Willow Gibson** sent this report from Norfolk: "A few GCRs stayed near Feltwell, Norfolk for a yoga retreat and while there we decided to run a local parkrun.

We split into two groups, some staying close and some going further towards the coast.

**Samantha Hastie, Sharon Stephens** and I ran Holkham Parkrun and had a dip at Holkham beach afterwards. What a beautiful place to run.

**Elizabeth Dean, Thippi Rashleigh, Tandy St Francis, Sarah Merrigan** and **Katharine Farrell** ran Brandon Country Parkrun. This was also a stunning location to run. We were very lucky and got sunshine over the weekend. Norfolk seemed to avoid the rain completely!"

Also heading East was **Sidney Valentine**, who sent a report from Mile End parkrun: "A curly wurly for breakfast in the form of Mile End parkrun – pros included a nice green course in the



centre of East London, good facilities, lots of cheap parking and you get too see runners of other paces on the course. Cons? It was hillier than I expected, and I didn't enjoy having to return to the finish area before going back out on my second lap. Overall it was a good course though."

*Left: Sid at Mile End*

Other parkrun feats included a winning run from **Simon Bostock** at Panshanger, first into the finish funnel in 19:42, and **Rob Casserley**, 9<sup>th</sup> in 21:11. **Jamie Rose** was also 11<sup>th</sup> at Stevenage in 20:51, where **Alex Faulkner** was 4<sup>th</sup> lady in 24:56. **Gareth Askey** was 9<sup>th</sup> at Henlow Bridges Lakes parkrun in 25:29.

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

### **Saturday 9th March: Don't forget your barcode and don't forget your bank card!**

A reminder that Panshanger parkrun on Saturday 9th March is the next fixture in the GCR Avery League and also the next Club Championship race. All club members are encouraged to take part. The course will probably still be wet and muddy but it will be a great morning with lots of GCR members attending. There will also be hot drinks and cakes available after the run as 1st Welwyn Scouts continue to operate a fundraiser, providing refreshments at bargain prices. Payment by bank card/phone or cash. See you all there.

### **Focus of the month - Tuesday steady runs**

GCR offers a number of steady run groups on a Tuesday evening. The table (included in the [Tuesday Group Runs section](#)) shows the **target distance** for each group and also the **target pace**. When deciding which group to join runners should consider both pace and distance. All groups aim to complete their run in about 60 minutes.

| 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 |

Each group has a volunteer run leader who will plan a route to meet the target distance and then during the run they will do their best to run within the target pace. The target pace is an average over the whole run. Downhill sections may be slightly faster and uphill sections will inevitably be slower.

For safety reasons it is important that the group stays together and does not get too stretched out. The run leader should be at the front of the group both to set the pace and because they are the only one who knows where they are going. If other runners get ahead of the leader it is vital that they **loop back**, not just to the front of the group but to the back of it.

If a runner finds that they are regularly ahead of the leader then their natural steady pace is faster than that group and they should really move up to a faster group. The difference in pace between groups is not huge and they will normally be absolutely fine in the faster group. Likewise if a runner is regularly falling a long way behind the leader they should really drop down to a group where they will be more comfortable with the pace.

If these simple rules are followed each group should get back on time, having covered the target distance at the target pace on a run that was relaxed, safe & enjoyable for everyone in the group.

GCR Run Leaders

### **GCR Walking Group**

In the hope that the ground will soon start drying up we intend to restart the GCR Walking Programme in March. This year we will add some new trails while revisiting some old favourites (in particular maximising the bluebell season). Distance is generally circa 10K. Anyone wishing to join the group — which generally meets on Sundays and Wednesdays — should contact Jerry Gilbert: [jerry@jgp-pr.com](mailto:jerry@jgp-pr.com)

## **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 **only a handful of tickets left!**

Tickets are available [here](#).

## **Quiz Night**

Vicky Rogers, Caroline O'Dwyer and Lee Wood are organizing a quiz night to raise money for the charities they have chosen to support for their upcoming London Marathon races. There will also be a raffle on the night. More details on quiz entry cost and raffle prizes to follow.

This is your chance to show off your knowledge  
and have fun in a friendly competition.

# QUIZ NIGHT

**WEDNESDAY 27TH MARCH**  
**POSTINO LOUNGE, HOWARDS**  
**GATE**

**Help us raise money for our  
charities:**

**The Family Holiday Charity**  
**Asthma & Lung UK**  
**National Autistic Society**

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

As communicated by email this week, the Sunday League cross-country fixture originally scheduled to be held on 18<sup>th</sup> February at Royston could not go ahead due to the recent weather conditions impacting Therfield Heath. **An alternative date of 10<sup>th</sup> March has been proposed**, but please watch out for further communications.

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).

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

- 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.

### **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:

| <b>Race #</b> | <b>Event</b>       | <b>Date</b>                |
|---------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| 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!

| <b>Avery Event #</b> | <b>Date</b>                        | <b>Event</b>                                   | <b>Venue</b>                         | <b>Cost</b><br><i>Registration fees may apply</i> | <b>Status / Notes</b>   |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| 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.                                       | Completed   |
| 3                    | <i>*postponed*</i>                 | 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.<br>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                    | 15 <sup>th</sup> May               | MWRRL #1                                       | Stevenage                            | Free  | Club will send out details via email  |
| 9                    | 23 <sup>rd</sup> May               | MWRRL #2                                       | Ware                                 | Free  | Club will send out details via email  |
| 10                   | 6 <sup>th</sup> June               | MWRRL #3                                       | Royston                              | Free  | Club will send out details via email  |
| 11                   | 27 <sup>th</sup> June              | MWRRL #4                                       | Trent Park                           | Free  | Club will send out details via email  |
| 12 (V)               | 30 <sup>th</sup> June              | Welwyn 10k                                     | Panshanger Park                      | tbc   | Details tbc   |
| 13 (V)               | 10 <sup>th</sup> 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 <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          | Hatfield 5k #2 (Vets)                          | Hatfield                             | tbc   | Details tbc   |
| 17                   | 15 <sup>th</sup> September         | Stevenage 10k                                  | Stevenage                            | £18.00 aff.                                       | <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<br>(tbc)      | SXCL #2 (poss. Jersey Farm parkrun as back-up) | tbc      | Free                   | Club will send out details via email |
| 21        | Start November<br>(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<br>(V) | Early December<br>(tbc)   | Festive 5                                      | WGC      | tbc                    | Club will send out details via email |
| 24        | Mid December<br>(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/)