



Garden City Runners News Release

8 October 2023

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

North Chiltern Ultra Trail 50k

Malcolm Baron and **Nick Genever** (both pictured right) stepped into the North Chilterns to challenge themselves on the trails on Sunday 8th October. Runaway adventures (the same company that puts on the Tewinbury 10k) arranged a beautiful route including excellent aid station support and signage.

Malcolm (pictured below) reports: "Nick jumped out of the gate strong and was cruising at 6 miles an hour before having some difficulty with his stomach which slowed him to a mere canter beyond 35km. The last 15km he struggled but still put together a solid 5 hours 47 minutes, to successfully complete marathon #228.



I was stepping back into the ultra arena for the first time since March, mainly to prove to myself I still had what it takes. The first 40km were solid, before the lack of miles in the legs came back to haunt me, walking a big chunk of the final 10km.

Overall, a beautiful event and a beautiful day. A great first ultra for those considering jumping to the distance."

Nick finished in 05:47:38 and Malcolm finished in 06:13:28.

Full results are available [here](#).



Glasgow to Edinburgh GB Ultra Challenge

Kath Evans has once again been seeking treatment for her severe aversion to a relaxing, warm and dry weekend.

Kath reports: "This weekend (Saturday 7th October) took me on a Scottish adventure for my last ultra running challenge of 2023! I've enjoyed a great year of ultras in Wales and England exploring the hills and coastal paths in varying weather conditions, but the wettest of them all this year goes to the Glasgow to Edinburgh GB Ultra Challenge!

Starting at the Hyper Modern Riverside museum in Glasgow, we were piped off by bagpipes at 6am and with head torches on, we headed onto the waterways of Scotland.

An early highlight was the lit up Stockingfield Bridge but the cut off times were tight and the rain relentless so my phone stayed firmly in its plastic bag for the duration of the day!

Slowly the light came and the Scottish landscape with its bursts of fabulous colours of red, orange, yellow, bronze and crimson, capturing the raindrops, entertained me between the checkpoints. One of the race directors had seen me pause to submit my number at checkpoint two, and firmly said 'keep moving or you'll get cold' so keep moving I did, all the way to the finish at Edinburgh Athletics Track.

Billed as 56 miles my Garmin captured it as 57.8 miles! I completed it in just over 14 hours and given the atrocious weather

conditions I'll take that! GB ultra said 'Embrace the challenge, embrace the distance, and let your footsteps pave the way!' well I tried my best on another little plod!"

More information on this event is available [here](#).



Chicago Marathon

Sofie Marchant (pictured right) and **Russell Morris** (pictured below) both participated in the Chicago Marathon on Sunday 8th October, with both achieving PBs.

Russell Morris writes: "I was one of the runners to receive an invite to compete in the Age-Group World Marathon Champs as one of the highest ranked 50-55 male marathon runners in the World Rankings earlier this year. The Age-Group World Champs are held just once a year and this year, some 2,500 of these athletes were invited to gather as a part of a 45,000+ strong field of athletes from more than 100 countries participating in the 45th Chicago Marathon.



Thankfully the 28-degree October heatwave of earlier in the week eased off for race day and conditions in America's "Windy City" were set for some fast performances. And so it proved, aside from the incredible world record by Kenya's Kelvin Kiptum, I achieved a time of 2 hours and 54 minutes, a PB by more than 4-minutes.



Being invited to compete in the Age-Group World Champs in Chicago was like a Charlie and the Chocolate Factory 'Golden Ticket' moment. Lots of hard training has gone in to trying to be in peak shape for the event since then and it came together this weekend. I made the trip proudly wearing the colours of Garden City Runners and I'm very happy with the result. What a time of life and what an event to get a new marathon PB. Thank you, thank you for all the encouragement from many other inspirational GCR runners and the many more lovely people from around Welwyn Garden City".

Full results are available [here](#).

Chester Marathon

Emily Shepherd and **Tendy St Francis** (pictured below) took on their biggest challenge yet, with the Chester Marathon on Sunday 8th October. Emily writes: "Tendy and I headed up to Chester for the Marathon and stayed overnight nearby. Neither of us has run a marathon before today and there was some stress about the 6hr time cut off. We Jeffed it and despite the hot weather (which gave us a bit of leeway with the time!) finished in about 6 and half hours.

The town is beautiful and it is a very scenic course though the countryside in to Wales and then back round to Chester centre. All the marshals are volunteers and they were outstanding. There were a few hills but none as daunting as White Hill!

We are so proud to have finished the race and we could not have done it without team GCR great to see other GCR runners there as we arrived.

Provisional results are available [here](#).



Loch Ness Marathon

Paul Watts gives us this report from last weekend: "Last Sunday (1st October) found me in Inverness at the Loch Ness Marathon. It's one I have done before and, despite the fact there are some uphill sections I knew there was more down. They drive you from the finish to the start and you run back. My guide and I started off reasonably well but he had problems with his back from just before halfway. This meant I got round finally in 5.23.38h but know that, had he not had problems, he would have got me round quicker."

Royal Parks Half

Several Garden City Runners participated in the Royal Parks Half Marathon on Sunday 8th October, no doubt looking majestic and not at all flushed whilst doing so. Results of the Royal Parks Half (which, annoyingly, doesn't give participants' club affiliations, so I couldn't search for any/all Garden City Runners) are posted [here](#).

Carol Reid reports: "I did the Royal Parks half-marathon today in a time of 2:12:57. I hadn't planned to do it but my younger sister got a place in the ballot, decided not to do it and transferred it to me. It was an early start to get to Hyde Park for 9am but I had plenty of time for a coffee and snack in the park before we set off. It's a nice course, starting and finishing in Hyde Park, passing lots of London landmarks and running through Kensington Gardens, St James's Park and Green Park. There was great support along the route which I needed in the last couple of miles. It wasn't too hot for running and it was a lovely day for relaxing in the park after the race."

Daniel Ashcroft writes: "Early hours of Sunday morning some Garden City Runners made their way into London from WGC train station general (names have left me sorry) but chit chat of potential PBs or reason for not doing so well! The Royal Parks half takes in many London Landmarks but also the amazing feel of the parks' green spaces within London for this it is highly recommend for future events for people. My race I haven't focused on a race distance this year but just gone to run for fun and social side of it. Not my best not my worst time but loved the whole day! 1:46:19".

Miles Hubbard (*pictured right*) added "Was lovely bumping into Carol literally at the start line of the Royal Parks Half today. The next 8km were then a shaded sightseeing run nicely on target pace. Unfortunately, the heat in the park got the better of me and I finished five minutes off target at 2:20:08."



Ely Runfest

At 7.30 am on Sunday 8th October, 4 GCRs met at the station for a leisurely train trip to Ely for the annual Runfest, organised by Ely Tri Club. **Charlotte Jones, Jane Molloy, Emma Dempster** and **Alex Yates** (*pictured left to right below*) opted for the 10k distance. Aspirations to do the half marathon distance were dashed by a variety of injuries and ailments over the summer. Setting off from the green by the cathedral, the route was a pretty flat out-and-back, with a downhill start to the riverbank then out through the fens. Of course, that meant an uphill finish, with the opportunity to drink in the cathedral wall views. Finishing times were Alex Yates 1:13:13, Jane Molloy 1:22:40, Emma Dempster 1:24:22, and Charlotte Jones 1:27:47. A small-scale, very friendly event followed by a visit to the excellent Tom's Cakes and a mooch round Ely centre.



Willows 5k

The annual Willow 10k and 5k events took place in the picturesque grounds of Hatfield House on Sunday 8th October.

Nigel Cavill reports: "10 Years in the club this year (GCR) and today I set out to complete 'the treble' at my local annual event Willows 10k & 5k at Hatfield House. Just about managed to hang on to first place (5k) and break the finish tape to complete the hat trick (2019, 2022 and 2023)!

Mission accomplished!!"

Full results available [here](#).



parkrun roundup

87 GCRs set their alarms for Saturday morning to get them up and out to their chosen parkrun location. 31 contributed to the steadily swelling numbers at Panshanger, where **Adam Wadley** and **Felicity Wadley** both had a top-ten finish (Adam completed his 50th parkrun as 6th man, 8th overall in 19:11, and Felicity finished as 4th lady in a new PB of 24:34). **Jamie Rose** smashed his PB, achieving his first sub-20-minute finish on this course (19:39). **Michael Germany** also beat his course PB (24:15). **Louise Smith** achieved her best time this year so far.

Top 10 finishers elsewhere were as follows:

- **Neil Hume** was 10th at St Albans in 19:04
- **Caroline Griffin** was 8th lady at Gunpowder in 26:08
- **John Macdowall** was 5th at Harrow Lodge in 21:09
- **Zoe Stephens** was 2nd lady at Cassiobury in 21:02
- **Sharon Threlfall** was 3rd lady at Mullingar in 25:17
- **Dan Van De Walt** was 8th man (9th overall) at Dunstable Downs in 23:22
- **Dan Pudner** was 2nd at Abbey Park in 17:09

Dave Faulkner achieved a new course PB at Jersey Farm (30:57).

Michael Scutt has once again been filling up his passport with stamps all in the name of parkrun. Michael writes: "I travelled to Volksgarten parkrun in Dusseldorf to take advantage of a special parkrun event - Germany Unity Day- on Tuesday 3rd October. I found I had a few more days holiday left to me than I realised and I was able to get a cheap-ish flight from Heathrow so I decided to go for it. Volksgarten is a lovely, flat, two lap course through a large urban park in the south of the city. The paths are unsealed and there are at installations dotted about, amongst the lakes. It's well worth a visit. Unfortunately, my right hamstring, which has been rumbling a bit for the last couple of weeks, decided enough was enough and started complaining quite loudly. The second lap was a bit of a struggle but I made it round and bagged my second German parkrun, and my third "V". A few glasses of the local alt bier provided to be good medicine. I really enjoy this European parkrun lark!"



Willow Gibson, Richard Somerset and John Macdowall travelled to Hornchurch to run Harrow Lodge parkrun. Willow writes: "This was my 50th different parkrun and my son Jensen's 5th parkrun. Well done to Richard is recovering from injury and John who came 1st in his age group, and 5th overall (21:05). Really lovely parkrun, with parking, toilets and cafe. It's one lap around a pretty lake and through woods. I would definitely do this one again."

Other parkrun locations attended by touring GCRs were: Barnstaple, Bushy, California Country, Elder Park, Itchin Valley Country, Loch Levin, Luton Wardown, Markeaton, Milton Country, Moors Valley, Oak Hill, Queen Elizabeth, Rendlesham Forest, Rickmansworth, Sandringham, Stevenage, Wolverhampton.

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

2023-4 Sunday League XC fixtures

Just a reminder that dates and venues of upcoming five league XC fixtures, running from October to February are as follows:

- Cheshunt - 15 October 2023 (see recent email about coach travel)
- Watford - 29 October 2023
- Trent Park - 5 November 2023
- Stevenage - 17 December 2023
- Royston - 18 February 2024

They're also 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.

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

Please also note the dates of other Cross Country fixtures over the 2023-24 season:

- 9 Dec 2023 - Southern Vets Champs - Oxford
- 8 Jan 2024 - Herts Senior Champs - Watford
- 27 Jan 2024 - Southern Main Champs - Beckenham
- 24 Feb 2024 - Nationals - Telford
- 26 Mar 2024 - Herts Vets - Watford

GCR Christmas Bash at Best Western Homestead Court, Friday 15 December

80s Night Fancy Dress £42.50pp

(3-course dinner and disco) Christmas 2023 (bw-homesteadcourt.co.uk)

Please phone/email Kasia at Homestead Court asap (contact details below) to book your dinner/disco and place your food order direct with her. It's £10 deposit to hold your place or

pay in full £42.50. Please also let her know of any allergies/requirements at the time of booking.

Events Tel: (01707) 385515

Front Desk Tel: (01707) 324336

Email: events@homesteadcourt.co.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.

Please remember to charge your head/chest torches, as the evenings are getting darker

Group/Distance	Pace (mins/km)	Pace (mons/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.

From Martha: Tuesday 10th October Intervals this week will be at Reddings. We will be doing some 500m efforts. Meet at the venue at 6.45pm warmed up and ready for drills.

Group Runs – Thursdays 6.30pm Campus West

From Tippi: Thursday 12th October 7/8 km group this week meet at the Gosling. And we will go to the Beefeater later for a drink. All welcome. Please beware of the parking charge at the Gosling.

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
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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.

Avery League Competition 2023

Please find this year's events table below. Eight Avery races, marked CC, are also part of the Club Championship competition (best five to score). Races marked V offer a volunteer point equivalent to a competing point.

Event no.		Date	Event	Venue	Cost	Status / notes
1	CC	22/01/2023	Fred Hughes 10	St Albans	£21.20 affiliated	Completed
2		19/02/2023	XC 3	Cassiobury Park, Watford	free	Completed
3	CC	05/03/2023	Berkhamsted half	Berkhamsted Cricket Club	£33 from 01/01/23	Completed
4		12/03/2023	XC 4	Therfield Heath, Royston	free	Completed
5	V	18/03/2023	Stevenage parkrun	Fairlands Valley Park	free	Completed
6		07/04/2023	St Albans Easter 10k	St Albans	£25.44	Completed
7	CC	30/04/2023	Hitchin 10k	Hitchin	£18.00	Completed
8		17/05/2023	MWRRL 1: Chingford (Orion Harriers)	Chingford	free	Completed
9		31/05/2023	MWRRL 2: St Albans (St Albans Striders)	St Albans	free	Completed
10		08/06/2023	MWRRL 3: Trent Park	Trent Park	free	Completed
11	V	25/06/2023	Welwyn 10k	Panshanger Park	£20; £18 affiliated	Completed
12		06/07/2023	MWRRL 4: Stevenage (NHRR)	Stevenage	free	Completed
13	V	12/07/2023	MWRRL Mob Match: WGC	Ridgeway Academy, WGC	free	Completed
14	CC	20/07/2023	Fairlands Valley Relays	Fairlands Valley, Stevenage	free	Completed
15	V	06/08/2023	GCR Centenary 20.2k	WGC Centenary Route	free	Completed
16	V/CC	19/08/2023	Panshanger parkrun	Panshanger Park	free	Completed
17	V	30/08/2023	Hatfield 5k Race 1	Hatfield	tbc	Completed
18	CC	01/10/2023	Standalone 10k	Letchworth	£18.00 affiliated	Completed
19		15/10/2023	XC 1	Cheshunt	free	Club will send out details via email
20	CC	22/10/2023	Stevenage Half Marathon	Stevenage	£28.00 affiliated	https://stevenagehalfmarathon.org.uk/
21		29/10/2023	XC 2	Watford	free	Club will send out details via email
22		5/11/2023	XC 3	Trent Park	free	Club will send out details via email
23	CC	26/11/2023	Hatfield 5	Hatfield	£22.26	http://hatfield5mile.co.uk/
24	V	10/12/2023	Festive 5	WGC	£12.00	https://my.raceresult.com/257922/registration
25		17/12/2023	XC 4	Stevenage	free	Club will send out details via email

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. All items are £20 (£19.99 if you pay by bank transfer) except for the jackets which 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/