



## Garden City Runners News Release

**10 September 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](mailto:results@gardencityrunners.org.uk)*

### **Hatfield 5k Series – Race 2 (6<sup>th</sup> September)**

Run report from **Peter Harvey**: The second of three races in the Hatfield 5k Series saw success for Garden City Runners in hot and humid conditions. GCR's **Juliet Vine** very comfortably won the women's race and was crowned Hertfordshire Vets County Champion timing 18 minutes and 9 seconds. Vine led the women's team to silver in the Herts Vets team competition along with **Martha Hall** who made the top 10 and **Zoe Stephens**. Hall also picked up an individual silver medal in the FV45 age category. The women only narrowly missed out on gold won by St Albans Striders.

The men's vets team also attained silver. They were led by first Garden City Runner over the line **Peter Harvey**, who clocked 17 minutes and 48 seconds also good for individual silver in the MV50's. **Bruce Judge** was a few seconds behind and got a bronze in the same category. **Rob Casserley** and **Paul Guy** returning to form completed the team. North Herts Road Runners won gold. New GCR members **Chris Dugate** and **Amber-Leigh Marvin** ran very well to achieve huge personal bests showing great promise. Herts Phoenix's **Richard Bloom** won individual MV70 gold by 2¾ minutes despite being close to 80 years old.

Ex Olympian **Yuko Gordon** from Fairlands Valley Spartans and **Jonathan Haynes** from Bishop's Stortford Running Club won the age graded prizes.

Race three will see trophies for the Series presented along with donations to Kit Aid.

Full results available [here](#).



*(Left: Zoe Stephens, Juliet Vine and Martha Hall)*



*(Left: Paul Guy, Bruce Judge and Peter Harvey)*

## **Duck n Dash Aquathlon Results**

**Steve Williams, Yvonne Jones** and **Catherine Dann** took part in Duck 'N' Dash on 3<sup>rd</sup> September, held at the Letchworth Outdoor Swimming Pool, Letchworth Garden City and part of the East Region Adult Race Series. Results in the table below:

Name	Swim Time (400m)	T1	Run Time (5km)	Category / Overall Place
Catherin Dann	10:14	1:28	31:10	11 / 92
Yvonne Jones	9:35	1:50	29:16	8 / 84
Steve Williams	7:46	1:03	23:56	1 / 28

## **Lake District Lap Ultra**

**Martin Mitchell** travelled to the sunny and hot Lake District to take part in the Lake District Lap Ultra.

**Martin** writes: "I took part in The Lap Ultra in the Lake District - a 47 mile ultra marathon around Lake Windermere. It was very hot and hilly and quite congested at points where the trail narrowed. We started at 6am and it was extremely muggy, luckily there was plenty of feed stations where we could top up on fluids and snacks. We hit Wansfell Pike about 2pm where the sun was out in full force and resulted in a lot of people dropping out. Several hours and peaks later I managed to complete the course in just under 13 hours in place 153. Apart from the heat and hills it was a fantastic event and the scenery was amazing."

## **Thames Path 100km Ultra Challenge: A Test of Endurance and Determination**

**Sanj Kaushal** (*pictured below*) shared his amazing experience of running the Thames Path 100km Ultra challenge on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> September.

**Sanj** writes: "On Saturday, 9th September 2023, I embarked on the gruelling Thames Path 100km Ultra Challenge, a test of endurance like no other. With temperatures soaring to a scorching 32°C, the challenge became even more formidable.

The journey began promptly at 9 am and unfolded as I covered a total of 106km, surpassing the original course due to an unexpected turn of events. At Walton Bridge, in Walton on Thames, I missed a crucial marker and found myself 2km off course before realising my mistake. It was a taxing setback, as I had to dig deep and make up for lost time to rejoin the course.

Despite these challenges, the course itself was nothing short of amazing. The scenic beauty of the Thames Path provided a picturesque backdrop for this arduous journey. What truly made the experience unforgettable was the unwavering support of the spectators and the public along the route. Their cheers and encouragement provided a much-needed boost when the going got tough.

In the midst of this challenging endeavour, there was a moment that truly stood out – the 50km aid station. As I arrived, I was met with the efficiency and care of a Formula One pit stop, all thanks to my incredible wife Anika. She had everything meticulously prepared, from replenishing my supplies to offering words of encouragement. Her unwavering support not only fuelled my physical needs but also provided the emotional boost I needed to push through the remaining kilometres.

After 14 hours and 25 minutes of relentless determination, I'm incredibly proud to share that I achieved the 74th position out of a remarkable 937 participants. It's a testament to the months of training, dedication, and sheer determination that led me to this point. The Thames Path 100km Ultra Challenge was a true test of my physical and mental strength, and I emerged from it with a profound sense of accomplishment.

This journey has reaffirmed my belief in the power of resilience and the camaraderie of the running community. It's not just about the finish line; it's about the experiences, the lessons learned, and the indomitable spirit that keeps us moving forward. I would like to thank the club and everyone who supported me on this incredible adventure. And a special thanks to my wife, whose pit stop-like support at the 50km mark made all the difference in the world.



Sanj Kaushal – BIB 2401: <https://liveltrail.net/live/thamespathchallenge/coureur.php>



## **New Forest Half**

**Samantha Hastie** updated us on another step on her personal challenge to complete 12 half marathons this year.

**Samantha** writes: "Half 9 of 12 today was New Forest Half Marathon. I was very worried in the lead up about the temperature but the running gods were listening and gave us showers throughout the race. It's a pretty big event with great event Village and warm up pre-run. We set off and I have to say this is by far the most beautiful course I have ever ran. You are in the trees straight away and as you wind through the forest you can spot the famous ponies, they even ran across the path right in front of us at about 18km which was a lovely

boost. Compacted trail and bits of tarmac so I wore road shoes and they were fine. So many water/hydration stops and just an all round fabulous race. A 2.36.52 gave me 3.04 off my PB and rounded the day of nicely. I highly recommend this event. Absolutely stunning part of the country and a brilliantly ran race.”



## The Vitruvian Triathlon

Another successful triathlon for our GCR triathlete, **Spencer White**, including a PB!

**Spencer** (*pictured below*) writes: "I raced in The Vitruvian middle distance triathlon today at Rutland Water in Lincolnshire. After a 3.00am wake up time I got to the lake for 5.00am. My wave in the swim went at 6.42am. The event was one of the best triathlon's I have done.

My finish time was 5 hours 22 mins beating my personal best by almost 20 minutes! I swam the 1.2 miles in 37 mins.

The 56 mile bike in 2 hours 50 mins (a new PB) and the 13.1 mile run in 1 hour 48 (again a PB during a triathlon). The swim was great. Beautiful lake and managed well. The ride was very fast. The run was very hot and tough but I kept my fluids, salts and electrolytes up and finished strong. Apart from an elderly lady coming across my way as she stepped out on the road whilst I was doing 55kmph and almost running into a sheep on the run it went very well!"



## **Bacchus Wine Half Marathon**

**Richard Darley** (*pictured, below*) sent us his run report from a half marathon that surely must sell out really quickly!

Located near Dorking, Surrey, Denbies Wine Estate with 265 acres under vine is the largest vineyard estate in the UK and represents more than 10% of the entire country's vine plantings. It even has its own Parkrun (Mole Valley).

Sunday morning saw **Richard Darley** venture there to "experience" the Bacchus Wine Half Marathon. A multi-terrain one-lapper predominantly on trail, half of the course is inside the Wine Estate itself with the other through countryside and woodland along the Pilgrims Way and North Downs Way accompanied by spectacular views of the Mole Valley and North Downs. With 400 metres of ascent, including one significant climb up a partially overgrown barely passable path, the route is definitely challenging. Richard was so excited to get to the top that hill he celebrated by falling flat on his face; tripping over a tree root.

As well as the challenge of the half marathon distance, the major draw of the event is the opportunity to sample a range of wine from the portfolio at each of the seven water stations. Both the half marathon and alternative 10k distances are very much promoted as "fun runs" with absolutely no pressure to finish to a cut off time, and many participants, including Richard making this a day out with no need to push for any sort of finish time. Given temperatures heading toward 30 degrees many had the same idea. Fancy dress is positively encouraged and even Richard managed to pass a few T-Rex's, and hand-full of unicorns and plenty of Ken and Barbies.

All half marathon competitors get a t-shirt and medal as well as a trip around the hog-roast and yet another glass of wine.

**Richard** reports that this is probably the most challenging half marathon he's done but the fun of the day and lack of pressure get to the finish line in the fastest time possible makes it extremely enjoyable and highly recommended.





### **parkrun roundup**

88 GCRs took part in parkruns in Hertfordshire and beyond.

Top 10 finishers elsewhere were as follows:

- **Chris Jones** was 5<sup>th</sup> at Stevenage in 19:10
- **Thomas Buzzard** was 5<sup>th</sup> at Panshanger in 19:25
- **Paul Guy** was 7<sup>th</sup> at Panshanger in 19:37

- **Chris Eland** was 8<sup>th</sup> at Panshanger in 19:59
- **Felicity Wadley** was 4<sup>th</sup> lady at Panshanger in 25:59
- **Rebecca Barden** was 8<sup>th</sup> lady at Panshanger in 27:05
- **Lizzie Belcher** was 2<sup>nd</sup> lady at Presint parkrun in 27:15
- **Kath Evans** was 5<sup>th</sup> lady at Zamek w Malborku in 30:27
- **Elaine Giles** was 9<sup>th</sup> lady at Zamek w Malborku in 33:57
- **Julie Delahaye** was 10<sup>th</sup> lady at St Mary's in 26:59
- **Clare Wildey** was 3<sup>rd</sup> lady at Leavesden Country in 25:47

## **Part 2 of the compass challenge at Eastbourne parkrun**

**Sidney Valentine** (*pictured below, with Sarah Valentine*) sent us his parkrun run report, from yet another exciting parkrun adventure.

**Sidney** writes: "Myself and Sarah travelled down to Eastbourne to pick up our second compass point in the parkrun challenge. The course is 1 big lap and 2 smaller ones around Shinewater Park. A mixture of paved and grass and very flat. The weather was very hot so after the run we travelled to the seafront for some rehydration and a dip on the sea."





### **Banking a Z at Zamek w Malbork in Poland**

**Kath Evans** (pictured below with Jane Molloy, Charlotte Jones, Jacq McCallum, Alex Yates, and Elaine Giles) sent us her parkrun report from a trip to Gdańsk for a Z parkrun, as part of the parkrun alphabet challenge.

**Kath** writes: "This weekend took Jane Molloy, Charlotte Jones, Jacq McCallum, Alex Yates, Elaine Giles and Kath Evans off on tour to the Baltic city of Gdańsk, and whilst visiting the Neptune's Fountain and finding out that Gdańsk is a center for the world's amber trade (everywhere we turned there were stalls selling the beautiful ossified resin) the main reason we visited was to bank an elusive parkrun z for our Alphabet challenge.

A picture on Facebook of Malbork Castle highlighted it offered a Z parkrun. The castle is a UNESCO World Heritage site, over centuries it's helped shape European culture and has been extensively restored.

Nestled below the castle is a flat and well-developed pedestrian and cycle path offering the flat 5k up and back along the river Nogat, including a shady woodland loop.

The Zamek parkrun team were delighted to see us in our GCR shirts, we arrived by the skin of our teeth with a minute to spare! There was lots of photos and encouragement to come back next week! A welcome book was also signed by us all and badges and biscuits kindly gifted to us.

Afterwards there was potter round Malbork town and the castle grounds, with celebratory coffee and cake for our outstanding placements in the parkrun results (it was a very small field!) we certainly had an adventure!

With cocktails, Polish food, including delicious dumplings, dips in the sea and river boat cruises we had a fabulous Polish tour with a little 5k included, and elusive Z was officially banked for us all!”



Other parkrun locations attended by touring GCRs were: Gorleston Cliffs, Eastbourne, Luton Wardown, Hackney Marshes, Hampstead Heath, Rickmansworth, Oak Hill, Westmill, Barnstable, Gunpowder, Ally Pally, Gladstone, Weymouth, Aldenham, Lydney, March, Castle Park, Monsal Trail, Brookland, Jersey Farm, Seaford Beach, Millfield, Jesmond Dene, Irchester Country, Itchen Valley Country, Henlow Bridge Lakes and University of Northampton

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

### **An update from Sean Bowen**

Hi, GCRs!

Just to let you know, I returned to WGC yesterday, nearly five weeks after my fall, and following a very comfortable stay at my sister's in Southampton.

I'm feeling fine, my rib discomfort is nearly gone, but there are still a few little niggles lingering on. I'm back to work tomorrow, initially part time. I'll be making a slow and cautious return to exercise.

Thanks to all of you for your kind messages of well-wishing. Looking forward to seeing you all again soon.

Cheers,

Sean

## **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.

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.

## **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>

### **Hatfield 5K race series**

The dates of the Hatfield 5k race series have now been confirmed. The fast and flat road route is an excellent opportunity to develop your speed in a competitive field. Date of the third race as follows:

Race 3: Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2023

Sign up details in the Avery table below.

### **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	<a href="http://www.nhrr.org.uk/standalone-10k.html">http://www.nhrr.org.uk/standalone-10k.html</a>
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	<a href="https://stevenagehalfmarathon.org.uk/">https://stevenagehalfmarathon.org.uk/</a>
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	<a href="http://hatfield5mile.co.uk/">http://hatfield5mile.co.uk/</a>
24	V	10/12/2023	Festive 5	WGC	£12.00	<a href="https://my.raceresult.com/257922/registration">https://my.raceresult.com/257922/registration</a>
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](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/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/gardencityrunners/)