



Garden City Runners News Release

15 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

Sunday League XC, Cheshunt



GCRs travelled south to Cheshunt on a beautiful (if chilly) morning for the first fixture of the Sunday XC league, hosted by Broxbourne Runners with help from GCR. The race follows a three-lap course over fields and trails of just under 5 miles. Full results will be featured in next week's newsletter, but there were some strong GCR performances and fantastic support provided by GCR marshals and results recorders.

The **dates and venues** of the remaining league fixtures, running from October to February are as follows (the majority of which happen in the next 7 weeks!):

Watford - 29 October 2023

Trent Park - 5 November 2023

Stevenage - 17 December 2023

Royston - 18 February 2024

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



Peterborough Half

Five GCRs set out up the A1 on a sunny but surprisingly cold morning to tackle the Great Eastern Run (aka the Peterborough Half). The route has changed from previous years and starts and finishes by taking a winding route through the city and past the cathedral. The race was very well organised with lots of loos, lots of marshals and lots of spectators and well-wishers along the course. The route is also very flat, which four of the five appreciated greatly, as training had been patchy at best. Our intrepid quintet's times were:

Katy Healy 1:54; **Jo Grant** and **Sam Males** 2:03; **Louise Beale** and **Anne Henson** (running her last race in her 60s) 2:09.

Pictured left: Jo Grant, Louise Beale, Sam Males, Katy Healy and Anne Henson.

Amsterdam Half Marathon and Marathon

Richard Darley (*beaming, below*) sent us this report: "With 45,000 participants across three



distances the Amsterdam "Marathon" is the largest road running event in The Netherlands. I chose to run the half marathon distance which had a very civilised one o'clock in the afternoon start allowing for a leisurely hotel breakfast before setting off to the start. The weather was relatively kind; the promised gale force winds didn't make an appearance although a few sharp showers throughout did keep the temperature down. The Half is a single circumnavigation of the city taking in many of the sights and being The Netherlands it's as flat as a Dutch pancake. Having positioned myself behind the two hour pacers I immediately lost them in the start funnel which

squeezed the runners to virtual standstill until the start line. It took 6km to catch them up so I knew I was up for a sub-2hrs if I kept with them which I did! The race finished in the stadium built for the 1928 Olympic Games. I was well pleased with a (Garmin) time just shy of 1:57."

Helen Stafford took on the marathon distance and ran a fabulous pb of 3:43:26.

Cabbage Patch 10

Valerie Levison (*celebrating, right, with her medal*) took on the Cabbage Patch 10 mile race in Twickenham. Valerie writes: "It was a surprise to me when I received an email a week Thursdays reminding me of the race today. I had a very busy and stressful summer which resulted in my not running or coming to club sessions. But I am proud to say that the mind is powerful. I got a PB and shaved 10 minutes off my last 10 mile race time. It is a very flat course. So that helped."



Gatliff 50k

GCR marathon ace **Nick Genever** sent us this report: "The Gatliff 50k is a self-navigation ultra in Kent and Surrey, known for being overlong at around 55k and difficult to navigate. It was a figure of 8 course and my Garmin decided to stop navigating because it thought I had

finished at 15 miles when I reached the checkpoint/start/finish. I was reliant on the written instructions and it required a lot of concentration to run and navigate with instructions like:-

'Pass pond on LHS & continue to KGA. Onto another KGA, X FD straight ahead. Go thru KGA with 'Bull in field' warning sign. Shortly X another KGA into FD, BL to XKGA. Continue X FD to KGA. XTK .XKGA. X FD towards houses, (210° bearing) XKGA. TR onto RD.'

It was sunny, not too warm, and the rain stayed away. I finished in 6:51 and the total ascent was 870m."

Run to the Sea Bournemouth

Peter Jasko reports from this southern ultra: "On a crisp autumn morning, as the mist rose from the ground between the forest trees, four intrepid GCRs (**Andrew Ackrill, Steve Ellerd-Elliott, Peter Jasko, Stu Whitford**) set off on the 50k Run to the Sea Bournemouth. Running from Moors Valley Country Park, just 18km north of Bournemouth, this event heads west on beautiful forest trails, before turning south through Poole and finishing with an 11km stretch east along the seafront.

Lovely views of the sea and beach, together with the waves rhythmically crashing in, put us in the zone. As we weaved through the crowds along the seafront, the tourists and locals were vocal supporters. Not quite London marathon but not far off. A great atmosphere.

Flat as a pancake with a couple of small flour lumps, this is billed as a PB course. In fact three of the four GCRs achieved PBs, though one was a first timer and for two it was only their second 50k. The flatness encouraged speed and everyone suffered from cramp, despite salt tablets. The tomato soup and roll post finish were enjoyed in old-mannish poses.

Below: the GCR quartet in action



Finishing times (out of 445 finishers) were:

Peter Jasko 61st 4:59:14

Steve Ellerd-Elliott 70th 5:02:32

Andrew Ackrill 116th 5:19:11

Stu Whitford 120th 5:21:26

Pictured below, at the start and at the finish

(l-r Stu Whitford, Peter Jasko, Andrew Ackrill, Steve Ellerd-Elliott; Stu, Peter, Steve, Andrew)



Great South Run



Dave Goosetree sent this report: "I returned today to take part in the Great South 10 Mile race in Portsmouth. This was a run that I first did 10 years ago when I had just started running for fitness and at the time it was one of the longest runs I'd ever attempted.

As shown in the photo (*left*) I finished today in 1:32:54 and 10 years ago my time was 2:17:13."

Intercounties 10K Champs, Cambridge

Daniel Pudner and **Martha Hall** ran in the Cambridge Town & Gown 10k today representing Herts in the Intercounties 10k Champs. Dan finished in 33:33 and Martha in 39:11, but both male and female Herts teams were pipped by Essex, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire teams.

Palma Half

Ali Eroglu and **Colin Grace** took part in the Palma Half Marathon, Mallorca.

Colin sent us this report: "Ali and I participated in the Palma Half Marathon, an event that marked both of our returns to racing. When unforeseen injuries impacted both my training plan and that of my friend Ali, we made the decision to switch from the full marathon to the half marathon.

Despite the challenges leading up to the event, the Palma Half Marathon turned out to be a wonderful experience in this charming city. The event had been on our calendars for months, and we had been looking forward to time in the sun. However, our journey to Palma was met with torrential rain from Valdemossa, which led to a one-hour delay to the race start time to allow for safer road conditions.

Fortunately, the weather improved, and we were able to run the half marathon in dry and favourable conditions. The route showcased the beauty of the city, making the run even more enjoyable. Upon crossing the finish line, the skies opened once again, drenching the runners still out on the course, including those in the half and full marathons. Despite the



unexpected turn of weather, I was content with my finishing time, taking into account all the challenges we had faced in the lead-up to the race.

Overall, the Palma Half Marathon was a well-organized event set in a lovely city, showcasing the resilience and determination of runners even in adverse weather conditions. Despite the initial hiccup with the start time, the organizers handled the situation well, ensuring the safety of all participants and providing an opportunity for an enjoyable race experience.”

Left: Colin and Ali celebrate with their finishers’ medals

parkrun roundup

It was a busy parkrunning weekend, with 95 GCRs taking part in parkruns across Herts and beyond.

Willow Gibson sent this report and farewell message about a visit to Richmond Park parkrun, **Samantha Hastie**’s last parkrun before moving to Scotland. It was Richmond’s 777th event and also their 16th anniversary.

“I haven’t been to Richmond Park before and was pleasantly surprised how beautiful it is. The park has free parking, two cafes and nice toilets. It is a beautiful one lap course with views of London and local deer along the way as well. There were around 700 people at this event, so it was a busy one!



Well done to everyone who got out this weekend and wishing Samatha all the best in Scotland and for your monthly Half Marathon challenge. It's been a lovely couple of years having you in GCR.

You will be missed down here in Hertfordshire and in the club. Stay in touch."

Left: Samantha and Willow lit up by the sun at Richmond parkrun

Meanwhile, at Westmill, **Matt Baker** was 7th in 21:30 and **Andrew Holt** 13th in 23:50. At Stevenage, **Paul Guy** was 4th overall in 18:54 and **Zoe Stephens** 1st woman in 20:59. At Aberystwyth, **Bruce Judge** was first into the finish funnel in 18:21. Panshanger

celebrated its 9th birthday and GCRs turned out in force to help celebrate. Among the GCR finishers were **Adam Wadley**, 4th overall in 19:27; **Jamie Rose** 13th in 21:17; **Felicity Wadley** 4th woman in 25:18; **Lucy Iles** 5th female in 25:42, and **Barbara Kubis-Labiak** 7th woman in 26:05.



Above: some of the GCRs who took part in Saturday's Panshanger parkrun.

At Wöhrder See parkrun in Nuremberg, **Sharon Threlfall** was 8th woman in 28:11. At Henlow Bridges Lakes parkrun, **Lauren Potter** was 1st lady in 23:37 and mum **Lynette Stewart** was 24th woman in 37:34.

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

GCR Christmas Bash at Best Western Homestead Court

Sophie Packman has sent details of this year's GCR Christmas knees up, an 80's Extravaganza, at Homestead Court on 15th December:

Friday 15th December

80s Night Fancy Dress £42.50pp

(3-course dinner and disco) [Christmas 2023 \(bw-homesteadcourt.co.uk\)](http://Christmas2023(bw-homesteadcourt.co.uk))

"Last year, a group of GCRs got together for a fab Christmas meal/party at Homestead Court. It was such fun, it'd be good to do it all again. Join me for an 80s themed party where everyone is encouraged to dress up (If you don't feel comfortable with fancy dress then come in all your glitz and glam!). I'm holding 60 places for GCRs +1 (as long as accompanied by a GCR). If you don't know anyone or are concerned about coming solo then please message me 07736 362311

Here are some examples of fancy dress outfits; Queen, Ghost Busters, WWF, Batman, Mr T, Madonna, Karate Kid, Prince, Rubik's Cube, MC Hammer, Anything Neon, leg warmers, fishnets, hair sprayed hair! etc.

As I'm holding 60 places, 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

HOMESTEAD COURT HOTEL

Homestead Lane,

WGC

AL7 4LX

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>

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	Completed
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/