



Garden City Runners News Release

22 October 2023

GCR men pick up Senior County Gold at Stevenage Half Marathon

And Ladies take Silver as GCR teams occupy four of the six podium places

Garden City Runners acquitted themselves superbly at last weekend's Stevenage Half Marathon. The event also doubled as this year's Herts County Championships Seniors Half Marathon race—and thanks to some outstanding individual performances the club picked up a number of team medals.

Weather was near perfect for the 21 GCRs (out of a field of 300) to negotiate the new course, along cycleways, with plenty of hills and turns—as well as underpasses, report **Peter Harvey** and **Rebecca Barden**. The course was a two-lap with a circuit of Fairlands Valley Park, while the event itself was ably organised by Races Online with fantastic local support from Fairlands Valley Spartans.



Chris Baylis was the first GCR runner home in a time of 1:21:42—which was good for 6th position, earning him an individual Senior Herts County bronze. He was pushed all the way in an epic battle with Harvey himself, who was just behind in 7th, giving him a brilliant 1st MV50 age grade victory (and 4th in the Herts Championships). **Paul Guy** continues to return to good form and was 9th in 1:23:48 plus 1st MV40 outside of the top 3. **Jamie Rose** ran a

PB in 1:25:44 for 12th, thereby completing the team which took Herts Senior County Gold

(pictured above), beating host club Fairlands Valley Spartans who picked up silver. Amazingly, GCR's B team, consisting of **Martin Mitchell, Russell Casey, Spencer White** and the amazing **Roger Adey** (aged 68) picked up the Bronze.



Of his achievement, Roger (*pictured left*) commented afterwards, "Having reached the finish of the Stevenage Half Marathon, I was confronted with the fact that we had won Bronze today with the rest of the team. But these MV40s were so fast they had all disappeared by the time I finished my second ever half marathon (in 1:50:39)—in a very different age category."

Special mention should also go to **Richard Darley**, clocking another comfortable sub 2-hour Half (1:59:01) only a week after smashing it out of the dijk in Amsterdam.

However, the ladies were not to be outdone. **Rebecca Barden** was 5th in the Herts Senior County Championships and 2nd FV55 (in 1:47:26) as the Women's Team of Barden, **Lucy Iles** and **Sophie Packman** (*pictured right*) picked up Silver. Lucy herself finished in 1:51:01 and Sophie was just seconds later in 1:51:19.

Lucy was especially delighted, saying, "I was shocked at my result. I'd left my Garmin watch at home by mistake so I had no idea of time or pace all the way round. When I finished in 1:51 I was stunned and winning silver was the cherry on the cake. It was a glorious day but I'll be glad not to see another Stevenage underpass for a while." Proving the oft repeated adages: 1. That to guarantee a faster time, always leave your Garmin at home. 2. If you want respite from the constant glare of low Autumn sunshine, pick a route with lots of underpasses.



The women's B team comprising **Holly Wise, Clare Grover** and **Maggie Wright** also won a highly commendable Team Bronze award.

Full GCR results are Chris Baylis (1:21:42) Peter Harvey(1:21:59); Paul Guy (1:23:48); Jamie Rose (1:25:44); Marvin Mitchell (1:30:25); Russell Casey (1:35:06); Spencer White (1:36:30); Rebecca Barden (1:47:36); Steve Mowles (1:50:21); Roger Adey (1:50:39); Lucy Iles (1:51:01); Sophie Packman (1:51:19); Colin Grace (1:53:23); Holly Wise (1:58:37); Richard Darley (1:59:01); Clare Grover (2:01:44); Maggie Wright (2:02:48); Melanie King (2:14:28); Chrissy Johnson (2:23:32); Kath Evans (2:29:27).

Beachy Head Marathon

Four GCRs headed off to Eastbourne to complete the Beachy Head Marathon and Ultra. **Dom Thomas** (86th/1168 in 4:15:12), **Peter Jasko** (117th in 4:26:14—a 24 minutes PB on this race) and **Nicolas Genever** (177th in 4:37:56) took part in the marathon, whilst **Mark Westley** (30th/214 in 5:29:29) (*pictured left*) extended it with the 10k course to hit the Ultra distance. As for Nick, it was his 12th Beachy Head Marathon.

Reports Peter Jasko, "Conditions were wet and windy. The average 25mph wind was strong enough to change foot placement mid-air, which, given this is a trail race, was not ideal. Fortunately there was only a short tough uphill section into the wind—we just had to grind it out. And the wind positively pushed us up hills on the way in.

"About halfway round the rain stopped and we could enjoy the beautiful views, including impressive waves crashing onto distant beaches."

Despite the significant elevation (1000m+), this remains one of Peter Jasko's favourite marathons.

parkrun roundup



Firstly news of a bit of royal parkrun tourism. A team of four ladies descended on the wet but stunning grounds of Sandringham. Due to the weather only 108 runners turned up but **Sarah Durston, Chrissy Johnson, Gail Munro** and **Wendy Leversuch** (*pictured*) confirm receiving a warm welcome. Reports Gail, "The run was flat, mostly in the woods which made perfect running condition. Thank you to the girls for a beautiful morning and followed by a lovely walk

and brunch." Sarah finished in 26.40 (3rd in age group); Chrissy Johnson 33.02 (1st in age group); Gail Munro 33.04 (1st in age group); Wendy Leversuch 35.59 (4th in age group)

A milestone of 200 parkruns was also reached by GCR's popular kit secretary, **Richard 'Badger' Somerset**. He achieved this momentous feat at Panshanger and is pictured (below left) with club members in the park's mud.



Elsewhere, outstanding performances this week came from **Martha Hall**, first lady home at Panshanger in 22:27. GCR had four finishers in the top ten, **Adam Wadley** (19:44); **Rob Casserley** (19:50); **Chris Eland** (19:59) and **Chris Dungate** (20:20). Another brilliant performer was **Daniel Pudner** who finished first at Stevenage in a brilliant 17:43 while **Daniel Mills** finished 9th at in 22:02 in Millennium Country parkrun,

Forest of Marston Vale. For full results click [here](#).

Cheshunt XC Results

Belated results from last week's traditional opening Sunday League Cross Country (SLXC) series race in Cheshunt (which arrived too late for inclusion last week).

First GCR home was **James Huish** who finished in 10th place in 28:34, followed by **Peter Harvey** (17th) in 29:12. Behind them were **Bruce Judge** (30:02); **Jamie Rose** (30:03); **Herbie Hopkins** (30:08); **Chris Eland** (30:09); **Joe Ansbro** (31:01); **Chris Dungate** (32:01); **Nick Summers** (32:41); **Dom Thomas** (32:55); **Russell Casey** (33:52); **Martyn Perrin** (36:53); **Rebecca Barden** (37:29); **Nick Portalski** (37:37); **Anna Lillie** (37:43); **Lee Mansfield** (37:43); **Barbara Kubis-Labiak** (37:53); **Dave Edwards** (38:32); **Lucy Iles** (38:49); **Steve Mowles** (39:00); **Keith McLellan** (39:09); **Paul Gatens** (39:21); **Roger Adey** (39:23); **Sarah Durston** (39:26); **Jim Forrester** (40:07); **Sophie Packman** (40:35); **Holly Wise** (41:03); **Kathryn McGuinness** (41:30); **Clare Grover** (43:36); **Lee Wood** (43:46); **Chris McGurk** (44:55); **Maggie Wright** (45:26); **Jen Williams** (45:32); **Dai Selwood** (46:13); **Carol Reid** (46:40); **Thippawan Rashleigh** (46:52); **Chrissy**

Johnson (47:38); **Rob Cartwright** (47:44); **Delphine Gibbs** (48:12); **Alison Meaden** (49:37); **Melanie King** (49:40); **Ben Donnelly** (49:44); **Gail Munro** (51:21); **Alex Yates** (52:53); **Kath Evans** (53:00); **Holly Casey** (56:56); **Michael Bowe** (57:40); **Willow Gibson** (1:00:39); **Tendy St. Francis** (1:05:38) and **Charlotte Jones** (1:05:38). In the team event Garden City Runners finished 3rd behind winners Trent Park RC and Royston Runners.

Sunday League XC

The dates and venues of the remaining league fixtures are as follows:

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

GCR Christmas Bash at Best Western Homestead Court

A further reminder from Sophie Packman 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
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1	CC	22/01/2023	Fred Hughes 10	St Albans	£21.20 affiliated	Completed
2		19/02/2023	XC 3	Cassiobury Park,	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	Completed
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
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/

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