



## Garden City Runners News Release

**24 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)

### Lee Valley 10K and Half Marathon

A contingent of GCRs travelled south to take on the Lee Valley 10K and Half Marathon around Lee Valley Country Park, billed as a fast and flat course.



In the 10K race, **Nigel Cavill** was first home for GCR, 11<sup>th</sup> overall and 1<sup>st</sup> MV50 in 42:56. For GCR women, **Hannah Frank**, in her first race as a mum-of-two, ran a fantastic time of 48:30 and was 5<sup>th</sup> lady and 2<sup>nd</sup> WV30.

*Left: Hannah Frank in action*

**Clare Wildey Grover** was chuffed with a PB, coming in at 49:30, and **Robert Cartwright** achieved a PB by a huge 9 minutes to finish in 51:02.

In the half distance, **Martin Mitchell** was first GCR and 13<sup>th</sup> overall in 1:27:01. For the ladies, **Sam Males** ran a speedy 1:47:30 to finish 3<sup>rd</sup> in her age group V40.

Results for GCRs taking part in the 10K distance can be viewed [here](#).

*Right: Clare takes on Lee Valley*

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Results for GCRs taking part in the 10K distance can be viewed [here](#).

Results for GCRs taking part in the half marathon distance can be viewed [here](#).

### **Ashridge Boundary Run**

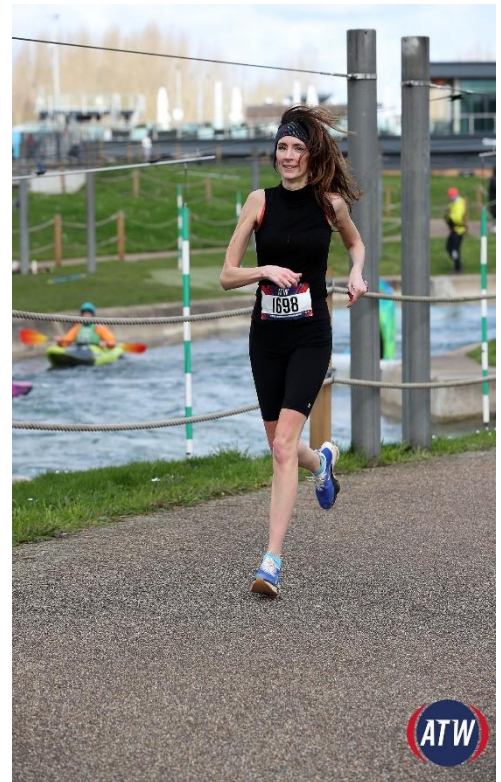
The day before, a hardy group of GCRs tackled the Ashridge Boundary Run. **Peter Jasko** sent this report: "With some trepidation due to the cold weather and a forecast of plenty of rain, a gaggle (or two) of GCRs set off to circumnavigate the Ashridge Estate, in an annual 17.8 mile ritual. Some of us nursed an overindulgence or two from the night before.

Cold it was, but tempered with glorious sunshine. We set off up and down the Ashridge hills, this year in an anti-clockwise direction.

The rain held off until about halfway round and even then barely managed to dampen our spirits. The hail, appearing for some at the top of Ivinghoe Beacon, was altogether less pleasant, requiring the donning of additional attire.

The views were spectacular, though often missed by runners as they fell into their Zen-like focused tunnel vision state.

First home for GCR was **Steve Ellerd-Elliott** in 2:33:34, a nearly 20 minute PB. Similarly, **Nikki Cowen** also had a nearly 20 minute PB in 3:12:39, despite a smashing tumble at 10 miles, bashing her shoulder and simulating stigmata on her right hand. Our MV60s did well, claiming 3 top 10 places.





*Above: GCRs at the Ashridge start*

Steve Ellerd-Elliott 2:33:34 (10th MV50)

Peter Jasko 2:52:49

Stuart Whitford 2:53:02

Lee Mansfield 2:56:39

Paul Gatens 3:00:17 (4th MV60)

Colin Grace 3:06:51 (6th MV60)

Roger Adey 3:08:50 (9th MV60)

Andrew Pocock 3:10:29

Nikki Cowen 3:12:39

Katharine Farrell 3:29:24

Aiden Dwyer 3:32:45 [maybe a GCR; was wearing a GCR top, but entered as a Wheathampsted Warrior; or I could have the wrong person]

Rob Jones 3:41:54

Results can be found at:

<http://ashridgeboundaryrun.co.uk/results-23rd-march-2024/>

## **Rome Marathon**

GCR's **Fredi Giliberti** took part in the 29<sup>th</sup> edition of the Rome Marathon, and sent this report:

"I was really looking forward to my first ever marathon as it has taken me a few years to get to the fitness required to attempt the distance. The last few months have been very intense, and I must admit the best part has been the taper week leading to the race!



*Left: Fredi celebrates with his medal*

The day started on the chilly side, but as the sun rose the day warmed up as expected. I found the 4hr20 pacers and kept them well within sight. As the race progressed I was surprised to overtake other pacing groups, a sign that we were possibly taking a more leisurely approach to the target time. I was aware of the "wall" and as I approached the dreaded 35k mark, I felt a hole in the stomach, which I promptly filled with half a banana from one of the stations. This was surely a glitch in my fuelling strategy which resulted in an annoying stitch in the following 2k just as we re-entered the city centre. At this point 4hr20 pacers kicked off to make up the time (now running at around 5:50/km) and I tried to keep up as best as I could. As I past a woman in the crowd holding the sign "only one parkrun left!" I started to wonder how long I still had to go. I kept checking my Garmin – it suggested I only had a couple of km's left – against the road markers. This made me a little confused, and as I was getting a little tired I even forgot if the marathon was 41.195k or 42.195k. I held it together and in the end the finishing line could not have come any sooner, as I crossed the line in 4hr and 21 minutes. I am very pleased to have completed my first marathon and still be well enough to tell the story... and who knows, perhaps this marks the start of a new journey? As a PS, I'd like to give a big thank you to Sue Fletcher who processed my EA membership in time for me to taken part in the race - grazie Sue!

## Twin Lakes 20

While many GCRs were taking on Lee Valley this morning, **Vicky Roberts, Caroline O'Dwyer** and **Sidney Valentine** (*pictured right*) travelled to Milton Keynes to take on the Twin Lakes 20 miler. Sid sent this report: "The course runs a lovely route taking in the two biggest lakes in Milton Keynes twice.

Vicky crossed the line first with a 20 mile pb of 3:18, Caroline also came in on her target pace putting them both in good stead for the London marathon. While my pace was off what I had aimed for, I did manage to keep my heart rate in zone 2 throughout the race so I am happy with that, and feeling ready of my first 50k ultra in June."



## Wolverhampton 10K



On a chilly Sunday morning, **Richard Darley** joined 1,700 other runners in the Wolverhampton 10k race. Starting and finishing inside the iconic Molineux Stadium, the route took in all the best car tyre and exhaust repair shops in town before a saunter down the dual carriageway and a final circle of the Victorian West Park. Perhaps not the

most scenic of races it was at least flat and made for speedy (for Richard) time of 54:01.

## Oakley 20

**Wayne Aylott** and **Stuart Mann** tackled this popular Spring marathon warm up, with Stuart finishing in 3:07:00 and Wayne in 4:13:00. *Right: Wayne and Stuart show off the famous Oakley 20 finisher's hoodie*



## Valetta 10K



**Valerie Levison** sent this report from the Valetta 10K: "I completed the 10k race in the Valetta marathon in Malta today. I don't know my time but all I can say is I was pleasantly surprised by how

hilly this race was. I do feel very proud to have completed it. The atmosphere was so good.”

*Above: Valerie in Valetta*

## **Orion 15**



**Dom Thomas** (*pictured left, on the course*) sent this report: “After the disappointment of Royston & The National XC being cancelled, I was recommended the Orion 15 to get my XC fix - and it delivered. A sign after the start promising a ‘free mud bath’ was a sign of things to come . My Mudclaws came off twice in the first mile getting stuck in the mud - hopefully now Jamie (Rose) has let me in on the ‘racer’s loop’ it will be the last time . Plenty of hills, a couple of trees to climb over on the route and around the 12 mile mark 200 meters of knee deep water to wade through.

A really well-run event by Orion Harriers - well marshalled with a couple of water stations along the way . There was even prosecco at the end if you fancied it, and great value at only £15.

Roll on next year....”

## **parkrun roundup**

GCRs clocked a trio of firsts at parkrun this weekend. **Chris Baylis** was first into the finish funnel at our local parkrun, Panshanger, in 17:58, where **Matt Baker** was 7<sup>th</sup> in 19:49 and **Jamie Rose** 9<sup>th</sup> in 19:54. **Katherine Lees** was 3<sup>rd</sup> lady in 22:45, and **Felicity Wadley** 5<sup>th</sup> in 24:03. **Paul Guy** was first at Leavesden Country Park in 18:59 where **Richard Somerset** was 8<sup>th</sup> in 21:41. At Woolacombe Dunes parkrun, **James Huish** was first in 20:26. At Rickmansworth, **Eleanor Sage** was 4<sup>th</sup> female in 20:58 and **Lucy Iles** was 5<sup>th</sup> lady at Gadebridge in 26:12. **Neil Hume** was 5<sup>th</sup> overall at Chichester in 19:30. At Aldenham, **Robin Newby** was 7<sup>th</sup> overall in 22:38, and **Adam Wadley** was 3<sup>rd</sup> overall at Babbs Mill in 18:59.

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

## **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)

### **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**

## **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:

Race #	Event	Date
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!

Avery Event #	Date	Event	Venue	Cost <i>Registration fees may apply</i>	Status / Notes
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	*postponed*	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. Half: £34.00 aff.	<u>Completed</u>
6	14 <sup>th</sup> April	Flitwick 10k	Flitwick	£18.00 aff.	<u>Register here</u>
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	Ridgeway 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 (tbc)	SXCL #2 (poss. Jersey Farm parkrun as back-up)	tbc	Free	Club will send out details via email
21	Start November (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 (V)	Early December (tbc)	Festive 5	WGC	tbc	Club will send out details via email
24	Mid December (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/)