



## Garden City Runners News Release

**24 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)*

### **Berlin Marathon**

No better welcome back to the editor's rota for me than being able to report on **Chris Jones'** outstanding achievement in the BMW Berlin Marathon (in which Ethiopian **Tigist Assefa** broke the women's marathon world record). Chris's time of 2:45:49 was almost a 2 min PB. "This included a big negative split — so I'm really happy," confirms Chris, pictured celebrating after the event. Well done to him.

### **London Vitality 10K**

Team GCR (*pictured below*) were flying the flag at The London Vitality 10k where around 15,000 runners participated, reports **Sid Valentine**. The course started on The Mall, heading out to Trafalgar Square to the City of London, through Cheapside before finishing back in front of Buckingham Palace. The course passed many of London's most famous landmarks. "The course was very flat and the support was great," reports Sid.



*Jo Grant and Louise Beale (left) loved the route following what they describe as "the race number shenanigans beforehand"*

### **Round Norfolk Relay**

Some 59 teams, including GCR, participated in the Round Norfolk Relay. Teams consisted of 17 runners, each running a stage across the 198-mile distance of the County boundary (starting and finishing in Kings Lynn). **Richard Somerset** reports that this unique route included some challenging terrain, including sand, shingle and A roads.

"GCR finished 21st out of 57 teams in 25:02:34, only 34 seconds slower than target. Excellent running by everyone."

He adds, "This was my third time as team manager and everything went well. This event does not happen without enormous support from club members, so thanks to my right hand

man and driver **Johan Preis, John** and **Maureen Dickerson** who timed the first half of the event and **Sean Bowen** who timed the second half. **Tim Cooke** and **Chris McGurk** provided cycle support for stages 1 to 6 and stages 15 to 17 and **Barbara Kubis-Labiak** cycled stages 7 to 9. Car support was provided by **Willow Gibson** (stage 8 and 10), John and Maureen (stage 9), Tim and Chris (stages 11,12) and **Peter Laphorne** and **Debbie Pierson** (stages 13,14,15).

“Special mention goes to Tim who coped admirably when Stage 14 was cancelled due to a ram raid in Feltwell! Also, Chris who did a massive cycle stint on both Saturday and Sunday; Willow who stepped in to do some last minute car support on stage 8; Barbara who navigated **Juliet [Vine]** through the horrendous traffic in Great Yarmouth; **Daniel [Pudner]**, who finished a commendable third on stage 10; **Thippi [Rashleigh]**, running for the first time and in the dark, and only one minute outside predicted target time.”

Assessing the run, Thippi said, “I have to say I never thought I would be able to run for the time Richard gave me, I was convinced I would do my normal 2.30 hours for 13 mile. But at the changeover, Sean said, ‘You are the first female from GCR to run stage 13’. I got fired up and just went for it. I was surprised to know that I was only a minute out of my estimated time ... so I got a half marathon PB! Richard is great at estimating.”

And **Sean Bowen** added, “Captain Somerset’ did a fantastic job as team manager, and with Johan as wingman and [Barbara] in the back they make the perfect threesome.”

The stage distances were uneven but the GCR’s ran stages 1-17 in the following sequence. RESULTS ALSO APPEAR IN TABLATURE FORM AT THE END OF THIS REPORT. Special congratulations go to **Juliet Vine** and Dan **Pudner** and for their 3<sup>rd</sup> gender places in Stages 9 and 10 respectively: **Johan Preis** (16.32 miles) in 02.26.57; **Katharine Farrell** (13.75m) in 02.04.49; **Alex Faulkner** (5.76m) in 00.51.52; **Barbara Kubis-Labiak** (11.14m) in 01.41.37; **Paul Guy** (10.81m) in 01.20.18; **Michael Germany** (7.90m) in 01.06.27; **Sophie Packman** (9.24m) in 01.18.33; **Richard Sidlin** (7.52m) in 01.01.07; **Juliet Vine** (16.60m) in 01.46.40; **Daniel Pudner** (18.13m) in 01.53.34; **Russell Casey** (12.45m) in 01.31. 59; **Rob Casserley** (19.67m) in 02.12.49; **Thippawan Rashleigh** (13.25m) in 02.13.45; Stage 14, **Tim Cooke’s** leg, was cancelled as stated above; **Jamie Rose** (10.59m) in 01.10.51; **Jo Grant** (5.49m) in 00.47.32, and **Mike Grant** (11.73m) in 01.33.44. This provided the aggregated time of 25:02:34. *Here is a selection of photos.*



			miles	time	position
Johan Preis	1	K.Lynn - Hunstanton	16.32	02:26:57	52
Katharine Farrell	2	Hunstanton - Burnham Ov.	13.75	02:04:49	43
Alex Faulkner	3	Burnham Ov. - Wells	5.76	00:51:52	23
Barbara Kubis-Labiak	4	Wells - Cley	11.14	01:41:37	36
Paul Guy	5	Cley - Cromer	10.81	01:20:18	9
Michael Germany	6	Cromer - Mundesley	7.90	01:06:27	32
Sophie Packman	7	Mundesley - Lessingham	9.24	01:18:33	45
Richard Sidlin	8	Lessingham - Horsey	7.52	01:01:07	38
Juilet Vine	9	Horsey - Belton	16.60	01:46:40	12
Daniel Pudner	10	Belton - Earsham	18.13	01:53:34	3
Russell Casey	11	Earsham - Scole	12.45	01:31:59	18
Rob Casserley	12	Scole - Thetford	19.67	02:12:49	15
Thippawan Rashleigh	13	Thetford - Feltwell	13.25	02:13:45	55
Tim Cooke	14	Feltwell - Wisington	7.27	cancelled	
Jamie Rose	15	Wisington - D.Mkt	10.59	01:10:51	13
Jo Grant	16	D.Mkt - Stowbridge	5.49	00:47:32	42
Mike Grant	17	Stowbridge - K.Lynn	11.73	01:33:44	32
				25:02:34	

### parkrun roundup

While clearly 'parkrun tourism' is still trending, there were some excellent results from those preferring to stay closer to home. Pick of the crop this week were at Panshanger, where **Chris Eland** finished 7<sup>th</sup> in 19:23 and **Adam Wadley** 9<sup>th</sup> in 19:34. Down in Southampton, GCR men's captain **James Huish** put in an excellent run to finish 6<sup>th</sup> in 17:20 while **Bruce Judge** finished 4<sup>th</sup> at Castle Park (in 19:13) and Paul Guy 5<sup>th</sup> in 19:37 at the local Jersey Farm. Also, congratulations to **Thippi Rashleigh**, who ran a PB of 27:50 at Felixstowe. She reports, "I'm very happy, as it was a last-minute surprise trip for my birthday, and didn't

realised I would be staying next to the parkrun!."Back in Hertfordshire, nother new Hertfordshire parkrun course attracting attention is at Leavesden, where **Peter Laphorne** ran. Despite misgivings about a three-lap course ahead of the event, he reports, "It was a surprisingly nice mixed course — and when you are as slow as me at the moment you get to take in the surroundings, including some fabulous wood carvings. The car park, lovely cafe, toilets and start / finish line are within yards of each other and only 30 mins drive [from WGC]. As it's relatively new the average attendance is only around 60 so it could do with a bit more support." See this week's full parkrun results [here](#).

### **Lake Vyrnwy Half Marathon**

The Lake Vyrnwy Half Marathon is an annual half marathon Welsh road event, which as the name suggests, takes place around the Lake Vyrnwy reservoir in Powys. GCR was represented by **Russell Morris** (*pictured below*). He writes: "Lake Vyrnwy is considered Wales' most beautiful lake but it's actually a large 4.5 sq. km reservoir built in the late 1880's to provide much needed clean water to a fast-growing Liverpool. These days, the lake is popular for water sports and it's surrounded by 20km of walking and cycling trails featuring fairy-tale towers and old stone bridges.

The main event was the Half Marathon, completed by more than a 1000 runners. The race route starts at the local village of Llanwyddyn and consists an undulating 1-mile climb up to the picturesque dam, before a single 11-mile tree-lined lap of the majestic lake followed by a return mile back down to the village.

Despite the uphill start, the course offers the potential for runners to achieve a Personal Best and that was my hope for this race which is just 3-weeks ahead of my invitation to compete in the Age Group World Champs held as part of the Chicago marathon on October 8<sup>th</sup>. Thankfully I finished the Half in 1hr:23 – just over four minutes faster than my previous best for this distance. The time gave me a 3<sup>rd</sup> place out of 68 in my M50 age category which I was very happy with, but I was later left wondering what could have been when I learned that the 1<sup>st</sup> placed athlete in my tightly fought category was a mere 33 seconds quicker.

"I recommend this event to everyone. The course is tarmac and fast but the glassy lake and lush green scenery all around is stunning and worth a run, walk, cycle, paddle visit with or without any race."

## **Humanity Direct Chiltern Challenge (50k Ultra)**

The intrepid trio of **Elaine Giles, Alex Yates** and **Kath Evans** (*pictured below*) headed off on Saturday to the Humanity Direct Chilterns Challenge 50k Ultra. For these GCR stalwarts it was a very sociable occasion, reports Kath. "We started at 8am with coffee, as we picked up our trackers and headed off onto the canal path, treated by dappled Autumn sunshine. With check-in stations supplying us with juicy pineapple and watermelon every 10k or so, we were



well fuelled on our 'girls day out'. We were treated to the Gruffalo trail at Wendover woods, the monument at Ashridge and the ever-glorious views from the Ridgeway. As always nattering with fellow participants signposted us to other Ultra events across country that we've added to the bucket list! "We are grateful to the fabulous team at XNRG for a cracking day out hoping they raised lots for Humanity Direct their charity partner who support life-saving surgery for children in developing countries."

## **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

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**

**Sophie Packman** reminds members of this year's GCR Christmas knees up, an 80's Extravaganza, at Homestead Court on 15<sup>th</sup> December:

#### **Friday 15th December**

80s Night Fancy Dress £42.50pp

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

## **Sunday Cross Country League**

**First fixture 2023 – 2024 season**

**Sunday, 15th October at Cheshunt Park at 11:00am**

### **PLEASE NOTE THE RACE START TIME OF 11am**

**Broxbourne Runners are delighted to welcome you to the first fixture of the 2023–2024 season. We do hope that you enjoy the run. We also welcome and thank Garden City Runners for providing marshal support.**

**Location: Cheshunt Park. Park Lane. Cheshunt Herts. EN7 6QD**

**In order to maintain our good relationship with the Local Council and the Golf Club please be mindful of the following:-**

**There are no changing facilities, but toilets and refreshments are available in the Golf Centre nearby. Showers are NOT available. Only food and drink purchased on site can be consumed on the premises. Dirty shoes are not allowed on the premises. This applies to all users.**

**Providing the ground is not too wet a field will be available for car parking. Follow the Marshals directions and car share as much as possible. Please vacate the Parking Field ASAP after race OR YOU MAY BE LOCKED IN.**

**The course is the same as in previous years, circa 5 miles, with three circuits of the Park. Kit is usually left (unsupervised) at the finish point. Do not bring valuables to the course. The start is in the adjacent field and is signed.**

**Please can runners race in their club colours.**

**Finish place discs will be handed out at the finish. Team Managers - please ensure that your runners do not take them home!**

**Please will all Team Managers bring to the attention of all their runners the following League Race Rule:**

*Headphones – For safety reasons, runners must not run wearing headphones or other impediments to their hearing. Runners must be able to hear any warnings or guidance given by course marshals or race officials.*

**John Nugent – Broxbourne Runners**