



Garden City Runners News Release

7 April 2024

London Landmarks Half Marathon

"The wind almost took your legs from under you." So said GCR's **Miles Hubbard**, about the weekend's London Landmarks Half Marathon. As a result there were a number of DNF's, which also affected fellow GCRs. LLHM itself is a colourful race through Westminster and the City, complete with route activations, musical performances, DJs, dancers, themed cheer stations and more. Miles (*pictured right*) was able to celebrate a new chip time PB of 2:11:16 in the time honoured fashion afterwards. Other GCR participants were **Tracy Behr, Katie Coates** and **Sharon Reynolds**.



Brighton Marathon



The popular Brighton Marathon drew around 13,000 runners to Preston Park for the start, with the route then heading north towards Withdean before taking participants through the city and past some of Brighton's most iconic landmarks including the Pavilion. Via Kemptown and Ovingdean's white cliffs it then turned back to the city, past the Brighton Pier, West Pier and i360 before finishing on the seafront at Hove Lawns. Among GCRs taking part were **Colin**



Grace, who finished in 04:14:04, **Steve Mowles** in 04:32:51, **Michael Scutt** (04:57:26) and **Thippi Rashleigh** (05:14:34). Also taking part in wheelchair race was **Gerard Macdonald** (*pictured left*). His wife (and GCR chair), **Jane Molloy** writes, "As hubby, Gez, was doing the Brighton marathon, I tagged along to do the 10k. It was a very blowy morning on Hove seafront at the start. Just a couple of uphills on an otherwise flat, smooth course on closed roads. I was happy with my 1hr.17m time, as I'd been seriously out of sorts recently. Then it was off to track Gez. It was lovely to see Michael Scutt and Thippi (both pictured right with Steve Mowles) around the 19m mark—both looking strong and determined. Lots of GCRs have been very supportive of Gez, so they might like to know he finished in 5:57, having found it really tough. Fantastic support around the course on a lovely, sunny day."

Of her own race, Thippi said, "It was a hot day and I was struggling with heat and hunger. I ran the first half with Michael at a good steady pace, which was nice, but later dropped back.

"It was a lovely race with plenty of support from the crowds, cheering the runners on. The down side was the number of hills, and the repeat of the 8-16 mile section, but overall it was a fantastic atmosphere, which certainly helped pick up tired legs."

Graduation parkrun

There seems no letting up to the number of people attracted to running, and coming to GCR to get started. At the end of the 10-week 'Beginners & Returners' course the customary Graduation run took place at Panshanger. The whole programme was supervised by **Tendy St. Francis**, aided and abetted by **Charlotte Jones** (*pictured left*).

Tendy writes, "It was a nice sunny morning for those experiencing the beauty and challenge of Panshanger for the first time. Attending were **Che Cherito, Laura Stephen, Penelope Hitch, Franchesha Dipola, Lee Ann Stephenson, Sarah Stephenson and Beth Dean**. Other fellow graduates are **Kevin Back, Dean Cartwright, Robin Cartwright, Michelle Goodheart, Ariana Oliver, Ran Takhar and Philip Collins**. Thank you to all who came out to help them celebrate."

Charlotte Jones's traditional post run flapjacks were a big hit with runners and volunteers. Charlotte also took the photo (*below*) of graduates, mentors, marshals and assorted canines.



Vale of Glamorgan Coastal Ultra

When you see the words 'Ultra', 'Wales' and 'Coastal' grouped together you can generally bet that the name of **Kath Evans** will also be in there. Finding it hard to resist yet another Ultra in her native country the indefatigable Kath (*pictured left*) headed west.

She writes, "*This weekend's little plod took me home for the 'Vale of Glamorgan Coastal Ultra', a 32.5 mile (33.5 according to my Strava!) linear route.*

"The race started at Penarth Pier and followed the often very muddy trails along the clifftops,

including a tour of Barry island.

"We ran through 19 hidden and often secluded rugged bays, seeing dramatic cliffs, amazing rock formations, and rolling countryside with blossoming sparkling bluebells and pretty, cheerful yellow primroses. With the sea on our left we headed all the way back to the splendid beachside resort of Ogmores-by-sea on the Glamorgan Heritage Coast.

"The added entertainment (in addition to the mud) was #StormKathleen ... the waves she created were spectacular! Grateful to Run, Walk, Crawl for another fabulously scenic route! This year I didn't add extra miles around the Welsh countryside which was a relief!"

Star Man

Last Monday found **Paul Watts** on the start line of a Saturn event based around the song *Star Man*.

He writes, *"Start was officially 09.00 although people were starting when they liked. I started at 08.30 with the intention of getting 50k under my belt. The course was tricky in parts with lots of tripping hazards so I took it slowly.*

"The weather was terrible; the course was an out and back, on which you could do as many laps of as you wished. As I said, I set out with the intention of completing 50k although had conditions been better I would have done more.

"I took my time and was given a finishing time of 7:29:38. Although that was disappointing, at least it was another Ultra under my belt!"

Camino Lea Valley 50km Ultra

Spencer White recently took part in Camino Lea Valley 50km Ultra marathon It was his very first Ultra and he ran it in 4:49—under his 5-hour target.

Spencer (pictured right) writes, *"It was a wonderful event with the weather holding out and glorious sunshine at times.*

"The run started at Gosling Sports Park, went across to Hertford and then down to the Olympic Park via the Lea Valley canal route. Aid stations were excellent and there was a great sense of camaraderie.

"As I passed the marathon distance and entered the Ultra world I was overjoyed but my legs then began to scream ... however, I kept going."

This event is one of five endurance events he is undertaking over the next month to raise money for Alzheimer's Research UK, after his father was recently diagnosed.

His Just Giving page is:

https://www.justgiving.com/page/spencer-white-1706295228279?utm_medium=fundraising&utm_content=page%2Fspencer-white-1706295228279&utm_source=email&utm_campaign=pfp-email

Tewinbury 10K Trail Race

Congratulations to **Nigel Cavill**, who was 1st GCR and 1st MV50 for the second time this year, and 19th overall in a time of 48:41. The evergreen **Dave Edwards** also finished a highly commendable 53rd out of 170 runners, in 54:51.

parkrun roundup



116 GCRs were scattered far and wide this weekend, at venues, ranging from Hertfordshire to Helsinki and beyond. While **Jacqui McCallum** ran Tokoinranta (Helsinki) in the snow (*pictured left*), even further afield **Kyle Kean** finished 16th at Tsurumi Ryokuchi in Osaka, in an excellent time of 19:03.

Closer to home top 10 finishers at Panshanger included **Adam Wadley**, 3rd in 20:01, **Chris Eland** 9th in 20:56 and **Martin Mitchell** 10th in 21:00. Well done to **Eleanor Sage**, who achieved a PB in 22:42. Nearby, on the faster course at Stevenage, **Jamie Rose** finished a creditable 6th in 19:28. **Michael Germany** posted a PB in 21:30 to finish 21st, and continuing her great run of form **Clare Wildey** set another PB in 24:32. Other

standout performances down in north west London include **Rob Casserley**, who finished 9th at Gladstone Park in 19:31, while **Lucy Iles** also recorded a PB at Alice Holt in 25:05 as did **Tom Wackett** (20:58) at Storeys Field. But the most victorious runner of the weekend was the ever reliable **Paul Guy**, winning the event at Wynyard Woodland in Stockton-on-Tees, in 18:57.

GCR Walks

Just a reminder that the next GCR walks have now been scheduled as follows—part of a provisional walking programme of different routes running throughout the summer. These include a couple of spectacular bluebell wood walks during May.

Sunday April 14th—a 10K Essendon loop (with hopefully a chance to see the legendary white wallabies). Meet 9.30am in School Lane, Essendon.

Wednesday, April 17th — just under 10K loop (via Kimpton and Codicote Bottom) starting at the Brocket Arms in Ayot st. Lawrence. Meet 9.30am.

In May we head for the bluebell woods, including Gustard Wood and the Hitchwood Trail, two of the finest bluebell walks in the county. Anyone needing further information, or wishing to be added to the list for forthcoming info, contact: jerry@jgp-pr.com

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.

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

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 st January
2	Watford Half	4 th February
3	Panshanger parkrun	9 th March
4	Flitwick 10k	14 th April
5	St Albans Half	9 th June
6	FVS 3k Relay	End July (tbc)
7	Stevenage 10k	15 th September
8	ATW Hatfield 5	24 th 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!

Average Event #	Date	Event	Venue	Cost <i>Registration fees may apply</i>	Status / Notes
1	21 st January	Fred Hughes 10	St Albans	£20.00 aff.	Completed
2	4 th February	Watford Half	Watford	£31.00 aff.	Completed
3	<i>*postponed*</i>	SXCL Royston (Race #5 of 2023-2024 season)	Therfield Heath, Royston	Free	Club will send out details via email
4 (V)	9 th March	Panshanger parkrun	Panshanger Park	Free	Completed
5	24 th 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 th April	Flitwick 10k	Flitwick	£18.00 aff.	<u>Register here</u>
7	6 th May	Kimpton Fun Run 10k	Kimpton	£10	https://www.kimptonmayfestival.co.uk
8	15 th May	MWRRL #1	Stevenage	Free	Club will send out details via email
9	23 rd May	MWRRL #2	Ware	Free	Club will send out details via email
10	6 th June	MWRRL #3	Royston	Free	Club will send out details via email
11	27 th June	MWRRL #4	Trent Park	Free	Club will send out details via email
12 (V)	30 th June	Welwyn 10k	Panshanger Park	tbc	Details tbc
13 (V)	10 th 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 th August (tbc)	GCR Centenary 20.2k	WGC Centenary Route	Free	Club will send out details via email
16 (V)	4 th September	Hatfield 5k #2 (Vets)	Hatfield	tbc	Details tbc
17	15 th September	Stevenage 10k	Stevenage	£18.00 aff.	<u>Register here</u>
18 (V)	Mid October (tbc)	SXCL #1	tbc	Free	Club will send out details via email

19	20 th October	Stevenage Half Marathon & Marathon	Stevenage	tbc	Register here
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 th November	Hatfield 5	Hatfield	£22.00 early-bird aff.	Register here
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

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.

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 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/

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