



South-East Region Runner Up England Athletics Club

NEWSLETTER

February 2026



We are 40 years young!

Contents

Club Website, committee, polices and Contact details:	Page 3
Liss Runners have reached 40 years old:	Page 3
Sensible advice and hindsight from Rose:	Page 4
Liss Runners organised weekly activities:	Pages 4 to 7
Chairperson's comments:	page 7
Editor's comments:	Page 8
Hampshire Road Race League race reviews:	pages 8 to 12
Southern Cross Country race reviews:	pages 13 to 17
Liss Runners Annual Boxing Day Run and Walk:	pages 18 to 20
Kit corner:	page 21
Fancy a race? :	pages 22 to 23
Runners profile: Rob Fleming:	pages 24 to 26
Rob Nugent Arc of Attrition experience:	pages 26 to 29
Sarah Page and Ben Spine Race experience:	Pages 30 and 31
Fav. Run: Greenways Lane and back via War Down and Butser Hill:	pages 41 to 45
Liss Runners Membership Survey:	pages 37 to 39.

Dates for the diary

Wednesday 1st April: Trevor's Challenge: Liss Runners club championship race and to work out handicap times for the season.

Wednesday 22nd April: Liss Runners AGM: instead of Wednesday training: don't miss out on your chance to have a say on the future of the club. More details closer to the day.

Liss Runners Summer Pub Run Series: First pub run: Monday 11th May. Any pub and route setting volunteers please let Tom know. (routes to be available are usually approximately 3 mile, 5 mile and 7 miles long over some lovely countryside.

Liss runners website: [liss-runners.org.uk](https://www.liss-runners.org.uk)

Liss Runners committee team: <https://www.liss-runners.org.uk/about-us/committee/>

Club Polices: <https://www.liss-runners.org.uk/about-us/club-policies/>

Club contact details: <https://www.liss-runners.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/>

Note: It would be advisable to take a look at the club polices to ensure you are following any applicable polices.

Liss Runners have reached 40 years old!



Way back in late 1985 our club founder: the late Trevor Stothard was chatting to a running buddy over a pint in a pub. They discussed the lack of running clubs in their respective areas and decided to do something about it. Trevor's running buddy went on to form Romsey Road Runners and Trevor Liss Runners.

To form Liss Runners Trevor placed an advertisement in the local press for a meeting to gauge interest. Many turned up so the formation of Liss Runners was a goer!

To kick start the club the first Liss Runners committee meeting was held on the 2nd March 1986. Where the club constitution was drawn up and club officials appointed. Names of those present include Marilyn and Mike Squirell, Bob Ayer, Jenny Broadhead, Michael Cartwright, Keith Jones, Pat and Richard Edwards, Lionel Geering and first Chair: Trevor. Names unfamiliar to most but I remember some of these – I joined the club in 1994.

Club subscription was set at £4 per year. Club membership was 33 members on the 11th May 1986.

There will be a celebration later in the year to mark our 40th year. Please look out for future details.

Some sensible advice and hindsight from Rose



There are two things I wished I'd known years ago...

I found out that I had skin cancer on my face just before Christmas and needed to have a six-week course of treatments (she has been told it's now fine but to keep an eye on it). It made my nose red, sore and scabby. I have not been careful with applying suntan lotion on sunny days and on my trips "Down Under". I did not like the way the suntan lotion blocked my skin pores and gave my spots. I should have used the now recommended moisturiser with SPF 50 that is non-comedogenic (I had to look that word up!).

Also, a couple of years ago I was informed that I had the beginning of cataracts coming and told to protect my eyes with dark glasses. "Rather late in the day" I now do this.

So take heed! Please can I ask you to learn from my mistakes/lack of knowledge and protect yours and any of your children's eyes and skin to try to prevent future problems in bright sunshine especially in hotter countries but also here even in the winter with strong sunshine.



Liss Runners Weekly organised activities:-



Remember that High viz in hours of darkness!

Sunday: Due to low numbers this has become an informal, non-coached members get together on a Sunday morning. It's usually for a slower, longer run with attendees deciding on route and length. More details on the club website: <https://www.liss-runners.org.uk/activities/sunday-long-run/>

Tuesday: "torch" runs: evening trail runs over 5 to 7 mile routes: note: trail shoes are ideally needed and High viz and a head torch is a must on dark evenings. Locations change every week with a meeting time of 7.15pm. There is a WhatsAppGroup for the weekly location. More details at: <https://www.liss-runners.org.uk/activities/tuesday-torch-trail/>

Wednesday: Interval training session: A number of club members are kind enough to each organise a Wednesday evening training session. Meet up at Newman Collard Pavilion at 7pm or closer to the training location, which is on a club e-mail before Wednesday. Now off "The Estate" and Ridings hill (our usual winter training locations). All speeds welcome as training is in one place or there are "gather ups". **Trainers and their dates (may be subject to change on the evening):-**

Main Trainer Assistant

11th February

Rosie Dyke Annett Heitsch

18th February

James White Tom Frost

25th February

Dave Brown Stavros Valourdos

4th March

Georgie Freeman Warwick Parker

11th March

Max Stuart Jayne Jefferies

18th March

Tom Frost James White

25th March

James White Jayne Jefferies

1st April

Trevor's Challenge Trevor's Challenge

8th April

Rosie Dyke Annett Heitsch

15th April

Dave Brown Tom Frost

22nd April

AGM – no training AGM – no training

29th April

Helen Purchase Stavros Valourdos

6th May

Handicap Handicap

13th May

Max Stuart Annett Heitsch

20th May

Helen Purchase James White

27th May

Georgie Freeman Stavros Valourdos

3rd June

Handicap Handicap

10th June

Tom Frost Helen Purchase

Thursday: Social runs: Easy paced runs with frequent stops to "gather up". Meet up at 7pm in the Central Car Park, Petersfield near Waitrose (what three words: sugar.bumpy.besott). Note: There are occasional starts and finishes away from Central Car Park: "First Thursday Forays" (on the first Thursday of the month). Look out for messages on WhatsApp and on e-mails. Website details: <https://www.liss-runners.org.uk/activities/thursday-social-run/>

There are also occasional organised **walks** on a Saturday. Look out for messages on WhatsApp and on e-mails.

Chairperson's Comments

Hi All

It feels like we have almost survived another winter! Despite the continued rain the days are starting to get longer and the temperatures not quite so bitter!

With this brings the promise of Summer sessions, club handicaps and pub runs, all firm favourites!

Relay recces will be getting underway shortly for both the Emsworth to Basingstoke and Southdowns Way relays. Even if you're unable to take part, do come along and join in on the practice runs, a great way to find and enjoy new trails in the area.

2026 marks 40 years of Liss Runners, an anniversary we intend to mark with celebrations and increased presence at the local races and relays. Looking back on photos it's clear to see how much has changed throughout these years, from the number of members through to the advances made through increased knowledge of training, nutrition and of course the beloved 'super' shoes! However, the enjoyment of getting out and enjoying those miles together and the support and encouragement that comes alongside that remains as strong as ever.

Here's to many more years and many more miles to come!

Catherine



Editor's Comments

The club goes from strength to strength! Rose has reported signing up the 200th member but a few are leaving. So, we may not hit the magic 200 member level to get us an extra London Marathon club guarantee place; just a few more members needed! The newsletter is another bumper edition. All credit to all who take part or help out with all the races, activities and other events we take part in and put on. A special mention to Rob Nugent, Sarah Page and Ben Potts for their amazing Ultra race experiences: reports later in this newsletter.

Thanks to Catherine Seager for Chairperson's comments, Helen Purchase for managing the Wednesday evening training sessions, Steve Armstrong for the race reports, Rob Flemming for completing the runners' profile, James White for the management of the club website and all his efforts on the club survey, to find out how to make our club even better! And all who work behind the scenes helping the club out.

As always, I'm after "copy" to go in future newsletters: any race reviews, volunteers for the race profiles, "fav" run routes or anything else of interest to club members to go in a future newsletter please e-mail me on: -

tom.frost@westsussex.gov.uk

I aim to produce the next Liss Runners newsletter in May.

Hampshire Road Race League



(an annual league of 12 road races around the Hampshire area)

Race dates of the new season are:-

Solent Half Marathon: 8th March 2026

Salisbury 10 mile: 12th April 2026

Alton 10 mile: 10th May 2026

Netley 10km: 17th May 2026

Alresford 10km: 21st June 2026

Lordshill 10km: 5th July 2026



[Hampshire Road Race League Website.](#)

Team results before Ryde 10 mile road race: Ladies 2nd in the top A1 league, Men 9th in the top A1 league: [team results.](#)

Race Reviews:-

Gosport Half Marathon



Weather wise it was an almost perfect day for racing on the south coast. Dry, cloudy, mild with a bit of a breeze on the outbound 5K stretch keeping things interesting. But overall the conditions were fantastic for a coastal run.

The Gosport Half is a two-lap course, essentially an out-and-back along the seafront, which means runners get to enjoy brilliant crowd support throughout. Yesterday did not disappoint and the atmosphere was buzzing from start to finish.

Liss Runners showed up strong with a squad of 21 runners, with half the team coming away with new PBs — an incredible effort all round.

Huge thanks to the organisers and volunteers for another well-run event, keeping everything smooth on the day. The goodie bag at the end was spot on too - salty crisps and a chocolate bar were much appreciated after 13 miles!

Team Liss

Ladies - Laura Armstrong, Cari Brown, Georgie Freeman, Camilla Harfield, Sandra Hunter, Yvonne McGarry, Kate Parker, Imogen Scott-Plummer, Karen Potts, Emily White

Mens - Tom Adams, Rob Fleming, Neil Hancock, John Harfield, Paul Hawes, Tom Kelham, Aoifean MacDonald, Warwick Parker, Rob Peters, Christopher Redmond, Chris Turner

Gosport Half Marathon Results:

<https://results.eventchiptiming.com/results.aspx?CIid=16202&RIid=5322>

Victory 5



It was a classic British race morning — relentless rain, swirling wind, and the kind of conditions that make you question your life choices on the start line but that didn't stop a brilliant turnout from the Liss team! A number of Lissers braved the weather and showed exactly what team spirit looks like 🌟.

Despite the tough conditions we were treated to some fantastic performances across the board. From strong debuts to determined PB chases and gritty finishes, the team pulled together and delivered another memorable day of HRRL running.

A special shoutout goes to our Ladies Team who stormed through the rain to secure a 3rd place finish! An incredible result and well done ladies 🎉.

Well done to everyone who raced and thank you to those who supported and cheered, days like these prove that the Liss spirit shines even when the weather doesn't!

Victory 5 2026 results: [Victory 5 results](#)

Ryde 10 mile Road Race



Ryde is the 6th race of 12 in this season's Hampshire Road Race League and, as ever, it proved a favourite for many. A big thanks to **Ryde Harriers Running Club** for another fantastic event. Sixteen Lissers raced this year, supported by a small but enthusiastic crew.

The course is a single, scenic lap, undulating (to say the least), taking in Ryde, Puckpool, Seaview, St Helens, Nettlestone, and back to Ryde again.

The ferry crossing was a wet one, but conditions improved in time for the warm-up and start as the sun made a welcome appearance. An almost refreshing drizzle followed as the race progressed, keeping things cool on the rolling hills.

There was plenty to celebrate at the finish, with Catherine collecting a handful of personal and team awards, including 1st place for the Liss Ladies—thanks to strong runs from Catherine, Molly, and Anna.

As tradition dictates, the day ended with a walk up yet another hill, rewarded with well-earned food and drinks before catching the ferry home.

Ryde 10 mile road race results: [Ryde Results](#)



Review: Alice Holt 23rd November



There was A fantastic turnout for race #2 in the Southern Cross Country League at Alice Holt. Only a week or so ago we thought we'd be at Bourne Woods. So well done to Farnham Runners for a well managed event, albeit aided by a few Lissers helping with the marshalling - thanks Rose and Norman Lewis and Tom Frost.

The red vests were out in full force with 19 ladies and 19 gents taking part, with the racing team supported by an ever-growing crew of helpers and little Lissers. The Club spirit was out in full force. There was no way we were getting everyone in the team photo.

Alice Holt is known as one of the tougher venues on the XC calendar (although there was no steam crossing this year!) but the team rose to the challenge, building on the momentum from Race #1 where we finished joint 1st.

Conditions were near perfect for cross-country; bright sunshine, mild temperatures and plenty of mud thanks to recent rain. Wet, slippery and exactly what XC should be. Those grippy XC shoes were needed to stay upright on the course - Eddie take note and ask Santa nicely for a pair for Christmas.

There were strong performances across the board: Our Ladies took first and our men 5th to give us a third place overall. Results on:
<https://www.southerncrosscountryleague.co.uk/>

For the future races , as always, everyone is welcome. XC is for all abilities and no matter where you finish, you are contributing to the team's overall performance. And it's free, but if you are not an EA affiliated member you will need to let the Captains know and pay a £2 supplement.

Lots of photos available on the Liss Runners Southern XC WhatsApp group.

Team Liss:-

Ladies - Caroline Brown, Alex Coomber, Emily Durrant, Mollie Dyer, Annett Heitsch, Millie Hoare, Lucy Jenkinson, Mel Jensen, Jackie Lloyd, Karen Potts, Helen Purchase, Laura Rogers, Catherine Seager, Polly Sharpe, Annaliese Shaw, Emilie Stevens*, Rose-Marie Turner*, Anna Wemyss, Emily White

Mens - Phil Avery, Andy Brown, Dave Brown, Eddie Butters, Steve Clay, Chris Dettmar, Simon Dimmock, Neil Gwatkin, Russell Hall*, Neil Hancock, John Harefield, Paul Judge, Andy Paton, Simon Tack, Paul Turner, Andy Turner, Stavros Valourdos, James White, Tom White

* Lissers making their club debut at the SCCL

Review Lord Wandsworth 21st December



Lord Wandsworth played host to the third race of this season's Southern Cross Country League (SCCL). The approximately 4.5-mile (7.2k) course was as advertised: undulating, mostly woodland tracks and paths, with some muddy sections... and then quite a few even muddier sections. 🌀 More so after all the rain we've had recently!

Like last year, conditions were actually kind to us. It was relatively mild, dry, with just a slight breeze—nothing like the infamous past editions where the wind tears across the start field, usually accompanied by freezing sideways rain. (I may have forgotten to mention this possibility to some of our newer members).

Fourteen red vests took on the course. A smaller turnout than usual, but still a great effort given how busy this time of year is with Christmas prep, holidays, and unfortunately also a few injuries.

We also had a couple of first-timers to cross country, and you absolutely smashed it! Hopefully Lord Wandsworth hasn't put you off... 😊



The race start



Typical Lord Wandsworth route: up the field and into the woods



Alex running down the sunken track near the finish



The infamous uphill finish through the ploughed field (not ploughed this year though!) to the grassed finish sports field.

Liss Results:-

Ladies: 5th Caroline Brown, 8th Catherine Seager, 13th Mollie Dyer, 16th Anna Wemys, 44th Laura Rogers, 54th Lucy Jenkinson, 122nd Alex Wilkinson.

Men: 19th John Harfield, 42nd Andy Brown, 69th Tom Frost, 76th Stavros Valourdos, 98th Paul Hawes, 102nd Andy Paton, 126th Sam Brear.

A massive shout-out to the all-important support team, who provided transport, childcare, photos, scoring, food, and refreshments. The smell of mulled wine, sausage rolls, cakes, and mince pies filled our little area of the field. Thanks to Steve, Laura, Millie, and David, and of course all the very well-behaved little Lissers.

Remaining Southern Cross Country League races this season:-

(Chawton House on in January was cancelled due to a waterlogged parking field)

Sunday 1st March: [The Bourne Cross Country race](#).

Sunday 5th April: Alver Valley Country Park near Stubbington (moved from 15th February due again to a waterlogged parking area).

Southern Cross Country League Website:-

[Southern Cross Country League \(SCCL\) Official Website](#)

Cross Country tips and advice from last year's newsletter: [Training tips and advice](#)

Liss Runners Annual Boxing Day run and Walk

Liss Runners have a tradition of organising a running activity held annually on Boxing Day morning. A few years back this used to be a "hash": running around following saw dust trails, shouting things like "on-on!". This was discontinued due to the effort it took to lay the trails out and the mess of the saw dust. To replace this a "social type" run was organised with runners staying together for around an hour run. For the first few years these were held over Army land at Liss Forest/Weavers Down. Then runs were from Durleigh Marsh, Selbourne (going West) and last year from Grayshott. The runs also have recently incorporated a shorter run and a shorter walk.

This year casting my eye over maps and after a few that's not quite suitable, Selbourne looked a good bet: car park and toilets (but I think they were closed?). We have been in the West direction two years ago, so East it was!

All routes took the dead-end lane by the closed pub, then on a muddy track to Priory Farm. Here the 3 mile route turned back West along the North side of the stream valley, past ponds, up to and through the church yard of St.Mary's back at Selbourne.

The 5 mile route climbed uphill to the public path to Candovers, then a West turn to take the lane up Park Hanger. At the top a dead end lane was taken to Wick Hill Farm before a drop downhill on a public paths to the ponds and the same route back as the 3 mile route.



The 7 and a half milers, after Candovers the route was a drop downhill through Hartley Wood, passing a fishing pond before a steep climb up a muddy track and after a strange area with many small timber buildings and quirky items a lane up to West Worldham. Here a lane was taken South passing St. Leonard's Church and the large pond opposite at the abandoned village of Hartley Mauditt. The route continued up the same lane to the dead end lane down to Wick Hill Farm then following the 5 mile route back to Selbourne.



Young Girls watch out!



The 7 milers by the fishing pond in Hartley Wood



The 7ers at the highest point of the route to the East of West Worldham



Runners passing St. Leonard's Church Hartley Mauditt



Almost back! In the church yard of St. Mary's Church

Liss Runners Kit Corner

For any Liss Runners running gear please contact our "kit man" Stuart (Stuie) Lavalette: stuielavalette@gmail.com.

Note: to run in team events – such as the Southern Cross Country League races – you need to have a Liss Runners top on.

Kit available:-

Available in Male and female cuts: Running vests, T shirts and long sleeved T-shirts.

Unisex: hoodies, fleeces, rain jackets, winter jackets, head bands, baseball caps.

There are also options to have hi-viz reflective markings on vests and T-shirts that show up in car headlights. Ideal for winter evenings.



Note: The last pictures are of the hi-tec running vest – fairly expensive. There needs to be a certain number in an order. An order will only be placed when there are enough items. If interested let team captain: Steve Armstrong via WhatsApp, to go on a future possible order list.





Fancy a Race...

Every Saturday 5km [Parkruns](#) at 9am: local [Parkruns](#): [Hogmoor Bordon](#), [Queen Elizabeth Country Park Petersfield](#), [Alice Holt](#). Note: to be included in the results you need to be registered with Park Run and have a bar code to show at the finish.

Sunday 15th February: [Bramley 20 and 10 mile Road Race](#), Reading.

Sunday 22nd February: [Winchester 10km road race](#).

Sunday 22nd February: [Big Mud Trails](#), Queen Elizabeth Country Park.

Saturday 28th February: [G3 trail race series race 3](#), Guildford.

Sunday 1st March: [Bourne Woods Cross Country](#). SCCL.

Sunday 1st March: [Brighton Half Marathon](#).

Saturday 7th March: [Brutal Chawton](#).

Sunday 8th March: [Solent Half Marathon](#). HRRL.

Sunday 8th March: [Southampton Common 10k](#).

Saturday 14th March: [Maverick Trail races, Winchester](#).

Saturday 15th March: [Lone Wolf, Alice Holt](#).

Saturday 21st March: [Stansted House Trail Run](#).

Sunday 22nd March: [Eastleigh 10k](#).

Sunday 22nd March: [Surrey Half Marathon Road Race, Woking](#).

Sunday 29th March: [Fleet Half Marathon](#).

Sunday 29th March: [Cranleigh 7/14/21 Mile Road races](#).

Sunday 29th March: [Combe Gibbet to Overton 16 Mile trail race](#).

Sunday 5th April: [Alver Valley Country Park Cross Country](#). SCCL.

Saturday 11th April: [Run The Seasons Cowdray: Spring race, Midhurst](#).

Sunday 12th April: [Salisbury 10 mile Road Race](#). HRRL

Sunday 12th April: [Brighton Marathon, Half and 10km road races](#).

Sunday 19th April: [Dell 10km, Basingstoke](#).

Sunday 26th April: [Bolt Round The Holt, Alice Holt](#).

Sunday 26th April: [Angmering Bluebell trail races, Arundel.](#)

Sunday 3rd May: [Southampton Marathon, Half, 10k and 5km races.](#)

Sunday 3rd May: [Worthing Half Marathon and 10km road races.](#)

Sunday 3rd May: [Run Frimley 10km/5km races.](#)

Monday 4th May: [Big Way Round race, Winchester.](#)

Sunday 10th May: [Alton 10 mile road race.](#) HRRL.

Sunday 10th May: [Run Gatwick Half Marathon and 5km road races, Crawley.](#)

Sunday 10th May: [Woodland Woggle 10km trail race, Farham.](#)

Sunday 10th May: [Race for life 10k/5k/3k Portsmouth.](#)

Saturday 16th May: [Emsworth to Basingstoke Relay.](#)

Sunday 17th May: [Netley 10k.](#) HRRL.

Sunday 17th May: [Hook 10 mile and 10km Road races.](#)

Sunday 17th May: [Godalming 10km race.](#)

Saturday 23rd May: [Fox Ultra Trail races, Guildford.](#)

Sunday 24th May: [Race for life 10k/5k/3k Basingstoke.](#)

Sunday 31st May: [Southampton Running Festival.](#)

Sunday 7th June: [Alice Holt Wild trail runs.](#)

Sunday 7th June: [Run Wisborough 5k/10k.](#)

Sunday 7th June: [Purbrook Ladies only 5 mile race.](#)

Sunday 14th June: [Hampshire Hoppit Trail Races.](#)

Saturday 20th June: [Race to the King ultra trail race, Chichester.](#)

Sunday 21st June: [Alresford 10km road race.](#) HRRL.

Sunday 21st June: [Solent Airport 5km race, Stubbington Green.](#)

Sunday 21st June: [Martian Race 5k/10k/21k races, Woking.](#)

Saturday 27th June: [Run the Seasons: Summer: Cowdray, Midhurst.](#)

Sunday 28th June: [Exbury Gardens 10km Road race, New Forest.](#)

Sunday 5th July: [Lordshill 10k.](#) HRRL.

HRRL = Hampshire Road Race League race. SCCL = Southern Cross Country League race.

Runner's Profile: Rob Fleming:-

Where were you born? Bristol

Where have you lived? I grew up in Bognor Regis and then went to university in Bournemouth. Once I started working, I settled in Petersfield but have been living in Clanfield for the last 15 years.

When did you get into running? When I was 20, a friend convinced me to do the Selsey 10K. I really enjoyed it and have never looked back!

What got you interested in running? At the time I was enjoying the university partying lifestyle and so running was my way of doing at least one thing that was healthy!

What do you like about running? I have always used running as a release from everyday stresses of life. Whatever problems I am going through, running allows me to switch off and I always feel more positive when I get back home. I also enjoy pushing myself and look to achieve things that I thought may not be possible.

Anything you don't like about running? I am really not a fan of running in miserable conditions when it is cold, wet and windy!

Do you have any running heroes or memorable running events, that you have watched, that have stuck in the memory? I really enjoyed watching the 2012 summer Olympics and seeing Mo Farah win both of his gold medals will always be a special memory. Such an amazing achievement and just shows what can happen with hard work and dedication.

What and when was your first running race? The Selsey 10K in 1997. I don't think this event is still going.

What running performance are you most proud of? Breaking 65 minutes at the Great South Run in 2023. I never thought I would ever be able to achieve this and so was delighted to cross the line in 64.33.



What has been your favourite running event? The Great South Run is my favourite event and I have done this 14 times now. It is great to run around the city whilst the roads are closed. It is a really good atmosphere and the streets are lined with spectators cheering. As long as the wind is not too strong, it is a

fast course and everyone seems to find that last bit of energy for a sprint finish along Clarence Parade.

What type of terrain do you prefer (trail, road cross country)? I am generally a road runner and can normally be found on the country lanes around Petersfield. I do like the trails, but as I am a bit of a wimp, I normally just do this in the summer months.

What race distance do you prefer? 10 miles or half marathons are my favourite distances. Long enough that the pace is not really brutal, but not too far for the real fatigue to kick in.

How did you get to join Liss Runners? I used to work with James White and he convinced me to join Liss in 2011.

Can you list a typical running week training wise? I try to run 5 times a week, which comprising of a track session, a couple of steady runs, a park run (or a tempo run) and a long run. I also try to do a strength session and has recently joined Hybrid Move to help with injury prevention.

Have you a running bucket list and if so, what's still to do? Next year I will be turning 50 and so it feels only appropriate to do a 50 mile race. If I can, I would love to complete the 4 Centurion 50 mile races over that year. Also I would like to do some more of the marathon majors as I have only currently completed London.

Is there any interesting or funny running stories or anything else that may be of interest to fellow club members? A few years ago I was doing the Coastal Marathon in Portsmouth. We started in castle field and in the first few hundred meters there was a set of bollards. As I was running through them, the person in front of me dodged out of the way of a bollard at the last minute, which sadly left me with nowhere to go. So I went straight into the bollard and ended up poleaxed on the floor! An interesting start to a race to be flat on the floor and I still had 26.1 miles to go. Fortunately I managed to drag myself up and complete the Marathon, but certainly not an experience I want to repeat.

Finally, Stats...

Can you list your personal best for mile, 5km, 5 mile, 10km, 10 mile, half marathon and full marathon (if done)?

5k – 19.01 (Cardiff Parkrun 2023)

10K – 39.04 (Stubbington 2024)

10M – 1.04.33 (Great South Run 2023)

Half Marathon – 1.27.01 (Fleet 2023)

Marathon – 3.21.04 (Brighton 2024)

Rob's experience of the ARC 100 Mile Ultra Race



Where to start with this one? It's billed as UKs toughest winter 100 mile ultra point to point foot race along the most exposed sections of the South West Coastal Path in Cornwall.

The Arc 100 is a race I've been aware of since I chose to get into ultra running but never imagined for a second I'd be stood amongst wave 1 on the start line of this formidable course. This is a race for runners much better than me surely?

The build-up was like most others and to be honest. I just put it out of my head while I trained my usual strategy of just running more miles than is sensible every week hoping that that alone would be enough.

We arrived Thursday evening and I was very relieved to see @my_running_adventures and Sandy were already onsite and registered. I got through kit check without having to do any of my mandatory kit as they said, and I quote, "you look like an experienced and sensible runner" which obviously describes me well!

The coach journey to the start was spent chatting to @charlottefisher and @timeonfeetrans while I did my best to hide how unhappy I was about the weather. This was my first winter 100 and at this point I was still positive I wouldn't need my waterproofs. This would prove, very quickly, to be wrong.

The start line brought storm Ingrid with it and for the next 20 hours we would be absolutely pelted with wind and rain relentlessly in every direction. Waterproof tops, trousers, socks, gloves and 5 layers of clothing still did little to cope with the wind chill.

My goal of sub 24 quickly changed to just making it to the finish line but I was happy to arrive at the first aid station just as night rolled in. Unfortunately, by this point the race had already claimed James Yearsley and I took a moment to realise the Arc wasn't playing games with us.

The next 30 miles were a bit of a blur of mud, wind and rain all dimly illuminated by a headtorch I refused to take off its minimum setting to preserve battery.



Those waterproofs needed Rob! Look at that scenery and those crashing waves.

The waves crashed over Penzance and I put on yet more layers with James and Sandy now arriving to support which was a massive boost to morale.

Then out of the endless night as I pushed along the coastal path, I heard it . . . the faint ring of a cowbell and the orange glow of a car's hazard lights. @sarahhp_runs and @ultra_coach_max had arrived and just like that the race was fired up.

Muddy miles went by, the rain hammered down and the wind took me off my feet more than once. By the time I reached Lands End I was in bits and ready to drop. I'm 100% sure had it not been for Max doing what he does best, I would not have left that hotel. But we pushed on with the worse section of the run now upon us. Lands End to St Ives is what gives the Arc its reputation in my opinion. It's a merciless 22 mile stretch of rocky climbs and steep muddy descents crossing rivers. In some sections the trail is just a few inches from the long drop into the sea.



One of the many strength sapping stepped climbs.

For nearly 5 hours runners battled through what felt like endless coastal path until I finally caught sight of a couple walking their dog at sunrise who said "you have my word, it's just around the corner" and thank god they were right.

From then on it was just a case of not getting injured and moving forward. Sarah, Max and James popped up at every aid station and of course told me about all the support from Kate, the members of Liss Runners and our other running friends. By mile 95 there was nothing left in the tank. I'd fallen over, was covered in mud and couldn't stop humming the theme tune to Bluey for some reason. At this point it was just 3 climbs and I'd never have to come back here again.

Unbelievable scenes at the Eco park as I arrived. Kate and Sue had arrived from Liss along with my whole crew to cheer me over the line. I didn't even know there was a gold buckle but that's what I achieved apparently, so I'll take that.. I was also give a pasty and with that it was done.

A race I never thought I'd attempt was done. Some forever memories made and one step closer to the dream of the UTMB.



At last...the finish!

Spine-tingling Success: 1st Lady and 3rd overall for Sarah and a 9th for Ben doing the 268 mile race!

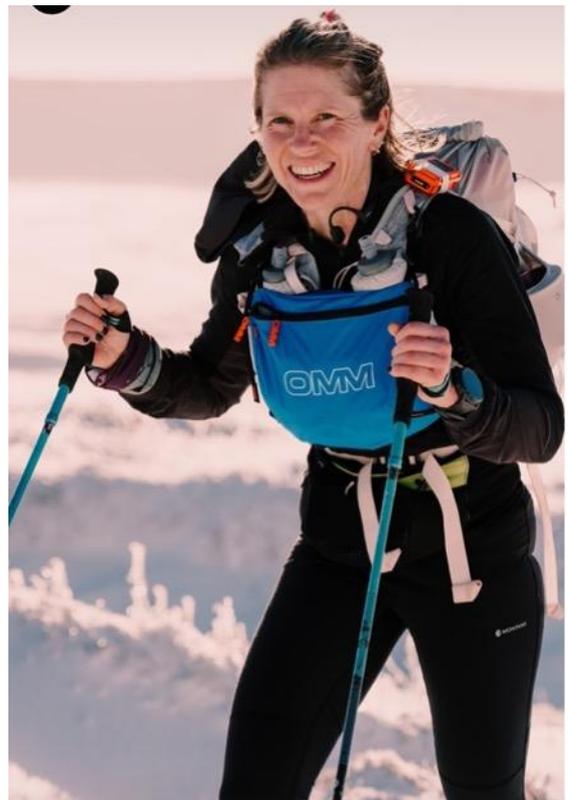
Two Liss Runners have excelled in the gruelling Montane Winter spine races held along the Pennine Way.

Sarah Page tackled the Challenger South, 108 miles from Edale in Derbyshire to Hawes in North Yorkshire. The trail race includes moorland and 5,400 meters of ascent including Kinder Plateau and Pen-y-Ghent. Competitors have a time limit of 60 hours.

The race took place during the worst of the winter weather with storm Goretti, knee deep snow, freezing rain and long stretches of sheet ice. There was even a last minute, weather related, course change to add to the difficulty.

But Sarah showed what a tough competitor she is, sticking with her strategy of eating and drinking every 30 minutes to maintain energy. She finished first female, and third overall, in a time of 29 hours 3 minutes which is the quickest ever achieved by a female athlete.

Sarah's outstanding performance comes on the back of a number of impressive ultra performances. This includes a stunning 2nd place at the UTMB Arc of Attrition, 3rd place at the Lakeland 100 and victories at the Centurion South Downs Way 50 and the Maverick Jurassic Coast 50k.



Reflecting on the race, she said *"It was one of the toughest things I've ever done. The conditions were relentless, but the support out on the course and the spirit of the event kept me moving. I'm proud of what I managed to do out there"*

Next up for Sarah is the UTMB Mozart in Austria, before heading to Chamonix at the end of the summer for the UTMB Majors.

Fellow Liss Runner, Ben Potts tackled the full Spine challenge, 268 miles from Edale to Kirk Yetholm in the Scottish Borders. The full spine has 10,900 meters of ascent across the Peak District, Yorkshire Dales, Northumberland National Park and the Cheviots. Competitors have a time limit of 168 hours.

Having previously completed the Challenger North, it had been an ambition of Ben's to undertake the full spine race.

Ben also had to content with the same challenging winter weather conditions. He finished 9th male in an impressive time of 119 hours and 34 minutes,

Said Ben "years in the making, the Spine race lived up to everything I hoped for, and more. Following storm Gorette, conditions were savage – bog, ice, snow, relentless rain and strong winds".



Fav. Run: Greenway Lane and back via War Down and Butser Hill

Closer to home this edition! This one is quite hilly. Two long steep hills with downhills as well. I used to do this one a lot when I was working in the Portsmouth area, especially if training for the Butser Run.

Parking is available opposite the houses at the West end of Greenways Lane (Road to Buriton from the John Huntley Scrap Yard roundabout what three words: fluctuate.truffles.boxing). From the parking spaces the route goes towards the railway bridge towards Buriton. Just before the bridge the route turns right to take a marked footpath down a farm track and to a field. The footpath then starts to climb uphill parallel to the field edge. The footpath then leaves the field, through the wood edge and on to a main track.



Uphill on the footpath

The footpath goes right uphill on the track going past a quarry to the right. Then it bends left with the hillside, then right before the path flattens out and runs to the path end at a main track junction. (Here to cut the distance shorter and miss part of the uphill the track left can be taken and followed down to the QE Country Park information Centre and car park to pick up the longer route at the A3 bridge) The longer route goes right at the junction going uphill before bending left at the hilltop. The route continues along the main hilltop track all the way to a car park.



Shorter route on the left and longer route goes right

At the start of the car park the route turns right off the main track, runs parallel to a play equipment area and continues down to another track. A path opposite takes the route down towards the QE Country Park information Centre car park. Just above the car park the route turns right to take a path along to the A3 road bridge (following South Downs Way), under the bridge and continuing on the South Down Way as it crosses the road and follows a path down to the field edge. The route continues on the South Downs Way as it climbs steep uphill on the middle hill spur.



Up hill on the middle spur towards the arial

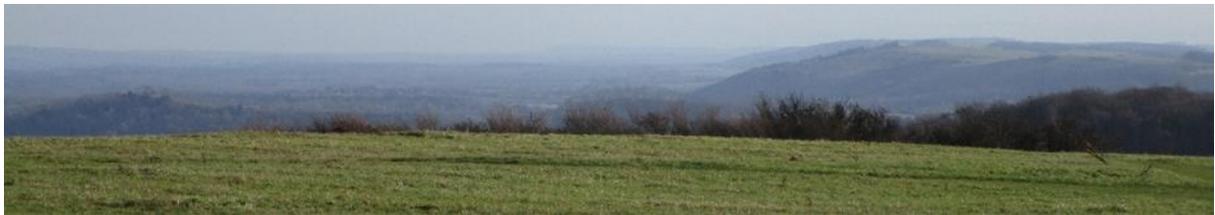
Towards the hilltop the route takes a right path towards the large communications arial, any old timers (me included) remember the large horn like structures on the top of the frame? The route then continues past the arial compound and on to the hilltop concrete triangulation pillar (check out the views here!). The route continues East on a middle path on the spur top before steeply dropping downhill and further down the path enters a tree line. Care is needed if wet as the path can be really slippery here.



Butser hill top arial



Butser triangulation piller



Looking East along the South Downs escarpment



View from above into Petersfield



Added bonus when doing the reccy: these wee beasties!

At the hill bottom the path ends at the wider path. The route turns right to follow the wider path up to a lane junction. At the lane junction take the right lane (Ramsdean Lane) for around a mile and a half to the lane end at a wide road (road towards Weston). On the way look out for the unusual round brick grain store now converted to a house and the Petersfield and District Angling Club Bopeep fishing pond.



Ramsdean Lane



Converted grain store



Bopeep fishing pond

At the wide road the route gets back to the parking area by turning right, then left, under the A3 bridge, on up to the roundabout and straight over.

Liss Runners First Membership Survey: Results



Thank you to all the Lissers that took time to complete our first membership survey.

The survey has helped us understand what you like about our club as well as helping us make improvements. Overall, it has reinforced that members are engaged with the club and what it has to offer. Satisfaction is very high but you have pointed out areas where we can make it even better without fundamentally changing everything that is good with the club.

The committee have been working through the detailed report of the survey findings. We are making some changes which we believe will improve the experience of being part of Liss Runners.

Following is a two-page summary. The first page sets out the survey results and feedback. The second page details what we are changing and the context for why.

Hopefully you find this informative, but if you wish to raise a particular matter then you can email us at liss.runners@liss-runners.org.uk or discuss directly with a member of the committee.

Member Survey



Engagement

- 96% members feel engaged and speak positively to others about the Club
- 75% are highly engaged
- There is no difference between age or gender groups in how we feel about the Club
- 71% have attended social activities, with the awards night the most popular
- 98% agree that membership fees are good value for money
- 92% of members agreed that they feel valued, no members disagree with the statement
- 85% have made many friends by being part of the Club



Preferences

- Our favourite run is around 5 miles to 10k
- We prefer trails and least like running on treadmills
- Almost 30% of members would like to step up to run a marathon or even an ultra
- 59% love to race with only 14% of members not comfortable competing
- There is no difference between the sexes in our attitudes to running
- WhatsApp is by far the most preferred communication method for training, racing and social logistics



Motivation

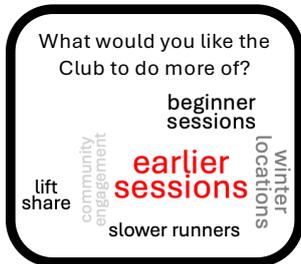
- 91% agree that running is an important part of their life
- 92% run for health and wellbeing benefits
- 79% train to run faster
- 64% train to run further
- 99% run for general fitness
- 82% love being part of the running community with only 4% preferring to run on their own



Participation

- >50% of members participate in the Club's regular activities – Intervals, Torchy, Social, Pub runs and the handicap
- The Sunday Long Run has fallen out of favour but you would like it back
- Track sessions, while new, already have 42% of surveyed members having participated
- Other than the SLR, the Club's activities are highly valued, scoring more than 4 out of 5 with track sessions being the most valued
- >60% of members have participated in the HRRL and SCCL
- Would like to see more Parkrun takeovers by the Club

Feedback





You said, so we're taking action



1 Pace equality

You would like to see more consideration for slower paced running in group activities.

- We will be allocating 2 LiRF* coaches to each session whenever possible; eg Wednesday intervals. The second support coach will ensure that slower paced runners are accommodated.
- On out and back sessions, such as Torchy, Social and the SLR we will have stricter adherence to the "gather up" policy.

2 Communication

While you feel informed about what the Club is doing, it can be overwhelming with all the WhatsApp groups, notifications and duplicate emails.

- We have recently started coordinating all club announcements to ensure there is never more than one announcement on any given day.
- However, the big news is that we have been looking at a specialist App to better manage all member activities of the Club. In addition to many other benefits, the App and its companion web site, will address communications in a single channel almost totally removing the need for WhatsApp. We will announce further details in due course and plan to pilot the App in the very near future.

3 Sunday Long Run

You would like to see more focus on the SLR.

- Hopefully, you will have noticed the SLR is back and thriving. Details of routes are all on the website.
- The survey told us that a number of members wish to train for longer distances. We will try and reflect that need with the SLR. We will look to have runs exceeding the usual 10 miles to support marathon training.

4 Competitive v social running

Slower and social runners sometime feel there is too much emphasis on performance, race results and PBs.

One of the Club's strengths is that we cater for all types; fast, slow, racers and social runners. Lacing up the trainers and getting out there is what matters. But we know we can do better with our inclusivity to all runners.

- We will have a runner of the month award. The focus of the award is not performance based. It's to recognise participation, engagement and contribution to club life.
- We will recognise all achievements of members. At club races such as the HRRL and SCCL, it's on all of us to cheer every red vest home. Anyone attending the SCCL league races hopefully feels the Team Liss vibe.

5 Times of activities

Members have asked whether the Club's activities can be earlier in the evening, later in the evening, in the morning or at lunch time.

- Current timing of session is the best compromise to deal with work, childcare and other responsibilities. We don't have the number of coaches or members to make multiple start times a practical reality.
- However, members are encouraged to connect with others and organise their own activities, either on an adhoc basis or a more regularly.

* LiRF is the Leadership in Running Fitness coaching accreditation from England Athletic. The Club currently has 12 LiRF coaches and is committed to adding additional coaches to the roster.