



NEWSLETTER

November 2024

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General Liss Runners information

Note: the evenings are now well and truly closed in now. For any running in the dusk or dark please wear Hi-viz clothing with reflective strips or belts. So, car drivers can see lights reflected back into their eyes. Head torches are a good idea but please angle the beam down to the ground, so fellow runners and others are not blinded.

Liss runners website: liss-runners.org.uk

Liss Runners Weekly organised activities: -

Sunday: Morning long run (around 10 miles usually on the road): meet up Newman Collard Car park in Liss (what three words: ghosts.firmly.sprayed) at 9am.

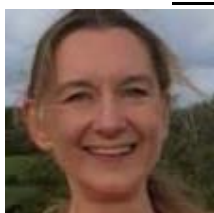


Tuesday: "torch" runs: evening trail runs over 5 to 7 mile routes: note: trail shoes are ideally needed and a head torch is a must on dark evenings. Locations change every week with a meeting time of 7.15pm. There is a WhatsAppGroup for the weekly location. (no report yet, of the torch runs, from a regular!).

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. 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):** November 27th: John Collis; December 4th: Dave Brown; December 11th: James White; December 18th: Kim King; December 25th - no training: relax on Christmas Evening instead!; January 1st: Tom Frost; January 8th: Helen Purchase; January 15th: Max Stuart; January 22nd: John Collis; January 29th: Dave Brown; February 5th: James White; February 12th: Tom Frost; February 19th: Helen Purchase; February 26th: Kim King; March 5th: Max Stuart.

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).

Liss Runners Important Club Contacts: -



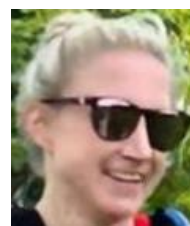
Club Chairperson:
Catherine Seager

Club Secretary:
David Reid



Club Treasurer:
Andrew Turner

Club Ladies Captain:
Caroline Brown



Club Mens Captain:
Steve Armstrong

Club Communications officer:
Jayne Jefferies



Trained club welfare officer:
John Collis

Club kit officer: Stuart Lalavette
Club membership officer: Rose Lewis

Club social secretary:
Alison Strudwick



Sunday run co-ordinator:
Neil Gwatkin



Wednesday training co-ordinator:
Helen Purchase

Club newsletter Editor:
Tom Frost



Chairperson Comments...

Hi all...

What a fantastic couple of months we have enjoyed since the last newsletter came out. September and October have been beautifully mild if a little wet (but we can't have everything)!

Another great period for new members to the club so welcome to everyone that has signed up in the past few months.



September brought about the finale of our handicap season seeing Ellie hold off Steve and Gemma to be our 2024 winner!

Our trial for summer track sessions also came to an end. Thank you to Jayne for getting these organised and to Joe and Caroline for stepping in to take sessions where needed. They proved very popular, and I look forward to them returning when the weather starts to improve in the Spring!

We also enjoyed a successful award evening to get together socially and celebrate the efforts and achievements of the club and individuals alike. A big thank you to Alison for putting this together.

Training sessions perhaps become more valuable as we head into the Winter months. Heading out knowing you have company on the darker nights provides an extra level of reassurance along with help to remain motivated as you find yourself adding yet another layer of clothing before leaving the house! We continue to enjoy trail runs on Tuesday evenings, intervals/hills on Wednesday and a social run every Thursday alongside the Sunday morning long runs so hopefully sessions to suit all.

Look out for upcoming club parkrun tourist trips, a great chance to try out a new parkrun or two with fellow club members.

We continue to be performing well in the HRRL, with our men's team currently sitting at the top of their league. As always, it's strength in numbers so if anyone is interested do check out the upcoming races at [Hampshire Road Race League – a running club competition](#) or speak to either of our captains, Steve and Caroline.

Finally, one of the highlights of winter for many is the Southern Cross country league. 6 runs held between November and March of up to 5 miles. Again, the more runners we have out the better! Always good fun, great support and even better it's free for full members, what's not to like!

Oh, and I hear a rumour that we might well be treated to Tom's annual Boxing Day social run again this year too. A chance to run off a bit of the Christmas dinner, escape the house for a couple of hours and enjoy a mince pie or two at the end.

Editors Comments

Second one in. Many thanks to all who have contributed:-

Catherine for the Chairperson's comments, Alison for the awards evening photographs, Jayne for the report on the Mountbatten track sessions, Steve for the Hampshire Road Race league reports and photographs, Stavros for his report on the Athens Marathon and James White for this edition's runners profile.

I'm still after any input from club members. If you have got up to or taken part in anything of interest to other club members, e-mail a report and photographs pretty please!

I'm especially after volunteers to submit answers to the runners profile sheets: could runners please contact me if you are willing to be featured. Don't be shy! please; before I come a badgering! Otherwise it will be a short series.

Also I like to feature any of your favourite run routes (like mine on page 30).

Anything to go in a future newsletter please e-mail me on: -

tom.frost@westsussex.gov.uk

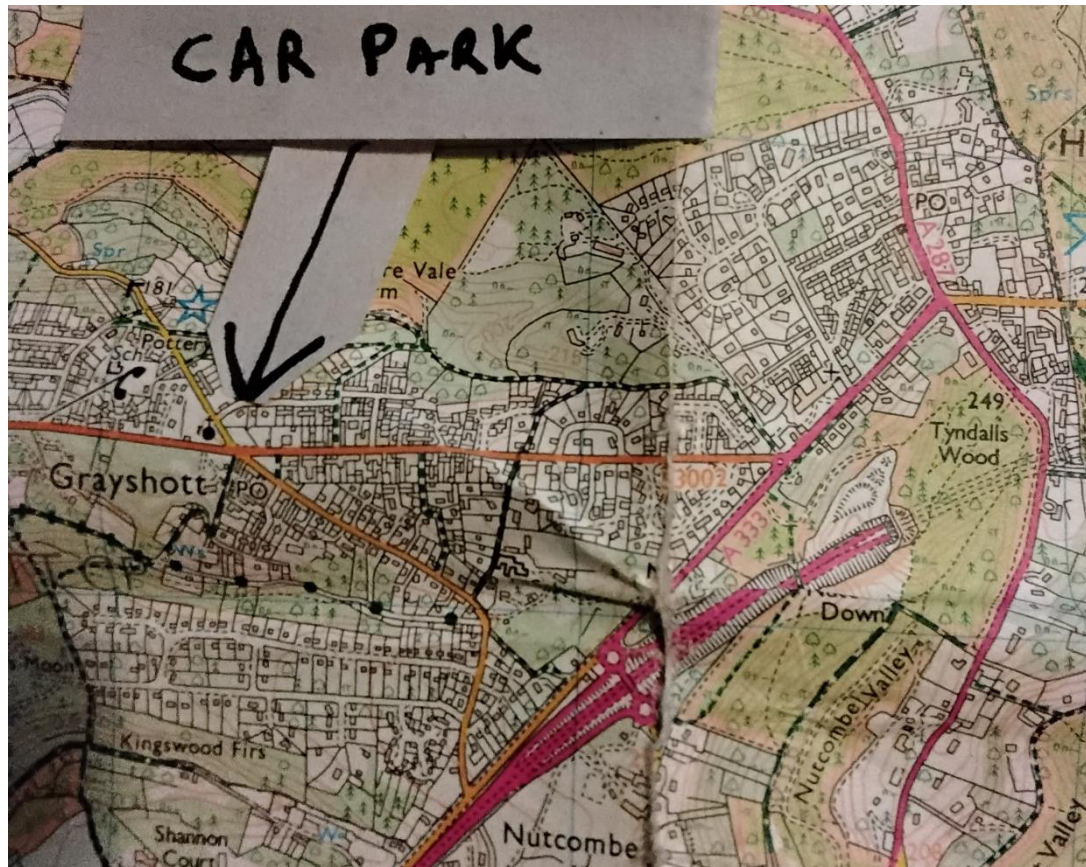
I aim to produce the next Liss Runners newsletter in February.



Liss Runners Boxing Day Social Run

Come explore parts of Ludshott Common and Waggoners Wells from Grayshott. There will be a 3 mile-ish route with written instructions for any walkers and Tom will lead a 5 to 6 mile long run; which will be run at a slow pace within sight of the slowest runner with gathering up points.

If taking part please meet up at 10.15am in Headley Road Car Park, Grayshott: opposite St.Luke's Church, post code: GU26 6LF; What three words :
column.tools.plantings.



Liss Runners Award Evening

The annual evening to celebrate club members achievements and thank members for their help was recently held in The Half Moon, Sheet. This year there was also a quiz: two general knowledge rounds where the answer began with an L or R and two picture rounds where items also began with a L or R.

Many thanks to all who attended: -





Note: Quiz winners were table 4: David and Catherine's table by half a point: putting down German fashion designer Christian name: Karl (Largerfeld).

Award Winners:-



Trevor's Challenge:-
(Club Champions):-
Lady: Catherine Seager
Man: Chris Dettmar.



Overall Handicap winner:-
Ellie Bryan



Personal achievement:-
Kate Parker



Mike Squirrel plate for
Contributions to the club:-
Jayne Jeffries



Consistency Award:
Lady: Gemma Sills
Man: Stavros Valourdos



Hampshire Road Race
Lady: Catherine Seager
Man: Steve Armstrong



Our runners who finished at least seven Hampshire Road Race League races and were awarded a mug by the League:-

Catherine, Steve, Gavin Saunders and Neil Gwatkin.

Also: Stavros and Andy Paton.

Southern Cross Country Race League: Top Liss Runner scorers:-
Lady: Gemma Sills; Man: Phil Avery



Ann Parnell Trophy for the quickest Liss Runner team in the Emsworth to Basingstoke Relay.

Team: Catherine, Caroline, Sarah P., Emma B., Nicky and Gemma.

Many thanks to Alison Studwick for the photographs.

New for 2024!: Liss Runners Track sessions at Mountbatten Centre, Alex Way, Hilsea, Portsmouth. PO2 9QA



Jayne Jefferies was kind enough to organise and coach some track sessions from late Summer down at the running track at the Mountbatten Centre, Portsmouth. As some club members were interested in having a go at track training.

Sessions started off with a warm up jog along the shore-line next to the centre, then some drills and warm up stretches, before the main section focusing on speed work around the 400m track with different distances and recoveries in between, finishing with some 200 and 100 metre sprints at the end of some sessions, for fun. The sessions proved quite popular: it was originally only planned for only the Summer but some of the group wanted to continue, so Joe Sykes made up some training schedules and then were led by Caroline and continued for a few weeks into the Autumn.

There are plans to start these track sessions again next year. Look out in the Spring for details. There will be car share opportunities and there is an individual fee of £4.50 to use the track (2024 prices).



“Lissers” down at the track

Hampshire Road Race League



Liss runners are affiliated to the Hampshire Road Race League. This is a league of 12 road races from September to July. Races are open to all but only club members from affiliated clubs will score in this league.

There is a club league where the fastest four members of a club, taking part, score.

There are also placings for Individual runners if they finish at least seven races in a season and they were awarded a fetching mug last season.

Current Liss positions after the third race (New Forest 10): Ladies 9th in the top A1 section; men 1st in the second A2 section.

Remaining races for the season:-

December 1st: Victory 5 mile Road Race; January 12th : Stubbington 10km Road Race.

February 2nd: Ryde 10 mile road Race; April 6th : Salisbury 10 mile Road Race.

May 12th: Alton 10 mile Road Race; May TBC: Netley 10km race.

June 15th : Alresford 10km Road Race; July TBC: Lordshill 10km Road Race.

To take part in any of these races enter the race in the normal way. Some – like the Stubbington 10km - fill up very fast.

Overton 5 mile race



“The team” on the runners gathering field before the start

Captain's comments : First race of the 2024-25 Hampshire Road Race League.

Overton 5 is an undulating, but net downhill five mile race on fully closed, or traffic managed roads. Showing off the wonderful countryside around Overton.

The weather this morning looked dubious to say the least, and very different to the heat of last year. Fortunately, the heavy downpours, and dark storm clouds dispersed as the start neared. We were treated to glorious weather for the whole event, if not a tad warm. I know a few of us would have appreciated a small cooling shower during.

A strong squad of 14 Lissers raced at Overton.

Awesome efforts from everyone. New members Tom Bennie and Tom Jones racing in red for the first time. Welcome gents, great having you aboard. Tom J had a bit of a nightmare getting to Overton and made it just before the gun. Good effort there mate. Chris Dettmar finished in an incredible time and came 1st V50 gent. Lastly a very happy on the day birthday to Mel, what a great way to celebrate....well it's one way to celebrate I suppose.

Liss Ladies results: Catherine Seager: 8th Lady 2nd FV40 32'44"; Pai Tang: 88th lady 46'15"; Mel Jensen 97th lady 47' 09"; Laura Armstrong 128th lady 51'18"; Laura Harding 132nd lady 52'25".

Liss man Results: Chris Dettmar 26th man 1st MV50 29'19"; David Reid 30th man 3rd MV45 29'27"; Steve Armstrong 63rd man 31'43"; Tom Jones 79th man 32'36"; Tom Bennie 99th man 33'52"; Andy Paton 113th man 34'46"; Warwick Parker 133rd man 35'43"; Gav Saunders 154th man 37'02"; Mark Wilkie 215th man 41'08".

Solent Half Marathon



Captain's comments: Kudos to the 7-man Liss squad for their fantastic efforts in the Solent Half Marathon this morning! The 2nd race in this season's Hampshire Road League. The Solent Half is a 30 year old course winding through the New Forest, around Exbury, and along the Solent shore at Lepe.

Great results all around, and a load of PBs. The conditions were perfect for racing—ideal temperature, no heavy rain, just a few minor drizzles during to keep us cool.

The water buffalo on the course (mile 10) remained as illusive as always. I'm beginning to doubt their existence. We did have some wild ponies run through the race early on. Fortunately with no incident.

Looking forward to seeing the overall HRRL results for this one. Great work everyone.

Liss Results: Chris Dettmar 6th Man 1st M50 1h18'05"; Andy Turner 18th man 1st M60 1h23'52"; Steve Armstrong 31st man 4th M30 1h26'30"; Rob Fleming 35th 4th M40 1h28'48"; Tom Jones 73rd Man 1h35'51"; Andy Paton 76th man 5th M50; Warwick Parker 83rd man 1h38'49".

New Forest 10 mile Race



Before the "off"...

Captain's comments: This morning a team of Lissers took on the New Forest 10, the 3rd race in this season's HRRL. A beautifully scenic, and relatively fast 10 mile mixed terrain race in the heart of the New Forest at New Park, Brokenhurst.

Multiple traffic lights, and busy weekend New Forest roads meant that we all had a pretty hectic start to the day. We weren't all able to get in warmups, and unfortunately we didn't have the time for a full team photo.

Some great performances from the ladies and gents despite this!!

I think the surroundings, and absolutely stunning weather helped us all. The shin deep water of the ford at the halfway mark took me (at least) by surprise. We also almost got taken out by two lots of New Forest ponies galloping across the race.

Big shout out to Laura Rogers who smashed her first ever 10 mile run. Ben Sykes who raced in red for the first time, great to have you mate. Warwick Parker who smashed his 10 mile pb, as well as many others. Plus the few of us suffering from this cold going around.

Horse Brass medals for all finishers.

Liss ladies results: Catherine Seager 11th Lady 6th F40 1h09'22"; Caroline Brown 13th Lady 7th F40 1h09'54"; Laura Rogers 105th lady 1h27'11"; Pai Tang 161st lady 1h33'57".

Liss men's results: Phil Avery 14th man 4th M40 59'10"; David Reid 35th man 8th M40 1h03'18"; Steve Armstrong 53rd man 1h05'14"; Ben Sykes 59th man 1h06'17"; Andrew Brown 63rd man 1h06'40"; Warwick Parker 111st man 1h11'36"; Andy Paton 122nd man 1h12'15".



...and at the finish.



Results : Benyon's Enclosure, Silchester: 3rd November



The team by the club tent and flag



The field ready for the "off"

We had a great start to the first cross country race of the season around the woods of Benyon's Enclosure, Silchester. The **ladies** did us proud, as usual, with a brilliant 2nd place with 50 points (behind Basingstoke and Mid Hants. AC on 15 and ahead of 3rd place Hart Road Runners on 99).

Our **men** had a mighty fine 3rd place on 94 points (behind 1st placed Denmead on 29 points and 2nd placed Basingstoke on 41 points but ahead of 4th placed Fleet and Crookham on 111).

Overall we finished in second with 5 points (behind the host club Basingstoke on 3 points but ahead of third place Alton on 8 points).

Liss runners individual positions: Ladies: 8th Caroline Brown, 10th Catherine Seager, 14th Nicky Thornycroft, 18th Lara Jackson, 20th Polly Sharpe, 31st Helen Purchase, 39th Laura Batey, 41st Kate Parker, 42nd Laura Rogers, 52nd Sue Godsell, 62nd Emily White, 149th Emily Durrant and 150th Mel Jenson.

And for the men: 16th Andy Turner, 18th David Reid, 26th Andy Brown, 34th Steve Armstrong, 40th Tom Bennie, 47th Tom White, 77th Paul Turner, 78th Warwick Parker, 81st Tom Frost, 86th Andy Paton, 113th James White, 164th Kevin Durrant and 191st Neil Gwatkin.

A message from our men's team captain Steve Armstrong: MASSIVE thank you, and well done to everyone who turned up and represented our club. 13 men and 13 women made it, I believe, a record turnout for a XC race. We had 21 at Bourne Woods last season. Warm welcome to our new members racing for us for the first time, and existing members getting their first taste of XC action. We had the perfect temperature and conditions for racing. I don't think I've ever been so clean after a XC race. I think we'd all agree it was still pretty tough going, but great fun! That's the first of 6 down. Looking forward to seeing the final results, and really looking forward to seeing you all, and hopefully even more at our next race.

Special thanks go to Laura, and Stuie for supporting the runners with childcare, photography, and the recording of scores.

Current details of the rest of the races this season: 24th Novemeber: Alice Holt, 15th December: Lords Wandsworth College Odiham, January or February: Chawton House Alton, February: Bourne Woods and 2nd or 9th March Wickham.

For each race, to reduce the need for parking and save petrol costs, there will be organised met ups for car sharing to the races. Look out for the e-mails for this. We plan to have the club tent for members kit and children at every race. Also any of our runners taking part and are not affiliated to England Athletics must declare this on the results sheet and pay a fee of £2.





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 24th November: New Forest Stinger 10 mile trail race Ocknell

Sunday 24th November: Alice Holt SCCL.

Sunday 30th November: New Forest off road ½ Marathon, Brockenhurst.

Sunday 1st December: [Victory 5 mile Road Race](#) (HRRL).

Sunday 1st December: Running GP Goodwood, Chichester.

Saturday 7th December: Run the Seasons Winter Cowdray Midhurst.

Sunday 15th December: Lord Wandsworth SCCL.

Sunday 22nd December: Portsmouth Coastal Waterside Marathon.

Thursday 26th December: Devils Punchbowl Boxing day run.

Saturday 28th December: Brutal Longmoor, Whitehill.

Saturday 11th January: Fitstuff G3 race 1, Guildford.

Sunday 12th January: Stubbington Green 10km RR (number transfers only).

Sunday 12th January: Winchester Trail Run.

Sunday 12th January: Southampton Common 10km.

Sunday 19th January: Romsey 5 mile Race.

Saturday 25th January: Brutal Bagshott, Aldershot.

Sunday 26th January: South Down/Arundel Marathon Heyshott Midhurst.

Saturday 1st February: Fitstuff G3 race 2, Guildford.

Saturday 1st February: QE CP off road half marathon, Horndean.

Sunday 2nd February: Chichester 10km Goodwood.

Saturday 8th February: Langstone Harbour half marathon.

Sunday 9th February: Farnborough Winter ½ Marathon.

Sunday 9th February: Portsmouth Coastal ½ Marathon.

Sunday 9th February: Running GP Goodwood.

Sunday 16th February: Southampton Running Festival, Southampton Common.

Sunday 16th February: Bramley 20 and 10 mile RR, Basingstoke.

Saturday 22nd February: Chichester Harbour run, Emsworth.

Sunday 23rd February: Winchester 10km RR.

HRRL = Hampshire Road Race League race.

SCCL = Southern Cross Country League race.

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 picture is 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 (stevearm85@hotmail.com) to go on a future possible order list.

Athens Marathon: 12th November 2023

by Stavros Valourdos



Dedicated to the Balkan Champion Gregoris Lambrakis

The idea about running the Athens Marathon was playing in my head for a while (including a mention from my mum on a phone call during the event the year before). What firmly lodged it as a plan was a Torch run evening at QE with Kev Osman. While discussing his exploits on the London marathon and then talking about other marathons, I mentioned that the Athens Marathon is in November, and he said it was great timing because you'd have most of your training volume at the best period, during autumn, not soggy/cold winter or hot summer! I then thought that November would also mean a decent temperature in Athens so there you go, I signed up! Living outside the EU also meant that I had to pay for the expensive race package – double the price (ouch)!

I grew up close to the route (roughly around halfway) in a town called Spata where the Athens Airport is now located and was familiar with it and some of its notable winners (including none other than the legend himself Ron Hill in 1969) through watching it on the TV but not ever joining in person. I remember hearing every time about how particularly hard people said the route was. Up to a particular point, the runner should watch out for themselves to not go too hard or risk a DNF or going out of contention at best. During the 2004 Olympics, Paula Radcliffe DNF'd shockingly (although the August heat must have played a part) pretty much outside my office at the time! During my training and especially on race day, I was particularly cognisant about these points on the course.

The Athens Marathon starts at the outskirts of Marathon town. From 11-17km the course is uphill in parts, with further uphill through to around 31km. The course then slowly descends into Athens and is essentially fairly flat the rest of the way, finishing in the Panathinaikon Stadium, home to the 1896 Olympics. The part between 17 to 31km is the toughest as I found out during the race from mine and other runners' experience. The Athens Marathon event on its own is not as old as you might imagine but the route has been used for many other occasions since 1896 like the 2004 Olympics, and many kinds of Athletics Championships like World, European, Mediterranean, Balkan etc.

I set out with a target of 3:30 – 3:45 and got a plan for that purpose from Runners World website. What was interesting about it, I thought, is that it indicated a target pace even for the long runs. Amazingly, it also had me doing intervals on the week of the event! I went through the plan by incorporating it in my weekly training and allocating the long run to Sunday (unlike Friday evening that I did often for my last marathon). I used the Longmoor ranges & Basingstoke canal for most of my long runs (btw, there is a short stretch of the canal that I need to do towards the end near Weybridge in order to claim that I have ran the whole of it). The plan still worked even when I was travelling, although on a particular September Sunday night near Izmir in Turkey I struggled a lot as I had to endure the hottest half I've ever done at 27 degrees Celcius (yes at night)! Marathon training also prevented me from joining the early races for XC and Road Race league that I enjoy so much so following a marathon plan also has this negative side-effect.

I travelled to Athens on the week before the event to acclimatise. Guess what: temperature was still around the early to mid-twenties and the sun was shining brightly every day! I didn't stop work that week and that didn't help but I couldn't do otherwise. In the meantime, I was also scheduled to travel to Tokyo on the week after, so I had to pack for both occasions as I was travelling on from there. The week was particularly brutal work-wise with very busy days that contributed to some nervousness ahead of the event. At that point, I should give credit to Catherine who replied to some relevant comment I made on Strava, that I'd done all the hard work and I should now enjoy the experience which resonated a lot and kept me calm to race day. In essence, a reminder that the all the training of closely following a marathon plan reduces the risk of the wheels coming off on such a long and demanding run and lets you enjoy this special day. But they don't call this maranoia by accident!

Logistics-wise, the marathon was due to start at 9am and the organisers were advising against travelling to the start by other means other than their own. They had shuttle buses picking up people along the route but that meant having to wake-up very early, get ready and get someone else (my son in my case) to drop me at one of the predetermined points to be picked up by the shuttle. Everything worked like a charm (except for no result at the toilet) which meant I was on one of the early shuttles to Marathon with a lot of time to kill until the start of the race. Part of the runner's pack that I had picked up during the week from registration, was a transparent bag labelled with name & number that you're supposed use on the day to drop at the start and pick at the end with the stuff you were carrying along. You were not allowed to bring your own bag. As soon as we arrived at the start, we were urged to drop our bags (which I did, including mobile phone) and given a poncho to help with the chill of dawn while on our race kit. That was a lot of waiting, loitering about and listening to music and announcements from the loudspeakers, stuff like that "the trucks are leaving imminently so people should really drop their bags now" (eyeroll). And while there were a lot of toilets with no queues available still no need. That was a first for a race. The start was at the stadium of the local football team (fittingly called "Marathon Battle FC") that I realised I had visited dog years ago while supporting my local football team on an away match, both teams at the lower echelons of Greek football. Finally, the time came for the start and thankfully I was on one of the early waves (3rd after the elites) based on the time I had submitted (2022 Solent Half).



Inside the famous ancient, fully marble (only one in the world) Panathenaic Stadium: start and finish

When we started, the weather was cool and cloudy, so it was relatively easy going. Close to the start and especially around the Marathon battle tomb loop, people were handing/offering olive branches to runners but I'm not in favour of carrying something while running so I passed. While the race had aid stations every 2.5km, at this early stage, I was only using them every 5km. Already from this point, I started seeing runners dropping off, nothing visibly wrong with most of them, a sight that you see much more rarely in half's and 10k's. After the initial flat bit, we started having the hills and later on, the ascent that the Athens Marathon is famous about. The most important and impactful event though, was that after the initial 10k, the sun came out from behind the clouds, bright as ever, and stayed there for the duration of the day. I noticed that I could tackle all the hills thrown at me (I had LR Torch run to thank for that) but the sun and the heat were killing me. I then decided that I would have to use all aid stations going forward, drink half a bottle of water and pour the rest over my head. As time progressed and we were moving closer to Athens, there were more and more people cheering us (in traditional and creative ways) along the route, something I wasn't really expecting in such numbers. Cyclists were also taking advantage of free movement on the closed roads and there were a lot of them along the way. After 31km that the hills had ended, it registered that there was nothing stopping me despite the fatigue and the fact that I was literally parched for water before each aid station, every 2.5km to the end. Finally, we reached the Panathinaikon Stadium and I finished in good form. I noticed that I must have had overtaken a lot of runners to finish roughly in the middle of the previous wave, although my time of 3:55:54 was below the target I had set. Considering the heat I had to endure, I would take that.



Our man in Athens! Stavros pounding the Athens streets.

Although I had talked with a lot of people about seeing me through along the route (e.g. a couple of friends volunteering in one of the early aid stations, my brother waiting around halfway, my son waiting at the finish), everyone missed me! I got to meet my son after I exited the stadium, got my kitbag and texted him. Getting my kit back was also an adventure and took a lot of time. Guess what: the transparent kitbag for all didn't help to distinguish which is which, neither did it make any difference that I was one of the early drops! My kitbag seemed missing to a lot of volunteers until one of them was more persistent and finally found it. Phew!



Finish back at Panathenaic Stadium



Stavros and son

I later met with my brother and his family, and we went for lunch in one of the busy restaurants of the city centre and finally I took the metro back home. It still involved a lot of walking until I arrived back exhausted. Along the way, I met one of the volunteers who asked me to make sure that I evaluate the event as it's important for the organisers to improve and a few people said some kind words for the accomplishment. The rest, thankfully tolerated the stench on public transport as I didn't get any abuse!

What made this race really special and unique was that every single part of the route (especially the 2nd half) had something to remind me from my earlier life as after all this was the main road from where I grew up to the centre of Athens that I had studied, worked, commuted through or visited places (e.g. bars, restaurants, shops, cinemas, theatres etc.) but never ran. It obviously never crossed my mind back then that I would end up doing this! I also hadn't realised what a big part of my life this stretch of road played, considering that Athens is such a big city.

Runners Profile: James White

Where were you born?

I was born in Chichester at St Richards Hospital, growing up on the coast at Selsey.

Where have you lived?

All of my childhood was spent in Selsey. I moved to London in my early 20s to seek my fortune, living in Crouch End and Norbury for a few years. But I'm not a city boy so moved to Fleet for a few years, before ending up in Grayswood (near Haslemere) until moving here in 2001.



While I've not moved around much, I have spent a lot of time overseas for work, living away for brief periods, most notably in Bangalore, Chicago, Delhi, Dublin and Krakow.

When did you get into running?

I've been running since 1981.

What got you interested in running?

I was always sporty at school and took part in most sports and ran for the school, but didn't specially train as a runner. Cricket was my main focus.

But in my first year of 6th form I became seriously ill and spent a year in and out of hospital. As part of my recovery, my surgeon recommended that I kept fit and active to prevent any reoccurrence and suggested I ran several times a week. I enjoyed running and it just became part of my life. I soon forgot why it was I started in the first place. I found it just made everything better.

What do you like about running?

There are two constants. The first is the sense of wellbeing I get from being out running, it's the ultimate stress buster and while it solves nothing, it does put everything into perspective. The second is being fit and healthy. Since my health scare in my teens, I have been very healthy ever since – running injuries don't count. In fact, I haven't had a day's sick leave since 1989!

But since moving to Liss and joining Liss runners, I now add to that the social life and sense of community it has given me.

Anything you don't like about running?

Not really. But I do hate being injured and not being able to run. I'm not great at rest and recovery.

Do you have any running heroes or memorable running events that you have watched and stuck in your memory?

My absolute number 1 running hero is Steve Ovett, and I am a member of the Steve Ovett Appreciation Society Facebook group. I also took part in a race in the early 80s where he was part of the Brighton team. But I was also a fan of the less well known Peter Elliott. He was around at the same time as Coe, Cram and Ovett. While he didn't have their natural talent, he had guts and determination.

My best watching moment was Super Saturday. I was in the Olympic Stadium in 2012 to see Mo win gold in the 10,000 meters, as well as seeing Greg Rutherford and Jess Ennis win their golds too.

What and when was your first running race?

It was the Arundel 10k in 1982. It was a lapped course (3 circuits I recall) up the hill to the castle. It was the race I mentioned above. There is even photo evidence, those shorts would probably get me arrested these days!

What running performance are you most proud of?

There are two and I couldn't pick between them. First is the Kingston Marathon where I not only ran a sub 3 but I finished 10th overall. The second is Hayling 10 mile and going sub 60.

What is your favourite running event?

That's an easy one. The South Downs Way relay. It really is the most fun you can have with your clothes on. I've been lucky enough to have done it 8 times and done all bar 1 on the 18 legs.

If you get a chance to run it, you will not be disappointed.

**What type of terrain do you prefer (trail, road, cross country)?**

Trail every time. It's kinder on your legs and best for wellbeing. Living where we do, we're spoilt for choice.

What race distance do you prefer.

10 mile is my favourite.

How did you get to join Liss Runners?

We had been in Liss a few months when an old friend of mine offered me a place in the 2002 London Marathon for a charity he was supporting. I trained well for it but was disappointed with not getting sub 3. I struggled from mile 17 onwards and staggered over the line in 3:12. So, I thought I would join Liss Runners to train properly.

Before moving here, while I had been running for 20 years, I had never joined a running club and had done a grand total of 4 races.

Can you list a typical running week training wise?

Now I am in my 60s it's less intense than it used to be. I probably run 6 days a week. The main focal points are Wednesday intervals with the club and a longer run at the weekend of 8 – 10 miles. The rest is a mix based on how I feel. Mileage wise, it's probably about 30 miles a week.

Have you a running bucket list and if so, what's still to do?

The Emsworth to Basingstoke relay if anyone will have me in their team (please).

Is there any interesting or funny running stories or anything else that may be of interest to fellow club members.

Well, you only need to look back to September's club handicap. Our esteemed Chair's instructions were to be careful on the old A3 and watch where you're running. So, I ran into a tree branch and near knocked myself out. It was my first, and hopefully only, DNF in a race.

Finally stats. Can you list your personal bests:

Mile	I've not raced a mile but have had a 5:18 mile split in the Hayling 10.
5km	Never raced one. I must be the only runner not into park run.
5 mile	28:57 – actually done in the first half of the Hayling 10.
10k	36:09
Half Marathon	1:21.26
Marathon	2:57:24

Training Matters...Tis the season!...Cross Country: comments, hints, guidance



Firstly, Why do Cross Country Races...

The team aspects: Doing a club cross country race it's all about the "team". Times no longer matter (even for the same courses done annually your times will vary due to different conditions), it's all about the placings. How many other club runners did you beat? Did you score for the team? Did you push other club runners down the placings? How well did the team do overall?

At the finish there is a lot more vocal encouragement. Your fellow club members will shout for you and when you're finished you have a chance to shout for the team members still to finish. Maybe it will encourage a final sprint to gain a few extra places!

The social side: Cross country races are a lot more social than individual races. There is more hanging about at the start and finish: find the club gathering by the club tent or club flag and have a right old chat. How are you going to do (or usually getting the excuses in that you're not going to do well as you've had a cold in the week but then have a great race!), what's the course like, what to watch out for (muddy sections, hills etc.). Then there is a chance to catch up with the opposition you know, especially runners of a similar speed to yourself, either coming across them around other club areas or at the start and finish and again have a right good chat.

To become a better, "all round" runner: Doing flat road races tends to exercise the same muscles. Cross country races will tend to give "a full body workout". The rougher, rutted and muddy trails will strengthen the feet, legs and hips as well as improving your balance. The constant change of pace (start, hills, bendy sections, finish) will give the lungs a real workout, increasing your Vo2 level (ability to get oxygen to the muscles), along with improving your arm strength and running form. That's the physical side but it should also strengthen up your mental side as well with the harder running and the colder weather to contend with.

Races are more interesting than road races: Cross country courses are varied and scenic (especially the SCCL ones). Plenty of different sections mud, hills, trails etc. Runners are also more bunched up. This gives more opportunity to run against your opposition or fellow club members. All good to give motivation and gauge your performance.

More forgiving on the joints: Road race courses are over hard tarmac surfaces. This can give your joints a real pounding. Give your joints a break and run on the softer surfaces of a cross country race.



Cross Country Spikes



My "stud" shoes



My trail shoes

Secondly ensure you have suitable shoes to race in...

Cross country races courses have mud, roots, ruts, loose stones, hills etc. even some have stream crossings. Road trainers just won't cut it! They won't stop you slipping all over the place, letting your opposition pass you and risk injury. You will need shoes that will give great grip on these surfaces. Elite runners run in "spikes": lightweight racers with screw in metal spikes on the shoe sole. These may not be suitable for runners who have any kind of biomechanical problem as they offer minimal support and cushioning. They can also cause problems over hard surfaces such as tarmac or concrete as the spikes won't dig in for the grip. A better alternative – at our level – are "fell running" shoes, some people refer to these as "stud" shoes (although football boots are also called studs). These have deep lugs on the shoes sole to dig into the ground and give excellent grip. Again, there is low cushioning and support. They won't be suitable for longer races (10km and above).

For longer races and where the mud is not too extensive "trail shoes" may be a better alternative. They still have lugs on the sole but these are less deep and these shoes offer better support and cushioning.

Thirdly, training for cross country races...

Mimic your race courses: Cross country courses are very different than road races courses. You need to get your body ready for the trails, mud, hills etc. If you are going to tackle Autumn/Winter series of cross country races start to "go cross country" in September. You need to try to replicate what you are going to race over. Can you find training routes that about the same or more than the distance you are going to race? That has muddy sections, ruts, bends and plenty of short sharp hills?

Ensure, if you only run on the roads over the Summer, ease onto the cross country surfaces. You will need to build up strength in your feet, legs, knees and hips slowly to lessen the risk of injury from turning your foot over in a rut or stone (and as at the bottom of this section the importance of scanning the route ahead).



Get your body cross country race fit: Cross country races are far less even paced than a typical road race. There is the rush from the start to get a good place, pace changes after hard sections, hard running around bends, slowing down but hard efforts up hills, dropping down slopes and a kick to the finish. Interval training is the way to go. Splitting your training session into sections of hard and recovery bits. Splitting your hard sections lets you give more effort on each hard section: more on the "Training Matters" in the last newsletter and turn up to Wednesday training!

Also "work those hills". Pick some short, sharp hills and practise going hard up them. At the top either stop to recover or more useful, keep the effort up over the top and beyond. At a hilltop is an excellent place to pass runners as most usually slow down due to the effort expended on the hill itself.

Down hill is also a chance to gain a few places. So, practise on the down slopes as well. There may be a "training matters" on hill training in a future newsletter.

Running form: Arm use will be more important with the pace changes and hills. Don't be a "tyrannosaurus rex" with arms that don't serve a running purpose. Keep the arms low, forearms parallel to the ground, pump the arm to power the opposite leg and keep the arms moving at right angles to the body – try to keep the arms from crossing over the body.

Over the muddy areas it's also worth trying to get as much of your shoe sole on the ground as your foot rolls forward for maximum traction, as long as this does not mess with your running form.



Looking ahead: Ensure to scan the route ahead to pick up any hazards such as logs, ruts, low branches, pits, slopped muddy ground (easy to slip off this). So, you have a chance to place your foot in a safe place as you are running. Also, it can let you pick the fastest route: the choice between going through the middle of a deep puddle or the long way round? The fastest route maybe between the two.

Fourthly, Race tips and comments...

The evening before, get all your items ready for race day: clothing, race tops, shoes, bin bags, waterproofs, towel etc. Saves time and worry in the morning and risk of forgetting things.

Have your breakfast well before the race, so your body has time to digest it and lessen stomach cramp risks or the chance of seeing your breakfast again (in a different form!).

Get to the race venue in good time to get a parking place and work out where to go, all to lessen worry.

Near to the start, go for a good warm up, long enough to really get some good warmth into the legs and arms and test the lungs. A good idea may be to warm up along the start and finish to give an idea of what the race surface is going to be, the best race lines and any problems such as pinch points.

At the start try pick your place between runners around the same speed as yourself. Unless you are one of the top runners being too close to the front will incentivise you to go off too fast and spoil the rest of your race or make you unpopular with other runners needing to pass you. Too far back and you will be obstructed.

Are your shoes tight on (deep, thick mud can pull them off) and your laces tightly tied (very annoying if they come loose mid race). Tuck your laces in to the secure section of the laces or do as the orienteers do and apply tape on the tied lace sections, if the laces keep coming loose.

Try to stay calm, composed, relaxed and loose all and ready for the effort to come.

The race itself could be split into sections:-

The start: It's a big rush to get a good position. Try to pick a good race line and not get into too much "oxygen debt" by going off far too fast, that will ruin the rest of your race.

The settle: After the rush of the start let your body calm down and ease into the rest of the race.

The scout: Have a look around. What's your nearby opposition? Can you start to pass people? **Be very careful on passing runners.** It is very easy to go into oxygen debt by running on the rough edges of paths trying to pass people. Pick your point where the path is nice and wide or it may be worth waiting for an uphill section.

Do you need to keep your position and if so, how about getting behind a fellow runner to make the running a little easier.

If you are struggling it may be worth a drop back to recover.

The steady: Try to maintain an even pace, as far as possible on the terrain, to best use your energy up over the whole race and not fade towards the finish.

The wind up: Towards the finish, if you have the energy, it may worth it to up the pace and gain a few places: don't go too early though and risk using up your energy before the finish and lose those hard-fought places.

The kick: The finish is in sight! Well worth a sprint to the line to use the last of your energy and again gain a few places (but do this without a risk of slipping over or knocking over your fellow runners).

At the finish, pick up your numbered finish token and catch your breath. Then find the club number collector and give them you finish number. Have a run down to loosen the muscles off and pump away any accumulated lactic acid. Stretches to the main muscles will also do the same. Have a good chat with your fellow runners on how they and you did and look forward to the next race!



Fav. Run Routes: Petersfield to Petersfield via Wheatham Hill: 6 miles

This is one of my favourite run routes: plenty to see, lots of variety and great views. It's 6 miles long but feels much longer due to the hills!

I'm after plenty more fav. Runs from others. If able e-mail me over your own fav. Routes and I'll get them in future newsletters.

My run starts with a park up on Tilmore Road, just to the North of Kimbers (what three words: streetcar/occupations/craftsman). Run North-East along Tilmore Road. After around a third of a mile the road becomes Harrow Lane: a narrow hedge banked sunken Lane. Where the lane ends the route continues up the cycle route/path on the right and goes over the Petersfield bypass. Keep on the same path as it turns back into a lane and follow to it's end at Waterworks Road. Go straight across the lane to follow narrow lane passing The Harrow Inn: lovely 18th century built (but there has been an Inn here at least from the 16th century), unspoilt pub that has been in the same family since 1932! As far as I know you won't get a more hearty ploughmans, sandwiches and quiches any where else and if you are lucky cottage pie and flan. Also a well served pint of Double Drop or Hophead beer from the stillage on the rear counter. Their pea and ham soup is legendary.



Park up on Tilmore Road

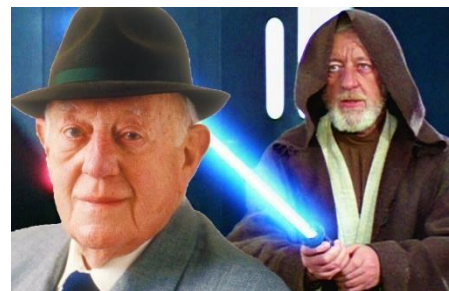


Over the by-pass



The Harrow Inn

After the pub: continue on the narrow lane as it drops down to a footbridge in front of Kettlebrook cottages. A vocal club member used to live in one of these! I'll let you decide who that was! Continue on the now muddy path running parallel to the deep ravine of side stream off Ashford Stream. Looking to the right across the meadow there is a bungalow the acclaimed British actor Sir Alec Guinness lived for the later part of his life. At the path end reach a sharp bend of Sandy Lane. Turn left to follow lane up and along to a wider lane junction. Here turn left to take the wide lane as it soon goes through the hamlet of Steep Marsh.



The force is strong with this One: Alec Guinness.

Keep going on the same lane and it rises up and reaches the private drive on the right to Coldhayes. I usually take a breather here, as I know what's coming!

The lane now climbs one of those horrible hills where it just seems to get steeper and steeper.

I've occasionally passed cyclists on this hill (quite satisfying!). Near to the top take the short lane on the right – it must be around 1:4 here.

At the hilltop turn right at the lane T-junction. Take a well-earned breather at one of the gateways and admire the views over the Liss area.

Continue on the lane to another lane junction. Here take the lane on the left and go up to a track on the left with the Ashford Hangers sign. Go up this steep track (a rise of around 100 meters in half a mile) no shame in taking a few breather breaks! As the track gets to the top, keep going to reach the information board Cobbett's view. Cobbett: William Cobbett, an 18/19th Century famous (in his time!) journalist/politician/farmer. Take the path up on the right to take in the fantastic view by the concrete triangulation pillar.



Ashford Stream ravine

Views from top of the first hill – towards Liss

Cobbett's view

Go down the path on the rear left, down steps and through gate to get back to the wider track. Turn right to follow the main track up and along for around 600 meters missing side paths until you get to marked footpath on the left. Go down this footpath soon going steeply downhill. Take utmost care as it has loose stones and slippery slopes. Very easy to fall over. Walk as needed. When the view opens up you come to...



View towards Petersfield and the South Downs beyond

Keep going steeply downhill passing the stone memorial to the poet Edward Thomas (killed in the First World War at the Battle of Arras in 1917), down the timber steps to reach a lane at the bottom. Turn right to follow lane to marked footpath down a drive on the left. Go down the drive and left following the footpath. Continue on the footpath as it goes around a small nature reserve. Just after the notice board take the marked footpath on the right, down passed the lovely waterfall down to a lane. Turn right and go up a short section of the lane to a lane junction. Take the marked footpath through the gate on the left and follow the footpath round the field and then uphill through a wood. At the hill top go over the playing field to a lane by the 12th century All Saints church Steep.



"Poets stone"



Steep waterfall

On the lane turn right then left to take marked public footpath. Follow this path running parallel to the grounds of Bedales, over the bypass bridge and on down to a lane. Turn right to follow lane back up to the start.

All Saints Church, Steep:

