



The Harrier

July
2003

The newsletter of the Canterbury Harriers

Happy 10th birthday to us

Canterbury Harriers celebrates its 10th birthday on July 27 – an event to be marked with a special pub run two days before, on Friday, July 25th at the Rose & Crown, Perry Wood.

Administration officer **Roy Gooderson** is asking the Rose & Crown to lay on an extra special spread for us that evening. It would be good to see as many Harriers there as possible – to celebrate this occasion. Please let a committee member know if you are coming so we can get the catering arrangements roughly right.

Roy and former chairmen **Bob Davison** and **Joe Hicks** – our three members who have been with the club through thick and thin from the start – all plan to be there.

See page 3.

Le Touquet

Roy Gooderson surpassed himself this year in organising the 12th Le Touquet 10k trip – laying on a re-enactment of Napoleonic marching (complete with bayonets and small cannons) just as the 36-strong Harrier team sat down for post-race refreshments at that bar in old Boulogne. He says it was just coincidence but we know better. It has to be said that the weather was a bit warmer than ideal for running – although **Mark Wilborne** still managed to get a PB. Over 1,000 people took part in the race overall. In traditional style, we had our Wimereux beach picnic – where Roy, **Stephanie Lam** and **Steve Clark** braved the sea for a swim. **Shirley Laws** and coach **Gerry Reilly** from the linguists division of the Harriers impressed the rest of us with their command of French, very useful at the bar.

Red Lion 10k

A reminder: we need 25 volunteers for the Red Lion 10k, a major fund-raising event for us, on

Sunday, 10 August at 11am in Hernhill, Faversham. Volunteer to **John Hartley**.

Pub runs

The Three Horsheshoes pub in Staplestreet is the location for the next pub run on Friday, 11 July – at 7pm. The special 10th anniversary pub run (see left) takes place on Friday, 25 July at the Rose & Crown, Perry Wood. We will be running the Red Lion 10k route at the Red Lion pub run on Friday, 8 August (at 7pm).

Saxon Shore relay

The men's Harriers team were runners up in this 47-mile, 22-leg relay – missing out by just 2.5 minutes to Deal Tri. Our team – **Simon Kendall, Nicolas Pirot, Steve Clark, Nick Keys** and **Joe Hicks** – came home in 5 hours 7 minutes. Our ladies team – **Stephanie Lam, Wendy Smith, Natalie Bent, Carol Reid** and **Mandy Poulter** – were also second. There were 23 teams in all, including our mixed team – **Alastair Telford, Dianne August** (whose husband **Monty** acted as driver), **Emma Wilson, David Martin** (on loan from Deal Tri) and **Laurence Sandum**. 'It was a great day out,' said organiser Steve Clark. 'Lots of people said they would like to do it next year.'

Kent Grand Prix

The next Grand Prix race is the Dartford Half on Sunday, 20 July. Several Harriers are doing well. **Roy Palmer** is 7th, **Pete Worsley** 13th, **Carol Reid** 7th, **Sarah Maguire** 16th. Our men's team is currently 4th and the ladies team lies 6th – in fields of 24 teams each.

Buy your water bottles now

Canterbury Harriers water bottles, £2.50 each, available from **Bob Davison** and **Roy**.

FORTHCOMING RACES

Time	Date	Race	Location
10.00	20 July	Dartford Half	Central Park, Dartford
11.00	10 August	Red Lion 10k	Red Lion pub, Hernhill
	17 August	Tunbridge Wells 10k	
10.00	7 December	Thanet Coastal 10	Westgate Bay, Margate

View from the men's champion

Roy Palmer, the Canterbury Harriers male champion, turns 40 in September and is due to become a father in October.

We are all used to seeing him speeding off into the distance – but it wasn't always so. 'I hated running at school: it wasn't the in thing to like it,' he says. 'Then I took up running 15 years ago to keep fit. I was playing football with my nephews in the garden when I realised how unfit I was.' So he began running on his own – enjoying (as he does today) running down footpaths around Canterbury and seeing where they led to. He entered his first race in 1990, a Canterbury fun run, but did not go in for his second for a few years.

His friend, fellow Harrier **Dave Smith**, was a big influence – and told Roy that he could do a marathon in three hours. So Roy entered in 1994 and did 2.57, a time he was happy with until he realised he could do more. Roy has always set himself goals – and his first set were Dave Smith's PBs. After a while, Dave encouraged him to join a running club – so, in 1998, Roy joined Canterbury Harriers, his one and only running club.

Five years later and his results show that he is still improving. At the end of 2002, he set his PBs in 5 miles (26.42) and 10k (33.00) – and earlier this year he achieved PBs in the Half (currently his strongest distance at 72.06), 20 (1.56.45) and the Marathon (2.35.27). His oldest PB is a 55.16 for 10 miles – the distance which used to be his best which is now 'probably the weakest'. The 33.00 for 10k rankles with him – as he really wants to get under 33. But now that he is about to become a vet, one of his main aims is to get some new PBs at 40. He adds: 'I'll have a new set of vet targets to go for.' Setting goals for himself has been a constant feature of his running. 'No matter what standard you are, there are hundreds of people who can beat you and hundreds you can beat. So it's never been about beating anyone else. It's you against you.' Before he started running races, he had worried that it would be unnecessarily competitive – so was relieved to find it wasn't and he enjoys the fact that his rivals are also his friends. He trains twice a week with the other top Kent runners, including Michael Coleman and Neil Renault, and ran last March with those two runners in the Kent Half Marathon team (where he achieved his PB). 'There's no animosity,' he says about the other top runners. 'I get on well with all of them. You might help each other out in a race to 9 miles – and then race the last mile.' He particularly enjoys the camaraderie of the marathons where 'everyone helps each other'.

Some runners of Roy's calibre might have found life simpler to join a club which was more focused on pure winning than the Harriers. But, by splitting his training between Canterbury and the fast group which meets at Dover, he can get the best of both worlds. He has several ideas to share (or at least which The Harrier extracted from him) about his own approach to running but says: 'A lot of the tips I've got have come from the Harriers.' So here are some of his thoughts:

- **'Running more miles** makes a big difference'. He does 70/80 per week leading up to the marathon, and 40/50 in the summer. (He used to do 15/20.) His weekly long run is 20+ for the marathon, and 12/15 in the summer.
- **'Running with the best runners** like Michael Coleman is daunting but brings you on.'
- **'I've recently added a tempo run** each week' – so the week includes, at least, one speedwork session, a long run and a 5m/10k tempo run (with the tempo run being performed at race speed).
- **'Longer warm-ups** are really helpful for shorter distances' – such as a one-mile warm up, followed by strides, before a 5m.
- **'Mind games'**. He might think more about this in future but he certainly tries to stay positive when running and says: 'You always do better on your favourite courses'. (His favourites include the Ashford & District 10k at Sandyacres, the Bethersden 5 and the Thanet 10. 'I like the country courses which are slightly undulating.')
- **Running time not distance**. 'I used to be obsessed with running miles – but I've recently changed to running a time. It's better to say you are going for 40 minutes than six miles. It takes the pressure off.'
- **Marathon training**. 'The Marathon programme is the only one I stick to rigidly. I didn't miss one run from December to April.' His longest run was for 27 miles, 'really slow', about 4/5 weeks before the race – but it was 'not as important as the 24-mile run which is a bit faster about three weeks before.'
- **Diet**. 'If you have a target time, maybe you should have a target racing weight.' He was 9 stone 2 (9 stone 5 with carbo-loading) before the Marathon – about 4 or 5 pounds lighter than last year. He is slightly unsure what **Gerry's** reaction would be – but says 'I'd try to lose a bit more for the marathon next year.'
- **Race strategy**. 'I go out hard and hang on. I never go steady to half and push.' So for his Half PB, he ran the first 10 miles in a 10 mile PB of 55.07.
- **Goals**. As he says, he always has several on the go. He was disappointed not to have done better on the Marathon this year – and feels he can get to 2.33. And he knows he is capable of at least 55.07 on the 10 mile

after breaking that time when he got the Half PB at Wilmslow.

- **Variety.** He varies his training throughout the year, enjoys exploring new footpaths and routes and also performs well in different circumstances. Running for Kent in the Half gave him a great boost on the day: 'It almost took care of itself. You don't want to let anyone down.' He is also toying with the idea of running the Paris Marathon instead of London next year – as he thinks a change like that might stimulate him more.
- **Days out.** Roy is often supported at races by his partner Jenny. She 'likes the road races' and certainly prefers them to standing about in the mud at cross

countries. But they often make the event a day out – and visit friends or relatives near the race. Support must be easier to give when it is fun – a factor which will be multiplied by two from October.

- **Rest.** He takes a break in the summer when he and Jenny go on holiday, and he does much less running in December.

All in all, he enjoys running as much as ever – and has not let winning or losing divert him from his own course. Although he accepts that he will not always go on improving as he has done in the last few years, he is certainly optimistic about what the future may hold: 'Footballers who start off late tend to have careers that go on longer.'

A decade of Canterbury Harriers

July 27 1993. Canterbury Harriers was set up at an inaugural meeting at The Dove at Dargate. The group of about 20 people was a split-off from Invicta. Membership of Invicta cost about £30pa but - more important – Invicta focused on the very fastest runners and was not a particularly welcoming place for people who ran mainly to enjoy themselves.

But, even so, Canterbury Harriers soon made its mark on the rankings. 'We had a very strong girls team which won the team prize at the London Marathon in 1994,' says **Bob Davison**. 'In 1994 we also won the Cross Country League in Kent and were beaten by about five points in the final in London.'

For the first four years, the club was largely run by its coach Kevin Mitchell and secretary Bonny Appleby. A dramatic parting of the ways (and of funds) took place in 1997 (ask committee members or older club members if you want to know more) when these two people decided to leave very fast. The remaining runners decided to set up all the best procedures (committee meetings, minutes, regular accounts etc) and jobs were divided up on the annual ferry trip to Le Touquet that year. 'We started running it like a business,' says **Joe Hicks** who was appointed chair. Former finance director **John Minshull** worked very closely with Joe as Treasurer. In the first few months, Canterbury Harriers was 'basically broke', says Joe, and even finding the capital to buy kit was a 'headache' in the early days. **Roy Gooderson** was administration officer and **Gerry Reilly** took over in the pivotal position of coach. Gerry says: 'The whole thrust of Canterbury Harriers is that it is a non-elitist club. It's just as pleasing to me to see an athlete progressing from running a 10k in 43 to 38 minutes as it is to see someone starting at 53 minutes and going to 48 minutes. They put in an equal amount of effort.'

Over the years, a wide range of activities has taken place, including:

- 12 annual trips to the Le Touquet 10k.

- 3 trips to the Dutch club Hollandia (and 2 return trips)
- other French trips (to Hardelot, leaving Canterbury at 4am, and to the Wimereux 10k).
- Several visits to the Rheims Half.
- Subsidiary trips such as the Tunisia and Portugal golf holidays.
- Fell running trips to the Lake District.
- Races including the Dove Dash, Herne Bay 10k, Faversham Half and – more recently – the Red Lion and Whitstable 10ks.

Our venues have changed from St Edmund's School to the creche at Kingsmead swimming pool to 'by far our best move', in Roy's words, to KSRC. 'We benefit from one of the best facilities for a club. We have access to a multi-million pound centre which the average running club does not have.'

In 1999, John Hartley took over from Joe as chairman, as reported in The Harrier, 'in a violent coup whose casualties included two pints of Guinness and a packet of peanuts'. Since then we have stayed very strong financially, hosted our races, kept a lively membership (with about 50 of our 110 members regularly at training), maintained our marvellous website, pursued a vigorous training schedule (including the London Marathon each year), participated in numerous relays, cross countries and other races and expanded our activities.

Canterbury Harriers offers a very low cost membership (£10), compared to other clubs, and subsidises more activities than most others. These include the pub runs, coaching courses, race fees for XC and charity events, the Presentation Dinner, transport and some kit. When times have been a bit tricky, we've been fortunate to have the right people around to see us through. When times have been good (most of the time), we have expanded and been very active.

Here's to the next ten years.

10th anniversary

Bob Davison, Roy Gooderson and Joe Hicks were among the group of 20 who formed Canterbury Harriers in July 1993. So we asked them why they did it and what makes the Harriers different.

Joe

- It's always been a club for adults who run for fun.
- We're a pretty well-run club, particularly for our size. Financially, for our size, we are extremely well-based.
- It doesn't matter how good at running you are: you are still in the club.
- The key has been to share out the workload. There's a high proportion of members involved in running the club....Out of our 100 members [approx], we've probably got one of everything.
- We've got one of the best websites in the country.
- If people disagree with something, they can talk about it.

The longest day

It will be a long time before **Steve Clark, Jenny Clark, Nicolas Pirot, Gerry Reilly** and 13 other Harriers forget what they were doing on 21 June. Five of our 16 runners got lost in the 123-mile North Downs Way relay. Of the six teams which entered this rather idiosyncratic competition, the four orienteering clubs came top. The Harriers came last (although we have come 3rd twice in the past). 'It was a lack of orienteering skills,' said **Steve Clark** organiser/driver/babysitter/9th leg (one of the ones who got lost). Heroes of the day were **Simon Kendall**, the only Harrier to win his leg, **Dave Lightburn** (who fought off a bad asthma attack to compete), **Mark Wilbourn** who knocked 6 minutes off his leg from last year, **Jenny Clark** (who may now regret having become an honorary Harrier for the day, getting up at 3.45am for the 5am start and not

stopping till the relay ended at 7.30pm) and, of course, Steve. His notes on the race could sit next to Captain Scott's diary as his men keep disappearing, he is wondering when to send out search parties, how to rescue **John Hartley** who – though not getting lost – becomes stranded after his leg at the Medway Bridge. 'I've got a bad feeling,' writes Captain Clark after waving off one of his team. 'Hope we see him again!!' The day becomes surreal as Steve drives several other cars for other Harriers, as well as running his own leg. At the end of his 9 mile-stint, he records: 'Fall over the line to be handed some keys to Dave Lightburn's car (he's long gone) by a time marshal with instructions to get in through the boot. Starting to lose my grip on reality. No-one else from our team about. Get into Dave's car/oven...'
Some team members received comfort and help from locals. When he asked for directions at a house, Gerry was given a cup of tea.

Roy

- Our training group at Invicta [the group that became the Harriers] was very friendly. It set a precedent. When someone new joined, they were made to feel welcome. That has stayed the case with the Harriers.
- It's a negative cost to belong to the Harriers. I cannot believe that another club in Kent, if not the South East, would give you the same value for money in terms of how heavily we subsidise everything.
- One of the strengths of the club is the diversity of skills, especially at the sharp end of things. The various members of the committee know each other very well and nobody clashes with anybody. We all work very well together.

Bob

- We had our own little club inside Invicta. When we went on runs we used to go to different people's houses sometimes to start off.
- We are a very friendly club. We have a laugh and a joke. Running doesn't have to be too serious.
- There was a bit of a joke between us that we would get some T-shirts printed up with the motto 'We're drinkers with a running problem'.

But, despite the setbacks, the day was a lot of fun for most people. 'Most people want to do their legs again next year, especially the ones who got lost,' says Steve.

Let's put the kettle on – to use a technical coaching term – for the other members of our valiant team: **Steve Reynolds, Joe Hicks, Roy Gooderson, Dave Parnell, Alastair Telford, Neil Vaughan, Fayne Brenner** and guest runners **Anna Saville** and **Ray Attrill** (Steve's brother-in-law).

PS Our chairman finally got away from the bridge and was reunited with his car.

Canterbury Harriers Committee

John Hartley, Gerry Reilly, Carol Reid, Stephanie Lam, Roy Gooderson, Fayne Brenner, Steve Clark, Joe Hicks, Simon Kendall, Sue Reilly, Alastair Telford