



The Harrier

September
2004

The newsletter of the Canterbury Harriers

XC's start in October

Pretty summer runs are all very well – but if you enjoy the feel of mud on your thighs, wind on your back and rain all over, then things are looking seriously good. The first of the winter series of cross-countries takes place on Sunday, 17 October at Knole Park, Sevenoaks – at 11am. As always, we meet up at 9am at KSRC to organise lifts. Further details will be available next month about the other runs. We also expecting to be hosting our XC at Blean Woods in November.

If we can get a good turn-out at each of the seven runs, we could improve on our ninth placing in 16 teams last year. We made a limping start at Sevenoaks last year and so were struggling from the start. So we would urge as many people as possible to come this time – so we can start well.

Pub runs

The last Friday pub runs of the season are at: The Chapter Arms at Chartham Hatch at 7pm on 3 September; and, at 6.45pm, at the Shipwrights Arms, Faversham on 24 September.

There is also the winter pub run on Friday, 19 November at 7pm at the Phoenix in Canterbury. Everyone is welcome – and particularly the Vet45s and above as this is a special 'celebrate the v45s and above' pub run.

Red Lion 10k – thank you

Many thanks to everyone who helped in the smooth running of the Red Lion 10k in August. Read all about it on page 4. Particular thanks to our seemingly tireless race director **John Hartley**.

Kit- new stocks

Pairs of shorts and the new vests are available from **Bob Davison** and **Roy**

Gooderson. Available for both ladies and men, vests cost £13 and shorts cost £10.

Bye Rosie and Anna

All the best to **Rosie McDermott** and **Anna Home** who are moving away from Canterbury for exciting new developments in their careers. Rosie is moving to the south coast to continue her studies and Anna – who has just successfully completed a PhD at UKC is off to Bristol.

Congratulations Fayne and Simon

Former Harriers Fayne Brenner and Simon Kendall are getting married on Saturday, 28 August. They were both leading runners in the club and, amongst other achievements, were our cross-country champions.

Results..Results

Jenni van Deelin has been picking up more PBs and placings – for instance, as the first lady in the Self-Transcendence 5 in Battersea Park (where her sister Sam came 7th). **Roy Palmer** was the 1st Vet 40 in a strong field at the Deal Dinosaur – where he came 9th and **Jonathan Holmans** was 7th.. **Joe Hicks** was the first Harrier back in the Red Lion 10k.

Harrier sales to soar

Reinvigorated from his Lands End to John O'Groats bike ride, our assistant coach Steve Clark will recount the journey in the next issue of The Harrier.

FORTHCOMING RACES			
Sept 5	9.30	Thanet Marathon (& Half)	Palm Bay, Margate
5	10.0	Shorne Wood 5	Gravesend
Sept 12	10.3	Challock Goose Fair 10m	King's Wood, Challock
18	10.0	Dublin Half Marathon	Phoenix Park, Dublin
19	11.0	65 Roses 10k (www.cffundraisers.info)	Abbey Sch, Faversham
19	8.30	Quicksand 15	Marine Sands, Margate
26	11.3	Boughton 10k (amq11@tesco.net)	Boughton Village Hall
26		Leeds Castle 10k (www.cancerresearch.org/10)	Leeds Castle
Oct 3	10.4	Sittingbourne 10	Highsted School
24	9.30	Maidstone Half	Valley Park School

The Longest Day - The North Downs Way Experience

By **Marco Keir**

The Alarm rang in my ears. **3.30am!** I couldn't believe I had let **Steve Clark** talk me into organising this year's NDW.

I dragged myself out of bed but at least I knew that half the work had been done. Somehow a team of 16 good runners had been assembled. Admittedly it had required **blackmail, bribery and strong-arm tactics**. Each runner had their map, start time and hopefully, organised their transport with their teammates. Now it was up to them to deliver the goods! What on earth will the day hold in store? Will everyone turn-up? How many will we lose?!

At **4.00am** I turned up at **Alastair Telford's** place to pick him and SC up and make our way to Dover for the start of the relay. Steve was there and waiting but where was Alastair? Steve was panicking that there was no answer from Alastair's doorbell. We called him on his mobile - no answer - great start to the day! A few minutes later Alastair sheepishly turns up from nowhere. We're off.

A few clouds dotted the sky. It was dawn and we were cold. Was it the nerves or the fact that it was **4.59am**? Apart from the runners from the other five clubs and us, no one else was present. Then again, who would be crazy enough to contemplate a 120 mile relay race at that time of day? In a typically British, understated way, the race began. Steve set off on the first leg.

Alastair and I quickly made our way to Cheriton for the start of his leg. Whether Steve arrived in time or not, the second leg would start at **5.55am** sharp. **Alastair went off, muttering** that it wasn't natural to run at that time of day. Within a few minutes Steve arrived in second place complaining that he had nearly gone over the **cliff's edge**. Back into the car and off to Stowting to meet **Joe Hicks** for the third leg.

Where was Joe? All the other third leg runners were present and ready. A car sped

round the corner and screeched to a halt with Joe's smiling face telling us to calm down. He and the other runners were already underway as those from leg two arrived. Ten minutes later Steve and I were still waiting for Alastair, the only one missing. Eventually we saw him bravely staggering up the hill to the pub for the finish, muttering that he couldn't find the way out of a field!

As we made our way to Wye station for leg four, the mobile rang and all hell broke loose. **Brian Fennelly** dropped the **bombshell** that he wouldn't be able to run leg 15 due to urgent work commitments. How on earth were we going to find someone to run at 6.00pm on a Saturday in Guildford!? Surely, mission impossible. While I started to hyper ventilate, Steve's experience and **cool nerves** kicked in - I had never seen him like this before. He pulled out the membership telephone list and began the trawl.

Meanwhile, Joe put in a good performance coming second. **Roy Gooderson** (on leg four) also put in a solid run coming third with **Bob Davison** running the fifth leg and finishing second at Hollingbourne.

With the relay going smoothly, Steve and I were able to concentrate on filling the missing leg. Having made **over 30 telephone calls** we had still not found a replacement. All our efforts seemed to come to nothing. Who else to contact? How about **Ed Condry**, the Dean of the Cathedral? It was a long shot but we had nothing to lose. Steve made the call: "What, you'll be in the Guildford area this evening? You can make it if we get a map to you? God bless you!" Our prayers were answered.

Next was leg six, a notorious route. **Nick Pirot** had got hopelessly lost the previous year. **Wayne Barnett** was determined not to make the same mistakes. Ostensibly on a school trip in the preceding week, Wayne had gathered intelligence and made copious notes to help with his route finding. All to no avail. More than two hours after his start, weary Wayne crossed the finish. It's

the taking part that counts and I understand Wayne wants to do the same leg next year.

John Hartley completed leg seven with a smile on his face. Was it because he acquitted himself well or the fact that he was the only male to run the leg?

Mark Wilbourn put in a great performance between the Medway Bridge and Vigo Inn, coming joint second. The first placed runner set a new record for leg eight. If only our car journey to Vigo Inn had been as successful. Somehow my sense of direction and driving skills went to pot. How many times did I go round that round about at Wrotham and how on earth did I find myself **driving on the hard shoulder of the M20 for two miles?**

Once at Vigo Inn, **Dave Lightburn** set off for Dunton Green (leg 9) and I set off to meet up with **Sally Bell**, the first of our two female runners. Many of the starting points are based at pubs and so it was at Dunton Green. While I tried to figure out on the map how I was going to get to the start of the next leg, Sally swung into the car park in her MG convertible as if turning up for a game of tennis and a few Pims. She had a great run on leg 10, nearly securing second place.

The weather had suddenly turned sunny and hot and Dave was missing in action. Had he got lost or was his chest playing up? Still no sign of him. I had to make my way to the next leg to meet up with **Neil Vaughan**. I eventually found my way to Betsomhill Farm to see Sally finish. News also came through that Dave had been found. Weather and pollen conditions had forced Dave to walk the last part of the leg but I was glad to hear he had arrived safe and sound!

Neil had a great run on leg eleven, coming second at the A22 Bridge. Leg by leg we were getting closer to the finish at Farnham.

Graham Tucker took up the challenge with a steady climb up to Reigate Hill (leg 12). I believe this is where Graham decided that he would specialise in the art of hill ascents on exceedingly hot days. Reigate Hill also saw the start of **Rosie McDermott's** leg. Leg Thirteen!

Rosie had turned up with a full support team consisting of her Mother, Aunt and Grandmother. I think they were horrified when they saw Rosie set off in the company of **5 very burly male runners**. Rosie's support team were even more concerned at Stepping Stones when all the runners had finished - except for Rosie. I felt terrible - there was only one thing to do; go and find her. I hadn't realised that I had to climb a

small mountain! As I reached the top, Rosie appeared. What a relief!

Mark Cooper set off, running well on leg fourteen. I set off to meet Ed the Dean, who had agreed to save the day by stepping into the breach. As soon as I arrived at Newlands Corner I rushed over, shook him by the hand, thanked him profusely and wished him well as he made his way to the start of the penultimate leg (15). That was it, I had counted them all out and counted most of them back. It was now my turn. The final leg.

I couldn't believe it! Stuck in traffic in the middle of Guildford with only 10 minutes to go before the start of my leg. I couldn't let the team down now of all times. I quickly executed a U-turn and headed north. There must be a quicker way to get to Puttenham. Thankfully I found my way onto the A3 and to the start with **seconds to spare**. I heard one of the runners mention this was his fifth time running the final leg. I resolved to stick to him like a limpet as I had no energy left to worry about route finding.

Three, two, one .. we're off. Immediately and surprisingly, all the pressure of the day lifted off my shoulders and I began to enjoy the run. It was just me on this final leg. I came joint second. Everyone at the finish was **elated**. It was 7.30pm.

Somehow we had all got to the end of the relay without major incident and Canterbury Harriers had **not come last!** In fact we came fifth, beating Saxons.

Everyone put in a huge effort and did their best. Many thanks go to all the team and their supporters. I would like to especially thank Steve Clark for all the advice and support he provided leading up to and on the day.

What a day. What a very, very long day! Did I enjoy it? Yes. Would I do it again? Maybe - but don't ask me yet.

P.S. Remember Mark Cooper? He had an eventful run lasting 1h36, having taken a wrong turning somewhere along the way. That's the North Downs Way!

Red Lion 10k

The Harrier spoke to the three people who had the closest thing to a bird's eye view of the Red Lion 10k on August 8th - lead cyclist **John Marshall**, lead car driver

Marco Keir and coach **Gerry Reilly** who was in the car with Marco.

For the first part of the race, John took the lead – leaving about a 200-300 metre gap to the runners. If anything unexpected happens, John has about a **one minute gap** to sort it out before the runners arrive. The car follows. ‘The thing you dread is stalling at the start and being overtaken by the runners,’ said Marco whose first experience of driving the lead vehicle was the Whitstable 10k on 3 May.

The first unexpected event was a car driving along towards the runners near the Red Lion. ‘There was a lot of **tooting, flashing of lights and abuse** from me,’ said Marco. But the car pulled in quickly. At 1k, Gerry noted that the lead runner, Patrick Curran was ‘already 30m ahead’. A Volvo appeared on the course just by the Dove pub. ‘He was aware that a race was on,’ said John. ‘I said: “Hundreds of runners are coming.” He pulled in to a natural layby and let everyone go. As lead bike, you can only do a little bit. If people chose not to listen to you, you’ve got to go on.’

‘A big gap developed between the first and second runners,’ said Marco. ‘The gap lengthened after the hill coming out of Dargate. We realised that **this guy was quite special**. To do that time [34.16] on that day [in 28.5 degrees] was quite remarkable.’

Gerry said: ‘By half way, he was 600 meters clear. He looked very purposeful. He took no drinks. It was a superb performance.’

At about 7k, as previously agreed, the car overtook the bike and went straight to the Red Lion HQ so that the clock (located on the car) would be back at the finish in time. John was therefore left in sole control at the front – but the most difficult part of the race has already taken place, he said. ‘By then, the race has unfolded. You are leading the first runner round. Even if you came across a car, you can all squeeze by.’ Marco had one of his most worrying moments just at the end when a **combine harvester** came out onto the course. ‘I was just grateful it hadn’t come out earlier.’ But there was no overlap between harvester and runners. John, meanwhile, was coming up the last hill. ‘No-one was comfortable on the hill.’ He cycled off to the side while Patrick Curran went into the funnel. ‘It’s a **great**

finish,’ said John. John then went back down the course, watching all the other 183 runners coming to the end. He went right to the tail end to accompany the back-marker to the end of the course.

Harriers behind the scenes

Many thanks to everyone for helping. Sincere apologies to anyone whose names is missed off this list: **John Hartley** (race director – who also did much of the administration and paperwork), **Gerry Reilly** (race-marking co-ordinator, race monitor from lead car, identifier of finishers at end of race, press officer), race markers **Joe Hicks** (who also handled race entries) and **Bob Davison**, **Alastair Telford** (website, entry form, race details and results compiler), **Carol Reid** (prizes co-ordinator, late entries table, marshal and filer of slips from bibs at the finish), **Steph Lam** (late entries table, marshal and detacher of slips from bibs at the finish), **Des Mullaney** (marshal, co-ordination at HQ), **Dave Lightburn** (car parking and stopwatch), **Luke Lightburn** (car parking and bib slips runner), **Sue Reilly** (changing rooms and stopwatch), **Roy Gooderson** (PA system), **John Minshull** (race entries inputter, funnel and finish co-ordinator), **Steve Clark** (chief marshal), marshals **Jennie Clark**, **Mel Carter**, **Mick Maume** (and finishing drinks), **Mick Hunt**, **Emma Hall** (and finishing drinks), **Mark Wilbourn**, **Wayne Barnett**, **Anika Davies**, **Neil Vaughan**, **Dave Parnell**, **Dennis Hayes**, **Brian Fennelly**, water stations **Iain Smith** and family, **Wendy** and **Glyn Smith**, **Marco Keir** (lead car driver, sponsorship negotiator), **John Marshall** (lead cyclist), Joe Epsom’s friend **June**, T-shirt table personnel **Shirley Lawes** and **Wendy Osmond**, **Neasa MacErlean** (late entries table, conductor of interviews for press release).

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