



The Harrier

The newsletter of the Canterbury Harriers

December
2004

The Harriers Christmas Dinner

Howfield Manor 4th December 7.00pm – the venue for the 11th Annual Prize giving ceremony with

- A sumptuous three course dinner
- Dancing
- Raffle

and great company!

All this for just £15 (£20 non members).

Enjoy the social event of the year in the exquisite surroundings of Howfield Manor. Make sure you don't miss out – only 70 tickets available in total. Contact **Marco Keir** on 01227 276029 or 07799 343538 or write to him at 53, Island Wall, Whitstable CT5 1EW and make cheques payable to Canterbury Harriers.

* If you have any spare photographs of Harriers in races or runs, please could you let Roy Gooderson know so we could include them in a display at the dinner.

Xmas run – 19 December

Meet at 9am at Arrow House, 14 Lovell Road – **Roy Gooderson's** house for a XC Christmas fun run through Blean Woods. There could be light refreshments and mulled wine available. Spikes are advised – as it could be muddy.

Subscriptions

Please pay your subscriptions (£10) for 2004/05 to committee members. Subs received before the end of November will entitle members paying them to be entered for a raffle at the Presentation Evening.

Pub runs

We are planning two more winter pub runs – with one in January in Faversham and one in March in Whitstable. We are also planning a social on Thursday, 21 April at KSRC after training.

Cross countries

If you are hoping to take part in the Kent Fitness League series but have not done so yet, please try to run on either 2 January at New Eltham or on 23 January at Minnis Bay. These are the 4th and 5th in the KFL series. Under new KFL rules, results are only counted in the last 2 XCs for runners who participated in the first five.

Please let Steve Clark know asap (by December 10 at the latest) if you want to run in the Kent XC Championships on Saturday, January 8.

Prague Half Marathon

Following the success of the Dublin Half, we are thinking of going to Prague for the Half on April 2. Kate and Andrew are putting a list on the board for people to register interest. See also www.pim.cz.

John Hartley to stand down

We had an extremely successful and useful AGM – one highlight of which was voting **Jenni Van Deelen** onto the committee. However, John Hartley has given notice that he will stand down as chair at the next AGM. We thanked him for his invaluable contribution over the last five years. We now need to find someone to take over. We would also benefit from more contributions from members. If you can organise a pub run, help in the organisation of one of our races and give any other assistance, please let a committee member know.

Harriers 'extremely healthy'

The finances of the Harriers are in 'an extremely healthy position', said treasurer **John Minshull** at the AGM. Although finances were a bit tighter this year than last (partly because fewer runners entered the Red Lion), we still put back 88 % of our surplus into subsidising members events (from the near £15 subsidy on the Presentation dinner to the free places on the Marathon coach to the free entries on XCs and some other races) on our £12,500 turnover. Many thanks also to our auditors Barry Lilley ('so good it's not true', according to John).

Thursday nights

Gerry and **Steve** and testing new ways of ensuring that runners do not get left behind on Thursday nights. We are trying following a route set out on a map on the noticeboard, and better chaperoning at the back. Thanks to **Emma Hall** for raising this at the AGM.

Other club news

We have had a 'very enjoyable and successful year', chair John Hartley told the AGM. We have taken part in numerous races and relays; many Harriers have helped make our races a success; our membership has grown and our finances are healthy. Several individual members – notably Jenni and Des – have made very significant contributions.

* The next Whitstable 10k will see a £1 donation from each race fee go to Dave Lee's charity.

FORTHCOMING RACES			
Dec 5	10.00	Thanet 10	Westgate Bay, Margate
11		XC – Vets and clubmans	
26	11.00	Christmas Cracker 5	Waterfront Club, Whitst
28	12.30	Last Friday of the month 5k	Serpentine Lake, London
Jan 1	11.00	Serpentine New Year's Day 10k	Serpentine, London
2	11.00	XC – New Eltham	Avery Hill
8		XC – Kent Championships	Sevenoaks
16	9.30	Dartford 10	Princes Golf & L'ure Club
23	11.00	XC – Thanet	Minnis Bay
23	11.00	Canterbury 10	Canterbury College
Feb 6	11.00	XC – Eltham	Oxleas Meadow
20	11.00	XC – Canterbury	Rough Common
27	10.00	Tunbridge Wells Half	St Johns Rd
Mar 6	9.30	Thanet 20	Hartsdown Pk, Margate
13	10.30	Hastings Lions Half	Sea Rd, St Leonards
20	14.00	XC Relays	Avery Hill
April 3	11.00	Paddock Wood Half	Eldon Way, P Wood
3		Praque Half	Praque
17		London Marathon	London

LANDS END TO JOHN O GROATS – *HEREINAFTER* *KNOWN AS:*

LEJOG by Steve Clark

The story so far: Our hero, Steve Clark, our assistant coach, has set off from Land's End to cycle to John O'Groats (lejog). Leaving on Sunday, 18 July, he survives the first day and 143 miles. We rejoin him on day two: **Monday**
19th July 2004

Setoff 05:15, breakfast had been left out for me [at pub/B&B] with good luck note, kind! Dingy, rear light on for while. 100 yds then up that B****y hill again!! But along the ridge superb views all round of misty meadows as a fine day breaks. Through Cullompton (huh!). Now on A38, through Taunton then across the Somerset flats, no hills, nice! Wind picks up & blows against me, someone ought to tell it it's supposed to blow from the S.W!

Eventually approaching Bristol from the South. Had heard this is a s.o.b. of a climb & they're not joking! Seems to go on & on!

Hot as well, oh for some rain! Stop at top (10:00) to recover with a giant sausage & onion roll & mug of tea from lay-by 'caf' (my diets been planned to the finest detail!). Off again into Bristol central, which is **hands behind head & feet up on handlebars job**, and well deserved I say! Under **Telfords bridge** (I'm impressed Alastair!).

Another nasty climb out of gorge to skirt the centre then head on out still on A38 up the Severn estuary. Good going and any wind behind me now. Nice day still with some cloud so not too hot.

Can see Olbury power station down by river where I ran a 10m road race last September, didn't expect to be going past 10 months later on a bike! On through Gloucester, Worcester & Kidderminster. Take A442 to Brignorth here to avoid Wolverhampton etc. More hills!

Long nasty climb out of Kidderminster, tiring and weather turned. Trying to rain, typical! I'm going to get drenched right at the end of the day. But my luck holds and it comes to nothing. Bridgnorth, ring YHA's Coalport & Coalbrook, both full. No luck with B&B's.

Couple of seedy looking pubs in centre one has B&B sign, bound to get in here, no one would stay here would they? "Sorry mate, full up, try next door!" Bar girl there hasn't a clue about vacancies, have to wait 20 mins for landlord to return, I DON'T have a pint! Pub has an 'Admiral Benbow' air to it! Hunched landlord returns, I get room for £15 without breakfast.

Have to wheel bike through centre of pub to leave it in the hallway! Freshen up & climb to upper town for supplies and fish & chips looking down on Severn gorge & steam trains. Brignorth is very pretty. Back to pub for 1 quick pint. Bed about 22:00 ish. **Odo for day is 159m with 10:40 in saddle.**

Tuesday 20th July 2004

Up at 04:20 and had a Muller rice in my room for breakfast, nice! Away by 05:10, noticeably lighter now

I'm a bit further north. Another fine morning, **what could possibly go wrong!** Soon struggling, my legs won't work! They're not sore or achy just seem totally bereft of any strength! Too far yesterday? I'd **hoped to do 100-120 miles per day averaging around 12mph** but the weather has been so good & I'm averaging 14.6, until now anyway!

I go nowhere fast over the next 2 hours or so. I stuff down a couple of glucose Boost bars and almost immediately my legs are feeling fine again! Coincidence or did I just let myself get de-glyco'd?

Nice ride to Warrington then on through the 'desolation of Smaug' that is the urban sprawl from here to Preston.

Making good progress now, what could possibly go wrong? The most embarrassing moment of the whole trip that's what! My bowels are playing up and it's a panic stricken dash to find some bushy cover, no mean feat in this neck of the woods (pun intended). Where the woman who walked past came from I do not know! There was nobody about!! I wanted the ground to swallow me up (well, not that exact spot, perhaps just a bit further over!).

Stop at Leyland for re-victualling, I'm travelling fully stocked up with Boost bars from now on! And late luncheon by the pet cemetery, nice spot! Through Preston and on up A6 to Lancaster, nice ride not much traffic (all on M6?) fine views to the Lake District. Tiring after Lancaster, knees getting sore.

As soon as I've passed the 130m mark I will stop at 1st B&B I see! Which happens to be a nice wayside inn at Hale 8m south of Kendal. Its now 17:15 and today's totals are 137m with 9:45 hrs in the saddle. En suite room, sheer luxury! Better wash my cycling gear the landlords moaning about the swarm of flies that have descended on his inn!

Later, having wine & dined I'm sitting at a table in the bar pouring over my maps I've got the ghastly climb up to Shap tomorrow, this cannot be avoided.

A man in a group at the table next to me asks if I'm doing LEJOG. Against my better judgement I reply yes, big mistake, this group had done it 2 years ago over 2 weeks avoiding all main roads. **More beers are forced on me** and he nips back to his house to get all his maps etc "You don't want to climb up to Shap on the A6, it's a slog & boring, If you take this route here turn left here, fork right here, etc, etc" and proceeds to rip pages out of his old road atlas. I end up with about 20 pages and a route to JOG that adds about 200m to my journey!

The good news is they generously give me £20 for Sports Relief. The bad news is I stagger up to bed late with 5 pints inside me! This wasn't in the game plan! Thinks: I must avoid pub B&B's from now on!

Wednesday June 21

Up at 04:20, peeing down! Waste of time washing my kit last night!! Wandered down and had breakfast landlady had left out for me with instructions to let myself out! Can't understand why nobodies ever about when I want to leave, what's up with these people! Take my time this morning; reluctant to set off in the pouring rain, perhaps it will stop, oh yeah! Eventually bite the bullet and set off 05:30 soon feeling a bit soggy and my knees are sore, to painful to stand up, my bum is remaining firmly on the seat! Really looking forward to the **climb up to Shap!** Quick

stop in Kendal, squelch into shop and stock up on Boost bars! Gerry & Sue have got a pad in Carlisle (about 50m) and I've got a key in case it's convenient for a stop. The way I feel at the moment I'll be lucky to get that far today! Now comes the slog up the A6 to Shap. I prefer to be out of the seat for climbing hills but my knees are just too sore! Fortunately I had changed the cassette on the rear wheel for one with extra large easiest cog but I'm going at a snails pace! 2/3 the way up I can't stand being seated anymore (figure that one out!) and stand up, sore knees or not and after a while they ease off, so that's a result! Finally at the top and the rain has stopped and the sun is breaking through at times. Past 'Crow Crag' in the distance (that's for the 'Withnail & I' fans) on a nice steady decline through Shap, wheeee, my spirits rise! On thru Penrith, dull but dry, A6 pretty quiet. Bike develops a little rattle! My spirits drop! Can't track it down, infuriating! Convinced with my usual optimism that the wheels are about to come off! Stop once again, shake bike etc. Old boy farmer comes by in mini dumpy wheel tractor, 'having trouble lud?' Lad? (I look round, oh you mean me) 'Yes, I've got a rattle I can't find' I continue with my "fault diagnosis" and he continues to sit there watching! Feeling uncomfortable I decide it's probably not important and push on. Some weird people in this neck of the woods still, **Graham Brown lives nearby** so what do you expect!! Reach Carlisle, quick stop at corner shop for supplies, find the **Reilly mansion** OK, now 10:20, lunchtime! Afterwards to repay their kindness I dusted & hovered from top to bottom (honest Sue), repainted the outside of the house (honest Gerry), and set off again at 11:15. My knees feeling a lot easier I decide to push on, passport in hand to the Scottish border. Just before is decision time, there are 2 equidistance routes to Edinburgh, left on the A74 via Moffat & A701 or stay on the A7 via Galashiels. Either way you've got to go thru the Galloway hills! One look at the heaving traffic on the A74 coming off the M6 and my mind is made up! It's the A7 for me. This turns out to be a real result the A7 is incredibly quiet the scenery is beautiful and the afternoon turns sunny, the road winds thru the valleys with little hill climbing to Hawick, 30+ miles of solitude & bliss. Onto Selkirk then Galashiels, nice place, now 16:45 another 35miles to Edinburgh, to far, don't want to upset the knees again. Found T.I. and extremely helpful guy rang loads of B&B's on their books till he found a vacancy but it was a double although I could have it for £30. Oh well, didn't have the heart not to accept after all his effort! But on the way I saw a vacancy sign and it was for a single room £16.50! (I wanted 2 at that price but she only had the 1 left, damn!) Plus she would make sandwiches for me to take in the morn for breakfast! Freshen up & hit the town, shop for tomorrow's supplies, then pub the landlady recommended. Asking the bar girl if there was any real ale was a big mistake which led to a long confusing conversation as to exactly what was after that would have made an excellent comedy sketch!!

I wandered up the road and viola! Wetherspoons, two pints of real ale and meal (haggis, tatties & neeps!) for rock bottom price. Back to B&B, fine evening; hit the sack about 22:15 still quite light.

Thursday 22 July 2004

Alarm woke me up 04:20, fairly light, looks a reasonable morning, bit different from yesterday thank god!

Had Muller rice, croissant & coffee in my room. On way out went to get my sandwiches from the fridge but dining room door was locked! B****r! Shall I wake them up to claim my sarnies? Probably not a good idea! Set off as the town clock struck 05:00. Quiet, still morning, some climbing at first, knees sore but nowhere near as bad as yesterday. Eventually get good steady run down to Edinburgh. Skirted my way round suburbs on minor roads (not allowed on ring road) toward Forth Bridge.

Day has gone a bit dull now but crossing the bridge was quite spectacular, long way down! Now cycling on nice minor roads tracking the M90 to Perth. Brief stop at little village called Kelty for supplies. Six miles later while admiring the views as I pass Kinross & Loch Leven I take a hit from an insect right in the eye. Why didn't my clear cycling glasses stop it? They're useless! Hang on a minute, where ARE my glasses? Suddenly realise I haven't got them on anymore! B****r, must have left them back in Kelty, only got sunglasses now and it's too dull for them but a few near misses later and I put them on even if I can't see much!

Luckily it brightens up after Perth where I have to join the A9 which isn't so nice, a bit busy. Arrive Pitlochry 13:20, food break, nice town, popular with the tourists.

Have done 106m, knee's coping ok so determined to go past 130m today. Trouble is I've got to climb over the **Drumochter pass (high point 424m)** and nothing much in the way of civilisation until Newtonmore, about 40miles away, oh well, committed! No bailing out! I've got my emergency sleeping bag if necessary! At least I can stay off the A9 for miles as where the road has been realigned & upgraded up Glen Garry the old road has been converted to a cycle track.

This is one of the best parts of the whole ride, the sun is shining, I have a whole road to myself, you wouldn't know the A9 is just over the way, Glen Garry is beautiful, I stop briefly for a paddle in the burn and absorb the vibes man!

I never see another cyclist. The climb to the summit turns out to be 'easy' as the gradient is steady and spread over 30 miles but eventually it turns into a gravel track with lots of little ups & downs and several gates to pass, so I get fed

up and go back onto the A9 and after the summit it's a feet up on the handlebars job with a great steady descent for miles doing +25mph with little effort. Past Dalwhinnie still a steady descent on to Newtonmore, arrive 17:10. Find a **cyclist hostel** here but can't raise anyone! Place is all open, the sleeping rooms are wall to wall with bunks made for giants! Must be grim if full! Only one bunk in use though by the look of it. Still no one about, give up and book in a basic B&B hotel up the road.

They put my bike in the dining room, as it's not in use! Have done 148.04 miles today and spent 9hrs 59mins & 39secs in the saddle according to the odometer – we'll call it 10hrs shall we? There is a rad on in the hall, god knows why, so I wash my kit and use it to get it dry. Don't know what anyone passing by will think! Newtonmore is very quiet, the barmaid say's most rooms in the hotel have been taken yet it's like a morgue, where is everybody? Later, in my room, suitably fed & watered, I'm checking mileage left and after several checks can only make it about 160 odd miles, I thought I had at least 200+ to go. I did 159m on the 2nd day so **maybe if the weather holds & no mishaps I can finish tomorrow in 6 days!** I never dreamt I would do it in that time before I started. It will be 2 days, earliest before Jenny, my wife can be there, driving up to our daughters in Liverpool today and will get to her sisters near Ayr ('wharm ne'er a town surpasses for honest men and bonnie lasses') tomorrow. There's still 300+ miles to John O. Anyway my natural optimism kicks in...The chain is bound to break tomorrow, it'll be blowing a gale, raining, I wish I hadn't washed my kit now! Bed about 22:00, bright daylight, what could possibly go wrong?

Next issue: Read the next issue of the Harrier to see what happens to Steve. Will he get to John O'Groats in good time? Or could anything possibly go wrong?

Canterbury Harriers Committee

John Hartley Chair - 459997
Gerry Reilly Head coach - 477148
Stephanie Lam Secretary - 832213
Roy Gooderson Admin Officer – 454449
John Minshull Treasurer – 01795 532226
Steve Clark Assistant Coach - 711272

Runners Representatives:

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