

Hello everyone and welcome to the October 2021 newsletter.

We would like to welcome back **Sky Chan** and say hello to our new members **Stu Melville, Ruth Maskell & Dawn Mowbray.**

Thank you to everyone who has also taken the time to write something for inclusion in this month's newsletter.

Thanks

Debby & Jim

Message from the Chairman

Hi All,

I hope you're all well. I'd like to congratulate all of you who have taken part in a race recently, and especially those who have run a marathon.

The weather is changing fast and it seems strange to be back for training at Oriel again!

On top of that, the Cross Country races have started. I hope to take part in the Reigate relays.

We're planning for the AGM in December and will send you the invite soon.

James



Tilgate Tidy

For those of you new to S&S, as regular users of Tilgate Park we organise sessions to help the wonderful team of rangers to keep it looking beautiful.

Finally on a recent Saturday, we were able to restart sessions after a nearly two-year 'pause'. Thankfully, the weather was kind and a small group of us spent a couple of hours clearing bracken and brambles from an area at the top of middle hill in order to allow the underlying shrubs and trees to thrive. Maria Weatherstone also found that she really enjoyed spreading mulch!

Theresa, one of the rangers sent the follow message:

Thank you all for a great job. It is amazing what can be achieved with a group of people in a few hours.

Thank you all again, you make a big difference to the park.

The rangers really rely on volunteers to help keep things in shape. The budgets are continually being cut and the support we give is hugely appreciated.

It is hot, sweaty, dirty work but great fun and immensely satisfying so please do come along to the next session which is pencilled in for November 27. Full details to follow.

Brighton 10K, September 12

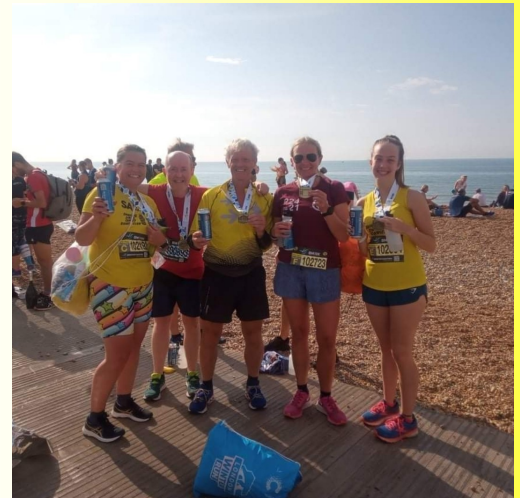
Mostly flat. Amazing atmosphere.

Marathon is on the same day, so you get to experience the buzz without the pain.

The 10k course is very flat apart from one 100m slog of a stretch up. It is really well supported on the entire route, with a great finish along the seafront.

The last mile cone turnround was felt in the legs, but it offered the chance to see running friends on the other side.

Finished, collected medal, cold shandy and took this photo. Then ventured over to the I360 to cheer on the marathon runners.



Fun, exhausting day.

Jo Fiveash

Parkrun Tourism, September 18

Clair Parkrun



As Tilgate Parkrun wasn't on due to the Race for Life event, I decided to head off to Clair Park (Haywards Heath).

The course is an interesting one! Five laps. I don't mind a lapped course, but five undulating laps is challenging!

The event is very friendly and well run, I would definitely recommend it as a good alternative to Tilgate.

It was great to see Julie Kalsi and Ed Wheeler taking part too!

James Mason

Colby Woodland Parkrun

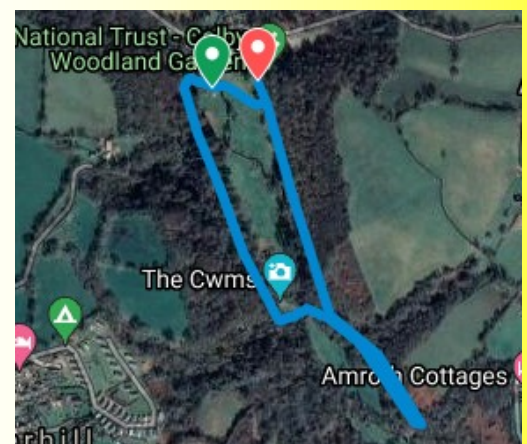
What better way to end a glorious holiday in Pembrokeshire than taking in a local Parkrun.

Colby Woodland Parkrun takes place on an estate owned by the National Trust, nestled at the bottom of a lovely wooded valley that leads down to the coast at Amroth.

The course is three loops around undulating woodland trails. Restarting later than other Parkrun events, this was only the third run 'post-Covid'.

Only 79 runners lined up at the start with a fair few tourists. A lovely friendly run, loads of parking and a coffee shop right next to the finish. Give it a whirl if you are ever down that way.

Clare Hall



Parkrun Tourism, September 18—Keswick

Keswick Parkrun is an out and back route along the Keswick Railway Path in the Lake District National Park.

The tree lined path runs along the track bed of the old Cockermouth, Keswick and Penrith railway, following the River Greta to Threlkeld.

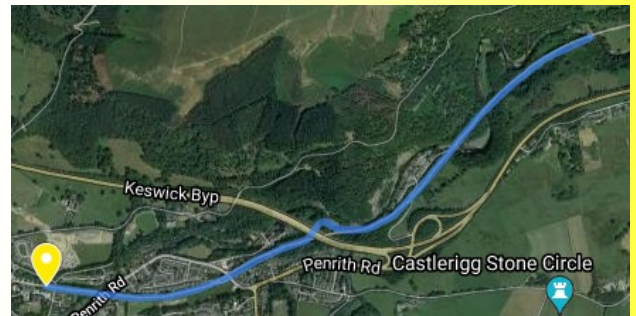


The railway path re-opened on Saturday, December 5 last year on the fifth anniversary of storm Desmond. During the storm two of the original Victorian railway bridges that crossed the river were completely washed away and another was seriously damaged, and the well-used route was cut off.

Following an extensive restoration project, costing just short of £8m, the trail reopened and has become a very popular route suitable for walkers, runners, wheelchairs and cyclists (it's part of the 137-mile C2C cycle route) as well as hosting Keswick Parkrun.

The trail is surfaced with tarmac along the whole route and gradients are very low, ideal for a PB!

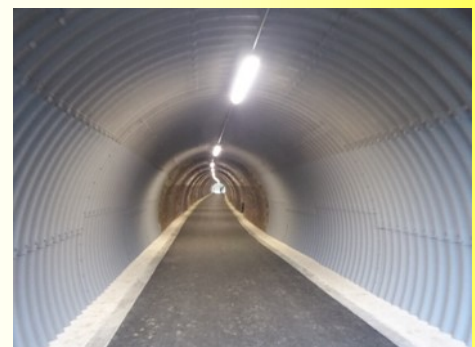
I was on holiday in Keswick, and, having found that I could walk to the start in under ten minutes, I made my way on a cool drizzly, autumnal Saturday morning through Fitz Park to the start by the old Keswick station, much of which remains, and is now integrated into a hotel.



After a nice chat with another tourist from Bournemouth, at 9am precisely 219 park runners set off along the trail. The course didn't disappoint, we soon left Keswick and were treated to some spectacular views of the meandering Greta and fells beyond. The turnaround point came just after the restored iron bridge at 2.5km and the runners retraced their steps. The last half mile was particularly fast, I took advantage and was very pleased with a new PB of 27:56.

Rain started to come down quite quickly, so I didn't hang about. Having been captivated by the wonderful views I returned on Sunday and ran the whole 5km route to Threlkeld and back (10km total), stopping to take photos and read panels about the history of the line.

Keswick Railway Path is a fabulous and very popular amenity and I'd encourage anyone staying in the northern lakes to look it up. For those wanting more of a challenge, Whinlatter Forest Parkrun, rumoured to be the toughest and hilliest parkrun in the UK, is only 3.8 miles distant. Maybe I'll do that one next time, I'm sure the views will be worth it?



Nicky Wilson

Saturday evening, September 18 - Rafal 10k

Rafal is a very sleepy little town in the south of Alicante, but it certainly came to life when 650 runners descended on it and it seemed more like a party than a race. Bands were keeping us entertained whilst we were running in very hot airless conditions.

There was a 5k or a 10k option. I did the 10k which started at 7.40pm in brilliant sunshine, ending in darkness but with the town lit up with fairy lights and a brilliant view of the sun setting behind the mountains. All participants got a really nice long-sleeved blue technical sweatshirt and a jar of fig jam.



Sunday morning, September 19 - Aspe 7.5k

Just a few hours after the Rafal 10k I headed to Aspe, a very traditional Spanish town located in the valley of the River Vinalopó, 25 kilometres from Alicante city. Options were a 5k, a 7.5k or a Nordic 5k walk. At one point I was slightly worried about being overtaken by one of the walkers who was moving extremely quickly! Another wonderful morning, at 9.30am when the race started the sun was beating down and I felt the suntan really was given a boost! There were only 61 participants in the 7.5k and it felt very low key but exceptionally well organised and the finish was in a beautiful park full of palm trees. We all received a very bright green technical T-shirt and a little bag of drinks and a banana and cereal bar.



Nina Trevarthen

Reigate Half Marathon, September 19

After the obligatory 2020 hiatus, the Reigate Half Marathon and associated 10k, 5k and kids races returned under the banner of 'Back as One' for 2021, with an event that felt very much business as usual.

Beneath a heavy grey sky, runners assembled in Reigate's Priory Park for a staggered start, the 10k event leaving 15 minutes before the half marathon participants made their way out of the park south, toward Hookwood.

This course has a reputation for presenting some challenging inclines, with the first climb away from Reigate up Cockshot Hill a signal of intent. This being my first timed half since the previous October's Beachy Head run, I had a cautious first few miles, knowing that another steep ascent awaited at about the halfway point.

Fortunately, this was a short, but steep climb through the closed country lanes south of the town, as the route turned northward on the return leg. The weather remained overcast with a few very brief drops of rain doing nothing to take the edge off the late summer warmth.

Many local residents were out shouting encouragement, offering high-fives and jelly babies in the latter half of the run, which returned to the main road for a short stretch before completing a loop south west of Reigate.

Toward the end of the run, the prospect of the final climb into the finish weighed on everyone's minds. I last did this stretch on my first ever half marathon in 2016 and had suppressed it from my memory, but it was there still and on an extended incline more than a match for Tilgate Parkrun's Chevron Hill, I kept my back straight and arms swinging, managing to keep up the pace back into the finish line at the park.

The event village was in full swing, and this year the only noticeable differences in event management were medals being handed out in plastic wrappers, no bag drop and T-shirts being an optional extra.

I was happy with a solid 1:56:51 and negative splits, and felt well prepared for the following weekend's Barns Green half marathon, which was also very enjoyable after such a long time without something to aim for.



Alex Wakefield

Run Reigate 10k and Kids Run—Sunday, September 19

"I always forget how hilly the Reigate races are," Chris L commented on my Strava. At kilometre eight it was fresh in my mind. Drive the arms, hold the form, save a bit for the end.

A few minutes later that end was in sight as I 'sprinted' down the finish lane, people lining the barrier clapping, cheering and admiring my shoes. What a great race. I was lucky to find another runner the same pace which led to a great battle; a tactical sprint finish (which I won for fourth) and contributed, along with Paul's hill sessions, to a new 10k PB of 37.42.

This was the first big running event I have done since lockdown. Wow it was great to be back to near normal, there was an incredible buzz around the event village with hundreds of runners nervously waiting for the start and later basking in their post-run glow.

The crowds around the finish made getting to the end feel a special achievement and helped spur me on to shave a couple of extra seconds off my time. And being able to hang around after the run, chat with friends, eat ice cream and browse running goodies was fabulous.

Although I was soon back on daddy duty, trying to manage two eight-year-olds. One wanted to eat lots of ice cream and the other had a serious case of the pre-race jitters.

Their race started at 12.45pm, but by 11.30am we were already camped out by the start line of the mile plus a bit kids' run to make sure Tristan could start at the front.

The course wound around the grassy hills of Priory Park offering a great introduction to cross country running, Paul Luttmann would have been impressed.

Watching the waves of junior runners set off was inspiring and funny in equal measure. Ben Short was doing the warmup and keeping eager runners behind the line with the help of a few event staff and some familiar faces from Tilgate Junior Parkrun.

Ben tried to convince successive waves of runners that the secret to a fast time was starting slowly and finishing fast, which only made the waves of 50m stampedes even more amusing.

Of my two charges, Tristan threw himself into the first 50m with reckless abandon and, looking exhausted from then on, managed to hang on for second. Adelle perhaps listened to Ben's advice a little more and finished strongly a few minutes later to demand her rainbow waffle cone with flake and strawberry sauce as reward.

Overall it was good to see lots of familiar faces from S&S and great to see the impressive performances pop up on my Strava feed. It felt good to be part of the 'gang', thanks all.

Andy Kerr



Run Reigate 10k - September 19

Reigate marks the first proper event I have done in over a year – and not just because of Covid-19.

I stopped running in pregnancy and wanted to get back and feeling confident running races again, so I went in with no expectations except wanting to finish and enjoy the race.

I arrived at Priory Park with my support crew (mum and dad) and was joined by Glenn's dad who was also taking part. Glenn was at home looking after Molly!

After the usual rituals (toilet and a quick warm up), we were in the starting funnel ready to go.

The first hill came very early on, but because of the long down that followed, it made for a fairly swift first mile overall (at least at my current postpartum pace!).

I was feeling good so continued to keep up some of that momentum along the out and back section before heading through the streets and country roads in and around Reigate.

There were a few small 'undulations' but mostly flat enough so I could feel good whilst keeping up a reasonable pace. That was until the monster of a hill near the end, which just kept on going up! Thank goodness for all the marshals shouting words of encouragement!



Following that effort there was a lovely downhill reward before heading back into Priory Park.

When I saw the finish, I didn't quite have it in me for a sprint, but I did pick up my pace a little, crossing the line with a time of 01:02:22.

Not a 10k PB, but a 10k postpartum PB – and generally a better than expected time! So needless to say, I was pleased with my result!

It was good to see a few familiar faces out there supporting on the course. Thanks for cheering me on! And thanks to the lady who complimented my colourful Lucy Locket leggings!

I really enjoyed this event and would definitely do it again – it has a number of distance options and I think I will go for the half next time!

Lou Mitchell

Hampton Court Half - September 19

As many of you know I always start my runs/races with what I think are very good excuses as to why I'm going to struggle today and my time isn't going to be good. Well today was no exception

Leg hurts from a HIIT class, not enough sleep and drunk too much red wine the night before!! And they could have gone on....

We set off at 7am, the weather was perfect running weather so unfortunately that didn't factor into one of my many excuses.

On entering Hampton Court it was buzzing with runners, and spectators. The smell of coffee and bacon sandwiches cooking in one of the stands was so tempting and that could have been the biggest excuse for me not to run today, I walked past quickly, promising myself a treat once the run was complete.

My partner hadn't received his pack so we joined the queue to collect it.

Whilst waiting in the queue we chatted to a couple of runners. Not sure if it is just my competitive nature or if it's normal, but couldn't help wondering how fast they might be and whether I could beat them.

Whilst watching hundreds of runners warming up, I thought I should at least join in with a few stretches and a couple of arms swings. I figured I was almost ready, but just one last thing and definitely the most important - 'MY GARMIN'. Let's face it no watch, no run!!

We started inside the gates of Hampton Court running out and around the riverside. At this stage I was still able to enjoy the scenery and I could also talk.

I noticed the couple we met in front of me I attempted to keep up with them, but gave up after the first few kilometres.

I eventually got into a rhythm remembering some of the route from last time.

There was a choir singing along the route and the support from the spectators was amazing,

As I got to the 10 mile point a runner had collapsed. I wanted to stop and help but he had a few people with him. I overheard that the paramedics were on their way, from that point my mindset changed and I realised that I should just relax and enjoy my run, pushing myself was not the way to go.

I continued my run at a pace that I felt comfortable with. The last mile was probably the hardest as it was on grass and uneven ground.

The finishing line was in sight, so a quick glance at my watch to check the distance, I pressed stop and waited for Leigh. We ran through the finish line together.

We collected our medal which was very impressive and even more so was the goody bag.

It's been amazing to get back to all of the running events. I have been very lucky to work and train at Nuffield Health in Crawley and hope to continue with the training, as maybe one day it could be a marathon!



Jackie Hastings

A WEEKEND OF TRAIL RUNNING

Puntes de Cieza 11.5k - Saturday evening, September 25

Cieza is a beautiful town in Murcia, which has the River Segura running through it. Puentes means "bridges" in Spanish, and the race consisted of running along the mountain slopes and bridges of Cieza. The terrain was uneven and the weather like a furnace and it was a really humid evening.

We started at 7.30pm and the last 4k were tricky once the sun had set, leaving us slower runners in complete darkness. My two aims were to finish the race, and not to topple into the River Segura, both achieved!

On completion we received lovely T-shirts and a little basket of fruit and plenty of drinks. Although it was a tough race the views from the top were breath-taking, looking down at the town's lights and hearing the church bells ring out, it felt very special indeed.

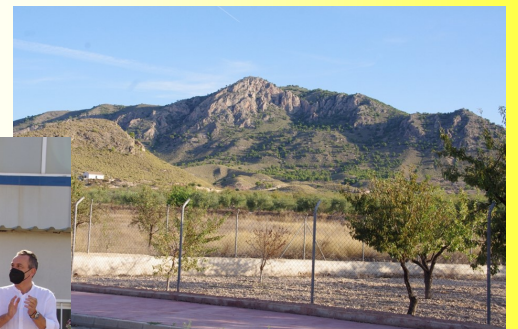


Sierra de Barinas 9.5k Sunday morning, September 26

Up early to return to Murcia, this time to a lovely village called Barinas, known for its outstanding beauty and fauna and vegetation.

It was the first time that this race was held, the organisation was brilliant and the race was another tough trail one, similar to a league race without the mud but with plenty of hills and shingle paths. Another great goody bag with a technical T-shirt, drinks and fruit.

After the race we could all help ourselves to a baguette, sweets, pineapple, melon and as much beer as we wanted. Hard to believe this was only 10 Euros to enter. To my surprise I came 2nd in my age group and got a lovely trophy.



Nina Trevarthen

Barns Green Half—September 26

I've run in this race a fair few times and the hills do not seem to be getting any easier. The course is on a bit of a camber and a little challenging in parts. Gradual inclines everywhere. Big hill just before mile six, then nine-ish.

A tad warm for my liking, but it is just nice to be back running at a local event. The event is very well supported.

Most is on closed country lanes and a small part runs through Christ's Hospital School. There is plenty of free parking close to the event, which has food vans, stalls and a pub close to the end.



Enjoyable event. Be warned it's a bit of a workout Don't go off too fast!

Jo Fiveash

Barns Green 10k—September 26

Races seem to be getting back to normal so my 4th since lockdown eased was with my eldest son Alex at Barns Green 10k. I had last run BG in 2017 partly because it clashes with the East Grinstead 10k on the same day which is a real shame.

We arrived in plenty of time and saw the half marathon runners go before it was time for the 10k runners to be called. A number of Saints were there so good to see yellow in both races.

I was suffering with a sore back and confess that I was simply looking to get round. Alex on the other hand was looking to improve on his two runs from previous years.

If you have not completed at Barns Green it is a very well-organised event with bands playing music, plenty of marshals plus the locals cheering everyone on. It seems to be a real community event. There is one very small downside.....flat the course is not!

I understand that the 10k had its largest turnout this year. The history behind both races is interesting with the 10k being added a few years after the half.

We were off at 10.20am. Alex stayed with me for the first 3k which we took reasonably leisurely before he decided he had enough of running with me and shot off!

Undulating is an interesting word, quite often misused I feel, but I consider that undulating is a good way to describe the course.

Halfway point was a run through Christ's Hospital School. Again an impressive structure and some rather pleasant grounds. Not quite the sort of school I attended!

As the race progressed one has a nasty shock around 8.5k — there is quite a steep hill! Once you have run, or in most cases around me when I reached it, walked up the hill, you have a nice downwards stretch and you can hear the tannoy in the distance where the finish line is.

A relatively straight last half kilometre leads you to the finishing line and at the end I was 7 seconds slower than 2017, somewhat annoying but I was able to get round without too much trouble with the back!

A nice medal and water awaited me, as did Alex who had finished earlier with a PB. I really must encourage him to join the club! We hung around and had a coffee at the local playgroup fundraising stall which was great.

Well done to everyone who ran either race, it is a really good morning and I would encourage anyone to give it a go next year. For me another dilemma awaits, BG or EG?!

Andy Hale



East Grinstead 10k—September 26

This was the first time I have done the East Grinstead 10k and what a treat it was. Organised by the East Grinstead Tri club and East Grinstead AC in memory of former member Andy Ripley, the run starts with a short wiggle around a school playing field on Imberhorne Lane before heading on to trails leading to the Worth Way, which forms a large chunk of the route.

The final 3km is on tarmac around East Grinstead with a sprint finish across another field. The organisers did a great job of marking and marshalling the route with a number of inspirational signs which make me smile as I ran by but failed to stick in my run fatigued memory so unfortunately I can't share any of the witty one liners here.

Despite being quite a small event, considerable effort had been put in to create a great atmosphere at the start and finish making the run feel a real event.

For the run itself, conditions couldn't have been better with cool temperatures no wind and the Worth Way in perfect condition.

I wanted a PB and there were no excuses available, I just had to step up and do it.

Off the start I quickly decided not to go with the lead runner, a young lad called Josh Hobbs, definitely the right decision. As he was finishing as I was halfway through my 8th km, to set an impressive course record of a few second under 32 minutes. WOW, remember the name.

I staggered across the line five minutes later to set a new PB and dip under 37 minutes in the 10k for the first time. To top it off, by finishing 4th I managed to get a prize for first V40 (outside of the top three). Overall, a really nice 10k run, which is easily accessible from Crawley, by bike via the Worth Way, so no need for petrol!

Andy Kerr



Surrey Hills Challenge—September 26, my first Ultra Marathon trail race (it was hilly)!

This was my longest race to date; in memory of my dad and I fundraised for Chestnut Tree House, the children's hospice. There were several options including a full 42km stride out and hit the hills or the ultra - 61km run covering all terrains with 1,656m of climb.

I chose to attempt the 61km ultra race, with under 12 hours to complete it

The route started in Haslemere at 7am and followed the Greensand Way towards the infamous Devil's Punch Bowl, a large natural amphitheatre, through National Trust land.

The route is almost entirely on scenic trails that cut across fields, up and down hills, through hamlets, along ridgeways and woodlands, over Gibbet Hill, Wormley Hill, Hydon's Ball, Hascombe Hill, Pitch Hill, Holmbury Hill, Leith Hill, then on to the North Downs Way.

There was so much to look at and so many variations in terrain! It finished at Denbies Vineyard in Dorking. A large glass of wine to finish what could be better than that?

I felt fairly confident my legs could take me to the finish but what I was less confident about was my ability to run/walk and navigate the course, whilst remembering to feed and water myself appropriately. My map reading skills are not the best!!

As we set off I was so excited! There were 79 participants. The mood was good-natured and I settled into a sensible, slow pace, ticking off the kilometres, enjoying the countryside.

I did find myself counting down the kilometres until the next checkpoints where there was a chance to stock up on sandwiches, crisps, fruit, sweets, biscuits—and the list goes on!

There were times where I did start to feel the energy drain from my legs. So, I took on more water and started chomping on more food! There were times when mentally I had to remind myself of the "why am I doing this again?" and give myself a good talking to!

I slowly made my way to marathon distance of 42.2km and this was a significant moment. It was only the fourth time I'd travelled this far in one go, I was entering the unknown!

As I continued with the last 10k, it took sheer determination and a monumental effort to keep putting one foot in front of the other. My thighs were aching, almost feeling like they were detached from my bones and ready to fall off, on to the road.

The final flourish - about 2km before the finish line everything was aching, and I was so extremely thankful to two runners, Sarah and Sophie, who gave me the surge to keep running!!

They grabbed an arm each and pulled me over the line! I think the photo shows how elated I was, the crowd cheering us and most importantly, the opportunity to lie down and have a cry!

My time was 7:45 and I was 4th woman and 35th overall. An achievement I am very proud of!

I really challenged myself with this and learned a lot! I should also add the organisation was top notch. Everyone was so helpful, positive and encouraging. The signposting, plus the information available in advance was excellent.

Would I do an ultra again? Absolutely! It is one of the best things I've ever done? Definitely!

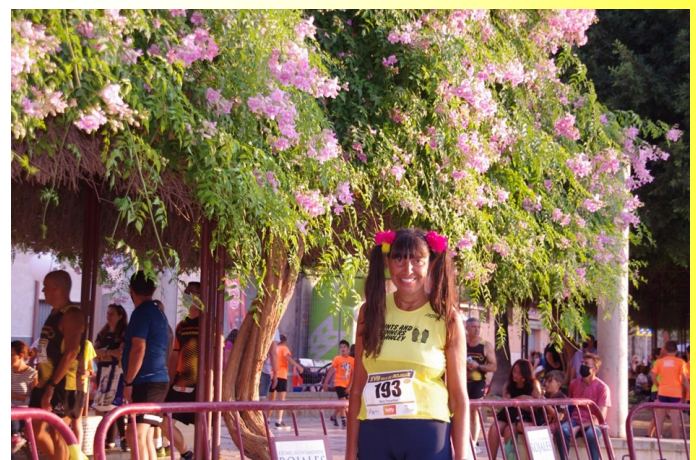
Sarah Brammar



Rojales 10k - Saturday evening, October 2, 7pm

I have run many times at the Rojales 10k and it never disappoints. Rojales is a pretty little town in the Alicante province and in the evening it was lit up beautifully with fairy lights and banners. Options were a 5k or 10k, I ran the 10k and was very pleased to get 3rd place in my age group and received a big cup. It was a hot and humid evening but luckily the route was flat. There was plenty of applause from all the locals sitting outside their houses.

Yet another great goody bag with an excellent shirt, a cap, a towel, a chocolate donut and energy bars. After the race we could help ourselves to fruit, beer or soft drinks and pizza.



Sangonera la Verde 5k - Sunday morning, October 3

I was up again early to head to this new destination in Murcia province, a lovely little village a few kilometres to the south west of Murcia city.

This was the first time the race had been put on and there was a real buzz in the atmosphere.

First of all there was some really loud music playing and just before the race start someone was playing a beautiful melody on the piano, and 50 doves were released in the sky.

The race should have started at 10.30am but due to some traffic issues the gun went off at 11am, by that time it was really roasting with the sun beating down.

A nice route, with the first 2k up and the remaining 3k down. I came 4th in my group and just missed out on the podium.

Another fantastic goody bag with a lovely shirt, a pair of running socks, a chocolate bar, crisps, and a towel. Afterwards there were tables laid out with meat or veg pasties, cakes and drinks. The entry fee was only 8 Euros and every participant was asked to bring a kilo of a non-perishable item for a local charity, which I thought was a brilliant idea. Also as part of our race entry we were entitled to a tea or coffee in the local cafe.

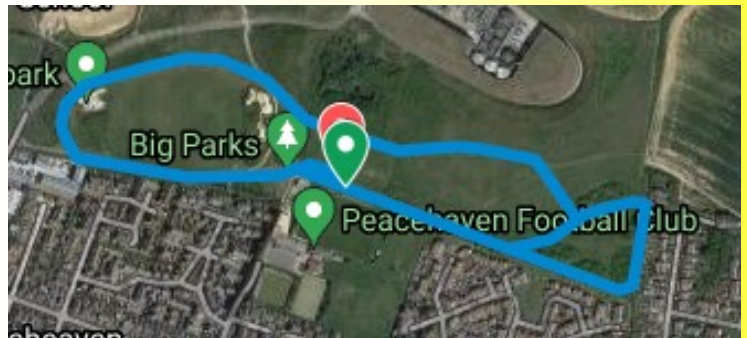


Nina Trevarthen

Parkrun Tourism—October 2

Peacehaven

With an early start five of us braved the blustery coast and took on the three lap course. The course is a mixture of grass and paths with one big loop followed by two slightly smaller ones. They said that this was their summer course so not sure how it differs for the winter!



Ian Greenaway was the first Saint home followed by Jo Fiveash who was also the 2nd female, then it was Ken Tulley, followed by Clare Hall with me bringing up the rear. All the marshals and fellow runners were very friendly and supportive of everyone and the parking was free.

It was agreed that it was a Parkrun that we would return to. Following the run we all stayed for tea and cake.

The next Saints & Sinners tourism is Saturday, November 13 at Squerryes Winery.

Debby Scott



SVN Beatrix Potter Challenge, October 3

I decided to try and complete an autumn marathon, and was recommended the SVN events.

As it turned out there was an event taking place on the same day as the London Marathon.

The bonus was that it was taking place at Gravesend Cyclopark, so only 45 minutes from home.

The course was an undulating 5.5km loop, so eight laps to complete for a marathon.

I arrived in good time to enjoy the race briefing and off we went. There were only 60 or so runners so the field thinned out quickly. I realised quickly that the hills in the first half of the course would be hard work by laps seven and eight!!

I enjoyed the first six laps, and then had the big challenge of the last 11k and the final two laps.

These two laps were very hard work, perhaps more walking than running!

I was very pleased to finish the event in 4.56, so the slowest of my four marathons.

James Mason



Loch Ness Marathon—October 3

Spending lots of time in lockdown last year made me think more and more about marathon running.

Even though I have previously run marathons, I hadn't run one in a few years, and mixed with not being able to travel far, made me feel as though I needed a break from running around the streets of Crawley.



So, in the New Year, scrolling through Facebook, as you do, I came across the Loch Ness Marathon advert....could I run another 26.2 miles, could I actually travel that far after lockdown? So many questions. I looked in to this further and decided to book my place as if we went back in to lockdown, I could defer, or even get a refund for race and accommodation.

And after all, my name is Ness!

The weekend itself: Inverness is a lovely city. I'd never been there before, so going by myself was a bit daunting. I flew up on the Friday, ready to collect my race pack on the Saturday. I booked to stay in a local Premier Inn, which was close to the finish of the marathon, but even better, a two-minute walk from the local Parkrun. It would have been rude not to Parkrun with it being so local. Scotland Parkruns start at 9:30am so I even had a lay in!

Waiting for the course description I was approached by two runners from Dorking who recognised me from the club, and also Mike and Victoria Saunders from Horsham Joggers. What are the chances of that? I'd even bumped into two ladies from Lancing Eagles on the flight up there. Running certainly brings people together.

Anyway, Torvean Parkrun, a lovely scenic course, a bit hilly, friendly marshals. To me, that is Parkrun as a whole, fun and friendly. How else would you spend a Saturday morning?

The Loch Ness Marathon itself....an early start. They provide coaches to the start, as you run along the Fort William side of the loch. Going uphill makes you realise it is going to be tough, but once on the coach, there is no turning back! The views were amazing though.

The start area was so cold, breezy and the rain had started too. The race started at 10am, and with 5,000 runners, we were told to line up in expected finishing times. A bagpiper started the race off, and after what seemed like a few seconds I crossed the start line.

The first few miles are downhill, but then it's undulating most of the way to the finish. Heavy rain came down around miles eight to ten, but luckily it then stopped. A challenging uphill section around mile 18, but a very scenic course along the side of Loch Ness.

I may not have seen the Loch Ness monster but it felt as though I ran up and down the humps of his back! The last few miles are around the city of Inverness.

I 'buddied up' with a Scottish lady around mile 14, with whom I crossed the finish line. We were both cold and wet but so happy to run and finish together.



Organisers Baxter's provided us with a cup of hot soup which was so welcome. A short walk back to the hotel was my 'cool down'. So happy that I made the effort to go somewhere I had never been before and to finish my 13th marathon.

6:17:25....not my best marathon time, but considering the hills, I am happy. If you've never run a marathon before, never say never. Happy running everyone.

Vanessa Harold



Belfast Marathon—October 3

I completed my first marathon on October 3. I signed up for the virtual London Marathon but could not decide a route.

Belfast Marathon was the same day so within half an hour I had booked my place, the Europa hotel and flights.

I bought a first marathon book with a 20-week plan and off I went. More or less keeping to the plan for my training.

So the day came and I took the courtesy bus to Stormont Castle to join 2,958 marathon runners and also team relay runners.

The route took me towards the city centre before dropping down to the South. We then ran back up through the city centre out to the West and along the famous Falls Road, Shankill and Crumlin Roads.

Heading North before dropping back to the centre and out along the Lagan river to finish in Ormeau Park.

I planned a 5:15 finish, not having run that far before. So no idea what was possible.

I drank and ate along the way with Pam and Beth popping up with bananas and sweets and drink.

All went to plan and I finished strong and OK, having avoided 'the wall', and in good shape.

I finished in 5 hrs 14 but with a chip time of 5:18:44 (2 loo stops). And 2,760 out of 2,956.

Not fast by comparison to some but there were 198 people and DNFs behind me.

Didn't need an ambulance or the offer by St John's Ambulance staff of vaseline for chaffing.

So that was the first marathon, maybe another next year.

I have a time to beat now.

Nigel Field



London Marathon—October 3

Two and a half years ago I ran the Brighton Marathon, my first, and afterwards swore never again.

Well I've been true to my word and not run Brighton again! Instead I took on the London Marathon.

I just couldn't turn down the opportunity to run one of the biggest and best races in the world - and it did not disappoint.

I'd forgotten how soul-sapping the months of training can be and, as always when I significantly up my distances, picked up an injury. This time aggravating an old Achilles wound.

As the day of reckoning drew closer, my maranoia went into overdrive. Injury and illness would conspire against me.

Rubbish. Like a 'proper' runner I told myself everything will be OK on the day even as I suffered strange dreams and sleepless nights wondering where it would all go wrong.

And so to the day itself. It's almost impossible to describe the feelings of hope, fear, excitement and ultimately elation.

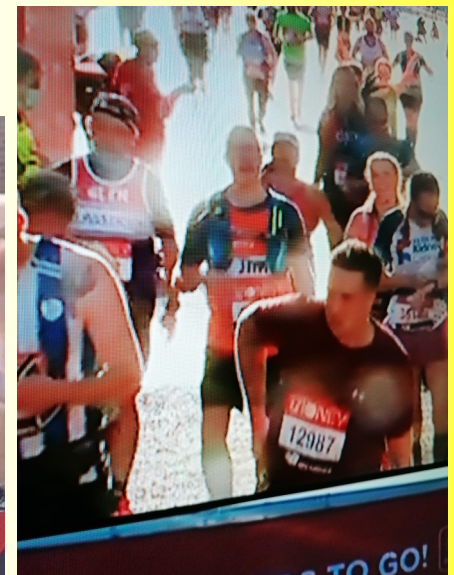
This was a race the likes of which I have never experienced before. The noise, the crowds, the feeling of being so alone amid tens of thousands of other likeminded lunatics.

The goosebumps as I rounded Buckingham Palace and saw the finish line inching ever closer, the lump in my throat as I crossed the line and the humungous high that meant I bored the pants off literally everyone for days afterwards.

My time was 5.08.35 - nearly ten minutes quicker than I did at Brighton in 2019. I'm delighted and will spend many a year boasting that I'm not just a marathon runner, but a London Marathon finisher!



Jim Scott



London Marathon—October 3

Ian Blackham - 2.37.40

Michele Nixon - 3.41.09

Ant Neal - 3.58.53

Frank Stone - 4.27.48

Jim Scott - 5.08.35

Theresa Wright - 5.19.33

Sarah Clapp - 5.27.42



Heron Way 10k, Horsham—October 3

I hadn't heard of Heron Way 10k until recently when Debby posted an advert for it on Facebook. As the flyer mentioned it was trail (and so had a good chance of being muddy) and had an ice cream van so I signed up straight away.

It was quite a small event with under a hundred runners and so it was easy enough to spot another Saint turn up - Andrew Vine (seen below powering to a fast finish).

The race itself started just on the outskirts of Horsham and for the first very short section on road I was cursing the decision to wear my trail shoes as I had forgotten how heavy they were. However shortly we reached the main bit of the course going through St. Leonard's Forest that had lot of deep muddy sections to splash through so trails were the right choice.

The route itself was well marshalled which was good as it meant I didn't end up doing any extra hills. The route was challenging with the hills and slippery sections; for comparison I was five minutes slower than my 10K race the following week and they felt equal effort.

Luckily to help recover at the end there was free cake and coffee which was much appreciated. This helped reinforce my mind that this will one race I will return to.

Chris Lobodzinski



Sussex XC Relays

After a break of 18 months our XC Team are back! A seven-strong Team S&S headed to the Sussex XC Relays on the top of the South Downs at Goodwood Racecourse on the afternoon of Saturday, September 25.

We arrived in grey, misty and drizzly conditions but things brightened up once our women changed into their S&S kit and started warming up for their race. By the time of the men's race we had sunshine and great views of the surrounding Sussex countryside.



In the women's race, running in the competitive Senior category, Sarah Stanbridge ran the first leg, Val Stanbridge (V55) the second and Grace Barden (V35) the third (12th overall).

For the men, running in the V40 category, Mark Warwick (V60) ran the first leg, I ran the second, Wayne Kingsnorth the third and Andy Kerr the fourth (6th overall).

Super running from everyone, with everyone giving it everything over the challenging 4km course. A special mention to Mark who ran the fourth fastest time by a V60 man on the day.

Relays are great fun. Running for and supporting our team mates really brings out the best in us and makes these sociable events.

Next up are the Priory XC Relays at Priory Park in Reigate on Saturday, November 6. Details to appear on our Facebook group shortly.

Paul Luttmann

2021/22 XC Races

Here are the updated dates for the 2021/22 Cross-Country Races:

October 16 - Sussex League Race 1, Goodwood Country Park

November 6 - Priory Relays, Priory Park, Reigate

November 13 - Sussex League Race 2, Stanmer Park, Brighton

December 4 - Sussex League Race 3, Ardingly Showground

January 8 - Sussex Champs, Little Common, Bexhill

January 22 - Sussex Masters Champs, Coombes Farm, Lancing

February 12/19 - Sussex League Race 4, Little Common, Bexhill

February 26 - National Champs, Parliament Hill, London

SGP

The Sussex Grand Prix is focusing on a revamp for 2022's competition. Organisers hope to attract more runners of all abilities. With this in mind, anyone who has any views on the SGP—whether you have competed before in races or not—can leave comments on the **sussexgrandprix.co.uk** website. I would encourage people to have a look and hope to see many of you at SGP races next year.

Jim



UKA

A reminder that when representing the club at certain races — including SGP and cross country events — you must wear your club T-shirt or vest.

If you have used your UKA affiliation number to enter these events and do not wear yellow either yourself or the club could be penalised.

PARKRUN

Thank you to those that have submitted reports following their recent Parkrun tourism, it's great to see so many people trying different locations

Clare has planned our next tour which is on November 13 at Squerryes Winery. Hope to see you there.

Remember if you want to be included in the weekly round up you need to set the club under your Parkrun ID to Crawley Saints & Sinners

ENGLAND ATHLETICS RUN & TALK WEEK

In addition to our normal Monday night social run the club also pledged to hold a mile challenge followed by a social run for members and anyone else who wanted to join us.

MILE CHALLENGE

We had 17 runners take part in the mile challenge, unfortunately the route had to change due to the pavements being dug up. Despite walking the new route just before the start it came up short on everyone's Strava!

Due to the location of the original route, as it is well lit, we hope to put this one on again in another three months (providing the pavements are OK)!

Following the mile challenge two groups of runners went for a social run.

TILGATE TIDY

A small group of volunteers joined Clare after Parkrun for a tidy of the park, next one is planned for November 27.

BREAKFAST RUN

Again a few members joined Clare for a short run followed by breakfast at the Furnace Green café. The next run is planned for October 31 with breakfast at the Broadfield café.

The club will be looking to offer further Run & Talk events but if you have any suggestions then please contact Stella.

LEARN TO RUN/BACK TO RUNNING

We are hoping to offer dates once Luke and Debby have completed their LiRF (run leaders course)



TRAINING

Now the nights are getting darker can you please remember to wear hi-vis clothing and also bring a torch.

Monday nights will continue to be a social run with the run leaders offering various speeds and distances to cater for everyone. Please wear club colours for training as it's good to get our name out there.

On a Wednesday we will be offering technical sessions. For both sessions these start at 6:30pm and we are currently meeting at the car park entrance to Oriel School in Maidenbower. We haven't paid to use their court this year so would request that you either park in the road just outside or in St. Leonards Drive and walk/run through the tunnel.

If there are any particular sessions you would like us to include please speak to a run leader or contact Stella at suggestionsofficer@crawlleysaintsandsinnersrun.co.uk

KIT

Don't forget that Sarah places the order for kit at the beginning of the month so if you are looking to get a new vest or T-shirt then please make sure you get your order in. Details can be found on the website.

RACES

Please keep an eye out for any upcoming races via www.sussexraces.co.uk or Facebook etc.. Or you may have other sources you wish to share.

If you have any upcoming races then please share them with the other members so we can support you and I promise I won't make you write a run report!

Gosport Half Marathon—Sunday, November 21

Crowborough 5 & 10k—Sunday, November 21

However if you do fancy writing something for fellow members to read then please send your report to Debby by the 7th of each month to media@crawlleysaintsandsinnersrun.co.uk so this can be included in the newsletter

Our committee:

Chairman - James Mason
chairman@crawleysaintsandsinnersrun.co.uk
Secretary - Richard Daniells
info@crawleysaintsandsinnersrun.co.uk
Treasurer - Roy Swetmen
treasurer@crawleysaintsandsinnersrun.co.uk
Membership/UKA secretary – Lesley Connolly
membership@crawleysaintsandsinnersrun.co.uk
WSFRL Rep – Luke Taylor
raceentry@crawleysaintsandsinnersrun.co.uk
SGP Rep – Jim Scott
sussexgrandprix@crawleysaintsandsinnersrun.co.uk
XC Rep – Paul Luttmann
raceentry@crawleysaintsandsinnersrun.co.uk
Kit officer – Sarah Stanbridge
kit@crawleysaintsandsinnersrun.co.uk
Suggestions officer – Stella Daff
suggestionsofficer@crawleysaintsandsinnersrun.co.uk
Social events organiser – Clare Hall
social@crawleysaintsandsinnersrun.co.uk
Social media – Debby Scott
media@crawleysaintsandsinnersrun.co.uk



Ordinary member – Dawn Rhodes
Ordinary member – Dave Penfold
Ordinary member – Sarah Clapp
Ordinary member – John Evans

How do I...?

Order kit!

Please use the kit page on the website to choose your kit. If you would rather not use the form then please email Sarah on:

kit@crawleysaintsandsinnersrun.co.uk

Stating:

Item: vest/tee/pouch hoody/zipped hoody

Female/Male (hoodies unisex)

Size: XS, S, M, L, XL, XLL or junior ages

Name: please type the exact name you wanted printed

Monies for kit to be transferred to:
Crawley Saints and Sinners Running Club

Sort Code 20-23-98

Account Number 30434213

Reference: KIT

Once payment is received your order will be made.

Orders will be placed at the beginning of every month. Sarah will then distribute these at training/races/parkrun when she can. Please note the turn around can be a couple of weeks so please your order in advance.

Register for WSFRL

Luke will email all members when races are upcoming and share details of each run.

You must email Luke and register your intent to run on:

raceentry@crawleysaintsandsinnersrun.co.uk

Please then transfer £3 pp to:

Crawley Saints and Sinners Running Club

Sort Code 20-23-98

Account Number 30434213

Reference: FR(race no)

As rep, Luke will collect all numbers and distribute on arrival. Please car share when possible.

Register for XC

Paul will send out details of upcoming XC races with cost and payment details.

Email Paul and register your intent to run on:

raceentry@crawleysaintsandsinnersrun.co.uk

Please, if needed, then transfer money to:

Crawley Saints and Sinners Running Club

Sort Code 20-23-98

Account Number

30434213

Reference: XC(race name)

Register for a Sussex Grand Prix Race

Unlike WSFRL, you must enter any SGP race yourself. Once registered, please inform Jim at:

sussexgrandprix@crawleysaintsandsinnersrun.co.uk

and if not done so before, share your UKA and DOB. Jim will manage the scores and points.

Make a suggestion!

Please email thoughts, queries or recommendations to our very own '**Suggestive Stella**'. You can ask these to be shared anonymously if preferred. Stella brings these comments to the committee meetings and then they can be followed up. The committee need to know what the members want and feel in order to improve.

suggestionsofficer@crawleysaintsandsinnersrun.co.uk