

appy Christmas sorry, New Year, I was too late again. However Father Christmas was early on two recent club occasions, at Helen and Nick's Vulgaris Noel on the Chiltern Sculpture Trail and at the club disco two days earlier. Duncan, who had left the room just before Father Christmas arrived, was very disappointed to have missed seeing him.

Rod's Boxing Day run continued the festivities with a mixed bunch of Handy Cross Runners and Chiltern Athletes getting very wet and muddy before enjoying mince pies and beer at Rod's house. Rod also entertained us during the Christmas lights run, when he managed to slip and fall over in the fountain at Frogmoor (which wasn't working at the time) much to the amusement of the onlookers!

Don't forget Ian's next Music Quiz at Sands Village Hall on Friday 16th January. As before there will be a fish 'n' chip supper in the interval. If you missed the last one, make a note in your diary as this is an event not to be missed.

Martin Dean 01494 530511 martin@martinjdean.sol.co.uk

## Return to Racing by Chris Gentry

think that the first thing I need to do is introduce myself, because the vast majority of club members probably have no idea who I am. I am Chris Gentry and I am probably one of the longest serving members of the club having joined in 1970. I am also, and have been for the quite a long time, the Club Secretary. Having said that, the reason that many of you will not know me is because since about 1991 I have hardly run with the club and have virtually given up competing.

However, the reason for this article is to let you know that I have returned to the racing scene - albeit for just the one race, the Swansea Bay 10k and Fun Run. "Why this race?" I hear you say and the reason why lies with my eldest son. A year ago he started university in Swansea and, like most parents, my wife and I went with him to settle him in before 'Freshers' week began.

We travelled to Swansea on the Saturday and stayed overnight at a guesthouse that was on the sea front. We were woken on the Sunday morning by the noise of a lot of activity and when we looked out we were confronted with numerous people setting up the finish area for the 10k.

Unfortunately (or should that be fortunately!) I hadn't brought any running gear with me so the question of whether to try to take part in the event didn't arise but the thought of the race stayed with me and, earlier this year, I asked my son to see if he could find out some details of this year's race for me.

This he did and we found that we were going to be in Swansea on the day of the race, 22nd September. That was the good news! What wasn't so good was that the race didn't start until 1 p.m. which would mean a later than planned arrival home. Therefore I had a decision to make - do I do the race or do I 'chicken out'?

Before I managed to make a decision I found out that you can enter the race online and, after a lot of deliberating, I decided to at least submit an entry form. This I did a couple of weeks before race day.

Well, a week before the race my number hadn't arrived and I was seeing this as the perfect excuse for not competing. However, a few days before we were due to leave for Swansea a large package arrived, which contained not only my race number and handbook but also a tee shirt.

This was somewhat of a surprise because the race information had indicated that t-shirts would only be awarded to the first 3,000 finishers in the race but I am not one to look a 'gift horse' in the mouth although I decided not to wear the tee shirt until (or if) I finished the race.

Anyway, Sunday 22nd finally arrived and I still wasn't certain whether to take part in the race or not - I had been suffering from a back ache for the previous couple of days and I generally felt tired and sluggish so I wasn't certain that I could give it my best shot (it is always good to get the excuses in first I have found!). However, taking inspiration from Ratcliffe breaking another world best at the Great North Run (and making it look so easy), I arrived at the race start and after a little warming up (which probably wasn't necessary as by that time the weather was rather warm) I was ready for the start.

Now I have to say that I not taken part in a race for over seven years and I haven't taken part in a race with so many runners (in the region of 2,500) probably since the last time I took part in the London Marathon so one of the first things I noticed when the race started was how difficult it is to run surrounded by so many people. I also made the mistake of

starting far too back and therefore the runners that were around me were aiming for much slower times than I was (I was aiming for around 50 minutes i.e. 5 min kilometres) which added to the problem. Anyway when I got to the first kilometre in over 6 minutes and the second kilometre in over 12 minutes I realised that I probably wasn't going to achieve my target but I wasn't in the mood to give up yet.

The other thing that I realised was that if you do all of your training at a slow pace (which I have been doing for some time now) you are not going to race at a faster pace. Therefore when. after the half way point, I finally did manage to find a bit of space to stretch my legs unfortunately they did not want to carry me at the speed I thought that I was capable of. Anyway there were a lot of people in worse condition than me on the second half (i.e. walking) and I was pleased to finish in 52min 08secs - an all-time personal worst but a personal best since I have become fifty.

Looking back on the event I must say that it was a very pleasant experience but not one that has got me thinking that I must do more races although the odd one or two, here and there, might be OK.

Chris Gentry

#### New Members

belated but nevertheless very warm welcome to the following new members:

Kim Bennett, Elaine Brewster, David Duckworth, Jim Doyle, Freja Halliday, Helen Hammond, Martyn Fox, Lineke & James Haydock, Jon Hobson, Jo Hutchby, Nigel Knell, Paul McIntyre, Sarah Mordaunt, Elizabeth Schuchman, Victoria Stone and Matthew Thomas

goodbye to Eri Tanimoto just before Christmas and wish her every success with her new career in Japan.

any members have missed seeing the familiar form of Ray (Eddie) Ramon over the last few months. He has returned to America for a while, where he is running marathons in disgustingly fast times for a man of his age, but hopes to return in the new year to, "Challenge all you guys again!" as he said in a postcard.

September. We wish her and her husband Matt (also a runner) every success and happiness in the future.

and thirty members, it's a such pity so few turned up for the Christmas Disco again this year.

inda Gaitskill helped raise the club profile recently with an article and picture in her local Harrow newspaper. She was photographed (with Ava) wearing a club T shirt.

joint events with Marlow Striders recently. Several of us manned a water station in their half marathon (congratulations to all the finishers in this very wet race, it was bad enough just watching) and in their predictor run, where Jock won a watch for being closest to his predicted time.

pologies to Alison Alexander who's time I missed from the Burnham 10K results in the previous Bulletin. She finished in 1.07.31

ren't the new showers at the judo club brilliant? I won't say, "not before time" but they have certainly been worth waiting for.

ave Nash has a very good line in Fluorescent bibs, which are essential running gear at this time of year. I have noticed (or almost failed to) several nearly invisible runners on dark Tuesday and Thursday nights. Don't take risks, invest in a visible top now.

he lucky (?) recipients of the club's London Marathon numbers are: Dave Redhouse, Russell Fenn and Debbie Brown. There will be a club coach to the event (price £8.50 each), see Duncan for details.

here is also going to be a skittles evening at the end of February, dates and venue to be announced.

#### WHICH MAN??

#### By G SHAKES

From the girls it's pay back time See if you can discover the men in our rhyme.

Who wears grey socks and tiny shorts Red Lycra tights, to show....all sorts?

And runs cross country?

Then there's the one with the luminous vest A portly form and a shiny crest.

Also writes poetry?

This one puts us through our paces He watches the girls - but not their faces. I hope his wife doesn't read this

Midlife crisis on the Ridgeway Hair dye, sports car, keep the years at bay.

Hair dye! Are you sure?

On the track tomorrow? "Yes we are"!

Bandy legs and needs a new car.

Rubbish, they've both got years in them!

A posty with a windy rear Helps new ladies as they appear.

An 'ex' posty now.

Mr Kit man, knows his way
Follow to the industrial estate without delay.

Who could this possibly be?

Don't ask this man: How long's the run? But his Bulletin is quite good fun.

Only 'quite' good fun? Damned by faint praise!

This one's always asking for a lift, Although laid back, he can really shift.

Initials PS ?

With Harmony hair, he's a deputy head His jiving knocks everyone dead.

Too easy girls!

Time keeping is not his trait
But for 5K's we cannot be late.

Used to be a good runner?

The quizmaster with a Scottish lilt We're still waiting to see what's under his kilt.

I'm sure you know by now.

We'd like to say the above in jest We really feel you're all the best!

#### Venice Marathon

Handy Cross Runners competing, but Paul was still in Kurdistan looking at walnut trees (don't ask) and Ken claimed his knee was too swollen to run (and proved it by dropping his trousers in the hotel bar to show everyone his offensive swelling).

So there were only five of us international athletes (?) who left our hotel at six in the morning to reach the start at Stra, about twenty miles outside Venice. I have travelled to the start of many marathons, but this was the first one involving a boat journey, but then all trips around Venice involve a boat somewhere.

There was still frost on the ground at the start, but once the race got going the sun shone and conditions were perfect. race makes its way back to Venice following the river Brenta and winds through pleasant little towns like Fiesso d'Artico, Doio, Mira, Oriago and the aptly named Malcontenta, passing attractive villas until it reaches the industrial town of Mestre, where I put in a claim to join the Handy Cross Divers by tripping over a barrier! Mestre is joined to the main island by a three mile long, dead straight bridge, the

Ponte della Libertà, which is arrived at after completing twenty one miles.

The official blurb says this is, "Probably the most challenging section of the entire race, where athletes' psychological strength is heavily tested, and where leading runners usually make their move to win." Yeah, right!

After this heartbreaking stretch the best part of the race starts along the canal sides and over thirteen bridges (thankfully with ramps fitted) to the finish. The Grand Canal is crossed by a temporary pontoon bridge before skirting St Mark's Square and glancing at the Bridge of Sighs to the finish along the beautiful waterfront of this fantastic and unique city.

I had to attend the first aid tent to have my cuts and grazes fixed before limping back to the hotel for a bath and then to continue with the important parts of the weekend: eating, drinking, shopping and sightseeing!

Thanks to Lucy for arranging our hotel and congratulations to the other finishers who were:

Peter Astles in 3.52 (pb)
Nick Martin in 3.58
Mike Blowing in 4.26
Lucy Couturier in 4.36

#### Luton Marathon

any congratulations to Nick Martin who not only did a splendid job in organising six Handy Cross teams in the Luton Marathon, but also completed the whole distance in 172<sup>nd</sup> place in a time of 3:55:36! In the relay event a superb run by Roger Porter on the anchor leg, meant that the Vets team beat the Seniors

#### Club Results:

15th place in a time of 2:44:30

John Peerless 55:10, John Dooey 57:16, Roger Porter 52:04

17th place in a time of 2:45:48

Dave Bosley 55:39, Trevor Hunter 51:18, James Haydock 58:51

61st place in a time of 3:16:49

Mike Hollis 61:39, Dave Duckworth 66:22, John Bradbury 68:48

81st place in a time of 3:29:31

Russell Fenn 68:22, Alison Gowers 72:34, Paul Jennings 68:25

92<sup>nd</sup> place in a time of 3:38:31

Margaret Moody 64:16, Angie McGoughlin 77:12, Lucy Couturier 77:03

118th place in a time of 4:00:30

Alison Packman 80:11, Helen Hammond 82:19, Lineke Haydock 78:00

#### Annual General Meeting

The club's annual general meeting is to be held at the Judo centre on Tuesday  $30^{th}$  March2004.

As in previous years the existing club committee will formally be at the end of their term. At this stage we do not know if the current elected committee intend to stand again, but that should not put you off if you would like your name put forward for election to one or more of the positions.

Just to remind you the following positions are available:-

Position

Current officer

Chairman

Alex Johnson

Club Secretary

Chris Gentry

Treasurer

Duncan Kennerson

Membership Secretary

John Bradbury

**Events Secretary** 

Peter Edington

Social Secretary

Debbie Ridout

If you would like any item discussed at the AGM please pass this item to one of the aforementioned committee, at least two weeks before the AGM.

## Christmas Cracker Jokes

I met a Dutch girl with inflatable shoes last week, phoned her up to arrange a date but unfortunately she'd popped her clogs.

Two Eskimos sitting in a kayak were chilly; but when they lit a fire in the craft it sank, proving once and for all that you can't have your kayak and heat it.

So I said, "Do you want a game of Darts?" He said, "OK then". I said, "Nearest to bull starts". He said, "Baa". I said, "Moo". He said, "You're closest".

You see I'm against hunting, in fact I'm a hunt saboteur. I go out the night before and shoot the fox.

The other day I sent my girlfriend a huge pile of snow. I rang her up and said, "Did you get my drift?".

So I went down the local supermarket, I said, "I want to make a complaint, this vinegar's got lumps in it". He said, "Those are pickled onions".

I saw this bloke chatting up a cheetah, I thought, "he's trying to pull a fast one".

So I said to this train driver "I want to go to Paris". He said "Eurostar?" I said, "I've been on telly but I'm no Dean Martin".

So I said to the Gym instructor "Can you teach me to do the splits?" He said, "How flexible are you?" I said, "I can't make Tuesdays".

But I'll tell you what I love doing more than anything: trying to pack myself in a small suitcase. I can hardly contain myself.

So I met this gangster who pulls up the back of people's pants, it was Wedgie Kray.

So I went to the Chinese restaurant and this duck came up to me with a red rose and says, "Your eyes sparkle like diamonds". I said, "Waiter, I asked for a-ROMATIC duck".

But I'm in great mood tonight because the other day I entered a competition and I won a years supply of Marmite ....... one jar.

So this bloke says to me, "Can I come in your house and talk about your carpets?" I thought, "That's all I need, a Je-oover's witness".

My next door neighbour worships exhaust pipes, he's a catholic converter.

So I rang up British Telecom, I said, "I want to report a nuisance caller", he said, "Not you again".

So I was having dinner with Garry Kasporov (world chess champion) and there was a check tablecloth. It took him two hours to pass me the salt.

He said "You remind me of a pepperpot". I said, "I'll take that as a condiment".

Now did you know all male tennis players are witches, for example Goran, even he's a witch.

I've got a friend who's fallen in love with two school bags, he's bisatchel.

So I was in Tesco's and I saw this man and woman wrapped in a barcode. I said, "Are you two an item?"

So a lorry-load of tortoises crashed into a train-load of terrapins, I thought, "That's a turtle disaster".

Four fonts walk into a bar, the barman says, "Oi - get out! We don't want your type in here".

A jump-lead walks into a bar. The barman says, "I'll serve you, but don't start anything".

A priest, a rabbi and a vicar walk into a bar. The barman says, "Is this some kind of joke?"

A sandwich walks into a bar. The barman says, "Sorry we don't serve food in here"

Dyslexic man walks into a bra...

A man walks into a bar with a roll of tarmac under his arm and says: "Pint please, and one for the road."

A three-legged dog walks into a saloon in the Old West. He slides up to the bar and announces: "I'm looking for the man who shot my paw."

There was a man who entered a local paper's pun contest. He sent in ten different puns, in the hope that at least one of the puns would win.
Unfortunately, no pun in ten did.

A group of chess enthusiasts checked into a hotel and were standing in the lobby discussing their recent tournament victories. After about an hour, the manager came out of the office and asked them to disperse. "But why?" they asked, as they moved off. "Because," he said "I can't stand chess nuts boasting in an open foyer."

### Vulgaris Noel

The Sculpture Trail I know quite well, So to the grid reference I went, Hoping to find that this Noel, My Sunday would be well spent.

The Lord of the Clues was there at 8,

He was happy to relate,

He claimed the wind was colder then,

But the sun made us feel much bolder.

To work in pairs, that was the theory,
All the clues to solve.

Yet six of us finished together,
All feeling very weary.

We'd run for miles, or so it seemed,
Along most of the Ridgeway,
Not many clues, but lovely views,
Up the hill to the finish.

Helen was there and Rachel too,
With mince pies and mulled wine,
I had a nodding dog in the Secret
Santa,

Perhaps I can change it later?

Congrats to the winners (all four?)

And thanks to Helen and Nick,
"Can we do it again?" came the refrain,
From some happy Handy Cross Runners.



#### Amersham 5

Matt Thomas in 40.52

Ellen Haynes in 42.19

Vicky Stone in 42.44

Lucy Couturier in 46.18 (pb)

Kate Sharp in 48.47

Elaine Brewster in 50.10

Marion Baker in 53 31

Sarah Mordaunt in 1.09 (first race)

4th Ladies Team: Ellen, Vicky & Lucy

A nice feature at this event was a van making free hot, buttered toast provided by Kingsmill Bread. I had several rounds!

#### Windsor Half Marathon

Linda Weedon in 2.00.40

Alison Packman in 2.02.23 (pb)

Helen Hammond in 2.08.27 (first  $\frac{1}{2}$ )

Lucy Couturier in 2.26.52

(after running at Amersham in the morning!)

#### Lacey Green 5K

Liz Davey in 23? (2<sup>nd</sup> lady)

Dave Nash in 26 43

## Abingdon Marathon

Sally White in 139th place in 3.20.13

## Henley Half Marathon

Roger Porter 17th in 1.21

James Haydock in 1.29

Michael Hollis in 1.33

Nick Martin in 1.35

Jock McClean in 1.36

Debbie Jones in 1.37

John Bradbury in 1.38

Peter Astles in 1.38

Mike Blowing in 1.51

Julie Dean in 2.20 (pb)

Martin Dean in 2.20

#### Fun Run (6 miles)

Lineke Haydock in 55 min

Pat Carter in 56 min

Stella Gwilliam in 56 min

Paula Potts in 57 min

Alison Alexander in 58 min

Rose Priest in 59 min

Sue Walker in 60 min

Laura Gwilliam in 60 min

Sarah Chambers in 75 min

## Cabbage Patch 10

254th Nick Martin in 1:11:31

1099th Alison Packman in 1:41:58

1112th Helen Hammond in 1:43:49

#### Amsterdam Marathon

Debbie Brown in 5.08

#### **Dublin Marathon**

Debbie Jones in 3.35 (PB) John Bradbury in 3.46 Margaret Moody in 3.57 Alison Packman in 4.40

Mike Hickman in 440

#### Blenheim10k

6<sup>th</sup> Trevor Hunter in 34:34
43<sup>rd</sup> John Dooey in 39:58
161<sup>st</sup> Paul Palmer in 44:34
Linda Weedon in 52.32 (pb)
714<sup>th</sup> Stella Gwilliam in 60:29 (PB)
772<sup>nd</sup> Ann Palmer in 63:11

## Tring Ridgeway Run

Liz Davey in 1.25
Beverly Black in 1.30
Linda Weedon in 1.32
Dave Nash in 1.36

#### Marlow Half Marathon

Michael Hollis in 1.36
Trevor Free in 1.38
Nick Martin in 1.41
Des Mannion in 1.49
Russell Fenn in 1.55
Jim Doyle in 2.07
Linda Weedon in 2.08
Dave Nash in 2.18

#### Herberts Hole

John Bradbury in 50.29
Jock MacLean in 50.52
Paul Palmer in 52.25
Peter Astles in 52.31
Mike Blowing in 63.22
Beverley Black in 59.12
Lucy Couturier in 61.14
Alison Packman in 61.26
Helen Hammond in 68.12
Elaine Brewster in 73.12
Ann Palmer in 73.45

## Cliveden Cross Country

John Peerless in 48.40
Paul Palmer in 52.19
Jock Maclean in 52.33
Martin Dean in 56.27
Mike Hickman in 56.29
Debbie Ridout in 58.28
Liz Davey in 1.00.24
Lucy Couturier in 1.02.33
Alison Packman in 1.03.06
Nicy & Harvey Lyon in 1.05.39
Angie McCoughlin in 1.07.01
Helen Hammond in 1.07.17
Julie Dean in 1.15.48
Ann Palmer in 1.16.22
Elaine Brewster in 1.19.30

#### Chester 10K

Dave Nash in 57.28

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One careful lady owner, low mileage! Still with one years warranty. It's an Omega Folding Treadmill so doesn't take up too much space. Speed is 0-10mph, shows distance over 400m laps, number of laps, mileage, has incline button so you can imitate those Wycombe hills! Great piece of equipment if you don't want to go out in the cold or on your own. Selling price: £600 ono. Contact either Alison Packman (07766 504045) or Helen Hammond (07754 182831) or see us at the Club! Buyer collects!



Who's the mystery runner pictured with Sue Neale's daughters?

# Handy Cross Runners Tuesday Training Schedule

Jan 6	$8 \times 300$ m interspersed with $100$ m recovery closed circuit
Jan 13	8 x 400m effort over last 50m with jog recovery Cressex road
Jan 20	$6 \times 200$ m @ 85%, $4 \times 200$ @ 100% , with 100m recovery
Jan 27	3 laps of cressex circuit using fartlek technique
Feb 3	Hill Session 6 $\times$ long hills and 4 $\times$ short hills with recovery on hill
Feb 10	Pyramid session 2 $\times$ 100m, 2 $\times$ 200m, 2 $\times$ 300m, 2 $\times$ 200m, 2 $\times$ 100m Closed circuit
Feb 17	Time trial 2 laps of Cressex Road approx 4.75k
Feb 24	$4 \times 800$ m with 2 mins rest recovery
March 2	$8\times100\text{m}$ @ $85\%$ Jog recovery, $4\times100\text{m}$ @ $100\%$ jog recovery, $6\times100\text{m}$ @ $85\%$ jog recovery.
March 9	$5\times200\text{m}$ @85% jog recovery, $5\times200\text{m}$ @ 100% jog recovery $5\times200\text{m}$ @85% jog recovery.
March 16	$8 \times 300$ m interspersed with 100m recovery closed circuit
March 23	8 x 400m effort over last 50m with jog recovery Cressex road
March 30	3 laps of cressex circuit using fartlek technique

All sessions will commence with a warm-up and stretch, drills and warm down, wear warm reflective clothing during warm-up.

Alex Johnson UK Athletics coach Tele: 01628 523322 Mob 07802 791878

Keeping the dream alive

## WEDNESDAY TRAINING PROGRAMME UP TO 31-3-04.

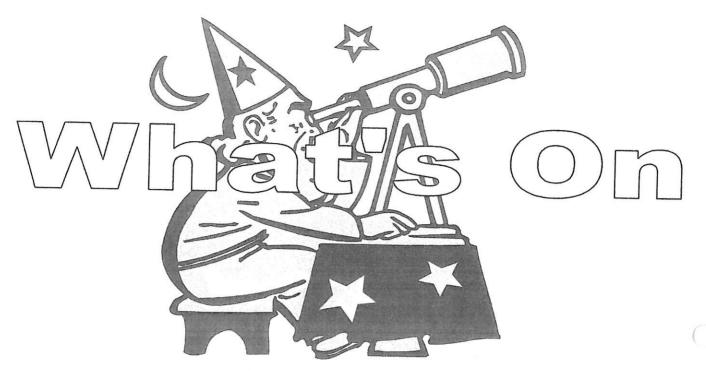
Venue:- Athletics track at Wycombe Sports Centre, Marlow Hill. Starting promptly at 7:00pm. All abilities should enjoy and benefit from these sessions.

ALL SESSIONS START AND FINISH WITH 4 LAPS (OR EQUIVALENT) WARM UP/COOL DOWN, FOLLOWED BY STRETCHING AND MOBILITY EXERCISES.

7/1/04	$12 \times 400$ m, followed by 1 ×200m at full effort (200m jog recovery).
14/1/04	$8 \times 600$ m, followed by $1 \times 200$ m at full effort (200m walk/jog recovery).
21/1/04	$6 \times 800$ m, followed by $1 \times 200$ m at full effort (200m walk/jog recovery).
28/1/04	$5 \times 1000$ m, followed by $1 \times 200$ m at full effort (200m walk/jog recovery).
4/2/04	$4 \times 1200$ m, followed by $1 \times 200$ m at full effort (200m walk/jog recovery).
11/2/04	$4 \times 1400$ m, followed by $1 \times 200$ m at full effort (200m walk/jog recovery).
18/2/04	$4 \times 1600$ m, followed by $1 \times 200$ m at full effort (200m walk/jog recovery).
25/2/04	5k Time Trial. (Please wear a stopwatch).
3/3/04	Pyramid session. 400/800/1200/1600/1200/800/400m (200m walk/jog recovery).
10/3/04	Hill Session (Knight's Hill), 8 $\times$ full circuits maintaining effort until 2 $^{\rm nd}$ corner. Recover on remainder.
17/3/04	Relay session. 2 $\times$ 10 $\times$ 200m (per person) in teams of 3. (400m jog recovery between sets).
24/3/04	400m Relay session in teams of 3. ( $1^{st}$ runner runs his/her effort lap. As $2^{nd}$ runner takes over, 1st runner begins his/her recovery. When $2^{nd}$ runner finishes, the $3^{rd}$ runner takes over and the $2^{nd}$ begins his/her recovery. The $1^{st}$ runner must complete his/her recovery before the $3^{rd}$ runner completes their effort lap. Continue until each person has run 12 efforts).
31/3/04	"Parlauf" session. $6 \times 800$ m (Same as we did in December).

#### Mike Hickman

uk: athletics coach (L3 Mar). Sports & Remedial Massage therapist MHFST Telephone 01494 525474 or 07947 309923 (Mobile). e-mail mikehick@btinternet.com



## Sunday Cross Country League

Sunday 18th January Bracknell

Sunday 1st February - Finch Coasters (Confirmed)

Sunday 15th February - Handy Cross

## Saturday Cross Country League

Saturday 14th February - Wing

Friday 16th January

Music Quiz at Sands

Sunday 18th January

Highworth Half Marathon Wendover 5 (Multi-Terrain)

Sunday 1st February

The Tough Guy Watford Half Marathon

Sunday 8th February

Wokingham Half Marathon

Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> February

Hardwick Cross Country

Sunday 29th February

Bramley 10 & 20

Sunday 7th March

London Half Marathon Reading Half Marathon

Sunday 14th March

The Grizzly Fleet Half Marathon

Saturday 27th March

Compton Downland Challenge (20 & 40)

Tuesday 30th March

Club AGM

Friday 9th April

Maidenhead Easter 10

Sunday 18th April

London Marathon

Sunday 25th April

Shakespeare Marathon & Half Bracknell Half Marathon