
ON COURSE



JANUARY 1991

ISSUE 16

affiliated to the
A.A.A. and W.A.A.A



*The Newsletter of Handy
Cross Joggers*

EDITOR'S RAMBLINGS

Welcome to a new year of "On Course" and I certainly hope that it will be better than the latter part of last year.

By the time that you read this you will probably have seen the letter that Club Chairman, Gerry Grosse, has distributed regarding the recent problems the club has had (in case you haven't seen this letter it is reproduced on page 4 of this newsletter) and there is little that needs to be added to what Gerry has said. However I must say that I have taken quite a lot of 'stick' about my decision to print the article by Alex Johnson in the last issue and quite honestly all the hassle that it has caused me has made me wonder whether it is worthwhile carrying on with editing this Newsletter. I will see how I feel in a couple of months or so before making a final decision in the matter.

Meanwhile, whilst not wishing to dwell on the past problems, I need to get a couple of matters off my chest. First, although it has caused me problems and I admit that I should have shown Alex's article to the people he attacked to give them a chance to respond, I have to say that I still think that this publication is the correct place for club members to express their views on issues affecting Handy Cross Joggers - so long as they are prepared for any comebacks. Secondly, Dave Robson, in a letter he sent to the club Committee members on the matter, he expressed his view that the reports I, as Publicity Officer, submit to the press have a certain 'sameness' about them and I have to say that I am in total agreement with him. I will try to do better in the future but it can be a little difficult to come up with 'words of wisdom' when I sometimes don't get results until late on Sunday night and the report has to be at the Bucks Free Press office before 9 a.m. the following morning!

Well that's all for this time and, as to whether there will be a next time, who knows?

Chris Gentry

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CLUB OFFICIALS

President	-	Vernon Martin
Chairman	-	Gerry Grosse
Vice-Chairman	-	
Secretary	-	Alison Banham
Events Secretary	-	Joy Smith
Treasurer	-	Ian Mallen
Membership Secretary (Men)	-	John Gardner
Membership Secretary (Women)	-	Paula Parkin
Social Secretary	-	Rose Priest
Publicity Officer	-	Chris Gentry

Spotlight On Club Members by Chris Gentry

The inspiration for this, the first of what is hoped to be a series of articles on club members, came from our erstwhile Social Secretary, Rose Priest, and I hope that you will agree that it is a very good idea. It was also Rose's idea that the first member under the spotlight should be Jack Sharpe, one of our longest serving club members, and I think that it was an excellent choice.

Jack (or Jacko as a lot of us affectionately know him) tells me that he is a native of High Wycombe having been born here back in July, 1921 and he has been a member of the club for 11 years - almost as long as the club has been in existence. I have known Jack for a good many of those years and have always found him extremely friendly and very dedicated to his running. Many a'time in the past, when we used to do the 20 mile run out to Maidenhead Bridge and back, have we got to Cookham on the way out and found Jack running in the opposite direction having started an hour or so earlier than us in order that he could complete his long run in reasonable time. That takes dedication!

However, saying all this, I have to admit that I had always thought that, like a good number of us, he had taken up running during the "jogging boom" of the late 1970's/early 1980's. I couldn't have been more wrong because Jack tells me that he first started running, mainly cross country, during the Second World War when he was serving with the army.

In those days Jack, and his fellow comrades in arms, had to do road runs before breakfast in the mornings wearing physical training kit but with boots on! Apparently after Dunkirk, during the emergency, these runs had to be undertaken with a rifle and 50 rounds of ammunition being carried and a steel helmet, gas cape and gas mask being worn - all this and also, as Jack says, the soldiers still had to look out for German parachutists!

Jack tells me that his first race was way back in 1941 and it took place in the mountains of Ireland but since 1981 he has taken to road running in a big way, having completed 30 full marathons in that time with his personal best being a very handy 3hr 55min. Jack has also done numerous half marathons and his p.b. for that distance, 1hr 41min, was achieved at the Wycombe ½ which took place on Jack's 65th birthday - quite a birthday present, eh!

As he will be 70 years old in a few months time, Jack's ambition for the future is to keep running with the club and I am sure that we will all be glad if he achieves this ambition.

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

As mentioned in the 'Editor's Ramblings', reproduced below is the letter that the Club Chairman, Gerry Grosse, recently distributed regarding the problems the club has had. It is reproduced here for the benefit of club members who may not have seen it previously.

To all members.

Your committee has been asked by you, the members, to run the club for the benefit of the members and the enjoyment of running.

At the AGM some views were expressed which did not find general acceptance. Subsequent events showed that there were strong opinions which have tended to divide the club and which have lead to one resignation from the committee and one from the club.

The committee has discussed the matter in detail and is of the firm opinion that the formation of separate groups within the club can be of no benefit and will only bring argument and disunity.

We will endeavour to maintain one organisation to promote our sport and give a service to our members. To this end we would point out that any members may raise a subject at the AGM or, with sufficient support, at a special EGM. (Advance warning is helpful to give everyone a chance to think through new proposals).

We hope that if you have a problem, a complaint, an idea or suggestion, you will bring the subject to the attention of a member of the committee who will raise it at one of our meetings.

Let's hope we can put the friction of the last months behind us and look forward to 1991 with a good year on the roads, the country and the track.

Ref: GG/gl.3

17th December 1990



Gerry Grosse

Never trust Roy Williams! I used to. On the day he asked me if I would like to do a run through some woods I had no suspicions that he spoke with forked tongue. Cross country always brings me out in a rash, well at least the thought of it does, so I initially declined on the basis that I had no spikes. 'You won't need spikes' he lied, 'it's all undulating woodland paths'. Secondly, he deceitfully said 'all of us are going over'. A sort of "be there or be square" ultimatum so, contrary to my inner sense of danger, I decided to go.

I first became suspicious that all was not what it seemed when the only people in the convoy of Handy Cross Joggers were hardened cross country vets with glazed masochistic stares and no sense of feeling from the neck down. I should have climbed out of Bob Carter's car there and then and, as we approached the venue, I almost did, because there in front of us was the direction arrow and written in large letters 'HILL RACE'. I am sure that you will appreciate the fear that sets in at such a sight. When race organisers bill a race as undulating you worry, this sight made my flesh creep.

Bob's Sierra turned off in the direction indicated and started climbing up through Wendover Woods. We seemed to be going up and up forever as he ground down the gears into second to keep going and still we went up. One of the nicest sights of the day was looking down at the clouds as they billowed below us at about 20,000 ft. Still we went up and when we reached the very top we went up a bit further. I began to feel a bit sick and it was at this point I first started to hate Roy Williams. I had visions of the race course going down this hill and coming up again. Surely no-one would organise that. My worst fears were confirmed, because the first person I saw at the venue was Derek Sawyer. I then knew without a doubt what type of race this was to be. Furthermore he was smiling knowingly. I was sick. Roy Williams was definitely off my Christmas card list and onto my hit list!

The air is very thin at this altitude and very cold. While the others were deciding whether or not to wear Helly Hansons and use 15mm spikes, I eagerly hunted down the use of a grey coat and wellies with six inch nails protruding from the soles (downwards).

I don't remember much of the race. I do however remember chasing Roy Williams, not, as most thought to beat him in the race, I was trying to catch him to beat him up! What had I done to him to deserve this? I almost caught him on the steep downhill slope until I remembered I was not wearing spikes, and at the same time someone sneekily told my feet which immediately became autonomous. I then passed Roy another runner the left hand turn over the fence through a herd of sheep only to be stopped by a large elm.

The uphill bit was beyond description. By this time I was exhausted, I had mud on places where I didn't know I had places. My new shoes weren't mauve any more. I ached everywhere, I was freezing, I was being passed by all and sundry and to cap it all the only thing I could hear in the distance was the call 'Is everybody happy!'.

I finished the race with the same glazed stare and lack of feeling from the neck down as all the others, but with the burning desire that helped me push to the finish line.... to get my hands on Roy Williams' neck to throttle him slowly and painfully.

ANNUAL DINNER

O.K., dig out those diaries you had for Christmas.

Now, turn to the page that has Friday 26th April on it and write, against that date, the following:-

"I am going to the Joggers Dinner which is being held at the British Legion hall in High Wycombe."

Well done! By the way, further details of the dinner can be obtained from our Social Secretary, Rose Priest.

ANNUAL CLUB EVENTS by Chris Gentry

Since the last Newsletter the club has held its' two annual end-of-year events, the Barnet Trophy and the Pre-Christmas Self Handicap race, and congratulations must go to the winners of these popular events, as well as to every club member who took part. Unfortunately a lack of space precludes me from giving the full results from these events but set out below are the highlights:-

Barnet Trophy

In this event there was a close race between Esme Thomson and Ian Mallen before Esme showed a fine turn of speed over the latter stages to edge out Ian. Esme's actual running time was 32min 42secs and the improvement that she has made over the past year, since returning from an injury that almost finished her running career, can be seen from the fact that her time this year was over 3 minutes faster than her 1989 time. Ian's time was 35min 30secs with Marie Spinks in third place in 36min 07secs and no less than 38 club members took part.

Self Handicap

Meanwhile, in this event, held on the Sunday before Christmas, not only was there a two-way split for 1st/2nd place but also for 3rd/4th place - something unheard of before! Stephan Naunko and Mike Stone tied for 1st place when they both ran 5 seconds faster than they had estimated and Dave Barraclough and Roy Williams tied for 3rd place by both running 7 seconds faster than they had said. The achievement of this quartet showed that they all had good pace judgement which unfortunately can't really be said for Eila Mansfield who was the furthest out from the time that she had estimated - still never mind, better luck next year! For this event we had 26 club members taking part.

MY BUSY YEAR by Derek Sawyer

Just to prove that I did do something last year after the Tuffman in May, here are the results from some of the events I competed in.

May 27th - Swindon Triathlon

This comprised a 1.5k swim, a 40k bike ride, and a 10k run. The swim started at 7 a.m. and it was cold but I managed to finish it in 33min 52secs. I nearly fell off my bike due to the chill factor and, after completing the bike section in 1hr 15min 51secs, I overheated on the run because by that time the sun had gotten up. The run took me 42min 30secs and I finished 353rd out of 484 finishers in a total time of 2hr 32min 13secs.

June 24th - Aylesbury Watermead Triathlon

This event consisted of a 600 metre swim, a 13 mile bike ride, and a 4 mile run. I finished 97th out of 310 finishers. My splits were 13min 35secs for the swim, 44min 43secs for the bike ride, and 27min 51secs for the run. This made a total time of 1hr 26min 09secs.

July 22nd - Milton Keynes, Willen Lake

This comprised a 1.2k swim, a 50k bike ride, and a 10k run and I finished 105th out of 161 finishers. My splits were 26min 09secs for the swim, 1hr 36min 20secs for the bike ride, and 41min 49secs for the run making a total time of 2hr 44min 18secs.

August 5th - Olney, Emberton Park

For this one we had to do a 1.5k swim, a 40k bike ride, and a 10k run. My total time here, 2hr 26min 38secs, was a personal best for the distance by 4 minutes and I finished 202nd out of 342 finishers. My splits were 31min 15secs for the swim, 1hr 18min 23secs for the bike ride, and 37min 00secs for the run.

October 6th and 7th - Tuffman Duathlon

Duathlon is the proper name for a bike/run event and this one started at 7 a.m. on the 6th with a 110 mile bike ride. Unfortunately it was a disaster as it took me 6hrs 04min 09secs - it started windy, got worse and I had to be lifted off the bike at the end. I then went home for a hot bath and plenty of food, ready for the next day, Sunday 7th.

The next day dawned with no wind and the sun shining. The Kingston Marathon was the next stage and I started out with the intention of going for 3hrs but after 2 miles this changed to 3½ hours! The course was one small lap and three large laps and I struggled, getting slower and slower, before nearly giving up with one large lap still to go. However I remembered Esme telling me off for dropping out of a race several years ago, so I

carried on and finished with my slowest marathon time ever on the road, 3hrs 40min 20secs. I finished 14th overall in the Duathlon out of 16 finishers (although I was 67th out of 95 in the Marathon) but there were about 20 non-finishers. My total time was 9hrs 44min 29secs.

The "220 Duathlon" series comprised a 4 mile run followed by a 20 mile bike ride and finishing with another 4 mile run. Supposedly the competitors best three events are to score.

30th September - Thame

It poored down but it was not a bad event and I came 102nd out of 199 finishers in a total time of 2hr 01min 26secs.

4th November - Castle Coombe

This event was held at the motor race track and the run was a bit over distance as it comprised 2 laps of the perimeter road which made it 4½ miles. We then had to do 10 laps of the motor race track, making a short 18½ miles, followed by the run again. My splits were 30min 14secs for the first run, 59min 13secs for the bike ride, and 32min 27secs for the second run making a total time of 2hr 01min 54secs. I finished 96th out of 243 finishers.

18th November - Castle Coombe (again)

This was a change of venue because the U.S.A.F. needed their airfield due to the GULF silliness. The organisers found a way to shorten the runs to the proper 4 miles but didn't give us any extra laps on the bike to bring it up to distance. It was very windy and it got worse as the laps went by but my splits were 29min 14secs for the first run, 63min 50secs for the bike ride, and 29min 27secs for the second run. This gave me a total time of 2hr 02min 31secs for a finishing position of 110th out of 193.

Is that enough for the year? No, now to the CROSS COUNTRY!

APOLOGY

It is apology time again! This time the lucky recipient of my grovellings is Derek Sawyer because I unfortunately missed him out of the results from the Aylesbury ½ marathon. So, to put matters right, Derek finished 32nd in a time of 1hr 26min 49secs, the same time as the first lady home Caroline Owen-Thomas, with whom he ran the last few miles.

RACE RESULTS/REPORTS



Windsor Half Marathon - 7th October

In one of the best performances from a club member in recent years, Peter Smith took on some of the best half marathon runners in this race to finish in an outstanding 3rd place in a personal best of an incredible 69min 40secs. Not to be outdone Joy Smith also took part in the race and recorded a very good p.b. of 1hr 41min 09secs.

Henley Half Marathon - 14th October

We had quite a turn out again for this event, even though it took place only a day after the first Chiltern League Cross Country fixture of the season, and certainly two races in two days didn't seem to affect Esme Thomson who, in this race, was not only the 1st lady vet home but was also the 3rd lady overall. There were also p.b.'s for Alan Chilton, who was the first club runner home, and Dave Nash. The results for the club were:-

Alan Chilton	1hr 12min 12secs	Jim Chilton	1hr 23min 57secs
John Flint	1hr 25min 27secs	Benjy Benjamin	1hr 29min 12secs
Roy Williams	1hr 29min 14secs	Mike Stone	1hr 29min 50secs
John Bradbury	1hr 32min 22secs	Alex Johnson	1hr 32min 54secs
Esme Thomson	1hr 33min 38secs	Peter Edington	1hr 38min 22secs
Martyn Franzese	1hr 40min 26secs	Brian Brown	1hr 41min 24secs
Kevin Duffy	1hr 42min 16secs	Gerry Grosse	1hr 42min 27secs
Peter Spelman	1hr 43min 05secs	Keith Illingworth	1hr 47min 37secs
Duncan Kennerson	1hr 48min 46secs	Marie Spinks	1hr 48min 59secs
Margaret Moody	1hr 48min 59secs	Robert Farrier	1hr 53min 07secs
Derek Skinner	1hr 53min 15secs	Peter Anderson	1hr 59min 24secs
Dave Nash	2hr 00min 32secs	Sarah Player	2hr 04min 37secs
Vivien White	2hr 09min 17secs	Greg Marsh	2hr 14min 50secs
Maureen Edington	2hr 22min 25secs	Ray Harris	time unknown

Wexham Park 10k - 14th October

Three club runners and three p.b.'s in this event so congratulations go to Ralph Chesswas, who was 14th overall and also the first club runner home, Stephan Naunko, and Joy Smith, who suffered no ill effects from also racing the previous day. The finishing times for the trio were 36min 43secs, 39min 25sec, and 44min 48secs respectively.

Diet Coke Great London Run 10k - 14th October

Whilst club runners were performing closer to home and in less exalted company, Allyson Unitt and Rose Priest joined international athletes, Rosa Mota and Grete Waitz, in this event. Whilst not managing to stay

with these superstars, Allyson and Rose did very well to record times of 60min and 60min 01secs respectively.

Dursley Cross Country - 20th October

Dave Robson was apparently the only club member who took part in this race, which was run over a distance of approximately 10k, and he recorded a very creditable time of 40min 35secs.

Tring 9 miles - 21st October

Three club members took part in this annual event and Kevin Duffy showed evidence that he is recovering from his lengthy injury by being the first home of the trio. The results for the threesome were:-

Kevin Duffy	61min 00secs	Martyn Franzese	67min 40secs
Duncan Kennerson	68min 15secs		

Abingdon Marathon - 21st October

This used to be a very popular event amongst runners from the club but this time it would appear that Jack Sharpe was our sole representative. Jack's time for the classic distance was 4hr 36min.

Great Sam Half Marathon - 28th October

This race took place the day after the second Chiltern League Cross Country fixture and again a few hardy souls competed in both events, apparently with no ill effects. The race took place in Bracknell in chilly and windy conditions but the conditions certainly didn't seem to deter the runners as there were 6 p.b.'s set by club members. The speedy sextet were Alan Chilton, who was 6th overall, Yvonne Adair, who was 3rd lady, Peter Edington, Duncan Kennerson, Dave Nash, and Maureen Edington. Not only that but the 1st lady home was none other than our own Irene Smith. The results for club runners were:-

Alan Chilton	1hr 11min 14secs	Irene Smith	1hr 23min 40secs
Yvonne Adair	1hr 25min 40secs	Roger Wilkes	1hr 29min 19secs
Grahame McLachlan	1hr 30min 06secs	John Bradbury	1hr 30min 31secs
Stephan Naunko	1hr 31min 33secs	Peter Edington	1hr 34min 35secs
Kevin Duffy	1hr 35min 00secs	Ron Newman	1hr 36min 45secs
Gerry Grosse	1hr 40min 34secs	Duncan Kennerson	1hr 44min 06secs
John Gardner	1hr 50min 46secs	Brian Sinclair	1hr 56min 26secs
Dave Nash	1hr 57min 30secs	Maureen Edington	2hr 09min 18secs

Chesham 5k - 4th November

The team from the club of Peter Smith, Alan Chilton and Steve Barrow, did us proud in this race because they managed to hold off the strong challenge from Watford Harriers to carry off the team prize. Not only that but Peter came 3rd overall, Alan 6th, but he was also the 1st junior home, and Steve 16th whilst in the ladies race Irene Smith finished 2nd, as well as being the 1st lady vet, whilst Yvonne Adair finished 4th.

Marlow Half Marathon - 4th November

A large contingent from the club took part in the second running of this race and, over a very tough course, it was surprising that no less than five club runners recorded p.b.'s. The "famous five" were Ralph Chesswas, who was also the first home for the club, Peter Edington, Mike Owen-Evans, Sarah Player, and Dave Nash. The full results for club runners were:-

Ralph Chesswas	1hr 21min 33secs	John Flint	1hr 22min 14secs
Chris Minall	1hr 25min 10secs	Dave Barraclough	1hr 26min 01secs
Roy Williams	1hr 26min 20secs	Dave Woolley	1hr 27min 07secs
John Bradbury	1hr 30min 12secs	Mike Stone	1hr 30min 53secs
Roger Wilkes	1hr 31min 05secs	Alex Johnson	1hr 33min 37secs
Peter Edington	1hr 33min 45secs	Kevin Duffy	1hr 39min 25secs
Trevor Hart	1hr 39min 35secs	Mike Owen-Evans	1hr 39min 39secs
Margaret Moody	1hr 43min 30secs	Greg Marsh	1hr 44min 14secs
Joy Smith	1hr 44min 27secs	Martyn Franzese	1hr 45min 10secs
Marie Spinks	1hr 46min 13secs	John Gardner	1hr 49min 52secs
Sarah Player	1hr 56min 00secs	Dave Nash	1hr 56min 50secs

Harrow Half Marathon - 4th November

Whilst everyone else was either competing at Chesham or Marlow, Stephan Naunko took the opportunity to slip off to Harrow to take part in this race. As far as I aware, he was the only club runner taking part and he finished in a good time of 1hr 30min 48secs.

Claude Fenton 10, Reading - 18th November

Take a cold, windy day and a five lap course around the grounds of Reading University and what do you get? Well, for club members competing in this race, you get no less than 6 p.b.'s and a fine 4th place, that's what! Alan Chilton was our first runner home in 4th place overall with a p.b. and the other p.b.'s were recorded by Stephan Naunko, Peter Edington Joy Smith, Gerry Grosse, and Dave Nash. The times for all of the club finishers were:-

Alan Chilton	53min 51secs	Stephan Naunko	67min 21secs
Peter Edington	68min 50secs	Kevin Duffy	71min 00secs
Joy Smith	73min 16secs	Gerry Grosse	73min 28secs
Martyn Franzese	76min 00secs	John Gardner	78min 54secs
Duncan Kennerson	81min 56secs	Dave Nash	85min 42secs

Wolverton 5 - 24th November

According to 'Athletics Today' this race has earned a reputation as one of the country's top races at the distance with a flat two-lap course lending itself to fast times. The race this time attracted runners of the calibre of Paul Larkins and Alison Wyeth and therefore the performance of club member Peter Smith in finishing 16th in a time of 25min 10secs was quite outstanding.

Basingstoke 10k - 25th November

After competing in the club's Barnet Trophy event in the morning, Roger

Wilkes and Dave Nash dashed down to Hampshire to take part in this event in the afternoon. The journey was certainly worthwhile for Roger as he managed a p.b. for the distance and the results for all the club runners were:-

Roger Wilkes	39min 47secs	Helen Wilkes	50min 00secs
Pam Wilkes	51min 32secs	Dave Nash	51min 33secs

Lower Earley 5 - 9th December

Those of you who read the Bucks Free Press will know that this race saw the return from injury of Eric Buckle and in cold conditions he recorded a very good time of 31min 34secs.

Hogs Back Race - 9th December

This race is over the little run distance of 9.25 miles and, as if the race was not difficult enough with a 330ft climb after about 4 miles, the descent this year was very icy which meant that the runners did not really gain any benefit from it. Three runners from the club took part and they were lead home by John Gardner in a time of 75min 47secs. The other two club runners were Dave Nash (77min 49secs) and Duncan Kennerson (81min 05secs).

Bicester 10k - 30th December

In this traditional end-of-year race in Oxfordshire, Ron Newman showed that he had recovered from his recent bout of illness by leading the trio of club runners home in a time of 41min 30secs. He was followed by Martyn Franzese (44min 26secs) and John Gardner (44min 46secs).

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LATE RESULT

Gosport Sultan 10 - 30th September

Roger and Pam Wilkes took part in this race and, from all accounts, ran well to finish in 67min and 89min respectively.

BITS & PIECES

Despite the somewhat inclement weather, which caused a change of route, our Boxing Day run was again very enjoyable and the refreshments at Vernon Martin's house most welcome. I say that the refreshments were welcome but, for Martyn Franzese, they must have been even more welcome because unfortunately he found himself having to walk from the car park, at the corner of Totteridge Lane and Amersham Road, all the way to Vernon's house and back again, in the pouring rain. Why did he have to do this? because Kevin Duffy had somehow managed to contrive to walk off with his car keys! Needless to say, after a few drinks all was forgiven.

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Talking of mishaps reminds me of the problems Chris Minall had at the Slough Marathon back in September and which just go to show how important race marshalls are. The race is a two lap one and Chris had reached the half way stage in a very good time of 1hr 26min 36secs but just after that he arrived at the Red Cow roundabout and, because there were no other runners in sight neither was there a marshall, he unfortunately went the wrong way. By the time Chris had found his way back on to the right course he had done an extra 2 miles. He carried on but, on reaching the 20 mile marker (having of course then run 22 miles) in 2hr 15mins, he realised that if he carried on he would not have an official correct marathon time, he would have run 28 miles on a very hot day, and his aim of 2hr 45min to try and win an age prize was impossible. Chris, to put it mildly, was not amused and, on the day, he spoke to the Race Director and the referee before putting his complaint in writing. A little while later he received a reply to his letter and the organisers admitted that the marshall allocated to the roundabout had gone missing, but, as if to add insult to injury, the letter went on to say "Fortunately no one else seemed to suffer from the same incident". Not surprisingly this comment was of little comfort to Chris. So, if you do the Slough Marathon next time, it might be as well if you carry your own map of the course!

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At a recent Committee meeting I was approached to put in the Newsletter the following cryptic comment "What happened to Alex Johnson at the New Forest event last year?". Answers on a postcard to

