

The 5K's are over for another year so now we have the cross country season to look forward to, but not just yet. There should be lots more warm summer's evenings to enjoy before the onset of the late nights and cold temperatures.

The Marlow 5 and Wycombe half marathons were both very successful with nearly one thousand runners in each. It seemed very strange not to see Alex's familiar figure at these events, but the specially struck commemorative medals and the newly named team trophy are a fitting memento to his memory. It was very poignant hearing *Keeping the Dream Alive* at the start of these two events.

We still miss Alex terribly, especially his presence on Tuesday evening sessions and at high profile events such as the above. However the club will continue to prosper and grow as he would have wished and the dream will be kept alive by the rest of us.

The club is certainly going from strength to strength, with new members joining every month. So a very warm welcome to the following people who joined recently:-

Clodagh Ball, Dan Charleston, Sue Cordery, James Cunnane, Danny Fox, Frank Fulcher, Jo Gilbert, Karen Haynes, Melanie Hill and Chris Lansdown.

It's nice to see Bill Nobbs hobbling around the Judo Club after his horrific accident. I'm sure we all wish him a speedy and complete recovery.

Did you see the picture of the start of the Wooburn 10K in the Bucks Free Press? Three Handy Cross Runners were very prominent at the front, all wearing the club kit. Altogether we fielded twenty seven competitors in this race, a great advert for the club.

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Olympic Distance

Some of you asked me to write about my first Olympic distance triathlon at Windsor, so here goes. Let me first explain that there are varying distances run in triathlons, the usual sprint is a 400m swim, 20K bike and 5K run. Strictly speaking this should really be a 750m swim, but they are quite rare. An Olympic distance is a 1500m swim (in the Thames!) followed by a 40K bike ride and a 10K run. You then have a half Iron Man, which I believe is about a 2k swim, a 90k bike and a half marathon. Then an Iron Man, which is just over 2 miles of swimming followed by 180k bike and a marathon. Strictly for nutters and my brother in law.

There were 2000 athletes taking part in the event at Windsor. Some had elected to do the sprint, which was hardly a sprint being a 750m swim (again in the Thames) a 29K bike (just short of 20 miles) and a 5k run. Obviously you can't get 2000 swimmers in the Thames at the same time so we were set off in waves (*sic*). All the sprint runners went first and then my wave, the 30 - 34 yr. old women full distance, went next.

I had got up at 4:30 am for this event. I had wanted to be at Windsor for 5:30 as my race was to begin at 6:20. You put your bike on what they call racking on the Saturday and bring the rest of your kit with you on Sunday, so I wanted to make sure my tyres were still up and nothing untoward had happened overnight.

I arrived feeling very nervous, the mist was rising off the Thames as the sun began to burn through the clouds. I put my bike shoes and running shoes next to my bike, sorted out my towel and socks, and put my sunglasses in easy reach. Also making sure that the straps on my bike helmet were not twisted. There is so much to think about and if you don't set up properly you can lose valuable time. After the swim you get to where your bike is and change, this is called the transition time. Getting a wetsuit off can take a little getting used to so you even practise that!

I struggled into my wetsuit, which took a good five minutes and waddled off to watch the sprints start and then it was time for me to get into the water. I was quite relieved as it's very hot standing around in the wetsuit. I was quite surprised at how warm the water was. I swam to the other side of the river as I was told that was the best place to avoid the current. You swim 850m against the current, turn at a massive buoy and then 650 back with the tide. I must say I didn't feel a difference but there probably was one. A few minutes passed and we were off.

The first thing I did as I pulled my arm over was to catch a bramble and get a thorn in my finger. 20 meters in to the race and my goggles fogged up. I had to clear them, so had to tread water and found my feet touched the bottom. I dread to think what I stood on, but with clear goggles I set off again. I actually caught not the wave in front, but the wave in front of that, who had set off five minutes before me, so I was very pleased.

We were the first to do the Olympic distance, so when I saw the buoy that the sprints turned back at I wished I'd done that distance instead. However, I could see my turn point and it didn't look too far away, so every now and again I would look up to make sure that I was headed in the right direction. Some poor girl who was caught up with us from the sprint got dragged along and ended up doing the full swim!

Finally after 32/33 mins it was time to get out of the water. The point where you get out is very deep and you have to climb on to a pontoon. There is a very nice man that helps people out and boy, did I need him. At this point you start to remove your hat, goggles and wetsuit whilst running towards your bike. This was some 400 meters away. Here is where your swim time ends. This is why my swim time is longer than 33 minutes.

No time to dry yourself. Simply haul off the wetsuit and place your helmet on, and boy are they fussy about that. You **MUST NOT** touch your bike until your helmet is on your head. There are huge time penalty points for that. Next, socks and bike shoes, drag your bike off the scaffolding and off you go.

The bike course is really nice but very busy. You are not allowed to draft, which means you must always have five bike lengths between you and the person in front. Again big time penalties, and believe it or not they have what they call the draft police going up and down the course. Should you wish to overtake you have five seconds to do so, as soon as you pull ahead the person behind has to fall back, even brake if necessary. There were so many of us on the bike course that this rule was very hard to abide by, but no one caught me drafting.

When you have finished the bike you get to a dismount point, this marks the end of your bike and the start of your run leg. You then leg it with your bike to the same place you'd taken it from. Dump the bike and then remove the helmet, again very important to dump the bike before removing the helmet. Change from bike shoes to running shoes. Carry my obligatory bottle of water and off you go.

Just three laps of Windsor to go now. You start by going up the hill with the castle on it. Not much of a hill but after the bike your legs turn to jelly. I'm not so bad now but at the beginning of the season it always gets me. Try it one day. Go for a cycle ride and then try to run. Your legs just don't feel like your own.

Anyway, just before the traffic lights you turn, which is really hard because you use a cone to turn around and it's very tight and the change of pace (not much in my case) is a real pain. Back down the hill. I like down, along towards where we do the Datchet 5K as far as the end of the field, again turn around a cone and then back towards Eton bridge. Over that, up a half a mile or so and then again turn around a cone to the start.

Very boring and really by now I was hanging on for dear life. There was no way I was giving up but the second time up the hill I decided not to waste any energy jogging up the hill, I would walk. For this I got an almighty slap on the back from a fellow female runner who shouted "Go girl chic" I don't know what she was on but I wished I had some at that point.

Then the crowd shouted at me to go and I felt I couldn't let them down, so plodded on up. I didn't dare walk the third and final time. I have to say by the third lap I was getting in to my stride and actually ran it faster than the other two! Then there it was, the finish line. I'd forgotten to start my watch in all the excitement and had no idea how I had got on and so was really pleased that I had completed my hardest event yet.

I thoroughly enjoyed it and can't wait to do my next one in Edinburgh on 28th August. That will be across the Forth so it will certainly be interesting.

Helen Murdoch

Many congratulations to Helen for completing the Windsor Triathlon in a superb time of 3hrs 9mins

1500 meter swim in 35:07, 40K cycle in 1:32:17 and 10K run in 1:01:59

More Triathlons

Other triathletes from Handy Cross include Alison Mcquater, who completed the Eton triathlon in 1:14 and the Bedford Sprint Triathlon in 1:23.

Also Kirsti Roberts, who used to run with us, completed the Alcatraz Triathlon, which included a one and a half mile swim in the freezing cold San Francisco Bay.

Club AGM (Apology from the secretary)

It was remiss of me at the AGM, when Peter was thanking everyone else for what they have done for the club, not to have mentioned the big debt of gratitude I think that the club owes to Peter and I would like to put this right through the Bulletin.

Also in the Bulletin I think that we should pay tribute for all of the hard work he has done for the club particularly over the weeks since Alex's death. I understand that things have been pretty hard for Peter on a personal level over the past few months and I think that losing Alex possibly hit him more than anyone else in the club.

I think that this was evident on the Tuesday after the death when he addressed the club meeting - he was very emotional because he was very close to Alex and they were very good friends.

Chris Gentry

Alex's Chosen Charities

We raised a total of £600 in donations, including a contribution from the club funds, for the NSPCC and Alzheimer's Research, Alex's favourite charities. The money will be divided equally between them.

Commemorative Medals

The specially struck medals in commemoration of Alex for the Marlow 5 and Wycombe Half Marathon were very impressive and make a fitting memento. There were extra ones made so that everyone can have one, whether they ran in these races or not. See Pete if you would like one of them.

Wycombe Half Marathon

This year's Wycombe half was the biggest we have had for a number of years, with nearly one thousand runners completing the course. Chris Gentry wishes to thank everyone who helped make it a success. The newly named Alex Johnson Memorial Trophy went to the Wycombe District Council staff team, which was very fitting as the council has been very supportive of this event for many years.

Our men's team finished in third place and the ladies fifth. Well done Benji for completing the race for the twenty-third time in 1.31 and to Danny Fox for completing his first half marathon in the same time. Also official course measurer Mike Hickman, who works so hard organising the event, also ran it in a very creditable 1.40. Handy Cross Runners times were:-

Dan Charlestone 01:24:38

John Dooley 01:27:58

Alfred Benjamin 01:31:08

Danny Fox 01:31:39

Michael Hickman 01:40:24

Russell Fell 01:43:25

Penny Cutler 01:45:05

James Cunnane 01:45:52

Terry Eves 01:47:14

Cecil Hamilton-Jones 02:05:58

Myrl Richardson 02:10:28

Laura Gwilliam 02:12:27

Martyn Fox 02:14:20

Melanie Hill 02:16:03

Stella Gwilliam 02:17:20

Jacqueline Harding 02:20:29

Grace Wilson 02:26:39

The Ridgeway Relay Challenge

(We wuz robbed)

Rather like the England football team in Portugal, our ladies team was penalised (by five minutes) for a very dubious reason. The organizers positioned marshals on the first leg (understandable as there are opportunities to take a short cut, as I know because I did it one year, unintentionally of course) and they claimed Dave Bosley missed one of the checkpoints, even though he followed the runner in front, who wasn't penalised.

Consequently Headington ladies beat us again this year by two minutes, but I'm sure Nick is planning his revenge already. Once again we fielded three teams for this most enjoyable event, no mean achievement for nearly thirty Handy Cross Runners to get to ten different starting points on time.

Special congratulations to the ladies team who returned their fastest time ever, to Jock Maclean, who competed in the Penn 7 before running his leg of the relay, to Clodagh Ball, who only enquired about joining the club two days before and was press ganged into running the fifth leg and to Mike Hickman who ran two legs back-to-back! Commiserations to James Bateman who got lost on the penultimate leg, easily done.

Thanks again to Nick for organising the teams and congratulations to all our runners, a really good team effort by everyone concerned.

(Incidentally, I thought it was for a foul on the goalkeeper).

PS. When Rod Palmer (who ran the same leg as Dave) returned from holiday and queried the time penalty, he admitted, when questioned closely about his route, to unintentionally leading Dave astray on a shortcut which, while it only cut about 50m off, avoided the strategically positioned marshal.

London Marathon

I had a ticket for a place in the grandstand in the Mall this year (which was nice) courtesy of Julie's charity. It was great to see the top athletes finishing, before going back down the course to see some Handy Cross Runners.

We saw several people (including Julie) at twenty two miles, then rushed back to the Mall, but thanks to the vagaries of the Underground, we were just too late to see her finish.

The weather conditions suited the runners better than the spectators, although they certainly needed their space blankets at the end!

Well done to Dave Redhouse for achieving a pb of under three hours and congratulations to Frank Fulcher, Julie, Helen, Linda and Elaine for finishing their first marathon. Our results were:-

Dave Redhouse in 2.58 (pb)

Roger Porter in 3.04

Frank Fulcher in 3.19 (1st marathon)

Nick Martin in 3.46

Ron Newman in 3.46

Mike Hickman in 3.51

Adam Koffler in 3.57

Alan Wheeler in 3.57

Ray Ramon in 4.05

Alison Packman in 4.33

Mike Blowing in 4.48

Russell Fenn in 4.53 (2nd marathon in 2 weeks)

Julie Dean in 4.53 (1st marathon)

Helen Hammond in 4.58 (1st marathon)

Linda Weedon in 4.59 (1st marathon)

Debbie Brown in 5.06

Elaine Brewster in 5.35 (1st marathon)

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Handy Cross Divers

Terry made a bid for life membership of Handy Cross Divers one Sunday morning recently. Knowing his reputation for falling over, Adam warned Terry of some prominent tree roots.

"It's ok Adam," replied Terry, "Since I've had these new glasses I haven't fallen once." Whereupon he leapt into the air, grabbed at a low branch, missed his footing and crashed to the ground!

Skittles Evening

I missed this, but judging from the photo it appeared to be well attended and everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Thanks to Nick and Lucy for arranging it.

Apparently on a practise run Nick was dive bombed by an unfriendly bird. I thought he was perhaps tempting fate again by starting the Summer Tough Guy with a large cross marked on top of his head!

The Importance of Vaseline

On a recent trip to Prague, Mike Blowing was accosted on the street by a lady(?) who grabbed him by the unmentionables! While his attention was thus diverted, her accomplice helped herself to the contents of his pockets.

And what did they escape with? Mike's tin of Vaseline! Never leave home without it.

Race Success for Editor

I came third in Vernon's duathlon (or was it a biathlon?) anyway it involved running round the field behind the Judo Club three times (3K) before cycling to Lane End (18K) and then running round the field twice more (another 2K). Yes Helen, I know what you mean about trying to run after a bike ride!

Frank Fulcher was the winner in 1.9.13, followed by Mike Hickman in 1.15.14. It's a pity there were only three of us competing but thanks to Vernon for organising the event.

Benson 10K

Margaret Moody was first Female Veteran 50 and Debbie Jones won the cup for being 1st local lady home as can be seen opposite.

Our ladies team of Margaret Moody, Debbie Jones and Liz Davey won a plaque for coming second.

Excellent runs from Mike Hollis, who was first home for the club and also Rod Palmer, Katie Palmer, Mike Hickman, Dave Nash, Stella and Laura Gwilliam, Grace Wilson and Sarah Mordaunt.

5K Series

All over for another year I'm afraid, but this years series seemed even more popular with over three hundred finishers in one event and two hundred and fifty nine in ours.

Debbie wishes to thank everyone who contributed food to our magnificent spread at Bassetsbury Manor.

Trevor made sure the club was well represented at the front by finishing 2nd at Marlow and 3rd at Datchet while Dan Charleston finished in the top ten in the first three events and hasn't been seen since!

Our event saw the long awaited and welcome return of Pete Smith, who has been injured since last years London Marathon.

A surprise result was Pete Edgington, last at Wargrave! But he was coming back from a serious injury and was much higher placed in later events.



Summer Tough Guy

I said I'd never do it again, but then the water can't be cold in the summer can it? Anyway against my better judgement I joined Alison, Ann, Grace, Helen, Lucy, Nick, Paul and Trevor at the start, all agreeing to stick together through thick and thin (or mud and water).

The cross country section of the summer event is shorter and less muddy than in winter, but they make up for that with two laps of the killing fields and much more water. It's strange how the different obstacles affect people. For some, the height of the Tiger was terrifying, for others the claustrophobia of the dark, narrow tunnels or the underwater sections were the worst. For me, it was jumping into the water from a great height.

Anyway we all overcame our fears but declined to go on the second lap (although Lucy was game to round again). Well done everyone.

Results

Maidenhead 10

Trevor Hunter (6th) in 55.24
Roger Porter in 59.51
John Peerless in 1.04.58
Robert Pettingell 1:05:28
Michael Hollis in 1.08.01
Alison Mcquater in 1.10.12
Nick Martin in 1.13.15
Peter Astles in 1.14.04
Des Mannion in 1.15.07
Penny Cutler in 1.16.04
Mike Hickman in 1.17.06
Angie McLoughlin in 1.25.54
Lucy Courturier in 1.28.20
Tina Stevenson in 1.32.15
Lynda Fletcher in 1.34.05
Julie Dean in 1.35.31
Martin Dean in 1.35.31
Debbie Brown in 1.42.02
Linda Gaitskill in 1.46.43
Tony Barlow in 1.46.43

British Airways Concorde 10K

Ellen Haynes in 49.36. (pb)

Wooburn 10K

Trevor Hunter (3rd) in 35.43
Dave Bosley (6th) in 37.37
John Dooley (15th) in 40.52
John Peerless (18th) in 41.40
Mike Hollis in 43.25
Adam Parrett in 44.41
Danny Fox in 45.08
Mike Hickman in 45.47
Margaret Moody in 47.25
(1st lady vet 50)
Adam Koffler in 47.28
Laura Gwilliam in 41.30
Russell Fell in 48.22
(1st male vet 60)
Chris Lansdown in 49.42
Liz Davey in 49.57
Debbie Ridout in 51.28
Angie McLoughlin in 53.13
Karen Williams in 53.29
Linda Weedon in 55.26
Lucy Couturier in 56.30
Alison Packman in 58.24
Stella Gwilliam in 62.28
Martyn Fox in 63.51
Melanie Hill in 64.09
Linda Gaitskill in 66.08
Grace Wilson in 68.14
Alison Alexandra in 69.28
Sarah Mordaunt in 80.43

Thame 10K

Danny Fox in 42.06
Adam Parrett in 43.07
Nick Martin in 45.11
Peter Astles in 46.46
Penny Cutler in 47.33
Alison Gowers in 49.20
Chris Lansdown in 49.42
Lucy Couturier in 54.444
Pat Carter in 60.13
Martyn Fox in 60.23
Rose Priest in 70.16
Peter Hill in 72.45
Melanie Hill in 72.45
Sarah Mordaunt in 79.21

Prestwood 10K

Mike Hollis in 43.18
Mike Hickman in 46.37
Peter Astles in 48.40
Liz Davey in 49.00
Mike Blowing in 51.00
Richard Stone in 61.43
Dave Nash in 63.01

Prague Marathon

Trevor Hunter in 2.39
Trevor Free in 3.40
James Bateman in 3.46
Nick Martin in 4.02
Lucy Couturier in 4.09 (pb)

Icknield Way 10K

Chris Gentry in 51:39
Liz Davey in 52:25
Karen Haynes in 55:50
Helen Murdoch in 58:09

Icknield Way Half Marathon

Trevor Hunter (2nd) in 1.20
John Dooley in 1.34
John Peerless in 1.36
Dave Leighton in 1.36
Benji Benjamin in 1.43
Jock Maclean in 1.46
Margaret Moody in 1.48

Risborough 10K

Trevor Hunter in 35:17
James Cunnane in 42:08
Michelle Margot in 43:24
Mike Hickman in 45:45
Peter Astles in 45:49
Russell Fell in 46:18
Penny Cutler in 46:38
Liz Davey in 48:38
Debbie Ridout in 49:06
Peter Edington in 49:44
Russell Fenn in 50:37
Linda Weedon in 53:39
Pat Bromley in 59:05

Pednor 5

Danny Fox in 34:23
Margaret Moody in 35:16
Pete Astles in 36:11
Mike Hickman in 38:02

Paris Marathon

Margaret Moody in 3.37
Russell Fen in 4.26

Marlow 5

Katy Palmer in 40.11
Jackie Harding in 45.32
Stella Gwilliam in 47.02
Laura Gwilliam in 47.02
Kate Sharp in 48.31
Linda Gaitskell in 50.35
Elaine Brewster in 50.38
Grace Wilson in 52.16
Alison Alexander in 52.48
Sue Walker in 52.48

Hampstead 10K

Russell Fell in 46.36

Champions

Margaret Moody is now the British Champion for her age group (over 50) at 1000 meters.

She competed at the Alexandra Stadium in Birmingham in the British Masters Championship weekend at the end of June and on the Saturday, in wet and windy conditions, she was just pipped to the post in 2nd place in the 5000 meters with an excellent time of 21:07.

On the Sunday, in hot and windy conditions, she got her revenge by not only winning the 1000 meter race by leading all the way, but also lapping the rest of the field "in true Paula Radcliff style", with a superb time of 44:36.

Dave Bosley won the first vets prize in the Bracknell Forest Five, finishing in 6th place in a time of 29:49

Our men's team of Trevor Hunter, Dave Bosley, John Dooley and John Peerless won the Wooburn 10K and with a different Dave (Leighton) also won the Icknield Way Half Marathon with Margaret Moody 1st lady vet 50.

Congratulations to our kit man Dave Nash who recently celebrated his 60th birthday.

Danny Fox is a young, up-and-coming star, having finished first for the club at Pednor and Thame and with some good finishes in the 5K series. One to watch!

Tuesday Night Training Programme.

- July 6th Hill session (Monkton Farm). 6 x Short followed by 4 x long.
- July 13th No Session. Handy Cross Runners 5k.
- July 20th No session. Datchet Dashers 5k.
- July 27th Pyramid session. 2 x 100m, 2 x 200m, 2 x 300m, 2 x 200m, 2 x 100m with equal length recoveries.
- August 3rd 8 x 400m. Pick up pace over final 50m of each effort.
- August 10th 6 x 600m. Pick up pace over final 50m of each effort.
- August 17th 4 x 800m. Pick up pace over final 50m of each effort.
- August 24th 8 x 100m @ 85% effort. 2 min's rest. 4 x 100m @ full effort. 2 min's rest. 6 x 100m @ 85% effort.
- August 31st 5 x 200m @ 85% effort. 2 min's rest. 5 x 200m @ full effort. 2 min's rest. 5 x 200m @ 85% effort.
- September 7th "Overtakers." Group jogs round circuit in single file. Each person in turn sprints from the back of the group to the front.
- September 14th Fartlek session. 3 laps of Cressex circuit in a clockwise direction.
- September 21st Time Trial. 2 laps of Cressex circuit.
- September 28th Pyramid session. 200/400/600/800/600/400/200m efforts. (200m walk/jog recoveries).

Keeping the dream alive.

WEDNESDAY TRAINING PROGRAMME UP TO 29-9-04.

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.

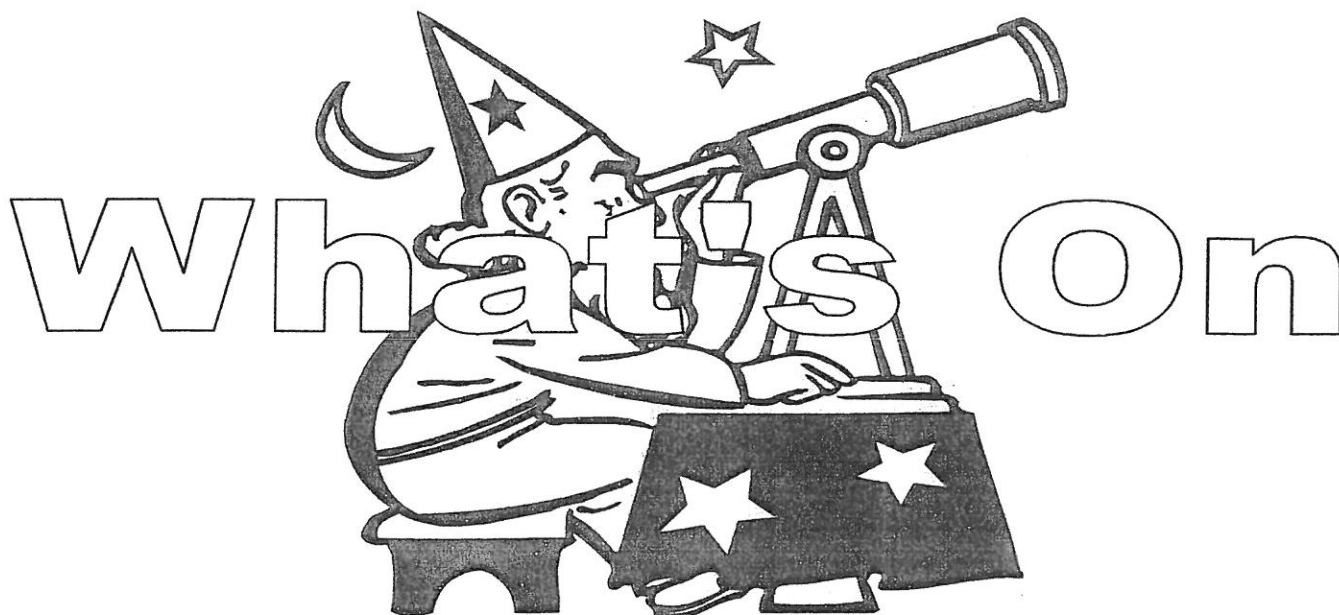
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| 7/7/04 | 2 x 10 laps of sprinting straights and jogging bends. |
| 14/7/04 | Paarlauf session. 12 x 400m. |
| 21/7/04 | 10 x 600m (200m walk/jog recovery). |
| 28/7/04 | 7 x 800m (200m walk/jog recovery). |
| 4/8/04 | 6 x 1000m (200m walk/jog recovery). |
| 11/8/04 | 5 x 1200m (200m walk/jog recovery). |
| 18/8/04 | 4 x 1600m (200m walk/jog recovery). |
| 25/8/04 | The Gerry Grosse Trophy/Wednesday Track Group 5000m Handicap Race. |
| 1/9/04 | 3 x 2000m (200m walk/jog recovery). |
| 8/9/04 | "Pyramid" session. 800/1200/2000/1200/800m (200m walk/jog recovery). |
| 15/9/04 | "Downer." 2000m, 1600m, 1200m, 800m, 400m. (200m walk/jog recovery). |
| 22/9/04 | 2 x 12 x 200m per person in teams of 3 |
| 29/9/04 | Paarlauf session. 12 x 400m. |

Mike Hickman

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Sunday 8th August

Bearbrook 10K

Sunday 15th August

Burnham Beeches Half

Sunday 29th August

Jog Shop Jog 20 (Brighton)

Saturday 4th September

Chalfont St Giles Multi-Terrain 10K

Sunday 12th September

Chiltern Marathon

Sunday 5th September

Luton 10K & Harrow Hill 6

Sunday 26th September

Maidenhead His 'n' Hers
Off Road Races @ Berkshire
Agricultural College

Sunday 17th October

Abingdon Marathon

Cabbage Patch 10 (Twickenham)

Prince's Trust 10K @ Legoland

Saturday 23rd October

Beachy Head Marathon

Sunday 7th November

Marlow Half Marathon